



THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2024

THE BOSTON SUN

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Mayor Michelle Wu (left) stops to talk to a homeless person in Boston, along with one of the many volunteers who came out to assist with the annual homelessness census in Boston.

Wu leads the 44th annual Boston homelessness census

Special to the Sun

Last week Mayor Michelle Wu led a dedicated group of volunteers, including officials from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, City and State officials, homelessness service providers, local elected officials, and public health and first responders in conducting the 44th annual homelessness census for the City of Boston. The count of Bostonians experiencing homelessness plays a crucial role in guiding the allocation of City resources to aid people experiencing homelessness.

"Boston's annual homelessness census is an opportunity to evaluate the needs of unsheltered Bostonians and connect individuals to services," said Mayor

Michelle Wu. "The data from the census is crucial for the City as we act with urgency and care to create an inclusive Boston for everyone. We are grateful to our state and federal partners and the dedicated volunteers throughout the City for their collaboration in making this year's census possible."

The street count is an integral part of the City's comprehensive yearly census, encompassing unsheltered adults, youth, and families in emergency shelters, transitional housing, domestic violence programs, and individuals living outside. This year, more than 270 volunteers canvassed 45 areas after midnight, covering every City neighborhood, Logan

(HOMELESSNESS CENSUS Pg. 5)

Esplanade Association sponsors second meeting on improving Back Street safety

By Dan Murphy

The Esplanade Association convened its second Back Street Neighborhood Project Meeting virtually on Thursday, Feb. 1, to discuss an ongoing project that intends to create safer access at two entrances to the Esplanade on Back Street.

Ali Badrigian, director of projects and planning for the non-profit organization that works in partnership with the state's Department of Conservation

and Recreation to maintain and enhance the Esplanade, then detailed initial work completed at two crossings on Back Street – a private way divided into numerous different parcels that runs parallel to Storrow Drive – at Fairfield and Dartmouth streets, respectively, since the Esplanade Association held its first meeting on the project via Zoom on Nov. 5 of last year. (The Esplanade Association is undertaking this project in partnership with DCR and the City of Boston.)

At the more westerly of the two footbridges on Fairfield Street, an old, faded crosswalk has been filled in, said Badrigian, while two white stripes were painted on either side of a painted "green swath" to indicate the pedestrian crossing and the continuation of a bike path that connects to a greenspace (i.e. the Esplanade). A two-way Stop sign has also been installed at the intersection, replacing two,

(ESPLANADE ASSOCIATION, Pg. 9)

Thinking Cup details proposal to make existing patio permeant at NABB committee meeting

By Dan Murphy

Representatives for The Thinking Cup appeared at the virtual Feb. 5 monthly meeting of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay Licensing and Building Use Committee to discuss the Newbury Street location's proposal to make its long-standing patio 'official.'

Tom Miller, an attorney for the applicant, said the coffee shop, located at 85 Newbury St., has operated the patio without incident since opening in 2014, and while it has never been licensed by the city's Inspectional Services Department, a patio has been in existence at its current location since at least 2005.

"We just want to legalize what's been there for quite some time," said Attorney Miller, who added the patio, which wouldn't be expanding, is currently cleaned by staff about every 10 minutes during business hours. "The patio will continue to oper-

ate in the way you're accustomed to," he said.

In another matter, Sushi By Bosso Ramen Tavern, which is slated to open in the former lower-level home of the Double Zero

plant-based pizzeria at 163 Newbury St. this April, is now seeking to add cordials to its beer-and-wine license.

(LICENSING COMMITTEE Pg. 3)



The Thinking Cup at 85 Newbury St.

D. MURPHY PHOTO

EDITORIAL

ZUCKERBERG, ET AL: THE WORST OF THE WORST

Last week's dramatic hearing in the U.S. Senate, in which the heads of a number of social media companies testified in front of a gallery that was filled with parents who lost children because of the pernicious effects of social media companies, hopefully will result in meaningful regulation that will hold these social media companies accountable for their deliberate targeting of our nation's youth with content that the companies know is harmful.

Arguably the worst offender among the group, Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, apologized to the parents sitting behind him and weakly told them he would try to do better. However, as South Carolina Senator Lindsey Graham bluntly put it directly to Zuckerberg, "You have blood on your hands."

Two years ago the Wall Street Journal revealed that Facebook was fully aware of the addictive and harmful qualities of its social media platforms and the specific damage that they cause to vulnerable young people. Yet Facebook has done nothing to ameliorate its behavior because of the billions of dollars it earns by targeting children with content that they know is dangerous for our children's mental -- and ultimately physical -- well-being.

One of the most telling pieces of testimony came from the head of Tik-Tok, who was asked whether he allows his own children on the Tik-Tok platform. He replied that he doesn't -- because his family resides in Singapore, where Tik-Tok is not allowed to be used by children. However, as Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar pointed out, here in the United States there are no limits placed on social media companies because of the millions of dollars that they spend to lobby members of Congress.

The very next day after the Senate hearing, the stock of Facebook (which is now known as Meta) jumped by a whopping 20% after it announced record earnings, increasing the company's value by hundreds of billions of dollars.

If we were to list the worst kind of people in the world, they would include murderers, rapists, child molesters, and drug dealers. But in this era of pervasive social media, we now can add a new type of sociopath -- the heads of social media companies that deliberately prey upon our children, whom they view as nothing more than a profit-center for their businesses.

A new book by Boston native Frank McCourt, a billionaire real estate mogul and former owner of the Los Angeles Dodgers, makes the case for regulating social media companies because of the threat they pose to our children and our democracy. His central thesis is that we need to do so now before it is too late.

We call upon our national legislators, especially Senators Warren and Markey, to support the bill in the Senate that will allow these social media companies to be sued by those whom they harm. As Senator Graham pointed out, the social media companies have refused to police themselves and the only way to do so is to "open the courtroom doors" to their victims.

....AND THOSE ON-LINE SPORTS BETTING COMPANIES ARE NOT FAR BEHIND....

A while back we wrote an editorial about the clear and obvious evils of the easy availability of sports gambling via smartphones. This past Sunday evening, the news program 60 Minutes had a segment on exactly that topic, highlighting how young men under the age of 25 have become addicted to on-line sports gambling, where they can place a bet not only on the outcome of a game, but also literally wager on every play, pitch, and moment across the international sporting world, simply with the push of a button on their smartphones at all hours of the day and night.

The report noted that many young men have gambled away their college loan money and their inheritances because of their addiction to these so-called sports books. The advertising for these gaming sites, such as Draft Kings and FanDuel, pitched by high-profile celebrities, makes it look like harmless fun. But as 60 Minutes noted, the reality is far darker.

We have no problem with sports betting when it is done at a casino or similar venue. However, allowing it to happen via a smartphone invites addictive behavior, especially by young people, that can lead them to financial ruin and a lifetime of gambling addiction.

In our view, it is clear that the companies such as Draft Kings, FanDuel, and others are nothing less than predatory monsters that seek to take advantage of vulnerable young people.

Just as our state legislature realized two generations ago that lowering the drinking age to 18 was a societal disaster, we call upon our state legislators to revise the laws that allow these sports betting houses to prey on vulnerable individuals 24/7/365.

GUEST OP-ED

A little bit of kindness to protect Mass. parklands and foster community

By Brian Arrigo

Just under a year ago, I had the honor of being appointed to lead the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the state's largest landowner and steward of roughly half a million acres across Massachusetts. It's been an amazing first year -- I've traveled across the state, getting to know our beautiful state park system, and the incredible and dedicated staff, who work every day to preserve these spaces for generations to come.

Growing up in and later serving as mayor of Revere, I loved being close to Revere Beach -- America's first public beach -- and would often start my day by clearing my head with a run along the beach. As the fastest growing city in the Commonwealth, the Revere community and so many others depend on our beaches, parks, reservations, reservoirs, and other open spaces that serve as urban oases and retreats.

The pandemic showed us how important these spaces are for our mental and physical wellbeing. They connect us with nature and our neighbors, building healthy and diverse communities of all ages and backgrounds. With more people than ever visiting and experiencing the beauty of our state parks, it's important to be mindful of the impacts our actions have on each other and the environment.

With this in mind, I'm excited to invite everyone to join us in the Be Kind! public awareness campaign, that we launched last fall in partnership with the Friends of the Fells and the Friends of the Blue Hills. Be Kind! encourages all of us to act with kindness while visiting our state parks -- to the people around us, park staff, and the plants and ani-

mals that call these spaces home.

Be Kind! suggests actions that park visitors can take to ensure they are being respectful of one another and of our natural environment. Specifically, it encourages all, whether they are regulars in our DCR parks or first-time visitors, to:

- Listen for other people on trails and make space for others to pass;
- Keep dogs leashed outside of designated off-leash areas;
- Leave no trace of litter or waste; and
- Stay on the trails -- on foot, paw, or bike.

Whether hiking, biking, or walking your dog, keep an eye out for Be Kind! signs along the trails at the Middlesex Fells and Blue Hills Reservations. While these parks are piloting the program, we are excited to expand this initiative to parks across the state in the future.

You can join us in sharing the Be Kind! message on social media using #BeKindMA and we would love to see your photos and stories of kindness in our parks.

As part of DCR's commitment to providing access to natural, recreational, and cultural resources, we look forward to collaborating with more groups, elected officials, civic leaders, and communities across the Commonwealth to grow this movement of kindness, protect our precious spaces, foster community, and create unforgettable memories for all. Let's Be Kind!

For more information about the Be Kind! public awareness campaign, visit <https://www.mass.gov/guides/be-kind-massachusetts>.

Brian Arrigo is the Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR).

THE BOSTON SUN

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Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary

New England painters bring new vitality to an old art

Special to the Sun

You're an art lover, prowling the streets of Boston. Where can you go to find avant-garde abstract work? Where can you find striking photorealist images? Where can you discover contemporary paintings with an emotional impact you never expected? You might stop in at the Guild of Boston Artists (162 Newbury St.) and have a look at the annual Signature Member Show of the New England Watercolor Society. But wait – watercolor? Aren't those paintings usually wet and misty scenic pastels with soft edges and a moody atmosphere? Not here. The painters of these works are the cream of the crop: each has been juried into at least four selective exhibitions to earn the Society's top designation. And they treat the watercolor medium in ways you probably never imagined.

Judging by the works in this show, they are an unruly band. There are sharply defined paintings of astonishing precision and there are wild and stormy pieces that nevertheless cohere unex-

pectedly into images of an eagle or a mountain range. There's a ghostly scene in which beautiful children step out of a background shrouded in mist, and there's a face-to-face confrontation with a herd of llamas in, of all places, Addison, Maine. Yes, there are boats, but not the kind you imagine when someone says "watercolor." One looks as if it had trespassed into a Barnett Newman color field painting; others have brilliant sails that might have been dipped in Klimt's burnished gold.

Eighty-nine artists from all over New England are represented in the show. All the paintings are for sale, most at prices within reach of art lovers without trust funds. Show chairperson Kristin Stashenko observed, "This show is an extraordinary display of the breadth and versatility of the medium and the technical expertise of the artists. The range of styles from realism to abstract will delight all, from the casual observer to the sophisticated art connoisseur. There is something for everyone!"

This year's exhibition judge, who chose the paintings for the

Society's prestigious awards, is Michael Holter, a signature member of the American Watercolor Society, the National Watercolor Society, and other national organizations. The exhibit runs until Feb. 25. As part of the society's commitment to education, award-winning member artists will give free painting demonstrations on weekends.

The society, which traces its history to 1885 and numbers such figures as John Singer Sargent, Childe Hassam, Andrew Wyeth, and Ruth Wynn among its past luminaries, today claims nearly 200 signature members and an overall membership of more than 400.

New England Watercolor Society Signature Members Show, Guild of Boston Artists, 162 Newbury St. until Feb. 25, Tuesday through Saturday, 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Sundays noon–4 p.m. Painting demonstrations Sundays 2–4 p.m. Feb. 11 (Irena Roman), 18 (Sally Meding), and 25 (Craig Masten).

Visit www.newenglandwatercolorociety.org for more information.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Continued from Page 3

Boston Parks and Recreation Department will present the annual Children's Winter Festival on the Boston Common Parade Ground on Wednesday, Feb. 21, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Visit boston.gov/winterfest for more information about this family-friendly school vacation week event.

The free festival is open to all and offers music, giveaways, winter activities, treats, and crafts. Featured attractions include large inflatable installations such as the All-Star Challenge, and a Fun House Maze. Kids and their caregivers can also enjoy rides in the park on the Trackless Train, a ski lift photo booth, the alpine slide, snow throw, and much more.

The event is hosted in partnership with title sponsor Highland Street Foundation and our contributing sponsors H.P. Hood LLC, ReVision Energy, and Xfinity. ReVision Energy, a 100-percent employee-owned solar company, will provide stored solar power for the event. Enjoy delicious hot chocolate courtesy of Rosa Mexicano and fresh local milk at the New England Dairy's Mobile Dairy Bar.

The Boston Common Parade Ground is located at the corner of Beacon and Charles streets. Call 617-635-4505 or email parks@boston.gov for more information. To stay up to date with news, events, and improvements in Boston parks, visit Boston.gov/Parks, join our email list at bit.ly/Get-Parks-Emails, and follow our social channels @bostonparksdept on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

MUDDY RIVER CLEANUP SET FOR APRIL 20

The Emerald Necklace Conservancy will be holding its 16th annual Muddy River Cleanup on Saturday, April 20.

The Cleanup is a part of the Annual Earth Day Charles River Cleanup, which takes place throughout the Charles River Watershed, and it builds on a national effort as part of American Rivers' National River Cleanup.

Visit <https://www.emeraldnecklace.org/volunteer/muddy-river-cleanup-2024/> to register and for more information on the Emerald Necklace Conservancy's 16th annual Muddy River Cleanup.

CHARLES RIVER CLEANUP SET TO RETURN APRIL 19-20

Join the Esplanade Association for the 25th annual Charles River Cleanup – one of the largest Earth Day cleanups in the nation – on Friday, April 19, and Saturday, April 20.

Registration is now open for individual and corporate/large groups; sign up for one or both days online at <https://esplanade.org/cleanup/>.

BOSTON WARD 4 DEMOCRATS CAUCUS TO ELECT DELEGATES TO MASS. DEMS CONVENTION

The Boston Ward 4 Democratic Committee will be holding a caucus on Saturday, Feb. 24, at 1:30 p.m. at Union Church (485 Columbus Ave.) to elect delegates to the Massachusetts Democratic Party Convention. The convention will take place on Saturday, June 1, in Worcester. All registered Democrats in the ward (spanning parts of the neighborhoods of Back Bay, the Fenway, and the South End) are welcome to attend and to run for delegate. The event will be hybrid, with a Zoom link available upon request. For questions, email ward4dems@gmail.com.



Virtual Public Meeting

1 Joslin PL (New Cancer Hospital)

FEBRUARY

26

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Zoom Link: bit.ly/1JoslinTF

Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864

Meeting ID: 160 124 8468



Project Proponent:

Dana Farber and Beth Israel

Project Description:

The information at this meeting is crucial to you as a City of Boston resident, and stakeholder. Interpreting services are available to communicate the content of these documents at no additional cost to you. If you require translation services, please contact the following: Tyler.C.Ross@boston.gov. The meeting is scheduled for 2/26/2024. Please request interpreting services no later than 5 days before the meeting date.

Meeting of the 1 Joslin Place Task Force to review the proposed Institutional Master Plan project. The Task Force serves as the advisory body for the 1 Joslin Place institutional development.

This meeting will be focused on the proposed Institutional Master Plan project. Please note that this is a joint Task Force/Public meeting. The meeting will begin with a 30-minute presentation of the project by the development team, followed by a 45-minute discussion of the Task force, followed by 45-minutes of public Q&A.

mail to: **Tyler Ross**
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201

phone: 617.918.4214
email: tyler.c.ross@boston.gov
Website:
bit.ly/1JoslinPlaceHospital

CALL TO ARTISTS!

CLEAN SLATE

A juried exhibition inspired by the change of season.

StoveFactory Gallery - Charlestown
March 22- April 14, 2024. Enter by March 7.

Use QR code or visit:

www.artistsgroupofcharlestown.com



Boston University proposes extensive renovation of Warren Towers

By Sun staff

Boston University is proposing an extensive renovation of its

Warren Towers undergrad dorms on Commonwealth Avenue.

The Trustees of Boston Univer-

sity intends to renovate 380,200 square feet of gross-floor area of the three-tower student res-

idence at 700 Commonwealth Ave., which is home to approximately 1,800 undergraduate students. The project will entail making repairs to the building's envelope; reconfiguring the bathroom cores; making accessibility improvements; modernizing elevators and escalators; and installing new mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.

Details of the proposed project were outlined in the Institutional Master Plan Notification Form (IMP NF) Amendment for the Boston University Charles River Campus and the Project Notification Form (PNF) for the proposed Warren Towers Renovation project located in Fenway,

filed with the Boston Planning & Development Agency on Feb. 1.

The BPDA will sponsor a virtual Boston University Charles River Campus and Warren Towers Task Force and public meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 20, from 6 to 8 p.m.

Meanwhile, the BPDA's public-comment period for the PNF for this project is open through March 2.

Visit the BPDA's project page at <https://www.bostonplans.org/projects/development-projects/warren-towers-renovation?> to register for the Feb. 20 meeting, to submit a public comment, or for more information on the project.



COURTESY OF THE BOSTON PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

A rendering of Boston University's Warren Towers under grad dorms.

HOMELESSNESS CENSUS (from pg. 1)

Airport, and the transit and parks systems. Volunteers canvassed assigned areas, identified those sleeping on the street, conducted a short survey, and provided individuals with important safety information and items to help them keep warm.

"The Annual Point-In-Time count is an important undertaking because it provides a national estimate of the men, women, and families in need of a home, many who are struggling to survive," said Juana Matias, HUD New England Regional Administrator. "We are grateful to be able to take this opportunity to join Mayor Wu, the City of Boston, and community partners to provide a local estimate of Boston's numbers and ensure this data can be leveraged to efficiently connect people experiencing homelessness to housing and supportive services. The Biden-Harris administration believes that homelessness is solvable and is committed to helping localities to tackle this growing crisis."

The data from the in-person surveys of unsheltered individuals will undergo a thorough analysis for accuracy and will be cross-checked and combined with the results of the shelter count. The annual homelessness census, mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), is an important requirement for Boston receiving federal grant funding from HUD for housing and services for those experiencing homelessness.

"I want to thank our partners, our network of experienced non-profit organizations and our dedicated volunteers for joining us for the point and time count of people experiencing homelessness in Boston," said Sheila Dillon, Chief of Housing. "The census helps to guide the critical work of moving our homeless residents into housing with the services they need to be successful. We look forward to continuing to work together with our partners to help prevent and end homelessness in Boston."

"This census isn't just about numbers. It's about assessing the needs of our most vulnerable and finding ways to meet those needs," said Dr. Bisola Ojikutu, Commissioner of Public Health and Executive Director of the Boston Public Health Commission. "At BPHC, we know many of our unsheltered residents by name—and we know their situations—and I am grateful to the City and all our partners for their commitment to treating our unsheltered residents with compassion and helping them get the care they need."

The City of Boston, with its partners, continues its work to end chronic and veteran homelessness using the Housing First approach. This evidence-based approach aims to provide permanent and stable housing without preconditions like sobriety or treatment. In recent years, City agencies and community partners have significantly redesigned the way services are delivered to

homeless individuals, increasing resources devoted to housing and deploying new technologies to match homeless individuals with housing and services.

"The annual Homeless Census, conducted by the City of Boston, provides Pine Street Inn and other agencies a critical snapshot of trends in Boston," said Lyndia Downie, president and executive director, Pine Street Inn. "This important data helps guide our strategies and programs, as we focus our efforts on moving individuals off the street, out of shelter and into a permanent home. Boston's street homelessness rate is around 3%, one of the best in the nation, but any person on the street is one too many," she added.

Last fall, a dozen City departments and partner agencies transformed how the City cares for unsheltered constituents impacted by substance use disorder, homelessness, and untreated mental illness, with a focus on the 'Mass and Cass' / Newmarket neighborhood. In September 2023, the City of Boston submitted a grant proposal of \$44 million to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to support Boston's homelessness programs in 2025 through HUD's McKinney Homeless Continuum of Care program.

This year's homeless census results will be available in the coming months.

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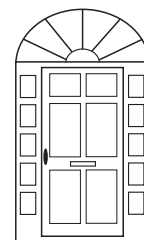
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Rentals

Local destinations offer swoon-worthy specials for Valentine's Day

Saltie Girl

www.saltiegirl.com
279 Dartmouth Street,
Boston, MA 02216

On Wednesday, February 14th, Saltie Girl will be hosting a four-course, prix fixe dinner with Chef Kyle McClelland. With two seatings at 6 and 8 p.m., the special dinner will be held in Saltie Girl's original, intimate space located at 281 Dartmouth Street. The seafood-centric menu costs \$100 per person and will feature options including wagyu beef tartare, cacio e pepe spaghetti, and pan-roasted black cod. Please visit [HERE](#) for the full menu and to make a reservation.

About Saltie Girl:

Being a New Englander, Kathy Sidell, President and Culinarian of the MET Restaurant Group, had a deep affinity for the saltiness of the sea and the fruit it bears. She discovered beautiful, high-quality fish in tins and jars, smoked, and excellent local and fresh seafood during her travels. She decided to open "Saltie Girl," which focuses on globally sustainable iterations of fresh fish & seafood. Be it fried, sautéed, raw, house-potted, smoked, or in tins. Chef Kyle McClelland takes the helm of the kitchen at Saltie Girl. His roots are in the Boston area, having worked early in his career at such locations as The Federalist, Ambrosia on Huntington, The MFA, Ten Tables, Pigalle, Clio, and others before tenures at Toppers at The Wauwinet, Caviar Russe, and Prospect in New York. Saltie Girl is located in the heart of Back Bay at 279 Dartmouth Street, Boston, MA 02216. For more information, please visit [Saltiegirl.com](#) or call (617) 267-0691.

Stephanie's on Newbury

www.stephaniesonnewbury.com
190 Newbury St.,
Boston, MA 02116

Beloved Newbury Street institution Stephanie's is offering a la carte specials in addition to the regular menu to celebrate Valentine's Day. Available February 9th through February

14th, the specials include Lobster Bisque, Snake River Wagyu Sirloin, Baked Stuffed Lobster, Pan Seared Whole Flounder for Two, and Chocolate Truffles. To make a reservation, please visit [www.stephaniesonnewbury.com](#).

About Stephanie's on Newbury:

It is a classic that continues reinventing itself to appeal to residents and visitors alike. Located on one of Boston's most iconic and scenic streets, Newbury Street, and in the heart of Back Bay, Stephanie's welcomes guests with warm, friendly service all day. Stephanies are open daily for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, serving skillful blends of home-style American favorites with a fresh, local twist. Stephanie's is casual elegance at its best with one of the city's most fashionable sidewalk cafés, a popular bar and lounge overlooking Exeter Street, and cozy sky-lit dining spaces. Stephanies is located at 190 Newbury St., Boston, MA 02116. For more information visit [www.stephaniesonnewbury.com](#) or call (617) 236-0990.

Rebel's Guild

Located inside The Revere Hotel
200 Stuart Street,
Boston, MA 02116
[www.rebelsguild.com](#)

For a "rebellious" Valentine's Day, Rebel's Guild will be serving up a fun and flirty Lover's Revolt menu on Saturday, February 10th and Saturday, February 17th. Perfect to grab solo, with a date, or with a group, the specialty a la carte menu will feature themed dishes and cocktails alongside a DJ playing fun breakup songs. For more information or to make a reservation, please click [HERE](#).

About Rebel's Guild:

Rebel's Guild is one part provocative local fare, one part pioneering cocktails, and a dash of conspiracy in the air. Inspired by the rebellious freedom fighters that defined Boston during the American Revolution, Rebel's Guild opens its Theatre District doors to those who favor

the unbeaten path. Contrarians, conspirators, and the insatiably curious alike will love the surprising fare on our menu and stimulating conversation in the lively salon-style atmosphere. For more information, including hours and reservations, please visit [www.rebelsguild.com](#).

Geppetto

Cambridge Crossing
100 North First Street,
Cambridge, MA
[www.thelexingtoncx.com](#)

Chef Will Gilson's romantic Italian destination Geppetto will be offering a special five-course tasting menu on February 14th for \$95 per person to celebrate amore. The menu will feature a choice of options including dishes like shrimp scampi, lamb chops, chocolate budino, and strawberry + persimmon pavlova. Please visit [HERE](#) for more details and to make a reservation.

About Geppetto:

Drawing from his love of Northern Italian food, Chef Gilson will bring the flavors and feasts from Italy to our modern, dinner only restaurant. Ingredients of the dishes will highlight the farms, fishers, and foragers of New England. Guests can dine on composed platters of cheese, cured meats, and small bites to start their meal. Housemade pastas, local seafood, and fresh butchered meats will be the highlight of an evening at Geppetto - all concluded by desserts from one of the city's leading pastry chefs, Brian Mercury.

Puritan & Co.

1166 Cambridge St.,
Cambridge, MA
(617) 615-6195

[www.puritancambridge.com](#)

Chef Will Gilson's Puritan & Co., located in Cambridge's Inman Square, will be serving up a five-course dinner on February 14th for \$95 per person. Menu options will include choices such as Maine mussels toast, squash risotto, ricotta gnocchis, steak frites, and lemon vanilla posset. The full beverage menu will be available in-house for purchase,

as well. For the complete menu or to make a reservation, please visit [HERE](#).

About Puritan & Company:

Puritan & Company is Chef/Owner Will Gilson's first restaurant, located in Cambridge's Inman Square. The modern-American dining destination pays homage to New England history and the restaurant's neighborhood. The Puritan & Company concept is that of an urban farmhouse where Gilson presents seasonal, fresh cuisine deeply rooted in New England tradition, while in the modern American style for which he is best known. The beverage program embodies Puritan & Company's piety to the New England bounty and tradition, with a focus on the often overshadowed, classic art of pairing of food and wine.

Gilson presents touches of his familial hospitality and their passion for herbs sprinkled throughout the dining experience at Puritan & Company. Everything from the material, to the color scheme, to the host stand (a repurposed antique stove from the 1920's), to the menu (stuffies, hard tack crackers, and Puritan Cake) all have special meaning and transport guests from Cambridge back to the Puritan time. For more information, please visit [www.puritancambridge.com](#).

Bistro du Midi

272 Boylston Street
(617) 279-8000

[www.bistrodumidi.com](#)

Join Bistro du Midi on Tuesday, February 14th for a romantic five-course prix fixe menu from Chef Robert Sisca. The French-inspired menu will cost \$175 per person with an optional wine pairing for \$90. Please see [HERE](#) to make a reservation.

About Bistro du Midi:

Bistro du Midi is a bi-level award-winning restaurant featuring French Cuisine with coastal New England Influences. The first floor boasts a stylish and bright atmosphere with a patio that overlooks the Boston Public Gardens. The second floor has

a more elevated feel and offers a refined dining room. Executive Chef/Partner Robert Sisca artfully combines both classic French cuisine with modern and inspired twists on new dishes using the region's freshest seafood, produce, and local farm fresh ingredients. Bistro du Midi is located in Boston's Back Bay neighborhood at 272 Boylston Street across from the Boston Public Garden. Reservations are available and walk-ins welcome. For more information, please call (617) 279-8000 or visit [www.bistrodumidi.com](#).

Harvest

44 Brattle Street, Cambridge,
MA
(617) 868-2255

[www.harvestcambridge.com](#)

Chef Nick Deutmeyer is serving up a delicious, three-course prix fixe menu on February 14 in the heart of Harvard Square for \$90 per person, with an optional wine pairing available for \$50. To enjoy a Valentine's Day treat at home, Harvest will also be selling to-go boxes of homemade bon bons for \$25. The half-dozen assortment will include options like Strawberry Lychee White Chocolate, Espresso Caramel Crunch, and more. To make a reservation, please call (617) 868-2255 or visit [www.harvestcambridge.com](#).

About Harvest:

Located in the heart of Harvard Square at 44 Brattle Street, Cambridge, MA, Harvest celebrates the modern New England table with contemporary New England cuisine from Chef Nick Deutmeyer that focuses on and showcases the region's freshest ingredients.

Tucked along a cobblestone pathway in the heart of the square, Harvest provides a welcome respite from the fast-paced world outside. Inside is a combination of soothing earth tones, supple banquettes, dark woods and pastoral art that lend an air of understated elegance. Outside, graceful linden trees offer shade to the Garden Terrace, Harvest's private garden café that boasts

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Atlántico

600 Harrison Ave., Boston, MA
www.atlanticoboston.com
 (857) 233-2898

Located in Boston's historic South End, Chef Michael Serpa's Atlántico will be offering a \$75 three-course prix fixe menu. Additionally oysters, shrimp cocktail, dressed lobster and caviar service will be available a la carte as well as a romantic sparkling cocktail flight available for \$45, or \$16 individually.

About Atlántico:

A lively seafood-focused tapas bar featuring wines from the Iberian peninsula in a sleek South End space, Atlántico is located at 600 Harrison Avenue in Boston, MA 02118. The striking and airy space transforms as the sun sets into a lively celebration of flavorful, fresh seafood. For more information or to make reservations, please visit www.atlanticoboston.com or contact (857) 233-2898.

Little Whale Oyster Bar

314 Newbury Street,
 Boston, MA 02115

www.littlewhaleboston.com

Chef Michael Serpa's Newbury St. newcomer Little Whale will be offering a \$75 three-course prix fixe menu. Additionally oysters, shrimp cocktail, dressed lobster and caviar service will be available a la carte in addition to a \$65 wine pairing to complement the prix fixe menu.

About Little Whale Oyster Bar:

Little Whale Oyster Bar showcases Chef Michael Serpa's passion for serving high-caliber, chef-driven seafood by offering guests a fresh take on classic New England favorites. The all-day menu features a raw bar with local oysters, Ipswich fried clams, local fish & shellfish,

New England clam chowder and Maine Lobster Rolls, both warm with butter and cold with mayo. Appealing to both Newbury Street tourists looking to sample local cuisine as well as Bostonians seeking out familiar flavors, Little Whale Oyster Bar aims to deliver a quintessentially New England dining experience in an elevated yet approachable environment in the heart of Boston's Back Bay. Located at 314 Newbury Street Boston, MA 02115, Little Whale is open for lunch and dinner. For more information, visit www.littlewhaleboston.com.

Select Oyster Bar

www.selectboston.com
 50 Gloucester Street, Boston
 MA

On February 14, Select Oyster Bar will be offering a \$75 three-course prix fixe menu. Additionally oysters, shrimp cocktail, dressed lobster and caviar service will be available a la carte in addition to a \$65 wine pairing to complement the prix fixe menu.

About Select Oyster Bar:

Chef Michael Serpa's first solo project Select opened in April 2015 in a Back Bay townhouse serving modern seafood and taking inspiration from the neo-bistro movement in Paris. The restaurant is focused on serving the highest quality seafood with a casual bistro vibe. The raw bar features local oysters and the rest of the menu offers crudo, ceviche, local shellfish, spanish octopus & more. The kitchen showcases the top quality seafood with simple seasonal preparations. The wine program focuses on seafood centric wines and our bar serves up cocktails with small batch artisanal spirits.

Sonsie

327 Newbury St.,
 Boston, MA 02115
 (617) 351-0400
www.sonsieboston.com

Beloved Newbury Street bistro, Sonsie, will offer menu spe-

cials including serving up a three-course prix fixe menu for Valentine's Day for \$85 per person. Menu options will include dishes like Oysters with Yuzo Granita, Caviar, Roasted Duck, 100 Layer Butternut Squash Lasagna, 12 Layer Red Velvet Cake, and Chocolate Lava Cake.

About Sonsie:

Open seven days a week from 8:00am to 1:00am, Sonsie boasts beautiful French doors that translate to an open sidewalk cafe in season, as well as a European lounge with deep leather chairs and sofas. The mahogany bar serves the best martinis in town from an experienced lot of friendly bartenders and the brick-oven churns out eclectic pizzas and focaccia throughout the day. It is easy to relax at Sonsie and enjoy the classic music that reflects the ambience of the restaurant as day progresses into night.

Sonsie's menu always introduces fresh flavors and brilliant food combinations. Signature dishes dot the menu as well as seasonal dishes splashed with nightly specials. Reservations are recommended and private parties are welcomed. Downstairs at Sonsie is the Wine Room. An elegant old world feel blended with modern design featuring a walk-in temperature controlled glass wine cellar. With over two hundred wines offered and a unique opportunity to try most by the glass. For more information, please call (617) 351-2500 or visit www.sonsieboston.com.

Rochambeau

900 Boylston Street,
 Boston, MA 02115
www.rochambeauboston.com

Located in the heart of the Back Bay, adjacent to the Prudential Center, Rochambeau will be celebrating Galentine's and Valentine's this year! Ro will be celebrating the galpals on Saturday, February 10th with a fab dinner party including a champagne tower, live music, decorations, \$1 oysters, menus specials

like crepes and chocolate covered strawberries, and more from 7 to 10 p.m. On Valentine's Day, Ro will be serving up a three-course dinner menu on Valentine's Day for \$85 per person, with an additional wine pairing and specialty cocktails available. The restaurant will be elevated with a romantic feel for the evening with white linens and roses on each table.

About Rochambeau:

Rochambeau, a fun, vibrant brasserie and café from the Lyons Group brings French flair and flavor to 900 Boylston Street in Boston's Back Bay. The multifaceted and multi-level space is comprised of a café, open for breakfast, lunch and afternoon snacks; brasserie, serving dinner as well as a late-night menu; and an expansive patio. The menu features French classics such as coq a vin, steak frites, and rotisserie chicken, as well as seafood and other meat options. Rochambeau is located at 900 Boylston Street in Boston's Back Bay. Please visit www.rochambeauboston.com for more information.

Kings

All Kings MA locations:
 Kings, Back Bay: 50 Dalton St., Boston, MA 02115
 Kings, Seaport: 60 Seaport Blvd Suite 225, Boston, MA 02210
 Kings, Burlington: 52 Second Ave., Burlington, MA 01803
 Kings, Dedham: 600 Legacy Place, Dedham, MA 02026
 Kings, Lynnfield: 510 Market St., Lynnfield, MA 01940

While Kings Dining & Entertainment will be welcoming couples for a fun Valentine's date night, all Kings MA locations (Seaport, Back Bay, Burlington, Lynnfield, Dedham) will also be offering something for a fun night out for single folk!

In addition to regular bowling and dining reservations, on February 14th, guests can "Strike Out Your Ex" with a fun Anti-Valentine's Day at Kings! From 6 to 11 p.m., guests can

opt to "strike out their ex"- at the top of every hour, participating lanes will display the provided first name of the player's ex on the lane screen, and the guest then has one minute to try to bowl a strike for a \$25 rewards card! All staff will join in and cheer on the guest as the "strike out your ex party" moves up and down the lanes each hour. Specialty themed cocktails will also be available for 21+ guests to enjoy including Thirst Trap (Rum Haven, New Amsterdam Red Berry, Pineapple & Orange Juice, Watermelon Red Bull) and Ghosted (Ghost Tequila, Triple Sec, Lemon & Lime Juice, Strawberry Monin, Prosecco, Tajin Rim), and more.

About Kings Dining & Entertainment:

Kings Dining & Entertainment was established in 2002 in the heart of Boston's Back Bay inspired to merge genuine food, creative cocktails, and social gaming to create the ultimate entertainment experience. At Kings you can expect delicious, crave-able food and an unparalleled social scene for all occasions; be it a family outing, a date night hotspot, a corporate event, or the best place in town to connect with friends.

Rare Steakhouse

Boston Steakhouses |
 Rare Steakhouse |
 Encore Boston Harbor
 Encore Boston Harbor
 One Broadway
 Everett, MA

On Wednesday, February 14th, Rare Steakhouse inside Encore Boston Harbor will offer a prix-fixed menu that includes an amuse bouche and champagne toast. Chef Megan Vaughan's menu includes a first course of smoked burrata, a second course featuring Surf and Turf and a third course of a Fleur D'Amore. The special menu is \$155 per guest. To make a reservation or for more information, please call (857) 770-3300 or visit www.sevenrooms.com.

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HARVARD BOOK STORE SCRAPS PLANS FOR PRU LOCATION



Despite having announced its intention to open in the fall to this publication less than three months ago, the Harvard Book Store announced on Friday, Feb. 2, that it was scrapping plans to open its second store in the space formerly occupied by Barnes & Noble inside the Prudential Center.

"The cancellation of the Pru project is humbling and disappointing. Despite exploring all available options, the lingering effects of the pandemic have continued to create considerable challenges for construction projects of this size and scope. With ongoing disruptions to the supply chain and escalating costs, our ambitious 29,000-square-foot expansion would ultimately prove unsustainable," a statement on the Harvard Book Store's website (harvard.com) reads in part.

Instead, the business now plans to focus on "improvements" to its flagship Harvard Square store, according to the online statement from the business.

In July of 2022, Harvard Book Store co-owners Jeff Mayersohn and Linda Seamonson signed a long-term lease for the Prudential Center retail space.

Antonio's reopens following extensive renovation

Story & photos By Dan Murphy

Following an extensive, nearly five-week renovation, Antonio's Cucina Italiano reopened on Monday, Feb. 5.

The newly revitalized space at 288 Cambridge St. now boasts a fresh paint job; new ceilings and floors; new furniture, including tables, chairs, and the rear booth; a new surround-sound system; new lighting; and a new service bar. Five framed images of Boston locales, including a shot of Beacon Hill, by award-winning photographer Matt Conti, now adorn the walls, each measuring approximately 3-by-5 feet. (Steven Colarusso, the restaurant's owner and a North End native, said he plans to hang another of Conti's photos in the restaurant — this one, a shot of revelers at the annual Saint Anthony's Feast in the North End.)

Since the project got underway in the first week of January, Steven and his son and right-hand man at the restaurant,



Pictured, left to right, are Michael Colarusso and his father, Steven, of Antonio's Cucina Italiano, together with Bob Lachapelle, general contractor for the restaurant's recent restoration.

Michael Colarusso, together with Bob Lachapelle and Robert D'Amore, the general contractor and interior designer for the project, respectively, worked straight through from 5:45 a.m. to 7 p.m. each day in preparation of the reopening. Planning for the project, meanwhile, initially got underway around last May or June. "It was well organized," Steven said of the project's quick

turnaround time.

Despite its new and refreshed look, Antonio's will continue to offer its signature Italian cuisine, with no major changes planned for the menu, which will continue to feature a rotating selection of lunch and dinner specials each day, along with some newer additions, like the calamari and arancini appetizers.

And although Antonio's will celebrate its 30th anniversary this May, this imminent milestone wasn't the impetus for the restaurant's thorough makeover, said Steven, and instead, the changes signal the ushering in of a new era for the longstanding dining establishment, with the younger Colarusso expected to take the reins from his father sometime in the not-so-distant future.

Visit Antonio's Cucina Italiano online at antoniosbeaconhill.com, or call the restaurant at 617-367-3310.



A look inside the newly renovated Antonio's Cucina Italiano on Cambridge Street.

February school vacation week activities

Children, parents, and caregivers are invited to join the Boston Parks and Recreation Department for February school vacation week. Online registration and more information on all these free family activities can be found at boston.gov/parks.

Softball Hitting and Fielding Clinics

Tuesday, February 20 and Wednesday, February 21, 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

The Bubble at Carter Field, 709 Columbus Avenue.

The program features UMass Boston softball players and coaches and is open to teams and individual players of all skill levels.

Pre-registration required Ages 10 and up

Boston.gov/sports

Children's Winter Festival

Wednesday, February 21, 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Boston Common (corner of Beacon and Charles Streets)

This beloved annual festival offers winter activities, inflatable attractions, and fun giveaways.

All ages

Boston.gov/winterfest

Baseball Hitting and Fielding Clinics

Thursday, February 22 and Friday, Feb. 23, 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.

The Bubble at Carter Field, 709 Columbus Avenue.

The program features UMass

Boston baseball players and coaches and is open to teams and individual players of all skill levels.

Pre-registration required, Ages 10-14
Boston.gov/sports

Open Gym

Thursday, February 22 and Friday, February 23, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

The Bubble at Carter Field, 709 Columbus Avenue.

Open Gym is available to students, families, and community members to play pick-up sports such as kickball, wiffleball, soccer, football, run laps, and more. Ages 7 and up

Boston.gov/sports

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Boston City Council accepts anti-terrorism grant that impacts region

By Adam Swift

Last week, the Boston City Council voted to accept a \$13.3 million anti-terrorism grant that the previous council had narrowly voted against accepting.

The grant will impact surrounding communities, including Chelsea, Revere, Everett, and Winthrop, who are all part of the Metro Boston Homeland Security Region.

The grant from the Department of Homeland Security is designed to provide planning exercises, training, operational needs, and response to terrorism threats, including biological, chemical, nuclear, and explosive incidents.

The funding was reintroduced by Mayor Michelle Wu several weeks ago and the council initially voted to send the request to committee.

But Councilor Ed Flynn put the request forward for a vote at last week's council meeting. Flynn noted that other communities in the homeland security region, including Chelsea and Quincy, are dependent on the money and that the council should not delay the vote.

Following last December's 6-6 vote that failed to accept the grant, a number of first responders, politicians, and other bodies urged the council to accept the \$13.3 million grant.

Congressman Jake Auchincloss

sent a letter to the council and Council President Ruthzee Louijeune urging them to accept the grant. He stated that the Israel-Hamas war has heightened the region's need for anti-terrorism funding as reports of anti-semitism are on the rise.

Earlier this year, Chelsea City Council President Norieliz DeJesus and several other councilors introduced a late motion requesting that the Boston City Council accept the grant funding, however, that motion did not move to a vote.

In the resolution, the councilors noted that Chelsea typically receives approximately \$400,000 per year in funding from the grant, which in the past has helped fund the purchase of

ballistic shields, cameras, maritime equipment, radios, trainings and a firearm trailer.

The decision to block the funding drew widespread criticism, including from then-Boston City Council President Ed Flynn, the Boston Police Patrolman's Association, Boston Firefighters IAFF Local 718, the Professional Firefighters Association of Massachusetts, Representative Jake Auchincloss (who represents Brookline), the Boston Globe Editorial Board, the Boston Chamber of Commerce, and the Massachusetts Catholic Conference, the resolution further stated. It added that the decision also drew criticism from the Massachusetts Legislature, with State Senators Nick Collins

(D-Boston) and Ryan Fattman (R-Sutton) introducing bipartisan legislation to strip local elected bodies of their authority to approve public safety grants.

Chelsea City Manager Fidel Maltez said the annual funding is a tremendous support for the city, particularly in its emergency response, emergency management, and public safety infrastructure.

With this round of funding, Maltez said the focus of the police and emergency management departments would be to increase the amount of surveillance they have available around the city, particularly related to street cameras.

ESPLANADE ASSOCIATION *(from pg. 1)*

graffiti-covered Stop signs, which were there before.

At Dartmouth Street, the previous conditions included a Pedestrian Crossing sign installed by DCR, which was "peeking out from behind a very healthy juniper bush," said Badrigian, but no painted crosswalk at the roadway. Like at Fairfield and Back streets, two white stripes haven been painted on either side of a green swath for the pedestrian crossing. A temporary westbound Stop sign was installed on the back of the Pedestrian sign in January, she said, although a proposed location for an eastbound Stop sign "on the back of the same signpost was determined to be a potential hazard for drivers on Storrow Drive."

But Badrigian, who has been working on the project since November together with Rachel Surette, project operations and sustainability coordinator for the Esplanade Association, added, "We know that two crosswalks and one sign isn't quite enough to improve safety outcomes on Back Street."

Additional ideas to improve safety include permanent Stop signs at Dartmouth and Back streets, which the Esplanade Association is now advocating for, said Badrigian, and would involve Stop signposts for eastbound and westbound traffic; a painted white line at each post to maintain proper distances from the crosswalk; and the blocking of "an unsanctioned parking spot to improve sight lines and provide more room for two-way traffic."

Also, the Esplanade Association is proposing 'Do Not Cross' safety signage at Clarendon and Back streets, said Badrigian, to discourage pedestrians from dashing across Storrow Drive at the "vestigial" park entrance.

Martyn Roetter, chair of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay and a 'key project partner,' described Back Street as "a very peculiar street in a very peculiar city."

"It's a very congested arena, and there are plenty of safety hazards," said Roetter, who said while Back Street is a two-way street, it's often reduced to one way in some places due to cars double-parked there - sometimes in undeeded spaces - as well as when trash trucks accessing the private way twice a week for garbage collections.

Roetter predicted that conditions could get even worse there due to the proliferation of motorized mobility vehicles, and he also cited a "tragic" incident on Dec. 6, when a pedestrian was struck by a vehicle near the entrance to the Esplanade at Back and Dartmouth streets.

NABB has several committees, including its Public Safety Committee, Parking Committee, and Development & Transportation Committee, which are all relevant to the issues now prevalent on Back Street, said Roetter, and could offer "recommendations on how to make Boston a safer place." He said NABB is willing to partner with the Esplanade Association and other stakeholders to improve safety conditions on Back Street but added that

abutters would also need to get involved for the effort to be successful.

Meanwhile, Badrigian unveiled a RACI (i.e. Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed) graph, which compared and contrasted the additional ideas for Back Street safety projects.

The least-expensive option, she said, entails neighborhood engagement via NABB committees, windshield flyers, and future community forums. This has an estimated cost of around \$150, with an expected time commitment of between five and 20 hours, "depending on the engagement option." If this option were to move forward, NABB would be the "responsible" party, added Badrigian, while the Esplanade Association would be held "accountable."

Another option would entail the maintenance of new crosswalks, which, Badrigian said, would have an estimated cost of \$1,500 and an expected time commitment of about 10 hours per crosswalk. For this approach, abutters would be responsible and NABB would be accountable.

A third option would be new stop signs, which is expected to cost \$1,200 and have an expected time commitment of about 15 hours per sign. The abutters would be the responsible party, said Badrigian, while NABB would be held accountable.

The final option would entail the installation of speed humps, with a peak height of about 5 inches, which are expected to cost \$2,000 and take around

25 hours to install per hump. Again, the abutters would be responsible, and NABB would be accountable, said Badrigian.

(Since most abutting buildings have more than one owner, Roetter noted condo associations would likely have to agree to participate in the program. And according to the city's directive on speed humps, engineering plans would need to be submitted and approved in advance by the city's PIC (Public Improvement Commission, while their design and installation would be the responsibility of abutting property owners.)

Jacob Wessel, the city's public realm director, said unlike steeper speed bumps, speed humps have a "more gradual flow" and are "less abrupt," causing drivers to slow down, rather than to stop. Speed humps also keep drivers from exceeding between 5-10 mph, he said, while speed bumps have a speed threshold of about 20 mph.

Wessel said he would consult with attorneys for the PIC on how to handle matters on the private Back Street - a "scenario" he likened to the Back Bay's public alleys, which fall under the city's purview. But without a "cohesive proposal," it would be difficult for the attorneys to advise on the matter, he said.

Jen Mergel, the Esplanade Association's James & Audrey Foster Executive Director, echoed a recommendation made by Roetter, suggesting that the first step would be to look at a map to determine the different stakeholders (i.e. abutters) on

Back Street to better understand their responsibilities regarding maintenance of the private way.

(Wessel advised Mergel that the city's Assessor's Office could provide a map of each property, which would include unit counts, but wouldn't specify whether property owners are direct abutters to Back Street and therefore responsible for its upkeep.)

Mergel suggested that the different options for Back Street should be prioritized by looking at what's "most dangerous," as well as their respective feasibilities.

Moreover, Mergel asked whether a Street Safety Fund could be launched under the auspices of NABB to solicit donations from abutters for future safety improvements to Back Street. She also said the Esplanade Association could perhaps work together with NABB "to fundraise for a maintenance or restricted fund."

To access an audio recording of the Feb. 1 virtual meeting, visit https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/sngouhosxjteubt549g22/Back-St-Community-Mtg-2_2.2.24.mp4?rlkey=c18dhytve5yzefcn4et1zcf0&dl=0.

For more information on the work done to-date, visit esplanade.org/crosswalks, and to learn about how the Esplanade Association is working to make pathways in the park safer in partnership with the Department of Conservation & Recreation, visit esplanade.org/pathways.

'Annie' at the Boch Center Wang Theatre

By Marianne Salza

Spunky, little orphan, Annie, and her friends endure a "hard knock life" at a neglectful orphanage in 1933 New York. Although times can be burdensome, she believes there is hope for sunshine. "Annie," directed by Jenn Thompson, and featuring scores by Tony Award winners, Thomas Meehan, Charles Strouse, and Martin Charnin, will be presented in Boston's Boch Center Wang Theatre February 6-11 for its 2023-2024 North American Tour.

"It's an important message any time, especially during tumultuous times in the world," explained Jeff T. Kelly, who plays Rooster Hannigan in the musical. "Clinging onto optimism when situations seem to be bad and getting worse is an important outlook to walk away from after watching the show."

Annie warms the heart of billionaire, Oliver Warbucks, and



COURTESY PHOTO

Barnstable native, Jeff Kelly, who plays Rooster Hannigan in the musical, "Annie," coming to the Boch Center Wang Theater February 6-11,

his staff when she spends the holidays at his mansion. Together, they set out to reunite Annie with her parents; but Rooster -- the brother of the orphanage's caretaker, Miss Hannigan -- has his own conniving scheme.

Kelly, who considers Rooster to be a comic relief villain, feels that audiences of all ages can enjoy the play. It incorporates political references, social movements, and an inquisitive dog.

"As someone who enjoys learning about different periods, the historical element resonated with me," revealed Kelly. "The political conflicts that were going on during the Depression and Prohibition, and the music of that era tickle my fancy."

Kelly began his career in musical theater nine years ago, in his early 20s. His background in martial arts, hockey, and fencing have been useful skills on stage. Kelly is a graduate of the American Musical and Dramatic Academy, New York City. His recent theater credits include playing Fluke in "Million Dollar Quartet," and Tommy Devito in "Jersey Boys."

"The road has been fun and enlightening. I'm enjoying being



on tour," described Kelly. "A goal of mine is to stay on tour for a while."

Kelly's acting career has allowed him to explore different cities like Denver, San Antonio, and Galveston. When traveling, Kelly asks locals about their recommendations for the best Buffalo wings in the area. Besides a shack that he discovered off a beaten path in the Bahamas, Kelly has concluded that the Buffalo wings from his hometown restaurant, DJ's Famous Wings, are superior.

"This last year has been such a good step because I did a cruise

contract, played the lead in a regional, and I'm playing a principal on a national tour. They're three, massive milestones in a performer's career," said Kelly. "I've been very fortunate. To successfully achieve them has been a really good feeling."

Kelly is excited to return to his Boston, and stop in Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers, where he would eat after marching band rehearsals when he was a member of the Boston University drumline. The Barnstable native plans to bring his friends to Cape Cod so they can revel in his favorite Buffalo wings together.

Next Back Bay Architectural Commission meeting is set for Feb.14

The Back Bay Architectural Commission will hold a virtual public hearing on February, 14, at 5 p.m.

This meeting will only be held virtually and not in person. you can participate in the meeting by going to <https://zoom.us/j/99672146931> or calling 301-715-8592 and enter meeting id 996 7214 6931 #. you can also submit written comments or questions to backbayac@boston.gov

The agenda is as follows:

I. DESIGN REVIEW PUBLIC HEARING - 5:00pm

24.0680 BB—121 Newbury Street:

Applicant: Jennifer Palma

Proposed Work: At rear elevation replace existing mechan-

cal equipment, install louvers at existing window openings, and widen existing egress door.

24.0659 BB—150 Beacon Street— **WITHDRAWN BY APPLICANT**

Applicant: David Ferris

Proposed Work: At front façade enlarge and alter window and door openings at fifth story penthouse and install outdoor kitchen.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW/APPROVAL: In order to expedite the review process, the commission has delegated the approval of certain work items, such as those involving ordinary maintenance and repair, restoration or replacement, or which otherwise have a minimal impact

on a building's appearance, to commission staff pending ratification at its monthly public hearing. Having been identified as meeting these eligibility criteria and all applicable guidelines, the following applications will be approved at this hearing:

- Applicants whose projects are listed under this heading **NEED NOT APPEAR** at the hearing. Following the hearing, you will be issued a Determination Sheet to present at the Inspectional Services Department (1010 Massachusetts Avenue) as proof of project approval when applying for permits. ISD personnel will send an electronic copy of your building-permit application to the commission staff for review. (To avoid potential confusion, the text of your building-permit application should be consistent with the project description given below.) Commission staff will accordingly authorize the execution of the work, attaching any applicable provisos, reflecting the relevant guidelines and precedents.

• PLEASE NOTE THAT FOLLOWING ISSUANCE OF THE DETERMINATION SHEET NO FUR-

THER CORRESPONDENCE WILL BE ISSUED FOR THE

APPLICATIONS LISTED BELOW. The electronic building-permit application as annotated by commission staff will constitute your Certificate of Appropriateness; this will be valid for one year from the date of the hearing. The applicant is required to notify the commission of any project changes; failure to do so may affect the status of the approval.

If you have any questions not addressed by the above information, please contact staff at 617.635.1935 or BackBayAC@boston.gov. Thank you.

24.0676 BB—206 Beacon Street: Install security grates at lower level windows and entry doors, and replace existing rear fence and gate with a new wood fence and gate of similar design.

24.0609 BB—235 Beacon Street: At rear elevation emergency removal of an Ailanthus tree.

24.0678 BB—236 Beacon Street: At front façade replace five fifth-story non-historic windows with historically appropriate wood windows.

24.0535 BB—246 Beacon

Street: At fourth-story replace non-historic windows and doors with wood windows and doors.

24.0667 BB—256 Beacon Street: At rear elevation repoint masonry.

24.0352 BB—280 Beacon Street: At rear elevation replace two seventh-story windows with historically appropriate wood true-divided light windows.

24.0686 BB—581 Boylston Street: At roof remove all existing cellular equipment.

24.0684 BB—581 Boylston Street: At front façade modify previously approved storefront design, at rear elevation replace windows in-kind add install egress door, and at roof replace mechanical equipment.

24.0665 BB—665 Boylston Street: At front façade replace existing wall sign and awning.

24.0673 BB—10 Charlesgate East: At side elevation replace three lower-level one- windows.

24.0598 BB—31 Commonwealth Avenue: Replace six first-story one-over-one wood windows in-kind.

24.0661 BB—32 Commonwealth Avenue: At rear elevation repoint masonry; and at roof repoint and repair chimneys.

24.0608 BB—57 Common-

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| Vernon, Mona M | Edgerly Development LLC | 130-132 Arlington St #130 | \$2,280,000 |
| Ebk 330 Beacon St 153 Hld | 330 Beacon M&m Rt | 324-332 Beacon St #153 | \$2,035,000 |
| Brb 2024 Residence T | Slinky Two T | 776 Boylston St #PH1F | \$12,500,000 |
| Marholin, Christine | Pyle, Regina S | 2 Clarendon St #702 | \$2,600,000 |
| Marholin, Christine | Pyle, Regina S | 2 Clarendon St #704 | \$2,600,000 |
| Kingsbury, Gabriel | Robert R Ford Lt | 233 Commonwealth Ave #1 | \$555,000 |
| Swindell, Katherine B | Gregory, Nathaniel A | 321 Dartmouth St #3 | \$2,300,000 |
| BEACON HILL | | | |
| Stevenson, Kim | Stevenson, Patricia A | 10 Bowdoin St #412 | \$736,250 |
| Martins, Fabio S | Sklar, Randal | 8 Whittier Pl #10D | \$505,000 |
| Reginald, Suresh | Wan, Sujing | 8 Whittier Pl #4A | \$473,000 |
| BAY VILLAGE/SOUTH END/KENMORE | | | |
| Benoit, Chad J | Burnett, Tammy R | 500 Columbus Ave #2 | \$900,000 |
| Liu, Richard | Hi-Hat LLC | 566 Columbus Ave #507 | \$740,000 |
| House Of Fairmont LLC | Rorick James Est | 111 Gainsborough St #204 | \$552,000 |
| Deena R Bernstein RET | Div Shawmut LLC | 100 Shawmut Ave #PHD | \$2,125,000 |
| Jma1 Properties LLC | 46 Wareham Street LLC | 76 Wareham St #6F | \$2,325,000 |
| Stoenest LLC | Cabral, Keith | 40 Isabella St #3E | \$1,560,000 |
| Kanwal, Amrit | Ts Pied-A-Terre Hldg LLC | 430 Stuart St #1602 | \$970,000 |
| WATERFRONT/DOWNTOWN | | | |
| Avery Ph Inc | Hiller, Arthur J | 1 Avery St #PH1B | \$4,050,000 |
| 2 Avery 29e Rt | Avery South 29e Rt | 2 Avery St #29E | \$6,990,000 |
| Ky Fortune Investment LLC | Mcaf Winthrop LLC | 240 Devonshire St #4803 | \$2,775,000 |
| Thomas, Gregg | Van Horn, Melissa S | 70-A Franklin St #70A | \$760,000 |
| Ns Boston India Owner LLC | Archstone Oakwood Boston | 131 State St | \$62,000,000 |
| Vaidyanathan, Priya | Mcdonough, Christina V | 165 Tremont St #401 | \$1,925,000 |

BBAC (from pg. 10)

wealth Avenue: At rear elevation repair existing fire escape.

24.0683 BB—115 Commonwealth Avenue: At rear elevation replace two existing non- historic doors with a pair of double-hung windows.

24.0662 BB—124 Commonwealth Avenue: At front façade clean and repair masonry, and replace deteriorated wood trim in-kind; and at rear elevation remove paint from masonry.

24.0610 BB—203-205 Commonwealth Avenue: At roof replace deteriorated slate in-kind.

24.0616 BB—183 Marlborough Street: At rear elevation repair existing fire escape.

24.0629 BB—185 Marlborough Street: At rear elevation repair existing fire escape.

24.0612 BB—387 Marlborough Street: At penthouse roof

replace rubber membrane roofing in-kind.

24.0670 BB—45 Newbury Street: At front façade install rubber membrane roofing at entrance canopies.

24.0679 BB—135 Newbury Street: At front façade replace existing wall sign and light fixtures, and install new awning.

24.0660 BB—156 Newbury Street: At front façade replace existing wall signs.

24.0643 BB—219 Newbury Street: At front façade replace existing entry door, transom and sidelights in-kind.

24.0644 BB—221 Newbury Street: At front façade replace existing entry door, transom and sidelights in-kind.

24.0645 BB—223 Newbury Street: At front façade replace existing entry doors and transom in-kind.

24.0603 BB—252 Newbury Street: At front façade install wall sign.

24.0599 BB—274 Newbury Street: At front façade install wall sign and window signage.

24.0681 BB—316 Newbury Street: At front façade replace existing wall sign.

III ADVISORY REVIEW: 42 Newbury Street: Replace existing storefront and install signage.

IV RATIFICATION OF 1/10/2024 PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

V STAFF UPDATES

VI PROJECTED ADJOURNMENT: 6:00PM

Attention to Detail

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY PENNY CHERUBINO

THIS WEEK'S ANSWER



The arched doorway in the last clue is on 61-63 St. Botolph Street, built in 1890. When the St. Botolph Area Architectural Conservation District was designated in 1981, properties like this and those in the surrounding eight-block area have been protected by standards and criteria that guide any proposed changes to these architecturally and culturally significant buildings.

You'll find the next clue in the Back Bay.

Do you have a favorite building or detail you would like featured? Send an email to Penny@BostonZest.com with your suggestion.

THIS WEEK'S CLUE



LISTING SPOTLIGHT!

409 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE, RESIDENCE K

3 BEDROOMS | 2.5 BATHROOMS | 3,003 SQUARE FEET

LISTED AT \$4,995,000



1 CHARLES STREET, RESIDENCE 1512

2 BEDROOMS | 2 BATHROOMS | 1,235 SQUARE FEET

LISTED AT \$1,950,000



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