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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2024

THE BOSTON SUN

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY

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Local spider expert weighs in on Joro sighting

By Michael Coughlin Jr.

Jessica Garb, an Associate Professor at the University of Massachusetts Lowell whose laboratory specializes in spiders, gave the lowdown on the unfamiliar creature that appeared in the neighborhood recently: the Joro Spider.

While Garb said she does not study this species specifically, she provided information for folks looking to learn more about it.

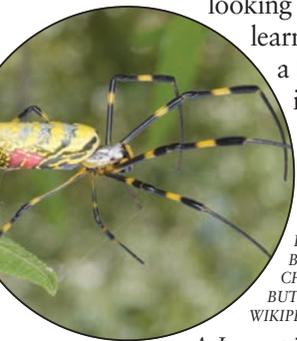


PHOTO BY CHRISTINA BUTLER VIA WIKIPEDIA

A Joro spider

According to Garb, the Joro Spider is native to Eastern Asia and was first introduced to the southern part of the United States around 2013.

“They’re actually quite abundant, in my understanding, in certain areas of Georgia, and maybe, South Carolina,” she said.

Moreover, she described some characteristics of the spider, saying they “make very large webs, and they’re quite conspicuous.” “They are pretty large-sized spiders as spiders go,” she added.

Specifically, according to <https://jorowatch.org/> — a website that Garb told the Beacon Hill Times takes reports of sightings — just the body of a female adult Joro can be up to 1.25

(JORO SPIDER, Pg. 2)

Kathy Kottaridis named Director of the Office of Historic Preservation

Special to the Sun

Mayor Michelle Wu announced Kathy Kottaridis will serve as the new Director of the Office of Historic Preservation. Kottaridis, a seasoned preservation professional with over 30 years of leadership in commu-

nity-centered historic preservation, urban planning, and public administration in Boston, brings her vast experience and commitment to equitable preservation practices to this role. She will lead efforts to steward and celebrate Boston’s rich and diverse histor-

(KOTTARIDIS, Pg. 3)

NABB HOSTS



ANNUAL MEETING

DEREK KOUYOUMJIAN PHOTOS

Shown above, NAAB Chair Martyn Roetter addresses the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay during their annual meeting, held this year at Fisher College.

Shown below, Michael and Elizabeth McCord, award Friends Of The Public Garden represented by Liz Vizza, Margaret Pokorny, and Catherine Bordon with the Prindle Community Leadership Award.

See more photos on Pages 6 and 7.



EDITORIAL

BICYCLING IS NOT SAFE IN GREATER BOSTON

The tragic death of a 62 year-old bicyclist last week on Memorial Drive has highlighted the lack of safety on our roadways for even experienced cyclists. We ourselves know first-hand how dangerous Metro Boston's roads can be. We train for triathlons and are fully aware that we are taking our life into our own hands whenever we take off for a ride. Even in places where there are bike lanes on the roads, those bike lanes always just end precipitously -- eventually forcing cyclists to navigate unsafe roads alongside high-speed automobile traffic.

And even when we are in a bike lane, we still have to deal with motorists who pull out halfway into the bike lane in order to see oncoming traffic, or who are distracted thanks to cell phones, or who are under the influence (either by alcohol or marijuana), or who are just bad drivers, not to mention the prospect of being "doored" by an inattentive driver exiting their parked car adjacent to the bike lane.

Although we applaud the trend toward encouraging bicycling both for exercise and in order to reduce our dependence on cars for environmental reasons (we used to commute to work on our bike on nice days and rode our bike routinely when we were in college in Cambridge), the reality is that bicycling never is going to be widely-adopted by commuters thanks to rain, snow, ice, and summer heat-and-humidity. It's a good way to get exercise, but it has its limitations for our increasingly-aging populations and for those who are not mobile.

Biking has its place in communities with designated bike paths, such as those on Cape Cod and the islands, where we enjoyed many bike rides with our children when they -- and we -- were younger.

But the reality of the push to get people on bicycles, as laudable as it may be, is that it only will lead to more tragedies on our unsafe roads. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported that 1,105 bicyclists were killed in motor-vehicle traffic crashes in 2022, a 13% increase from 976 in 2021. In addition, the Consumer Product Safety Commission reports there were 405,411 emergency department-treated injuries associated with bicycles in 2022.

In New York City, last year was the deadliest year for cyclists since 1999, according to that city's Department of Transportation. Of the 30 cyclists who died in 2023 on NYC streets, 23 died riding e-bikes, which is more than double the previous record for e-bike fatalities. Serious injuries among cyclists in NYC went up last year as well, with a total of 395 cyclists who were severely injured, including 79 who were riding e-bikes, an increase of about 50 from the previous year.

The U.S. never is going to be Europe, where bicycling was a way of life before the automobile and the roadways in major cities were designed with bicycling in mind. We certainly would like to see safer roads for bicyclists in and around the Greater Boston area, especially if we can add dedicated bike paths. But until we have figured it out (and have the money to pay for it), we fear that more tragedies are inevitable.

DEJA VU ALL OVER AGAIN FOR LONG-TIME SOX, PATS FANS

The Red Sox once again are on the outside looking in. The Sox have failed to make the playoffs for the third year in a row and the fifth time in six years. The Sox had appeared destined for a playoff spot at the midseason All-Star break, only to falter miserably in the second half of the season, a pattern of the past three years.

As for the pathetic Patriots, it's hard to imagine them winning more than one or two games for the remainder of the year, which means they will finish up even worse than last year's four-win team, leaving them out of the playoffs for the fourth season in the past five. Even worse to contemplate is that the future for the Pats appears dim. As long as Allen, Mahomes, and Jackson are still in their prime, the Pats at best will be a .500 ballclub for the next decade.

Although both the Sox and the Pats enjoyed incredible success in the first two decades of this century, the downward trajectory for both teams is not all that surprising. The Sox and the Pats may be rated among the most valuable sports franchises in the world -- the Patriots recently were ranked the fourth most-valuable NFL team -- but the ownerships of both teams take their incredibly loyal fan base for granted and appear disinterested in constructing a championship-caliber team.

The Pats' demise must be particularly galling for owner Bob Kraft, who often speaks of being a Patriot fan from the founding of the franchise in 1960 and then enduring the decades when the Patriots were among the worst teams in the NFL.

Although younger Boston sports fans came of age during a 20-year period of excellence, the woeful performances of the Sox and the Pats these days bring back sad memories for older fans of the early 1960s for the Red Sox ("When April's high expectations turned to September's tears", in the words of Ken Coleman on the Impossible Dream record) and the latter half of that decade when the Pats were the worst team in the NFL.

Ironically, when the Pats and the Sox were awful in that era, it was the Celtics who brought us success with their incredible run of NBA titles led by Bill Russell -- and once again the Celts seem to be our only hope for joy once again, just as they were six decades ago.

With the tough summer for Sox fans behind us and the fall football season fast-forwarding (so it ends quickly) for the Patriots, hopefully the Celts will bring us some salvation this coming winter and spring.

JORO SPIDER (from pg. 1)

inches long.

Moreover, media outlets have previously used headlines indicating that this spider can fly; however, Garb pumped the brakes on that assessment.

She noted this idea of flying is tied to the phenomenon called ballooning, in which spiders in their infancy release silk and are carried in the air by the wind. Further, Garb indicated this occurs with many spiders and that they are often at their smallest size when it happens.

Naturally, one would wonder if the Joro is a cause for concern, especially for folks who might encounter it. However, Garb eased those concerns.

While Garb noted that almost all spiders, including the Joro, are venomous -- meaning they make venom -- she did not think there was any documentation of this species' venom being harmful to people.

"So there's a lot of species for which even though they're making venom -- because it's not necessarily targeted toward human nervous systems, it's not toxic to us," she said.

"Then their behavior might be such that they're just so shy that they're not inclined to be biting people."

Although this spider is seemingly not dangerous to people, Garb did express some concerns relating to the critter.

First, she noted some concern if the spiders became numerous in the state and displaced local species, especially those that have adapted to the area and cannot survive elsewhere. She also thought it could be concerning if the spiders found their way

to more natural habitats. Still, she stopped short of forecasting how it might impact those habitats and generally suggested it could lead to homogenization.

Additionally, Garb mentioned that she was concerned about false reports of seeing the Joro Spider. For example, she said that she received an image through another news outlet from a resident of Cape Cod and another image directly from a resident of Western Massachusetts, both of whom thought they spotted the Joro, but they were actually a native species that looked similar.

"We do have at least one native species here, which is kind of similar enough looking that for people who are not really thinking a lot about different kinds of spiders and how to distinguish them, could be easily mistaken," said Garb.

"When they sent me the picture, I'm like, oh no, this is the native spider, and so I'm just worried people will start killing this thing, which I don't think they should."

For those interested in learning more about the spider or reporting a sighting, visit the aforementioned link to the Joro Watch website. For those who remain concerned about the Joro Spider's appearance in the neighborhood, at least one city official sympathizes with you.

"I feel for my fellow residents of Beacon Hill as I am not a fan of spiders. Especially the flying variety! Happy to lead the Boston Arachnid Mitigation Plan," wrote City Councilor Sharon Durkan in an email commenting on the sighting.

THE BOSTON SUN

PRESIDENT/EDITOR: STEPHEN QUIGLEY

(STEPHEN.QUIGLEY@THEBOSTONSUN.COM)

MARKETING DIRECTOR: DEBRA DIGREGORIO

(DEB@THEBOSTONSUN.COM)

REPORTER/EDITOR: DAN MURPHY, DMRPH4@GMAIL.COM

ART DIRECTOR: KANE DIMASSO-SCOTT

CITY PAWS

Emergencies with pets

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

Animal guardians have two types of emergency situations where planning ahead will make things easier and less stressful. The first is an occurrence where you might have to leave your home with your pet to shelter elsewhere or a call to “shelter in place” with the needed preparation and supplies. The second is the need for an emergency visit to a veterinarian for a sudden illness or injury.

Weather and Other Emergencies

The heart of hurricane season is here. If you have companion animals, you need a plan because, should a storm or other disaster strike, you are on your own when finding shelter for your entire family.

You must plan a safe place to go with your animals in an emergency. While large-scale disasters come to mind, it could also be water leaks or fires in your build-

ing. Sadly, the organizations that provide shelters for people often prohibit animals.

A friend or relative who will shelter you for a few days is ideal. You should also have the phone numbers of a few pet-friendly hotels near your home and surrounding areas, where you might reserve a room until the immediate danger has passed and those charged with emergency management begin to offer solutions for families with animals.

Escape Plan and Kit

The MSPCA and Animal Rescue League have created comprehensive and helpful collections of disaster planning resources on their websites. These will provide you with a checklist of items to gather and resources to have on hand. Those with cats and birds should be certain to have appropriate carriers in an easy-to-access spot.

Poppy has a red kit bag filled with emergency supplies. We use

it when we travel and would take it if we needed to evacuate. This bag has been used more often as a first aid kit than for a significant emergency, an added incentive to have one for your animals. Our family escape bag has our own supplies, plus emergency food and water for her.

Trip to the Animal ER

Do you know your current options for an emergency room visit for a sick or injured pet? When we meet new neighbors, they often ask if we can recommend a veterinarian. We're happy to tell them about the veterinary hospital we use and our favorite home-visit vet. We also tell them the location of animal hospitals offering round-the-clock emergency care and specific specialists. If they're new to the area, we suggest they know exactly how they would get to these facilities.

If they, like us, are car-free, we suggest they have a plan to



By planning and calling ahead, you can reduce the stress of rushing your dog to an emergency vet.

transport their animal to a vet by public transportation, a car service, or, best of all, by a friend or neighbor with a car.

We've noticed more and more expanded veterinary clinics and 24-hour emergency veterinary care services opening in our area. We suggest you search, list those nearest you, and add the numbers for those places to your phone. Calling ahead is always a good idea in an emergency, not only to confirm availability and wait times. This call can also

guide what you should do on the way to professional care.

We keep our dog Poppy's medical records in cloud storage. This way, we don't have to remember the details and can give any veterinarian access to the records from our regular care providers if needed.

Do you have a question or topic for City Paws? Send an email to Penny@BostonZest.com with your request.

KOTTARIDIS (from pg. 1)

ical assets, reporting to Chief Climate Officer, Brian Swett.

"I am thrilled to welcome Kathy Kottaridis as our new Director of the Office of Historic Preservation, said Mayor Michelle Wu. "Kathy brings unparalleled experience and passion for preserving Boston's historic places while elevating the stories of our diverse communities will help ensure that Boston's history is honored. Under her leadership, we will continue to make historic preservation a tool for social and racial equity, celebrating our past while building a future that benefits all Bostonians."

As Director of the Office of Historic Preservation, Kottaridis will drive the City's preservation initiatives by promoting inclusive historical narratives and fostering collaborations between public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Under her leadership, the office will prioritize centering racial equity and community involvement in preservation processes, ensuring that Boston's history reflects the experiences and



Kathy Kottaridis.

contributions of all its residents. Kottaridis will oversee the Boston Landmarks Commission, the City's Historic District Commissions, the Archaeology Program, and the Commemoration Commission.

Kottaridis will also spearhead the City's commemorative efforts, including the upcoming 250th anniversary of the United States in 2026 and the 400th anniversary of Boston in 2030, ensuring these historic milestones are marked inclusively and meaningfully for all residents.

"I am deeply honored to be entrusted with leading the Office of Historic Preservation at such

a pivotal time for Boston," said Kathy Kottaridis, Director of the Office of Historic Preservation. "Boston's history is vast, layered, and intertwined with the stories of many communities. I am excited to build upon the foundation of this office to ensure that Boston's diverse histories are preserved, acknowledged, and celebrated in ways that benefit all of our neighborhoods."

Kottaridis has been the Executive Director of Historic Boston Incorporated (HBI) since 2007, where she led the rehabilitation of numerous threatened historic buildings, successfully raising more than \$5 million in capital grants and overseeing development projects valued at \$39.7 million. Her leadership has transformed many of Boston's architectural treasures into revitalized community spaces. For example, Kottaridis worked on the Fowler Clark Epstein Farm, a historic agricultural property in Boston, which underwent restoration in 2015 to serve as the Urban Farming Institute's headquarters and an educational center. Kottaridis

also supported the restoration of the Alvah Kittredge House, which was purchased by HBI in 2011 and completed a \$3.8 million rehabilitation in 2014. The renewed mansion now holds five two-bedroom residential units including two permanently designated affordable units. HBI also undertook the \$1.9 million rehabilitation of the Upham's Corner Comfort Station, a former rest station, converting it into the restaurant Comfort Kitchen, a full-service award-winning café and restaurant.

Kottaridis holds a Master's in Public Administration from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, a Master's in Historic Preservation from Boston University, and a Bachelor's in History from the University of New Hampshire. Her career also includes positions with the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the Bostonian Society.

"Kathy's visionary leadership and deep expertise in historic preservation in Boston will be

invaluable as we work to integrate preservation with our broader efforts in creating a just, decarbonized, and resilient city for all," said Brian Swett, Chief Climate Officer. "Historic preservation is not just about honoring the past, but about building a sustainable and inclusive future. Kathy understands the vital connections between our historic assets and the wellbeing of our communities, and I'm excited to work with her to make Boston a model for both preservation and community building."

Over just the last three years, the City of Boston has designated over 20 landmarks in Boston. This is more than twice the number of historic designations which occurred in the decade prior. Additionally, the Archaeology team has opened a new laboratory in West Roxbury, as well as an exhibit in Faneuil Hall that explores Boston's history of slavery. To learn more about historic preservation in Boston, visit <https://www.boston.gov/departments/historic-preservation>.

SEND US YOUR NEWS:

The Sun encourages residents to submit engagement, wedding and birth announcements, news releases, business and education briefs, sports stories and photos for publication. Items should be e-mailed to deb@thebostonsun.com.

NEWS IN BRIEF

NABB HOMELESSNESS TASK FORCE FORUM SET FOR OCT. 9 AT COPLEY BPL

The Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay Homelessness Task Force will sponsor its fifth annual Citywide Public Forum on Wednesday, Oct. 9, from 6 to 7:30 p.m., at Rabb Hall in the Copley Branch of the Boston Public Library at 700 Boylston St.

This year's educational forum will be moderated by Jenifer McKim, interim investigations editor for WGBH, and include panelists Dr. Howard Koh, professor of public health and director of the Initiative on Health

and Homelessness at Harvard SPH; Kenzie Bok, administrator of the Boston Housing Authority; and Joshua Cuddy, director of interagency coordination at EOHLC.

Register online at <https://bpl.bibliocommons.com/events/66e47f5379c37d9f5da6e2fa>.

REP. LIVINGSTONE TO HOLD OFFICE HOURS

Rep. Jay Livingstone will hold his Back Bay Office Hours on Thursday, Oct. 3, at 10 a.m. at the Copley Branch of the Boston Public Library at 700 Boylston St.; his East Fenway Office Hours on Thursday, Oct. 10, at

9 a.m. at Caffe Nero at a4 Edgerly Road; and his West Fenway Office Hours on Tuesday, Oct. 15, at 5 p.m. at the Fenway Community Center, as well as his virtual Office Hours via Zoom on Wednesday, Oct. 9, at 10 a.m., and on Tuesday, Oct. 24, at 5:30 p.m.

To receive the link for Rep. Livingstone's virtual office hours, or to set an alternate time to meet with him, email Cassidy.Trabilicy@mahouse.org.

SOWA ARTISTS GUILD TO HOLD OCT. EVENTS

SoWa First Friday will take place on Oct. 4 from 5 to 9 p.m., and SoWa Sundays will be held on all four Sundays in October from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. All SoWa Artists Guild events are held at 450 Harrison Ave., and are free and open to the public.

Visit <http://sowaartists.com>, <http://facebook.com/SoWaArtistsGuild>, or <https://www.instagram.com/sowaartistsguild/> for more information.

www.instagram.com/sowaartistsguild/ for more information.

CHARLESGATE FARMERS MARKET CONTINUES UNTIL OCT. 13

The Charlesgate Farmers Market continues every Sunday until Oct. 13 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in DCR Charlesgate Park at Commonwealth Avenue between Charlesgate East and West.

Some of the 20 vendors on hand will be Dicks Market Garden for fresh produce; Captain Marden's Seafood; and Cape Ann Fresh Catch. The new Eastern Standard bakery has joined the market as well, with fresh bread, croissants, and other delectables. Berklee Students will also be performing at the weekly markets.

For more information, email Charlesgatefarmersmarket@gmail.com.

WLP'S ANNUAL SPAGHETTI DINNER RETURNS OCT. 18 TO THE FAIRMONT COPLEY PLAZA

Women's Lunch Place's annual fall gala, its Spaghetti Dinner, will take place on Friday, Oct. 18, at 6 p.m. at the Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel.

WLP will celebrate its donors and partners who have invested in building a healthy community for women experiencing homelessness, hunger, and poverty.

This year's event will include a dynamic musical performance by local artist Miranda Rae, as well as speeches from Kate Walsh, Secretary of Health and Human Services, Chef/Owner Douglass Williams of MIDA Restaurants, and the Honorable Linda Dorcea-Forry, former State Senator.

To reserve a seat, sponsor the event, or learn more, visit womenslunchplace.org/sd.

FENWAY ALLIANCE PRESENTS

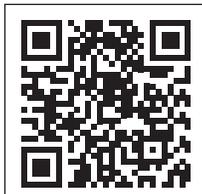
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Amie Rui of Eon Dance Troupe performing at Opening Our Doors 2023
Photo credit: Annielly Camargo

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FENWAY

The Fenway Alliance

BCC BOSTON CULTURAL COUNCIL

MC Mass Cultural Council

Fenway Cultural District



City of Boston Arts & Culture



Mission Hill Fenway Neighborhood Trust, Inc.

Senator Collins, Rep. Moran vote to increase the Commonwealth's competitiveness for federal dollars

Special to the Sun

The Massachusetts Legislature passed a bill that will allow the Commonwealth to more effectively compete for federal funding that could be invested in transformative projects related to transportation, housing, climate, economic development, and technology.

S.2954, An Act to provide for competitiveness and infrastructure investment in Massachusetts, takes advantage of the interest accrued from the Commonwealth's Stabilization Fund and leverages that interest to ensure the state receives the maximum possible share of federal funds. The Commonwealth's Stabilization Fund has an all-time high balance of over \$8 billion. It is currently estimated that Massachusetts could receive up to \$17.5 billion through historic, once-in-a-generation federal funding opportunities.

"Federal funding opportuni-



State Rep. John Moran.

ties is crucial for Massachusetts to thrive. Diverting interest from the Stabilization Fund is a can significantly benefit Massachusetts," said Senator Nick Collins. "With over \$8 billion available, reallocating these funds allows us to tap into the \$17 billion in federal resources and enhance our regional projects. The additional \$12 million for municipalities

will empower them to compete effectively for federal matching funds, fostering local growth. This approach not only supports immediate investments but also accelerates our ability to address long-term liabilities, strengthening our financial position."

"With the passage of this legislation, the City of Boston will be able to leverage state dollars to make key strategic investments, ensuring our continued competitiveness," said Representative John Moran.

The initiative requires the Comptroller to transfer interest from the Stabilization Fund to the Commonwealth Federal Matching and Debt Reduction Fund on a quarterly basis if the stabilization balance reaches certain benchmarks. The Secretary of Administration and Finance (A&F) would then pursue federal funding opportunities available due to the availability of

(COMPETITIVENESS, Pg. 5)

TMC presents 'Resonance of Remembrance'

Special to the Sun

Tutti Music Collective (TMC) presents a fall concert "Resonance of Remembrance," on Saturday, October 19, 8 pm, at St. Cecilia Church, 18 Belvidere Street, Boston. The concert features the Wood Harbor Orchestra and TMC Chorus, led by Cofounder Elijah Langille, conductor. Guest performing artists include Ciaran Nagle, tenor, Tara Novak, violin and fiddle, and Ken Field, saxophone.

"Through a diversity of compositions and musical genres, we'll explore our remembering - who we are, who we should be, who we cherish, and who we have lost," shares Rachel Burckardt, composer and TMC cofounder. "Where else but at a TMC concert will you hear the mingling of a concert orchestra, chorus, jazz combo, and Irish musicians performing music

mostly of local composers? Join us for an unforgettable evening of music!"

Tutti Music Collective's "Resonance of Remembrance" features the second Boston performance of Composer Rachel Burckardt's Global Music Award-winning work "Mount Auburn: A Requiem in D Minor," featuring renowned Irish tenor Ciaran Nagle, soloist. In addition, the program features Burckardt's composition "Ascendance." The performance of this work is the first collaboration of the Wood Harbor Orchestra, Ishna violinist/fiddler Tara Novak, and the Revolutionary Snake Ensemble, featuring Ken Field, saxophone, Phil Neighbors, drums and Blake Newman, bass. "For Elaine & Steve" by Burckardt, "Psalm 130" by local composer Patricia Van Ness, and "Conga del Fuego Nuevo" by Arturo Márquez



The Tutti Music Collective performs.

round out the program.

The Tutti Music Collective and Wood Harbor Orchestra are committed to showcasing the music of local minority, LGBTQIA+, and living composers, in the belief that concert music should reflect the diversity of the world we live in. The Collective strives to create spaces where these voices are heard and celebrated. Through the Collective's performances, it aspires to

engage audiences, while championing inclusivity and equity in the arts. Learn more at thetuttimusiccollective.com.

Tickets to "Resonance of Remembrance" are \$25 general admission, \$10 seniors and students, children under 12 attend for free, available at MtAuburn-Boston.eventbrite.com and

at the door. Parking is available at the nearby Hynes Auditorium Garage on Dalton Street for \$13 with a coupon available at the door. St. Cecilia Church is fully accessible

For more information about Wood Harbor Music, and Composer Rachel Burckardt, visit woodharbormusic.net.

COMPETITIVENESS (from pg. 4)

federal funds for infrastructure, resiliency and economic development projects.

At its current level, the Stabilization Fund is anticipated to accumulate approximately \$250 million in interest annually. Currently, that interest is deposited directly back into the fund. Once signed into law, this bill will require the Comptroller to transfer interest from the Stabilization Fund to the Commonwealth Fed-

eral Matching and Debt Reduction Fund when amounts exceed 10 per cent of budgeted revenues of the previous fiscal year; and the balance of the fund has not decreased in the previous year. When a diversion does occur, the interest will be used for two key purposes, including matching funds for federal grants, during this unique opportunity of Federal investments; and long-term debt management strategies.

Over the coming years, this bill is expected to unlock more than \$800 million in funds that will be used to fund the state or municipal match requirement for federal competitive grant opportunities, as well as planning work that will help municipalities with the process of preparing applications for federal grants. Once federal grant opportunities expire, money in this fund will go toward reducing the Commonwealth's long-term liabilities.

Through three pieces of federal legislation—the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), and the Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) Act—over \$2 trillion in spending is being made available to states through competitive grant programs and formula allocations. With this bill, the Commonwealth will be maximizing its position to capitalize on these substantial federal funding opportunities.

Having been approved by the House and Senate, the bill was signed by the Governor into law on September 24, 2024.

DELUCA'S CELLARS



GRAND TASTING

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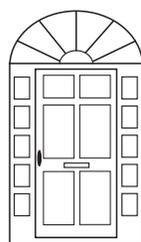
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Rentals

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION OF THE BACK BAY HOLDS ANNUAL MEETING

Photos by Derek Kouyoujian

The Neighborhood Association of Back Bay held its Annual Meeting at Fisher College. Mem-

bers of NABB elected officers and directors as well as recognizing individuals and organizations that help enrich the neighborhood.



NAAB Chair Martyn Roetter addresses the crowd.



Boston City Councilor Sharon Durkan and Massachusetts State Rep Jay Livingstone.



Gail Laffer and Roberta Orlandino after presenting her with the Mary Natale Citizenship Award.



NAAB Chair Martyn Roetter presents Boston Guardian publisher, Dave Jacobs, with a Special Recognition Award, shown with wife and Associate Editor for the Guardian, Gen Tracy.



Women's Lunch Place CEO Jennifer Hanlon Wigon speaks at the meeting.



Kathleen and Steve Young present Boston Sun reporter and editor Dan Murphy and publisher Stephen Quigley with a Special Recognition Award for their work covering events in the Back Bay neighborhood.

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Uber Eats DOORDASH GRUBHUB

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION OF THE BACK BAY HOLDS ANNUAL MEETING



Friends Of The Public Garden President Liz Vizza soaks after being presented with the Prindle Community Leadership Award.



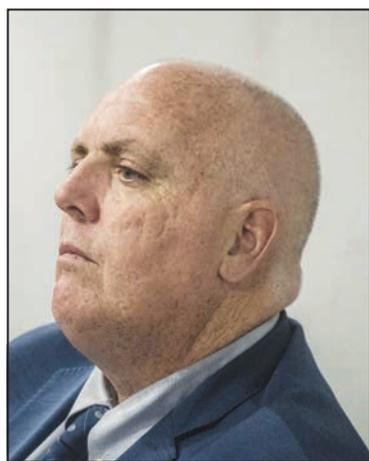
Elizabeth Morris and Gail Laffer present Roberta Orlandino with the Mary Natale Citizenship Award.



Women's Lunch Place CEO Jennifer Hanlon Wigon and Chief Program Officer Nancy Armstrong.



Women's Lunch Place Chief Program Officer Nancy Armstrong.



Boston City Councilor Ed Flynn.

Healey-Driscoll administration announces Firefighter Safety Grant opportunity

Special to the Sun

The Healey-Driscoll Administration announced today that up to \$5 million in grant funding is available to support the purchase of firefighter turnout gear, fire suppression equipment, and related items through the FY25 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant program.

The competitive grant program, which is administered by the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security and the Department of Fire Services, reimburses local fire departments for the purchase of qualifying safety equipment. Departments of every city, town, fire district, and eligible state authority may apply for a grant. Maximum funding amounts are based on the size of the population the department serves.

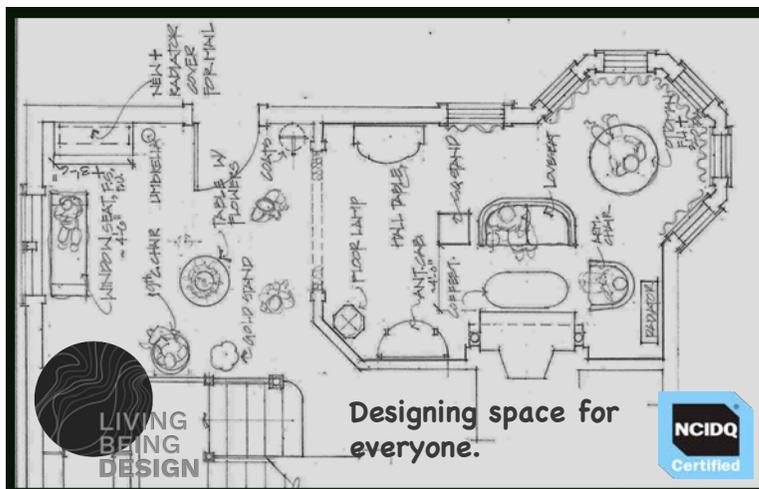
"Massachusetts firefighters put everything on the line to protect their communities," said Public Safety and Security Secretary Terrence Reidy. "The Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant program helps make that dangerous job a little safer for them. From radios to rescue harnesses, every dollar goes toward protecting the people who protect us."

Tools, meters, personal protective equipment, communications devices, and other items are eligible for reimbursement through the program, which places an emphasis on helping departments meet the latest safety standards set by the National Fire Protection Association and Occupational Safety & Health Administration.

"Modern firefighters do much more than fight fires," said State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine.

"They perform technical rescues, mitigate the release of hazardous materials, and treat traumatic injuries. Many of their day-to-day activities expose them to carcinogens and other health hazards. These grants give local fire departments the flexibility to purchase the safety equipment that will best serve their needs, from small rural towns to large urban areas. It's an investment in the safety of our firefighters and all our communities."

Applications for the FY25 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant program are being accepted through October 17, 2024.



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Harry Potter: The Exhibition

Step into the Wizarding World now through January 5

Story by Marianne Salza

Indulge on a sweet glass of draft butterbeer and tangibly explore the rich world and castle in Harry Potter: The Exhibition, on display now in Boston at the CambridgeSide through January 5, 2025. Created and developed by Warner Bros. Discovery Global Entertainment, in partnership with Imagine Exhibitions and Eventim Live, the enchanting show celebrates the iconic characters, creatures, and scenes from the beloved books and films, dazzling millions of people around the world, from Brazil, to France,

and Austria.

“I really like when you come in from page to screen into the castle. There is the Marauder’s Map, and your name comes up. It’s so fun,” said Tom Zaller, Imagine Exhibitions CEO/President, who encourages guests to tour in costume. “I didn’t realize how impactful it was for people. The whole idea is to personalize it, and also for the magic to be behind the scenes.”

Featured are mesmerizing, immersive environments that offer interactive elements, and authentic wardrobes and props, such as the Sword of Gryffindor.



A little one potting a Mandrake seedling.



A young witch having her prophecy revealed.



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY HARRY POTTER: THE EXHIBITION

A family exploring the various Hogwarts houses.

Encased memorabilia includes a first edition of the 1998 novel, “Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone,” by JK Rowling -- protected in a Gringotts bank safe -- the leather, sorting hat, costumes, and a student trunk and luggage trolley from Platform 9 ¾.

The journey begins by receiving a Golden Snitch bracelet that can be tapped to track progress and earned points for one’s chosen Hogwarts house, be it Gryffindor, Slytherin, Hufflepuff, or Ravenclaw. Guests select their wands and patronus for defense before embarking on their magical travels.

Visitors will be introduced to Harry, Hermione, and Ron, and view movie clips of their first meeting before heading to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, where one can meander through the Grand Staircase and portraits.

Guests wander beneath the twinkling, levitating candles in the Great Hall, which, in the movies, boasts a ceiling of 70-feet-high, sometimes opening to the sky.

“On the drawing board, this was what I was most excited about. It’s layered with projection screens. I love it,” revealed

Zaller, about the depth illusions. “It’s hard to capture in pictures. It’s better to be here.”

Practice spell casting and follow an ingredients list to brew a potion. Visitors can also have their prophecies revealed while peering into a globe in Professor Trelawney’s Divination Classroom.

“What makes our job fun and interesting is that we’re three-dimensional, so when you walk through, it’s not like you’re watching a screen -- you’re in it,” emphasized Zaller, sitting at a table in the Great Hall while wearing a Gryffindor robe and t-shirt. “You have to be able to feel it.”

Sit on a massive armchair in Hagrid’s hut, or pot a crying Mandrake seedling in Professor Sprout’s herbology greenhouse.

“One of the things that we wanted to do is reconnect you to moments and remind you what happened 20 years ago,” Zaller explained. “The Harry Potter stories are great, and you could relate to being there. The adaptations from page to screen are well done.”

Zaller remembered becoming a fan of the series when he began reading the books and watching the movies with his oldest son, nearly two decades ago. He believes that Harry Potter is still cherished by fans today because of how relatable the characters are.

Fortunate to have been a part of the experience, Zaller has developed into an even great-



The Great Hall offering the illusion of depth.

(HARRY POTTER, Pg. 9)

MBTA launches NextGen Bus Navigation Pilot Program, Operations employees to use new digital tools

Special to the Sun

The MBTA has announced the beginning of its new NextGen Bus Navigation Pilot Program, a new initiative designed to assist bus operators in navigating detours and other road challenges. In partnership with Swiftly, a transit technology company committed to open data and interoperability, off-the-shelf tablet technology will be piloted in the operator cabs of up to 100 buses by the end of the year, providing turn-by-turn directions similar to navigation apps like Google Maps or Apple Maps. The NextGen Bus Navigation Pilot is supported by major new features in Skate, the MBTA's internally managed bus dispatching app, which allow

the MBTA's Operations Control Center to map out, monitor, and manage unplanned bus detours on-the-fly.

"This technology is a step forward in improving service for customers and supporting our drivers who need to be nimble when unforeseen obstacles get in the way of running vehicles on regular routes," said MassDOT Secretary and CEO Monica Tibbits-Nutt. "MBTA bus service is a great option for travel and we believe the new technology will result in more efficient bus service, reduced travel times, and improved service reliability."

"As we continue to improve bus service for our riders, it's important to put our workforce in a better position to succeed. We all know how the ability to

navigate our road network can vary from day to day, and even hour by hour, affecting travel times. We are utilizing technology to give our dispatchers and operators the tools to make timely decisions and deliver improved and more reliable travel for our riders. The NextGen Bus Navigation Pilot does just that," said MBTA General Manager and CEO Phillip Eng. "Providing our front-line bus operators with turn-by-turn directions is another example of the investments we're making in our workforce, building a more resilient and nimble transit system. Credit goes to our Technology and Operations teams along with our Safety Division that have worked to ensure the NextGen Bus Navigation Pilot Program is safely implemented."

Automobile drivers increasingly use navigation apps like Google Maps or Apple Maps for turn-by-turn directions, which typically provide the fastest, most efficient route. However, the needs of the MBTA's buses, which operate along fixed routes making hundreds of scheduled stops at bus stops, are very different. During special events, closed streets, and unplanned subway service suspensions, MBTA

buses follow approved detours and shuttle bus accommodations provided by the Control Center, which can sometimes be complicated by narrow and winding streets.

In designing and implementing the NextGen Bus Navigation Pilot, the MBTA addressed these challenges by:

Using modern practices from the technology industry: Rather than relying purely on proprietary systems, the MBTA combined its in-house software engineering staff experts with an in-development tool from Swiftly.

Centering safety: Minimizing distractions is even more important for bus operators than for most drivers given their varied responsibilities keeping riders safe. The MBTA's Safety Division has been engaged since this pilot's inception, orchestrating testing and planning that helped Swiftly and internal technology staff ensure that the pilot technology is supportive, not distracting, for bus operators.

Listening to front-line staff: For almost a year, the MBTA and Swiftly iterated and tested with bus operators, inspectors, and dispatchers, ensuring that the turn-by-turn software and new

detour features in Skate reflect the input and expertise of front-line staff.

"Providing safe and reliable service is the core to everything we do at the T — and that starts with supporting our operators," said MBTA Director of Bus Safety Asia Williams. "Turn-by-turn navigation will ensure a seamless transition as the T continues to update its routes and reinforce bus operators' existing knowledge, giving them more confidence. We tested this feature with our operators and instructors to ensure that the technology works seamlessly in real-world conditions, creating a safer on-board experience."

Swiftly's navigation solution will provide bus operators audible and visual turn-by-turn directions from a low-cost, off-the-shelf tablet. Concurrently, new features in the internal Skate app allow bus dispatchers to draw detours on a map from the Control Center — Skate then allows these detour maps to be shared with inspectors and other staff who manage service in real time across the system. The MBTA plans to eventually push these detour directions to the in-cab Swiftly tablets, and ultimately also to bus riders via

(MBTA, Pg. 11)

HARRY POTTER (from pg. 8)

er fan since starting the project in 2020. He has been intensely involved in choosing the details for all of the elements throughout the exhibition; and now envisions himself in the role of Harry Potter: not always a rule-follower, less polished, but with a deep care and determination to do the right thing.

"I've created lots of different experiences. Potter was always the Holy Grail for me. It was a huge honor when Warner Bros. called," said Zaller, who would find it convenient to be able to use the "alohomora" spell to unlock doors and other objects

in his day-to-day life. "I love it. People love it. You feel the energy when you're here."

Visit www.HarryPotterExhibition.com to learn more about Harry Potter: The Exhibition, located at 100 Cambridge Place, Cambridge, in the former Best Buy space. Hours are Friday-Saturday 9am-7pm, Sunday-Thursday, 9am-5pm, and holidays, 9am-7pm. Browse the gift shop (no ticket necessary), which features exclusive apparel, products, and treats such as chocolate frogs and butterbeer candies.



A guest sitting in an armchair in Hagrid's hut.



City of Boston
Planning
Department

VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING

OCT
16

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

50 HERALD STREET

Register: bit.ly/50HeraldSt1016

Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864

Meeting ID: 160 395 9411



PROJECT
PROPONENT:
Beacon Communities
LLC

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

This is a Joint IAG and Public Meeting for the proposed Notice of Project Change for 50 Herald Street, located in the South End neighborhood of Boston. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the Notice of Project Change and the potential impacts. The meeting will include a presentation followed by questions and comments from the IAG and the Public.

This Notice of Project Change contemplates a reduction in scale from the originally approved project. Originally approve at 150 feet of height and 313 residential units, the NPC proposes 85 feet of height and up to 120 units. The originally contemplated ground floor retail will remain in this proposal.

Mail to: **Nick Carter**
Planning Department
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201
Phone: 617.935.5303
Email: nick.carter@boston.gov

Website:
bit.ly/50-herald-street

Close of Public Comment Period:
10/18/2024

Celebrate the High Holidays with the The Boston Synagogue

Special to the Sun

The Boston Synagogue has become a vibrant Jewish hub in downtown for spiritual as well as educational, musical, and cultural experiences. It welcomes people wherever they might be on their Jewish journey – whether NexGen (under 40), single, couples, families, interfaith and LGBTQ.

Need a place to go for the Jewish high holidays? Rosh Hashanah starts Wednesday evening October 2, with services on Thursday and Friday. The holiest day of the Jewish year, Yom Kippur, starts Friday night October 11 with services all day October 12. The services are led by Rabbi Navah Levine, along with a pro-

fessor of Modern Jewish History at JTS in New York, who is one of the leading experts about the Jews in the Ukraine. Reservations are required, and details are on the website www.bostonsynagogue.org/

The synagogue schedule includes a wide array of programs, all tied to Jewish heritage in some way. “One size doesn’t fit all,” noted Susan S. Weingarten, Synagogue Chair. “Community is more than just holiday services.”

Through BackRoom Boston at The Boston Synagogue there are monthly music programs produced by The Boston Festival of New Jewish Music. West End Lyric programs tend towards Broadway and opera! ‘Not Your

Bubby’s Book Club’ meets live every month for an engaging, interactive discussion, often featuring virtual authors. Two adult education classes are just starting, are available on zoom, and registration is still open. There are programs for children and families, such as a weekly Hebrew school, monthly Music for Tots, and Family Fun activities. There are continuous NexGen (under 40s) events, monthly Friday Shabbat dinners, whiskey tastings, and so much more!

“We’re about our downtown neighborhood, with people coming together in various ways, and finding their place in a warm and welcoming space,” Weingarten commented. “We’re here to celebrate together, and also to



COURTESY PHOTOS

A look inside events going on The Boston Synagogue at 55 Martha Road in Charles River Park in the West End.



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support each other through the exhilarating and sadder moments of the life cycle.” Our community covers the West End, Beacon Hill, North End, Waterfront, Seaport, Back Bay, Charlestown, East Cambridge, Somerville, East Boston, and elsewhere.

For more information go to www.bostonsynagogue.org.

The Boston Synagogue is the downtown Jewish hub for spiritual, cultural, educational, community and socializing experi-

ences. The spiritual aspect is pluralistic, where women and men participate in the services. It’s warm, welcoming, and unpretentious. The Rabbi is associated with Hebrew College in Newton. Check it out: www.bostonsynagogue.org

It is conveniently located at 55 Martha Road in Charles River Park in the West End, and near the Red and Green Line T, as well as North Station and the TD Garden. Parking available.

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Knowles, John R	Christopher D Macduff Lt	76 Marlborough St #3	\$1,277,500
Sinha, Vikram P	Beacon Bay LLC	483 Beacon St #14	\$504,900
Edward A Dublio RET	Rivka Zimmerman RET	416 Commonwealth Ave #604	\$1,400,000
Villa 2 Investments LLC	Dunne, Michael	342 Marlborough St #1	\$2,550,000
Wheeler, Harrison B	Carmen E Grainger Nt	381 Marlborough St #2	\$1,030,000
BEACON HILL			
Beacon Street Vent LLC	Ludwig, Ora D	21 Beacon St #2F	\$307,000
Oberli, Christiane	Lvovsky, Anna	26 Temple St #3	\$1,050,000
BAY VILLAGE/SOUTH END/KENMORE			
Raia, Stephanie	Naba 509 T	301-319 Columbus Ave #403	\$2,850,000
Peter Libby 2002 T	Rodman, Jeffrey	505 Tremont St #904	\$4,700,000
Kanoria, Swati	234 Causeway St Unit 908	234 Causeway St #908	\$1,000,000
1005 Quinn LLC	Quinn South End LLC	370 Harrison Ave #1005	\$649,000
Sinha, Pranay	Gold, Matthew	14 Medfield St #1	\$1,275,000
Braun, Esther	Kutz Province Street Rt	45 Province St #708	\$1,000,000
Srinivasan, Sejal	Div Shawmut LLC	100 Shawmut Ave #H	\$3,100,000
Cheng, Sean	Dvir, Nir	26 Wellington St #4	\$1,100,000
WATERFRONT/DOWNTOWN			
Ba400 LLC	400 Atlantic Avenue LLC	400 Atlantic Ave	\$30,000,000
Anna Berik T	Mcaf Winthrop LLC	240 Devonshire St #5010	\$2,750,000
Vaddeboina, Sridhar	Liang, Xueqing	85 E India Row #38D	\$635,000
Galvani, Ruth A	Pullins, Jerald L	75 Fulton St #11	\$852,000

MBTA (from pg. 9)

industry-standard real-time open data feeds.

"We are delighted to partner with the MBTA to bring a modern navigation experience for the unique concerns of transit to life," said Swiftly's Chief Product Officer Meredith Bordoni. "With Navigation in Onboard App, transit agencies can prevent wrong turns, improve service reliability and safety, guide operators through detours, and build operator confidence. While feedback from dozens of transit agencies informed Swiftly's approach, the MBTA's unique open data standard orientation and innovative development approach made the agency an extraordinary partner in solving transit navigation challenges for the whole industry."

By building on a combination of in-house tools, off-the-shelf hardware, and modern vendors like Swiftly, the MBTA is preparing for future innovation and

iteration. In an industry where technology can often remain stagnant, the MBTA's Technology Innovation Department can iterate quickly based on feedback from dispatchers and other front-line staff.

"We've hired over 350 new operators in the last year. Though we train operators on all routes, it still can be a nerve-wracking experience to get out on the road for new operators," said MBTA Executive Director of Bus Transportation Sean Mills. "This helps provide them with more confidence to learn more routes and be able to cover what would otherwise be dropped trips, when they have availability."

"The team has built the detours feature with dispatchers, for dispatchers," said MBTA Bus Dispatcher Byron Randolph. "They've done it by spending time learning from us, speaking our language, and understanding our needs. I appreciate what the

team has built. It'll make detour management so much easier for dispatchers by saving us time and improving how we work with staff in the field."

The MBTA will monitor the NextGen Bus Navigation Pilot over the fall and the winter 2024/2025. Following this evaluation period, the new technologies will be prepared to roll out to all bus garages with detailed real-time bus detour information available for riders too.

The MBTA's Technology Innovation team utilizes creative technology solutions to improve transit service for riders and the T's workforce. Members of the public interested in joining this exciting team can view their open positions online.

For more info, visit mbta.com or connect with the T on X @ MBTA, Facebook /TheMBTA, Instagram @theMBTA, Threads @thembta, or TikTok @thembta.

Attention to Detail

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY PENNY CHERUBINO

THIS WEEK'S ANSWER



The corner windows in the last clue are on 20 Hemenway Street, which first appeared on a street atlas in 1900. Today's answer is from a 1931 photo of the building.

You'll find the next clue in the South End.

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

THIS WEEK'S CLUE



NEW EXCLUSIVE LISTINGS

155 WARREN AVENUE, SOUTH END

3 BEDROOMS | 3 FULL 1 HALF BATHROOMS | 3,555 SQUARE FEET | 2 PARKING

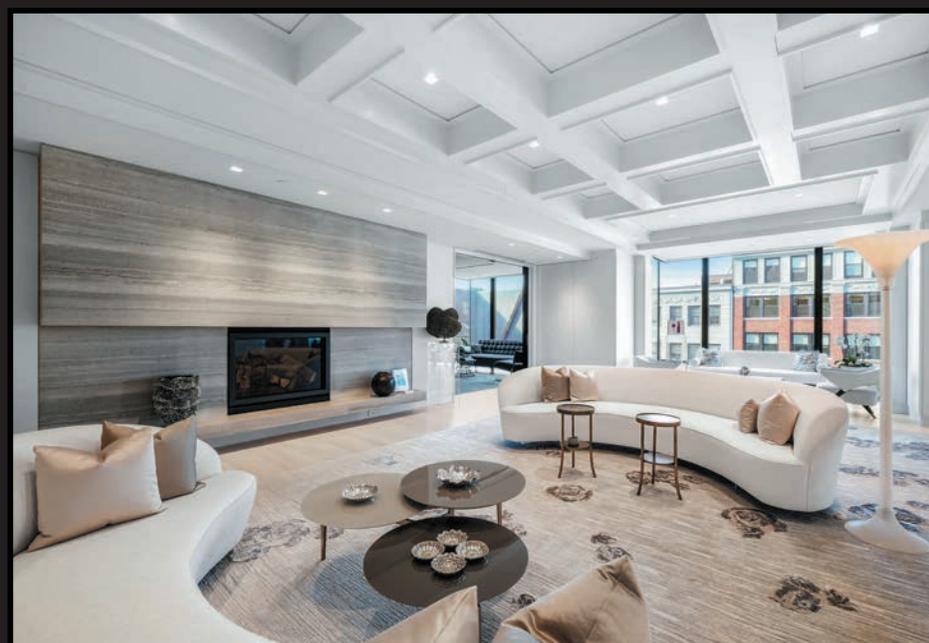
LISTED AT: \$6,999,000



6 NEWBURY STREET RESIDENCE 5, BACK BAY

5 BEDROOMS | 5 FULL 2 HALF BATHROOMS | 5,992 SQUARE FEET | 3 PARKING

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