

THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 2020

# THE BOSTON SUN

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## Murdered on the Mile: Young man came to Boston for help, but ended up getting killed

By Seth Daniel

Damien Hughes was known as a young man with lots of jokes – always the ham and the funny guy in the crowd.

The party, unfortunately, went from the toney suburb of Westbor-



A recent picture of Damien shows him when he was on the right path, working for Amazon and trying to stay sober.

ough to the dregs of Methadone Mile – as he called it – or Mass/Cass Corridor as it is known officially. It was there on Mass/Cass almost two weeks ago that the jokes stopped, his opiate addiction having relapsed and a man he didn't even know allegedly stabbed him multiple times and killed him in front of the Southampton Shelter.

His mother said she was told that the light-hearted, passive young man begged for his life – begged for others to help – as his alleged killer, Cesar Valentin, 34, from Chelsea, pursued him and stabbed him again and again and ended his life.

The jokes at that point were over.

Last Saturday, his mother Ashley Tenczar Curran laid him to rest at a funeral home and cemetery in Central Massachusetts, having tried multiple times to help him get into and stick with detox and sobering up for good. Herself a former addict clean for almost two

(HUGHES, Pg. 4)

## City official remains confident Mass/Cass 2.0 is not a failure

By Seth Daniel

The leader of the Mass/Cass 2.0 plan disagreed this week with recent neighborhood descriptions of the plan being a “failure” and that it needed a re-start, noting that the demands of treating COVID-19 zapped the plan of many of its key facilitators and partners.

Now, however, Kim Thai, special assistant to Mayor Martin Walsh, said they are returning to the framework of the plan, and just released the long-awaited dashboard and website for Mass/Cass 2.0 and are working towards many of the milestones that were

in the queue before COVID-19.

She said outright the plan is not a failure.

“I would disagree it's a failure,” she said. “The Task Force meets monthly. When I stepped into this role in February, I was almost immediately faced with a pandemic...One important thing is a lot of those who worked on particular issues within Mass/Cass... pivoted to COVID-19. A lot of people working on Mass/Cass are the same people who were front-line workers and essential workers (during the pandemic)...We're

(MASS/CASS, Pg. 5)



DCR Commissioner Jim Montgomery, Caroline Reeves, of the Muddy Water Initiative, City Councilor Kenzie Bok, and Rep. Jon Santiago were all smiles under their masks as they posed with Parker and Spaghetti, two of the three goats that came to the launch.

## WaterGoat trash net launched into the Muddy River

By Lauren Bennett

The long-awaited WaterGoat trash net was finally launched into the Muddy River at a small, socially distanced event on August 5 at the corner of Ipswich St. and Charlesgate East that brought together members of the community, elected officials, and even three live goats to celebrate the launch.

Neither COVID-19 nor last Tuesday night's storm could stop the device from being launched after being granted final permitting. Caroline Reeves of the Muddy Water Initiative was joined by Jackie Royce of the Muddy Water Initiative, as well as City Councilor Kenzie Bok, State Rep. Jon Santiago, Boston Conservation Commissioner Michael Parker, Department of Conservation

and Recreation Commissioner Jim Montgomery, and several others who have played a role in the WaterGoat process to cut the ribbon and release the device into the water.

The WaterGoat is a shallow net that includes a rope that can be untied from one end, pulling the net across the edge of the river and

(WATERGOAT, Pg. 5)

## Walsh discusses safety measures for BPS schools, addresses uptick in COVID-19 cases

By Lauren Bennett

Mayor Walsh held a press conference on August 12, his first one in nearly two weeks. He talked about the rising number of cases, and focused on Boston Public Schools (BPS).

He discussed the “slight uptick in Boston” over the past few weeks, where the average positive

test rate went from about 2.1 percent to about 2.8 percent. However, he announced that the most recent seven day positive test rate was down to 2.5 percent.

He said that while the increase in cases is “not alarming,” the City will continue to closely monitor the public health data. He also said that the expansion in testing across the city could be a reason

for the increase in positive case numbers.

Walsh also said that he is “concerned” about college students returning to Boston from high risk states, and has asked colleges and universities to provide the City with information on testing and other reopening protocols.

(WALSH UPDATES, Pg. 3)

# EDITORIAL

## AMERICA IS CIRCLING THE DRAIN

On January 30 -- what seems like a lifetime ago -- the World Health Organization declared that COVID-19 was a world-wide pandemic. On that same fateful date, the United States' Centers for Disease Control issued a press release that stated as follows: "The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) today confirmed that the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) has spread between two people in the United States, representing the first instance of person-to-person spread with this new virus here."

One month later, on February 29, after the first confirmed coronavirus death in this country, President Donald J. Trump said as follows:

"We've taken the most aggressive actions to confront the coronavirus. They are the most aggressive taken by any country and we're the number one travel destination anywhere in the world, yet we have far fewer cases of the disease than even countries with much less travel or a much smaller population."

Given Trump's reassuring statement, who among us could have imagined that five months later, the United States would rank as the nation that has been the most-ravaged by the virus? With more than 160,000 of our fellow Americans victims of the virus -- and increasing by 1000 per day -- we have recorded 25 percent of the world's deaths, though we have just four percent of the world's population. And our five million confirmed cases -- an increase of one million in the past 17 days alone -- account for almost one-quarter of cases world-wide.

The daily life of every American has been affected by the virus, with no end in sight. Not only has the fabric of our society been shredded, but the very foundation of our democracy -- the ability to hold fair and free elections -- is in serious jeopardy.

The virus has reduced us to the status of a banana republic in every respect -- and we're continuing to spiral ever downward, day-by-day.

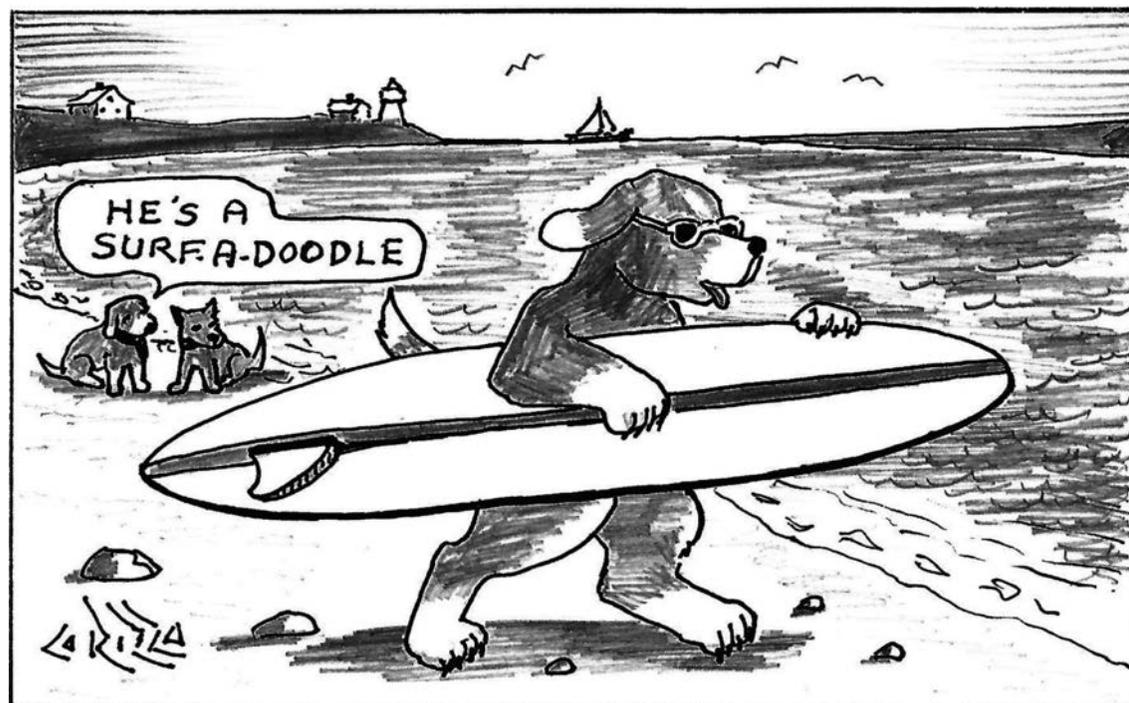
## CAR REPOSSESSIONS ARE ON THE RISE

Although most of the attention of the financial crisis brought about by the coronavirus pandemic has focused on the evictions and foreclosures facing millions of out-of-work Americans, the number of repossessions of motor vehicles because of loan defaults is starting to increase dramatically.

With the expiration of a ban on debt collection actions having ended in Massachusetts on July 31, lenders have begun to repossess the motor vehicles whose owners have defaulted on their loans.

We are not taking issue with the lenders -- who only are seeking to protect the value of the motor vehicle for which they have the title -- but we are mentioning it to point out that this is yet another side effect of our nation's feeble national response to the pandemic.

The loss of an automobile will have catastrophic consequences for many families. But the sad reality is that some policymakers in Washington obviously do not care.



DOG DAYS OF SUMMER ARE HERE

GUEST OP-ED

## Make your voice count in the 2020 Census

By Mayor Martin Walsh

The Census Bureau has abruptly decided to cut their national counting operations a month short. The last day to participate in the U.S. 2020 Federal Census is now September 30, formerly October 31. This announcement further jeopardizes Congressional representation, redistricting, and critical federal funding for things like education, housing, food programs, and more in Boston's communities during the next 10 years. It could lead to a significant undercount, especially for renters, people of color, and immigrants. Only 53.5 percent of Boston's households have responded to date, with some neighborhoods lagging behind. This is why I'm once again asking everyone to fill out the Census AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, if you haven't already. You can self-respond

online ([my2020census.gov](https://my2020census.gov)), or by phone 844-330-2020, and these services are available in 13 different languages. A full list of language access hotlines can be found online. There's also a resourceful FAQ page for any questions you may have.

As a reminder, the Census Bureau will send staff to your house and attempt to assist your household in-person if you have not yet responded. The best way to avoid this visit (should you not want it) is to self-respond immediately. It takes just a few minutes and, please remember, your responses are safe and confidential. You will not be asked about immigration status, and your answers will not affect any public benefits you receive. If you are interested in getting more involved to help Boston achieve a complete count, you can

help in two ways:

Spread the message digitally. Use our outreach toolkit to share that responding is not only crucial, but it is also safe, easy, and confidential. In the toolkit you will find messaging, sample social media text and graphics, infographic flyers and guides, PSA videos, and additional resources. Much of the content is in six languages.

Volunteer to census phone bank with the City of Boston. We are hosting daily phone banks to reach out and encourage households in some of our lowest response neighborhoods.

We want to make sure that everyone gets counted, because in Boston, everyone counts. This is a time to make your voices heard, own your power, fight for your city, and help keep Boston strong for years to come.

GUEST OP-ED

## Suffolk DA Rachael Rollins Statement on Bail and the Bail Fund

By DA Rachael Rollins

*(The following statement is in regard to the release of a convicted sex offender and rapist in Dorchester through the efforts of the Massachusetts Bail Fund in July. Last week, the DA's office brought charges against the man for allegedly raping and kidnapping another woman shortly after being bailed by the Massachusetts Bail Fund.)*

Each one of the over 25,000

cases we handle a year is unique and the Office examines many factors in determining how best to proceed in each case. The decision to request bail or move for dangerousness is one of many that requires a careful consideration of what best serves the victim. And to be clear, the alleged rapist isn't the victim in the case. The person raped is.

Dangerousness under s. 58A requires an evidentiary hearing. There are important victim-cen-

tered reasons for not requesting such a hearing and instead requesting bail. Further, the dangerousness statute only allows defendants to be held without bail for a limited period of time, after which they are eligible for release on bail, and only permits prosecutors to request a dangerousness hearing during an arraignment.

What I find interesting about the Bail Fund's recent behavior of

(Op-Ed, Pg. 3)

## THE BOSTON SUN

PRESIDENT/EDITOR: STEPHEN QUIGLEY [STEPHEN.QUIGLEY@THEBOSTONSUN.COM](mailto:STEPHEN.QUIGLEY@THEBOSTONSUN.COM)

MARKETING DIRECTOR: DEBRA DIGREGORIO ([DEB@THEBOSTONSUN.COM](mailto:DEB@THEBOSTONSUN.COM))

ART DIRECTORS: KANE DIMASSO-SCOTT, SCOTT YATES

REPORTERS: SETH DANIEL, [SETH@REVEREJOURNAL.COM](mailto:SETH@REVEREJOURNAL.COM)

LAUREN BENNETT, [LAUREN@THEBOSTONSUN.COM](mailto:LAUREN@THEBOSTONSUN.COM)

# Councilor Bok resumes in-person office hours

By Dan Murphy

City Councilor Kenzie Bok will resume offering in-person neighborhood office hours this week in outdoor locations, allowing her to again meet individually with constituents while adhering to social distancing and other safety precautions.

Her office hours on Saturday, Aug. 15, take place at Mission Hill Playground in Mission Hill at 10 a.m.; Phillips Street Playground on Beacon Hill at 1 p.m., and the Commonwealth Avenue Mall at Clarendon Street and Commonwealth Avenue (across from the Clarendon Street Playground) in Back Bay at 3 p.m.; on Monday, Aug. 17, at Symphony Park in East Fenway at 4 p.m., and at Ramler Park in West Fenway at 5:15 p.m.; and on Thursday, Aug. 20, at the Thoreau Path (on the benches behind the Amy Lowell Apartments) at 6 p.m.

“One thing we’ve learned about the pandemic is outdoors is a lot safer for these sorts of things than indoors so we’ll be having [office

hours] at playgrounds and in parks,” Councilor Bok said.

Guests who plan to attend her office hours are strongly encouraged to book ahead by calling Councilor Bok’s office at 617-635-4225, but she said she would also welcome any constituents who happen to walk by and want to connect with her personally.

Social-distancing will be in place during her office hours, and face coverings are mandatory for everyone in attendance; hand sanitizer will also be made available on site.

During her office hours, Councilor Bok intends to encourage attendees to not only fill out and return their invitations to vote by mail in the upcoming elections, but also to complete the 2020 census.

“The census numbers citywide are nowhere near where we need them to be or where they were 10 years ago,” she said. “We’re really worried about the count, which affects funding for everything in Boston – from schools to streets to public health itself.”

Councilor Bok also plans to offer virtual office hours again next month after successfully bringing them online.

“I want to make sure I can connect one on one with people who aren’t comfortable with my outdoor office hours,” she said. “It’s all a balance by creating virtual opportunities so people who aren’t comfortable with [traditional office hours] can feel safe and also bringing back face-to-face interaction that we’re all missing within the context of safe public health precautions.”

Soon after assuming office in January, Councilor Bok held her initial “round” of office hours throughout the neighborhoods she represents, and she said she was looking forward to continue to meet with constituents in this manner on a more-frequent basis when the pandemic struck.

“The sad thing is we had a really ambitious set of office hours planned for weekends, weekdays and evenings that we had to cancel because of the pandemic,” she said. “I’m a city councilor who loves being out and about, so it’s been hard to be in this weird sit-



City Councilor Kenzie Bok (at right) is seen earlier this year with West End Branch Librarian Helen Bender during the councilor’s office hours at the library.

uation.”

For now, though, Councilor Bok expects to continue holding in-person neighborhood office hours throughout the fall at a minimum.

“Since we know we’ll be living with COVID-19 for a while,

we’re trying to find outdoor alternatives while the weather is still nice,” Councilor Bok said. “We’ll certainly be doing this through the fall, and maybe we’ll even try some winter office hours with hot chocolate; we’ll just have to wait and see.”

## WALSH UPDATE (from pg. 1)

“Many colleges have submitted information to us,” he said, but there are “still a few outstanding colleges” that have yet to provide the information.

He said that he understands people’s want to get together with friends and family, but he urged that people do so in a safe manner.

“We have to be clear: it’s not time right now to let up,” he said. When meeting people in parks, he suggested going in small groups where everyone has a mask on. He advised people to not sit in crowded areas at beaches, and masks must be worn “until you sit down” at a restaurant, he said.

“You can have fun, but we want you to make sure we minimize the risks,” he said.

He thanked those who have been following the guidelines and helping to stop the spread of the virus in the City, and reminded everyone that the work needs to

continue.

### BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

“The most important collective step before us right now is BPS opening,” Walsh said, as families and teachers “are concerned” about safety and need time to create plans.

“Everyone is rightly concerned about their safety and the safety of our young people,” Walsh said. “Keeping everyone safe is our first priority. That means our kids, our families, that means all of our teachers, our staff, that means our community at large, it means quite honestly everyone.”

He said that BPS will “not be starting with all in-person learning,” but rather either a hybrid model or a period of completely remote learning.

He said that the City is “doing the work now to ensure that remote and in-school learning will be as safe and effective as they can

be.”

The City has purchased nearly 5,000 plexiglass and vinyl separators for use in schools, and is making sure that schools have nurses rooms with properly isolated, ventilated spaces for symptomatic children. Schools are being equipped with new HVAC filters, and window adjustments are being made to ensure that every classroom has at least one window that opens to allow for fresh air inside the classroom.

Walsh also said that the City is purchasing electrostatic sprayers—one for every single BPS school—to disinfect surfaces.

Additionally, sanitization stations will be installed at the entrances and exits for people to sanitize their hands before entering the school, and schools will be marked for foot traffic safety and distancing.

“Every school will receive a

certificate of inspection before reopening,” Walsh said. “We will not send students or teachers or staff into a building that is not safe.”

He also said that BPS is working to strengthen remote learning capabilities, including internet access, to fix gaps that occurred in the spring that did not allow some students to fully participate in the learning process.

Walsh also said there will be “new outreach and support plans” for families. “My concern right now with school is that we have a growing achievement gap, in particular for our Black and Latino students,” he said. “Our schools have two crises right now:” the pandemic, and racial inequity.

He said the BPS budget was increased “with a targeted focus of closing achievement gaps.”

### OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Walsh also announced that the

USDA grant waiver allowing summer meals “to be served in safe ways” will expire on August 31, and if it is not extended, BPS will have to stop making deliveries of meals to students with disabilities and students who are homeless.

He also said that the “Grab and Go” method would have to be altered, and would no longer be open to all children.

Walsh said that he’s “simply asking the federal government in the midst of the pandemic to let us feed our children safely.”

Walsh also announced that \$30 million dollars is now available for affordable housing in the City, and projects will be awarded in September. The projects “must advance our goals of being a carbon neutral city,” as well as demonstrate diversity in the project team.

## OP-ED (from pg. 2)

posting higher bails for violent serious crimes - like the alleged rape recently committed by a convicted sex offender and rapist - is that any incentive for good behavior by the alleged offender is removed. When a family member or friend posts bail, there is an added pressure on the defendant. Any violation,

whether a new offense or not showing up in court, could result in that family member or friend losing their money that was posted for bail. That’s how the bail statute works. The Bail Fund isn’t a friend or family member of the accused. There is no discussion on the ride home of ‘what the hell are you doing?’ or

‘what in the world have you done?’ There is no pressure applied to the accused by the Bail Fund. Rather, their mantra is ‘Free Them All.’

If this office made a decision to request bail and not a dangerousness hearing to spare the victim of a rape any additional trauma, I can absolutely live with that decision.

But bailing out a convicted sex offender and rapist, and then going home, is the act of a coward. So is not making a statement after you make a decision like that. The Bail Fund bailed out Shawn McClinton and he is now accused of raping someone else, in Boston. I would have so much more respect for the

Bail Fund if they had bailed him out and then let him stay in one of their homes. Because that’s what family members and friends usually do when they bail a loved one out. Not bail them out, set them loose on a community they don’t live in, and drive back to the safety of their homes.

## HUGHES (from pg. 1)

decades, she lives in Jamaica Plain and tried to keep frequent tabs over her son on Mass/Cass when he would disappear for days on end – coming down to the Mile originally because there were no services in the suburbs for him and no help in Worcester County Jail where he served more than a year for stealing gift cards from cars.

“To be honest, I expected an overdose call,” said Curran. “I didn’t think it would be about violence or murder. I would have given that guy \$10,000 if he would have left my son alone...My son died saying ‘I can’t breathe; I need an ambulance. Help me.’ He couldn’t breathe because his lungs were full of blood. He died in the ambulance half a block from the hospital. He died a horrible, horrible death and they found the guy who did it over at St. Francis House a little later calmly eating lunch. I just want to know why. I want to know why he needed to come back and stab him again and again – once in the neck and once in the side.”

Hughes, 27, was allegedly



One of the last times Curran saw her son was on Mass/Cass when she went looking for him in July. He wasn’t doing well, but was still full of jokes and laughter – wearing an Uncle Sam top hat.



stabbed by Valentin just outside of the doors of the Southampton Shelter around 11:51 a.m. in broad daylight on July 31. Valentin has been charged with murder, but the story entails far more than street violence. Mostly, Hughes’s mother said, it’s a story about addiction and relapse and the difficulty in finding help in the suburbs and the dangerousness of trying to get help in Boston. Curran said it is often lost that the people on Mass/Cass are real human beings, as they are often in the throes of their addiction and they are sick. Seeing them that way doesn’t help a stranger to see them as a son – as Curran does – a young man who lovingly nursed her late husband in 2015 as he died of cancer, a young man who liked to play mini golf, and who was a constant funny man at home and even in the Mass/Cass area.

“He wasn’t just some random guy from Boston,” said Curran. “He was from the suburbs. He was raised in Westborough and went to Westborough High. My parents raised him. My mother put everything she had into him, the schooling and IEPs. He grew up in a very well-to-do area. He never really got into sports even though my parents tried everything. He started smoking weed and then he got into addiction. Addiction is a disease. He was sick. My son was no choir boy. He was hustling and his had a massive opiate habit... We struggled with that a lot, and I tried to take him to PATH on Albany Street – wading through addicts six-people deep to get to

the door. We went together.”

Curran said she is familiar with addiction, being a reformed addict herself. She said she had Hughes when she was young, and she slipped into addiction as well – which is why her parents raised him in Westborough. More than 15 years ago she cleaned up and became a nurse, and at that time started keeping close tabs on Hughes. A few years ago, in Worcester County, he got caught stealing gift cards out of cars and spend two years in the county jail, she said. He was never a violent or aggressive person, his mother said, and jail was hard for him. There was no help for addiction there, so when he got out, Curran said they felt the only help they could get was in Boston.

“He ended up coming to Boston because I felt there were services here that weren’t in the suburbs and I could keep an eye on him,” she said. “Unfortunately, there weren’t good services in Boston either and it was dangerous down there. Where there are just so many drug dealers going in and out, you’re going to have violence...Eventually, I couldn’t do it anymore.”

The last time Curran saw her son, she had gone down to the Engagement Center – known as ‘The Tent’ – and found him nearby wearing an Uncle Sam top hat and making jokes with everyone, as well as being very high.

“He was always joking, even that day,” she said. “I look terrible in that picture because I was crying so much when I found him that way.”

Prior to that meeting, he had been at her JP apartment for several days and she was trying to get him into a detox and start the process again. However, he disappeared shortly after.

Part of the failure, she said, was the attitudes in places like Westborough – the denial of problems which leads to the rejection of any help or services. Many in those types of towns eventually turn to Boston – like Hughes did – and it’s a very dangerous place to navigate for a suburban kid without any street experience.

“The services are zilch,” she said. “They need to pay attention to their kids and stop denying



Ashley Tenczar Curran over the body of her son, Damien Hughes, last Saturday during his funeral in Westborough. The young man, who was a regular for some time on Mass/Cass due to a long-standing addiction issue, was murdered on July 31 right outside the doors of the Southampton Shelter.

it. It’s happening and they don’t seem to get it. They have a police officer at school in Westborough High School, but he’s not treatment. It would be nice if they had an addiction office...They need to understand these kids are coming into (Mass/Cass). They’re coming in from the suburbs. They haven’t been on the streets 20 years. They are coming from affluent areas. It’s gotta stop. It’s going to get bigger and bigger and spill over into all the neighborhoods. They have a perimeter set up now. I don’t know who orders that, but I’d like to know.”

Meanwhile, Curran said she’s focusing on the violence that has erupted in the area, and trying to draw attention to it so other kids from the suburbs – like her son – don’t fall victim to someone with a knife or gun. She said her son’s murder was captured on a Home-

land Security camera, and Boston Police are working the case but aren’t sure if there’s any motive. Her son was simply standing at the door, and in two seconds he had been stabbed. He tried to get away, and the assailant followed him and stabbed him again.

“I want people to know he wasn’t some random guy,” she said. “He was a person, a human being and he had an addiction. People remember him for jokes and laughs and being non-violent. I don’t think he could even defend himself. He was so much more than the addiction.”

Last Saturday, Hughes was buried out in Westborough. Curran and her mother said their last good-byes to a young man that was once full of life and laughter.

Damien’s laughter, though, had been silenced by so many factors beyond anyone’s control.



A recent picture of Damien Hughes this year when he was with his mother at her JP apartment. She said she thought that she might get a call some day that he overdosed on Mass/Cass, but she never expected him to be called and told he had been murdered.



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## WATERGOAT (from pg. 1)

trapping trash in it as it's pulled. Once the trash is removed from the net by volunteers wearing goggles and gloves, it is scooped into trash bags and hauled away.

"We have been working towards this moment for a year and a half," Reeves said. "This WaterGoat is a testament to what we can and have done together... We have brought this project to fruition, and I am so excited that we can say that we have done it in record time."

The WaterGoat trash net is a pilot program in the Muddy River, but the Muddy Water Initiative hopes that other communities will launch their own WaterGoats to help keep water clean all over the city.

"This is something that we can do to make a difference," Reeves said. "It is not an impossible problem, it is not an intractable disaster. We can each make a difference and we are making a difference here today."

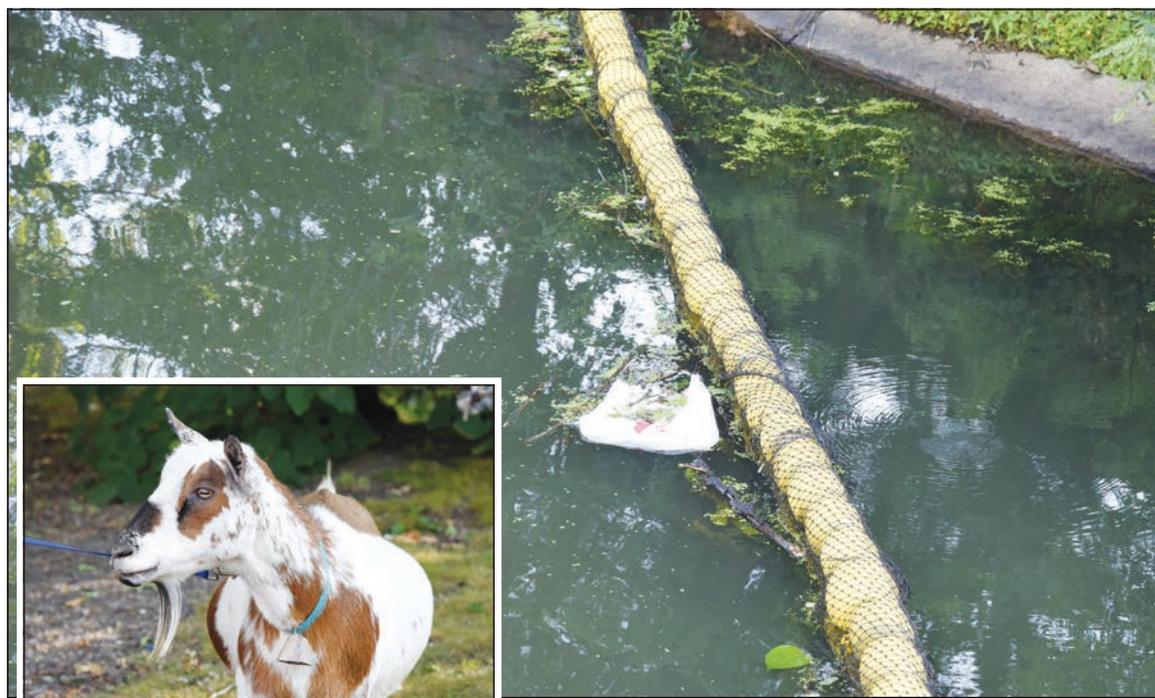
The organization said that between the "naysayers who said the water is too dirty to clean,"

COVID-19, and other challenges that have slightly set the process back, they were still able to stick together and launch the WaterGoat.

Several "Goat Medals" (in the form of a small plastic goat-shaped trophy) were given out to those who had a hand in making the WaterGoat possible. Recipients included Commissioner Jim Montgomery from the DCR, Representative Jon Santiago, Councilor Kenzie Bok, Emerald Necklace Conservancy President Karen Mauney-Brodek, Emerald Necklace Board of Overseers Member John Iappini ("Father of the WaterGoat,") neighbor George Lewis, Jr., and Boston Latin School Volunteer Preston Musoke.

Not in attendance were Senator Will Brownsberger and Representative Jay Livingstone, but Reeves said they are deserving of medals as well for their contribution to the WaterGoat process.

This week, trash will begin to be pulled from the water via the device, and different volunteer organizations will take part in the



Shown above, the WaterGoat trapped its first piece of trash, a plastic CVS bag, right after being launched into the Muddy River. To the left: Parker the goat was a popular guest at the WaterGoat launch on August 5.

emptying. This week's volunteers include 12 first from the Chica Project. Emptying will occur every week until the river freezes over, Reeves explained.

"Today for us is a day of celebration, it is a day of triumph and it is a day of accomplishment," Reeves said. "This little river goes out to the Charles,

the Charles goes out to the ocean, and we are making a difference on a great scale. We look forward to seeing this in more communities and making it work."

## MASS/CASS (from pg. 1)

really trying now to get back to that framework moving forward. We want to tackle the bigger issues and still be able to serve vulnerable populations."

There are a number of new things to report, she said, noting that the Fire Department has just unveiled the Delta Car to respond to issues on Mass/Cass with trained recovery and addiction specialists. That provides a highly trained approach – as is done with the specially-trained police officers on Mass/Cass – and frees up a regular fire engine from having to respond. Likewise, the internal City Departments and non-profit partners continue to meet by phone three times a week, and the Task Force is unveiling working groups to make progress on issues in between monthly meetings.

"What we've done is create working groups," she said. "The Task Force members have been working out certain areas they want to focus on. Most of the Task Force has been receptive to the idea. They would meet outside Task Force meetings to expedite conversations further about certain topics."

Those working groups include Decentralization of Services, Public Defecation, Safety, Planning Studies (with BPDA), and Supportive Housing.

At the same time, the plan faces some major obstacles as many have identified that the issues on Mass/Cass have escalated from

last summer – with seemingly more people there and more precautions to take with COVID-19.

The most talked about obstacle is decentralization of harm reduction services, such as locating services like needle exchanges, homeless shelters and the many other such services to other neighborhoods and other cities and towns. That's an issue Thai said will be for the Task Force, and it's not an easy one.

She said that is one reason the new website for Mass/Cass 2.0 includes a map of services – to show the concentration in the South End as opposed to other communities.

"I don't think anyone would discourage anyone from seeking services," she said. "At the same time, the neighbors in Mass/Cass are concerned about the numbers of services in their neighborhood...It's very complicated when you start talking about neighborhoods, but that's part of the working groups...At the end of the day, whenever we're talking, we need these communities to be part of the answer. It's an important conversation and uncomfortable conversation, but one we have to have. That's why I think the Task Force is the perfect incubator to start advocating for providing services elsewhere."

Another challenge has been partners within the plan, like Pine Street Inn that surprisingly located a new homeless shelter right in the

middle of Mass/Cass without nary a word to their partners. Thai said that hasn't strained the relationship, and they are moving forward to work to get people moved out of that situation rather than dwell on what was a crisis decision.

"We're in a war with a pandemic and Pine Street Inn is a responsible organization that does a lot of work and has been a great partner," she said. "I think unfortunately people have to make tough decisions...I won't speak for Pine Street, but I think from a Task Force perspective it encourages everyone to speak up more and engage and participate and talk about questions openly as we move forward."

There is also a threat to the law enforcement partnership, as resources dedicated to Mass/Cass 2.0 are still being evaluated as to where they fit in with budget cuts due to the loss of some overtime funding in the Boston Police. Many of the resources provided by police in the plan were paid out of the overtime budget, and that is being reconsidered. Thai said all of the services by BPD in the plan are still in place, but there is an evaluation right now.

"There is no final decision made on how police will work Mass/Cass and how it will impact services there," she said. "That's an ongoing discussion."

Despite the challenges – and the setback caused by the total focus on COVID-19 in the vulner-

able populations – Thai said she believed in the plan because the people involved are dedicated and passionate. That, she said, is why she remains optimistic even when others involved may have doubts.

"Every department that is participating in this plan are all people

so dedicated to trying to resolve this issue," she said. "A lot of these first responders and City employees are so dedicated to this cause and so passionate about this work. Some people might forget that, but these are passionate people who want to make a difference."

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# Veterans pledge support for Joe Kennedy for U.S. Senate

Staff Report

On Thursday, a group of Boston area veterans pledged their support for Joe Kennedy for U.S. Senate at a press conference held at the Puerto Rican Veterans Memorial in the South End.

The speakers discussed the need for stronger leadership in the Senate and Kennedy's leadership on veterans' issues as reasons for their support.

The speakers included two-tour Iraq veteran Paul Jacques, transgender combat veteran Hanna Tripp, and Marine veteran Tony Molina, the first Puerto Rican soldier injured in Vietnam and President of the Puerto Rican Veterans Association.

"The differences in this election year are clear," said Paul Jacques.

"I just told you about Joe, so let me give you some fun facts about Ed Markey. On Ed Markey's first vote in the US Senate, on dealing with the issue of Syria, he was the only member of the senate to vote present. How bold is that leadership? To vote present for your very first vote in the U.S. Senate. It's unacceptable. Ed Markey claims to be the peace candidate when in fact he voted for the Iraq War. Let me say it again, Ed Markey voted for the Iraq War. How is it that the self-proclaimed 'peace candidate' when you vote to send your men and women into battle? I'll be clear: Ed Markey has not delivered for veterans, the same men and women he voted to send into battle."

Said Molina, "I've always been impressed with Joe because every



Tony Molina, president of the Puerto Rican Veterans Monument Association in the South End, endorsed Congressman Joe Kennedy III for U.S. Senate at the Monument on Friday.

time he comes in, he uses the Spanish language to advocate, to say to us what he is looking for, and what he is willing to do for us as Puerto Ricans, Latinos, and Americanos. I personally endorse Joe Kennedy because again as a veteran, as



Paul Jacques, Hanna Tripp, and Tony Molina pledged their support as veterans to Kennedy in the U.S. Senate race.

the first Puerto Rican wounded in Vietnam, I know that Joe Kennedy will always be present for veterans, specifically Latinos and Puerto Rican Veterans."

Added Tripp, "Joe gave me a voice at a time when our government tried to stifle it. And in doing

so he conferred me the opportunity to be a voice for others. So, it was no surprise that when I was in Washington D.C. speaking out against the ban on transgender military service, it was Joe that was speaking and standing right alongside me."

# Amid uptick in cases, Baker puts the brakes on state's reopening process

By Lauren Bennett

Gov. Charlie Baker last Friday announced that Step Two of Phase Three of the state's reopening

plan is postponed "indefinitely," after public health data showed an uptick in positive COVID-19 cases.

"We cannot say this enough—

COVID-19 is highly contagious," Baker said at his press conference on Friday, adding that some people in the state have been "a bit too relaxed."

He cited several reports of big parties at various locations across the state, as well as illegal sports camps, private boat charters, and a 300 person wedding that is currently being investigated as a cluster and will "likely result in fines."

Baker announced that new initiatives would be put in place to slow the spread of the virus, some statewide and others targeted towards specific communities that are currently experiencing an increase in cases.

"In some respects, we're entering a new phase in our battle against COVID-19," Baker said. He said that additional town data will be reported starting this Wednesday, and will be posted on a weekly basis.

"An uptick in cases and reports of people not adhering to the guidance means we cannot move forward at this time," Baker said. He said that the state's contact tracing teams have identified large pool parties, birthday parties, and other gatherings as having "contributed significantly to community spread and new COVID clusters."

He said these gatherings are "too big, too crowded," and "people are not being responsible."

New guidelines statewide include reducing outdoor gatherings, on both public and private property, from a limit of 100 people to a limit of 50 people. Indoor gatherings remain at a limit of 25 people. People must remain six feet apart from one another and face coverings are required when "more than 10 people from dif-

ferent households will be mixing," the state said.

He also said that restaurant guidance now states that alcoholic beverages can only be served for on-premises consumption if food is also served as part of the order. He said that "bars masquerading as restaurants" will not be allowed to operate.

Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders said on Friday that the state's seven day average positive test rate was about 2.1 percent, about .4 percent higher than the past couple of weeks.

On August 11, Baker said that the most recent seven day positive test rate is now 1.8 percent, but an "uptick in various communities across Massachusetts" has been seen.

He said that there are about 33 communities in the state that have more than four cases per 100,000 people (a standard for measuring cases across several states) over the past few weeks.

"These communities require specific strategies," he said. He said that "every community is different" and will require different enforcement measures, as well as additional testing, tracing, and isolation measures.

"The good news is that the vast majority of communities are experiencing low case numbers," Baker said, adding that 318 communities have low numbers of new cases over the past two weeks.

He also said that a map with

(REOPENING PROCESS, Pg. 6)

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# Owl's Nest beer garden returns to the Esplanade

By Dan Murphy

Albeit arriving later in the season than usual, a sure sign of summer returned to the Charles River Esplanade over the weekend as the Owl's Nest beer garden kicked off its third season in the park.

Everett's Night Shift Brewing is again partnering with the non-profit Esplanade Association to offer a selection of craft beer, wine and non-alcoholic beverages in a self-contained area at Storrow Memorial Embankment Park (Fiedler Field), and although this year's hours of operation are "still being tweaked," Matt Eshelman, the brewery's quality manager, said the Owl's Nest is currently open on Wednesday and Thursday from 4 to 10 p.m.; Friday and Saturday from 2 to 10 p.m.; and Sunday from noon to 8 p.m.

But the hours now hinge on staffing food trucks for the beer garden, Eshelman said, following Gov. Charlie Baker's mandate on Friday that alcoholic beverages can only be served at restaurants and other establishments where food is also prepared on site.

"We're doing our best to expand staffing food trucks at all times," he added. "It's just one more moving piece."

In keeping with social distancing and safety guidelines, the beer garden's occupancy has been

reduced by about 50 percent, Eshelman said, with six guests maximum permitted at each of the 30 tables, but unlike past years, however, no standing room is allowed.

And while there might be an opportunity to add a few additional tables before the beer garden's season wraps up at the end of October, safety is now the top priority.

"We want to go slow and be cautious, provide guests as much space as possible and make it work with the new guidelines to make sure that our staff, our customers and the community are safe," Eshelman said. "We're doing everything possible to keep people safe and healthy."

All patrons and staff will be required to wear face coverings whenever possible, and the number of on-site "porta-potties" has been reduced to six from 12 in years past as additional safety precautions.

Night Shift is also strongly encouraging guests visiting the Owl's Nest on the Esplanade, as well as its Everett brewery and two other beer gardens located on Lovejoy Joy Wharf and near Herter Park in Allston, respectively, to make advance reservations at [nightshiftbrewing.com](http://nightshiftbrewing.com) or via the Resy app.

(Per state requirements, this system will also allow Night Shift to

notify patrons if someone at one of their locations tests positive for COVID-19, Eshelman said).

Reservations will be limited to two-hour windows, Eshelman added, but parties can stay longer if they are behaving responsibly, and if space permits.

Guests will also be accommodated on a walk-up basis, space permitting, but one member of each party would be required to provide their contact information for contact tracing purposes.

"We strongly encourage reservations as opposed to walk-ups," Eshelman said. "The whole goal of this is to keep crowds to a minimum...and the Esplanade [beer garden] is such a popular location, so we want to make sure as many people can enjoy the space as possible."

The Owl's Nest drew around 100,000 patrons to the Esplanade between early May and the end of October of last year, according to some estimates, but Eshelman doesn't expect overcrowding will be a problem this year, judging by the turnout for the opening weekend, which he put at around 100 patrons each night.

Michael Nichols, executive director of the Esplanade Association, which continues to receive revenue from the beer garden's operation to enhance and improve the park in partnership with the



Patrons seen savoring the return of the Owl's Nest beer garden on the Charles River Esplanade on Saturday evening.

Department of Conservation and Recreation, warily welcomed the return of the Owl's Nest.

"We're thrilled, but cautious to have the Owl's Nest back," said Nichols, who stopped by the Esplanade beer garden on Sunday afternoon. "The tables were nicely spaced out, there was ample shade cover with the umbrellas,

and the Night Shift staff was really thoughtful about sanitizing all touch-points."

Moreover, Nichols added, "We view the Owl's Nest as an important amenity in the park, but appreciate that Night Shift has been sensitive in prioritizing public health over everything else."



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## REOPENING PROCESS (from pg. 6)

case counts for every town in the Commonwealth will be released and "will be updated on a regular basis going forward," he said. It will include a color-coded ranking system of "typical traffic light colors:" red, yellow, and green to indicate concentration of cases in a particular area.

But Baker warned residents: "regardless of where your community sits, COVID is not going away."

The Commonwealth's Stop the Spread Initiative, which includes free testing for communities that had a higher positive test rate as well as a lower overall test rate, began last month and has now expanded to 17 communities across the state. Sudders announced that the free testing for those communities will be expanded through September 12, and the

administration is "prepared" to expand the program to other communities should they need it.

"Last week, Stop the Spread communities tested 56 percent more residents than the week prior," Sudders said. "Some communities have experienced decreases in their positivity rates."

Baker said on Tuesday said that MassPort employees will "serve as ambassadors" to incoming travelers at places like Logan Airport to help them access the state's traveler form and make them aware of the travel guidelines.

Baker also announced a new COVID Enforcement and Intervention Team, which will assist in statewide enforcement and "coordinating local intervention efforts at the local level in higher risk COVID-19 communities," according to the state. "Communities

will be designated as higher risk COVID-19 communities based on public health data, including but not limited to rising trends for new cases and the percentage of positive COVID tests." Baker said on Tuesday that the team will help to provide resources in different communities as well as help towns access additional federal funds.

Some of the statewide enforcement will include road signs, PSAs, "potential restrictions or shutdowns for parks, playgrounds, businesses or other entities and locations believed to be contributing to the COVID-19 spread in higher risk COVID-19 communities," other public health support resources, including tracing, testing, and quarantining, among others.

# SELDC approves new building at 566 Columbus Ave.

By Lauren Bennett

After a very lengthy process, the South End Landmark District Commission (SELDC) approved the proposed building at 566 Columbus Ave at a special hearing on July 30.

The hearing drew in more than 100 participants to the Zoom call, and included many neighbors in support of the project, and some who still had issues or concerns about the proposed mixed use residential building.

The demolition of the existing building at the address, known as the Harriet Tubman House, was approved in 2019. The current building is owned by United South End Settlements (USES), who explained to the community that it must sell the existing building in order to continue providing programs to the community.

Developer New Boston Ventures, along with architect Jonathan Garland of J. Garland Enterprises LLC, have presented several proposals to the SELDC and a subcommittee has worked with the project proponents in hopes of honing the project into something that the community could accept.

“It has been nearly 18 months since we began with the process, and prior to that USES held a lengthy community process when they issued the RFP for this site,” said David Goldman of New Boston Ventures.

While many members of the community support this project, even after the approval, there are still outstanding concerns related to the height and massing of the building (especially on W. Springfield St.), as well as the preservation of the historical aspects of the existing building.

Goldman said that the height on W. Springfield is “tied directly” to the 4,800 square feet of first floor space that will be donated for community and nonprofit use. He said that they are “bound by the [Boston Planning and Development Agency] approval and with the City” to include that space as well as affordable artist live/work units.

“If we lose the pillar on which our ability to do them rests”—which he said is the height—then the “financial feasibility of the project itself collapses.”

Architect Jonathan Garland presented the latest proposal for the project, including proposed streetscape and public realm

improvements, in a mostly recap fashion.

“We have tried our best to respond to each comment thoughtfully,” he said of both Commissioner and public comment from past hearings.

He briefly discussed about some of the facade details, including the brick detailing, the removal of headhouses at the top level of Mass. Ave, and the corner treatment on Columbus Ave. and W. Springfield St.

On the W. Springfield facade, he explained a massing reduction that was made possible both by introducing bowfronts at the base of the building for the three story townhouse section of the building, and explaining that floors four, five, and six will step back three feet at each floor.

“We look at that as a significant improvement in terms of the mitigation,” Garland said.

The bowfronts also create additional green space, which will be heavily planted to deter people from loitering in the area, he added.

“In terms of the planting, we want to send a clear message that this does not have social or physical function,” Garland said.

Garland also said that all headhouses have been eliminated and the elevator is centrally located in the back of the building and would go all the way up to the top of the building.

For the streetscape items, Garland proposed new street trees along the perimeter of the building, as well as brick sidewalks on Mass. Ave., Columbus Ave., and W. Springfield St.

Garland also said the project would comply with the City’s Complete Streets program.

The preservation of the mural outside of the current building was also a topic of discussion, though it is outside of SELDC’s purview since it will not be placed outside in the new building. A mural commission had been formed to discuss the best way to preserve the mural, and photographer Andy Ryan said that he is tasked with photographing the mural so it can be reproduced in many forms once it is removed.

He said the mural, created by late artist Jameel Parker, has been cleaned to bring out the true colors, but in doing so, it has made the varnish reflective which poses some challenges for photography.

He said the hope is to “be able

to create a one to one representation of the mural that is as true to the original as possible,” and can be printed out on different materials as well as possibly digitized for a display inside the community space on the ground floor of the new building.

After the presentation, many members of the public weighed in on the design of the building, either during the virtual hearing or in a written letter to the Commission. The Commission let the public speak before Commissioner comments, because so many people tuned into the hearing.

Michael Kelly said he was in “strong support” of the project, as well as of the design team. He thanked the team for their work, said he appreciated the increase in affordable units, and called the project “an attribute to the community.”

Julia Johannsen, Chair of the Board of Directors of USES, said she was in support of the project as well and called the project “beautiful.” She also thanked the development team for being “extremely responsive.”

Former State Representative Byron Rushing also joined the Zoom call to speak in favor of the project as well, stating that he believes the work done by the design team to respond to community concerns was “great” and the changes are “all very appropriate.”

Several others also voiced their support, adding that they’d like to see this project move forward as soon as possible, they believe the project fits well in the neighborhood, and they appreciate the affordable units.

Others were not as supportive of the project, citing concerns about height, density, cultural significance, and more.

Resident Mike Reinders said that this is “not about liking or disliking a building,” but rather about “following standards and criteria.” Reinders has repeatedly expressed concerns about the height of the project, among other things, and he believes it does not fit within the SELDC Standards and Criteria.

Leslie Kulig agrees that the W. Springfield facade is “way too high” and “does violate the Standards and Criteria.” She added that she has been “very disappointed in the process,” as she said that as an abutter, she never received notification of hearings on the matter.

Another resident, identified as Mike P. on Zoom, said that he feels that “much less” has been asked of this developer than is asked of homeowners who come before the Commission, who do not have the same money to spend that a developer does.

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*...the work done by the design team to respond to community concerns was “great” and the changes are “all very appropriate.”*

—Byron Rushing

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“Just so it’s clear to the public,” Commissioner John Freeman said, “when a project is approved at this phase, that doesn’t mean the Commission steps away from it.” He said there is “continued involvement and continued input on the projects as they move forward.”

Preservation Planner Mary Cirbus said she received a petition with 237 signatures from residents on W. Springfield St. and other areas citing issues with the height and setback on W. Springfield St.

“We take public comment very, very seriously,” Freeman said. “We can’t do what everybody wants because it’s very different.”

Commissioner David Shepperd, who is new to the Commission and also sat on the subcommittee for this project, had many comments about the proposal, beginning with the fact that he agreed with the residents who think the massing, height, and setbacks are an issue.

He also said “he likes a lot of the things the public have commented on who are in support of the project,” including the “different depths” along the building that make it feel more like rowhouses, which he said “made it feel more like a South End building.”

He added that “I do think that overall, this will be a benefit to the community and to the neighborhood. That said, many of the things we’ve discussed in past meetings really haven’t been adjusted to match the rules that are set out for the Commission in my mind.”

He said the “biggest concern” that remains is the height on W. Springfield St., adding that the newly proposed setbacks and bowfronts are an improvement,

but are still not enough.

He added that he doesn’t think a “bookend” building, which was a term used often throughout this Landmarks process, “means that you have an entire block at a 70 foot height.”

He also said he does not believe there is enough green space, nor has the Mass. Ave. facade been discussed enough, as he feels discussion on W. Springfield was a distraction from other aspects of the project.

That being said, he said that “there is a lot of support on this project,” and believes it has “moved in the right direction.”

Commissioner Catherine Hunt cited a recent business meeting of the SELDC where the Standards and Criteria were discussed generally, but no reference to any specific project was made.

“I have been reassured that our understanding of the guidelines is correct and our project is within them,” she said, referring to what was discussed at the meeting.

Commissioner Diana Parcon made no comments about the proposal nor did she ask any questions.

Hunt moved to approve the project as submitted “with the understanding that the applicant will provide details to the Commission during design development...” Additionally, she said that all mockups will also be required to be provided to the Commission so they can view materials being used, and a signage plan will need to be viewed eventually as well. Additionally, nothing on the roof should be visible from a public way as promised by the design team.

Commissioner Shepperd voted against the motion, but Parcon, Hunt, and Freeman voted in favor, so the motion passed.

A separate motion was made to approve the sidewalk and streetscape modifications, which produced the same votes.

“This starts the next phase of the process,” Freeman said. “We review the details, materials; everything that may change. You have a duty to come back to the Commission,” he told the applicants.

Garland expressed his “deep gratitude” to the Commissioners for their input on the project. He called the project a “team effort” and said there is “still some way to go,” but said he is appreciative of the comments and feedback from Commissioners and the public.

# BPDA to Developers: We are taking Diversity and Inclusion seriously

By Seth Daniel

The Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) is sending a message this month to the development community and to residents that it plans to take a serious approach to Diversity & Inclusion when evaluating proposals for City-owned parcels – and they have taken action on that warning already.

On Thursday, the BPDA Board will be set to re-issue an RFP for 142 Shawmut St. in the South End and re-start the process to create a new park space in the New

York Streets area – all because the responding developer did not identify any specific diversity and inclusion plans for minority or women-owned businesses.

That RFP will join two others in Charlestown that were stopped this year, and will also be likely re-issued by the Board on Thursday in what is a message to developers across the City that the 2018 order by Mayor Martin Walsh carries heavy weight.

The BPDA's Devin Quirk and Project Manager Reay Pannesi said that the RFP processes that began earlier this year will need to have

more details and a specific plan. The responder, The Druker Company that owns an adjacent undeveloped parcel, put in a proposal to create a park on the lot. The proposal didn't specifically commit to working with any women or minority owned businesses, but was willing to do so.

"We wanted to see a lot more detail and these RFPs fell into this category," said Quirk. "They didn't get into a lot of detail we wanted to see...It's not that the proposal was so bad, but that it lacked specifics. It had a good value statement, but that's not

enough."

He and Pannesi said the willingness was there, and value statements were included, but that no longer is enough.

"They had great value statements on it, but didn't show details," said Quirk. "This is a good time to tell the development community in Boston Diversity & Inclusion is very important and we want to see results. Value statements aren't enough and we want detailed plans about outreach to women and minority businesses... You have to now actually show some results. The community

needs to know we're advocating for them and the development community needs to know we're very serious about this."

Pannesi said they are happy to be moving forward on all three, and they expect the Board to approve the RFPs. They also expect those that responded originally to once again submit responses, but the hope is there will be more thought given to Diversity & Inclusion on these publicly-owned lands.

Quirk said moving forward that Diversity & Inclusion plans would account for 25 percent of the evaluation of any sale of BPDA land.

# City Council holds hearing on crowd control agents

By Lauren Bennett

The City Council Committee on Government Operations held a hearing on August 10 regarding an ordinance that restricts the use of chemical crowd control agents and kinetic impact projectiles.

Sponsored by Councilors Ricardo Arroyo and Andrea Campbell, the purpose of the hearing was to learn more about these items and how they affect people, as well as learn about the process used by the Boston Police Department (BPD) and have a discussion with them about restricting their use.

Arroyo said that chemical crowd control agents are "strictly prohibited in warfare. Tear gas would actually be illegal if used on an enemy combatant but perfectly legal to use on our constituencies."

Arroyo made it clear early on in the hearing that "this isn't an outright ban." Though several councilors stated their wish for the items to be completely banned, they acknowledged that restricting them is a good first step. The ordinance also includes a two minute warning that must be given to the crowd before these devices are deployed, to give people a chance to leave the area.

"We know that these things are dangerous," Arroyo said, citing a case in 2004 when a woman was killed in Boston by a rubber bullet after the Red Sox won the World Series.

"People exercising their lawful first amendment rights shouldn't be met with destructive or deadly weapons," Councilor Campbell said. "These are often called non-lethal. Prolonged use can cause blindness, or in severe cases, death."

Councilor Liz Braedon said she grew up in Northern Ireland "where they invented the rubber bullet. It's very personal to me. I understand the need for effective

ways to try and manage street protests that are turning violent and getting out of control," she said, however "I do feel these rubber bullets are very dangerous. I would like to see clear protocols for when they should be used."

Dr. Rohini Haar, an adjunct professor at University of California Berkeley and a part time ER physician, has been studying the effects of chemical crowd control agents and kinetic impact projectiles on people.

She explained some findings of a "long, systematic review we did between 1990 and 2015." She explained that there are various types of rubber bullets; some with a plastic base and hard foam on top that are much larger than a regular bullet, and others like foam batons, bean bag rounds, and scatter shot bullets, which include "multiple balls inside a single canister."

She said that there is a "range of severe injuries caused by kinetic impact projectiles," including to the skin, bones, muscles, limbs, eyes, lungs, head, neck, and belly.

She said the terms "non-lethal" or "less than lethal" should be retired, as "these are very much lethal." There have been instances where the bullets have fractured people's skulls, causing brain damage to the point where a person can no longer be functional.

Tear gas can cause chemical burns and allergic reactions, and the can can cause explosive burns, as well as severe injuries to the eye. Haar said that over 50 deaths from tear gas were included as part of the research.

"We conclude that tear gas is indiscriminate and unnecessary," she said.

Boston Police Superintendent William Ridge said he has been a police officer since 1983, and said he has been to "hundreds and hundreds" of demonstrations, at some

of which force was used.

He said the only time they have ever used tear gas was at the protest on May 31 of this year.

"It was not a peaceful demonstration; police officers were being attacked," he said. "We need tools to be able to disperse and disrupt people who are attacking us."

He said that while the job of the police "is always to protect everybody's first amendment right to peacefully protest, our officers were attacked with CS gas and pepper spray as well as a number of other projectiles that were coming down towards us."

He said that permission to use things like rubber bullets and tear gas "is given strictly at the highest levels," and he doesn't want to restrict the use of those options.

"It's not like we're out there indiscriminately using this stuff," he said.

Deputy Superintendent Kevin McGoldrick agreed, saying he does not want to "risk letting a riot run un abated or not controlled."

He added that "no one is diminishing the fact that there is risk when you use impact weapons like that but it's a balance of risk. The night of May 31 would have been quite calamitous if we didn't take action. The vast majority of protestors there that evening were peaceful protestors."

He also said he was concerned about the two minute warning, as the ordinance does not allow for an officer to react during a sudden attack and there are police concerns about having to wait two minutes while being actively attacked, they said.

"The proposed ordinance does not go far enough," said Rahsaan Hall of the American Civil Liberties Union Massachusetts, adding that he would like to see the councilors "enforce an outright ban."

Superintendent Ridge said that these items are only used during

riots, and never during peaceful demonstrations. "In the City of Boston we are not using those unless we have a riot situation," he said.

He added that BPD has sponge rounds in its inventory, but they can only be deployed by specially trained officers.

"Once it escalates into a riot and we have to use those devices that we have, then I don't see the need to start putting restrictions on it," he said.

Ridge said that "in all circumstances, we can't say that we're able to give a warning. We can't say 'we'll let you attack us for two minutes.'"

He said that currently, "if somebody's under direct attack, they can use OC spray." In order to use CS gas, the "police commissioner or his designee" would have to clear it first.

McGoldrick said that there would be "unhappiness at the police response if we don't control violence for two minutes while we wait. It presents challenges that people may find unacceptable."

Councilor Arroyo responded by saying that "the reality is if somebody threw a stick of dynamite, [there would be] no ability to leave because the response is immediate. That is not acceptable either."

He reiterated that this is not a ban of these devices; "we're not taking the tools away from BPD. The question is about how it's implemented and used."

A few members of the community shared their experiences of being pepper sprayed by BPD officers and described what they saw from the BPD at protests in May, which one said also included the use of batons "to move attendees because one of them dropped their bike."

Campbell said the Council "talked for a long period of time before putting this ordinance for-

ward. We wanted to have a robust conversation," and added that she is "mindful of the fact that an absolute ban probably wouldn't go anywhere."

She said that she was "still confused" about the practices and protocols for the use of these devices in the city, and she believes the ordinance would codify them and make it clear to the public what the rules around them are.

"I do not think this should be a long, drawn out conversation in terms of passing this ordinance," she said. "If the two minutes is too long, what is reasonable?" She said it would be difficult to make changes to the ordinance if the police department does not provide specific information about what would work for them.

"It's about striking a balance," Councilor Michael Flaherty said. "The [two minute] warning is in the best interest of public safety." He said that if a warning is issued, it should be for a "short period of time" to give people a chance to leave.

Councilor and Chair of the Committee on Government Operations Lydia Edwards agreed with the need for a balance, and said that issuing a warning before deploying these devices "I think is the most reasonable and low hanging fruit."

She said she "hopes the police will agree to some kind of warning," and added that it might even help the police weed out who is not at protests to be peaceful, as those who are would most likely leave after the warning was issued. She said that "we have, in the majority of cases, good police work," but she still believes "codified protocols should be put in place."

The discussion on this matter is not over. "This conversation will continue in a working session," Edwards said.

## ATTENTION TO DETAIL

BY PENNY CHERUBINO

### THIS WEEK'S ANSWER



The window in the last clue is on 1 Raleigh Street designed by Little and Browne and built in 1893. The design of this house was important to architect Arthur Little since he would look out on it from the home he designed for himself across the street at 2 Raleigh Street.

The next clue will be found in the South End.

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

### THIS WEEK'S CLUE



# Eight environmental activists arrested after hanging banner over Citgo sign

By Dan Murphy

Eight members of an environmental group were arrested and charged with trespassing and disturbing the peace Monday after they raised a banner declaring "Climate Change Now" above the iconic Citgo sign in Kenmore Square.

According to Boston Police, officers responded at about 8:03 p.m. to a radio call to investigate the premises at 660 Beacon St. and proceeded to the roof, where the sign is affixed to the building. Police had received information that a group of individuals entered a construction site at that address, which is clearly labeled as an active construction site and surrounded by a wire fence. Upon arrival, however, officers observed that the group had removed the banner after it covered the sign for about 20 minutes.

The incident took place as the Red Sox were facing off against the Tampa Bay Rays at Fenway Park.

Those arrested were reportedly

members of the Extinction Rebellion Boston – an offshoot of an environmental group that got its start in the United Kingdom – and were identified by Boston Police as James Comiskey, 30, of Roxbury; Jason Rudokas, 43, of Arlington; Allen McGonagill, 30, of Somerville; Seward Ogden, 60, of Putnam, Vt.; Thomas Davis, 35, of Cambridge; Alexander Chambers, 21, of Boylston; William Livernois, 24, of Newnan, Ga., and Johannes Vulto, 60, of Brookline.

A 57-year-old female from Putney, Vt., and a 56-year-old female from Brooklyn, N.Y., were also summoned to court on charges of trespassing and disturbing the peace, according to Boston Police, and all parties were arraigned Tuesday in Roxbury District Court.

"The First Amendment right to speak and protest freely is one that will be protected in Suffolk County, but the safety of the public and our first responders will not be sacrificed in the process," District Attorney Rachael Rollins said in a statement. "No right is absolute.

Each of these individuals willingly put themselves at great risk by climbing up a structure to execute their plan, and then required numerous members of the Boston Police Department and Boston Fire Department to respond and assist them back to the ground safely. While the charges these individuals face are included on my List of 15 [crimes she has pledged not to prosecute] that are, absent other factors, prioritized for pre-arraignment diversion or declination, my Office never takes these actions without thoughtful consideration of all of the facts present in each case. I have instructed my prosecutors to take additional time to review all of the facts of this incident, all of the risks it created, and the costs that the City of Boston incurred as a result. Once I have that information we will determine next steps in court."

A representative for Related Beal, the Boston-based firm that is redeveloping the building at 660 Beacon St. into a seven-story, mixed-use office complex, declined to comment on the matter.

## Real Estate Transfers

BUYER 1	SELLER 1	ADDRESS	PRICE
<b>BACK BAY</b>			
Lapointe, Ellen L	Madden, Dennis	311 Commonwealth Ave #61	\$1,456,000
<b>BEACON HILL</b>			
Sadoski, Corinne E	Rosenberg, Laura M	21 Beacon St #4R	\$575,000
Dileo, Harry C	Kennedy, William	83 Phillips St #1B	\$1,420,000
Taddei, Sarah C	Gillis, John U	6 Whittier Pl #11A	\$536,500
<b>BAY VILLAGE/SOUTH END/KENMORE</b>			
Chen, Abigail E	Levy, Nicole L	83 Dartmouth St #2	\$1,355,000
So, Steven H	Jeannette Kelly LT	9-11 Harcourt St #401	\$1,165,000
Corey, Christopher J	Garrison, Richard C	7 Warren Ave #1	\$1,775,000
Lacamera, Devyn F	Rasmusson, Ann M	36 Bradford St #2	\$595,000
Merrill, Andrea L	Wolvek, Joseph	700 Harrison Ave #315	\$1,090,000
Wilson, Jennifer J	Coutier, Jean P	21 Milford St #3	\$1,639,000
535 Newbury RT	Josephine M Roche FT	535 Newbury St	\$1,400,000
Jonnalagadda, Ravishankar	Jonnalagadda, Gourilakshmi	Babcock, Reginald 121 Portland St #404	\$640,000
Kljat, Angelina	Wan, Siu Y	64 Queensberry St #222	\$520,000
Oprisan, Andrei	Plaisted, Alex	1180-1200 Washington St #315	\$1,499,000
Brennan, Kylie	Bommart, Karen S	6 Wellington St #1	\$689,000
<b>WATERFRONT/DOWNTOWN</b>			
Coudray, Christophe	Beyen, Gil	121-123 Beach St #501	\$1,225,000
Rodenstein, Douglas I	Freer, Kelly L	406-418 Commercial St #1	\$800,000

# SELDC hears plans for Crite Park under advisory review; makes small recommendations

By Lauren Bennett

A new vision for Crite Park was presented for Advisory Review at the South End Landmark District Commission hearing on August 4. Commissioners seemed overall pleased with the proposal, providing fairly minor suggestions for the project team to consider before coming back for a design review that would result in a vote.

Cheryl Dickinson, President of the Friends of Crite Park, provided a brief overview of the existing conditions at the park, which include six trees, “four of which” she said are no longer alive, and “two of which have not been pruned since 1986.”

She said that the area is busy and a lot of traffic comes through. “No matter what angle you view the park from, it’s not very attractive,” she said.

“One of our goals with Crite Park is to beautify the space into an open, safe, and tranquil environment,” she said, which includes expanding the park site by 2.5 times to create more area for community events.

The park is named for Allan Crite, an artist who was “a cultural and South End icon,” according to Dickinson.

Dickinson proposed three different pergolas for the park, which would serve the purposes of providing shade, which the public requested, as well as shield the

seating areas below them from droppings from the Linden trees above.

A survey distributed to neighbors indicated that South End residents wanted to better honor Allan Crite with a redesign of a park, but also to create a tranquil “urban oasis,” she said.

The proposed plan for the park gives it an “outdoor living room feel,” with seating areas in small alcoves: three on the Columbus Ave. side and three on the Appleton St. side, Dickinson said. She explained that each area has a small love seat with single chairs, but all seating is small enough so that someone would not be able to comfortably lie down. Tables are also part of the design, including some game tables.

Plantings are proposed for around the alcoves to create a sense of some privacy but still leaves enough room for larger amounts of people to gather in the park for events.

The proposal also includes the installation of new trees and a lighting design element, and a garden with white flowers and lavender accents.

Concrete was proposed for a portion of the ground, and some of Crite’s artwork was proposed to be reproduced and included at the base of the pergolas, for a total of six panels.

A low fencing on the interior

curb was proposed to protect the plantings, which Commissioner Amodeo felt was appropriate.

Overall, the Commissioners seemed to be in favor of this proposal, making several minor suggestions for Dickinson to consider.

One was including brick on the ground in place of the concrete, as Amodeo said that is allowed by the ADA and the City of Boston Commission for Persons with Disabilities as long as certain criteria are followed to ensure the brick will remain a flat surface.

“When you have a brick context, brick would be preferred,” Amodeo said. “I don’t think you’re required to put concrete there.”

Dickinson said the landscape architect for the project “will be happy to hear that.”

Commissioner Catherine Hunt said that “it seems like there’s not enough park, especially with the tables in that open area.”

Amodeo agreed that the proposed location of the game tables might not be the best one, as it would get in the way of the open space.

Dickinson responded by saying that there are a number of events in the works, though she couldn’t share details as “a lot of them are still in the planning spaces.” But the overall goal of the redesign is to make the area “an active community park.” She also added that the renderings might be making

the space look larger than it will actually be.

“Allan Crite’s paintings have so much going on in them,” Commissioner John Freeman commented. “all sorts of curves and open spaces. This seems to have an imposed grid on it. It feels like I wish it was a little more loose or something.”

Amodeo said that “in a post-COVID world, so many activities are going to be brought outside that are not outside now. Having that space is important. I totally support your wanting to make this improvement and I think you’re a long way towards an approvable plan. I would say we would probably be picking at details rather than concepts here.”

Amodeo said that one of his biggest issues is the pergolas, which he said he is “on the fence” about because he likes the design on the top, but questioned whether they’re “sympathetic enough with the district.” He said that he feels the SELDC Standards and Criteria “didn’t anticipate enough the evolution the outdoor spaces in the district would go through.”

Dickinson said they originally looked at wooden pergolas, but decided that the upkeep would be too much, so they chose a powder coated aluminum instead.

“I just think it needs more articulation in its massing,” Amodeo said of the pergolas. “The framework needs to be less minimal.”

He also said he feels the artwork proposed for the side walls of the pergolas would block views into the park, “and that concerns me. Eyes from the street into the park will be important for maintaining a sense of safety.”

He also said the panels might be too busy. “As much as I love art, that’s a lot of art,” he said. He also called the artwork “signs” since it is a replica of an original, and not the original artwork itself. He likened the panels on the pergola to signage at a bus shelter, and urged Dickinson to rethink how to include Crite’s artwork without including so many panels.

Commissioner David Sheperd said he thinks the design of the park is “nice,” but added that he has more of a concern with the pergolas than Amodeo does.

Amodeo said that shade structures like the pergolas do already exist in some community gardens in the South End, such as on Worcester St. in the community garden there.

Since this was just an advisory review, no vote was taken by the Commission, but Dickinson said that she and the design team will reconsider the design of the pergolas, come up with another way to honor Crite’s artwork, and rethink the concrete to include more brick before coming back to the Commission with a revised plan for a vote.

## For the Record

**CORONAVIRUS UPDATE:** Due to public health concerns, the hearings that normally would be held on a week have been postponed or canceled due to the guidance of Mayor Martin Walsh and the order of Gov. Charlie Baker. Some meetings, however, have been moved to an online or teleconference format under the emergency order on the Open Meeting Law issued by Gov. Baker.

**From the Aug. 13 Emergency License Board meeting, noon, online:**

Emergency Virtual Informational Hearing Beer Gardens + Large Extensions

Hearing regarding licensees operating on special one-day licenses and licensees with temporary extensions with a significant capacity. You are hereby notified that the Licensing Board for the City of the Boston will conduct a virtual emergency informational hearing regarding all establishments operating on a series of Special One-Day Licenses (commonly referred to as

beer gardens) and those operating on a temporary extension with a significant capacity on August 13, at noon.

**From the Aug. 14 Emergency License Board meeting, 1 p.m., online:**

Emergency Virtual Hearing - You are hereby notified that the Licensing Board for the City of the Boston will conduct a virtual emergency informational hearing regarding all establishments with a Club License, Veteran’s License, or Temporary C.V. License on August 14, 2020, at 1 p.m. The Emergency Informational Hearing is being held to address the numerous complaints received by the Board and the Inspection Services Department regarding the operations of Licensees.

**From the Aug. 17, 10:30 a.m., COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS WORKING SESSION:** An ordinance to provide for the safe disposal of sharps through the establishment of a Product Stewardship Program.

**From the Aug. 18, 10 a.m., COMMITTEE ON HOUSING**

**AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT HEARING:** Support for tenants facing eviction and displacement and the creation of temporary rental assistance to support residents impacted by COVID-19.

**From the Aug. 19 Community Meeting for proposed Back Bay Cannabis establishment:** Compassionate Organics, LLC (“Compassionate Organics”) will hold a virtual community outreach meeting on August 19, at 6 p.m. to discuss the proposed siting of a Cannabis Establishment at 331A-333 Newbury Street, Boston.

**From the Aug. 20, 1 p.m., COMMITTEE ON PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION HEARING:** Order for a hearing regarding implementing changes for safe streets during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

This matter is sponsored by Councilor Michelle Wu and Councilor Liz Breadon and was referred to the Committee on Planning, Development and Transportation on April 29.

**BOSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT UPDATE ON PERMITS**

Due to the harsh economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on businesses, the Boston Fire Department is extending the expiration date on all existing Place of Assembly and Annual Permits from June 30, 2020 to September 30, 2020. Any issued Place of Assembly Permit or Annual Permit stating an expiration date of June 30, 2020 will now automatically be valid in the City of Boston until September 30, 2020. The invoices for renewal will be mailed out in mid-August, and the permitting cycle for both Place of Assembly and Annual Permits will become October 1 to September 30 of the following year from this point forward.

**REPORTING WORKPLACE SAFETY CONCERNS**

•Workers in any size organization have options if they feel they are being pressured into an unsafe situation. Attorney General Maura Healey has created resources for workers to report safety concerns

during reopening. They include an online form at the [Attorney General’s website](#) and a dedicated Fair Labor hotline at 617-727-3465. People can also find those resources by calling 311.

**•HOW TO REPORT A PROBLEM PROPERTY**

Since taking office in 2014, Mayor Walsh has made fixing quality of life issues a priority in his administration. From investing in Public Works to making sure community policing is a staple in every neighborhood, we are making sure every neighborhood is clean, safe and a great place to live and work in. Unfortunately some properties in Boston need more help than others, and that’s why we are here. If you know of a property that fits one of the following criteria: multiple calls to 911, one that’s blighted or just a general concern, we encourage you to reach out to your neighborhood liaison.



**LUXURY LIVING IN SOUTH END**

**201 W BROOKLINE STREET #402**  
**3 BEDS | 3.5 BATHS | 3,804 SQFT**  
**\$7,200,000**



**17 LOUISBURG SQUARE**  
**5 BEDS | 3F 2H BATHS | 7,610 SQFT**  
**\$18,500,000**



**1 FRANKLIN STREET #3605**  
**2 BEDS | 2.5 BATHS | 1,609 SQFT**  
**\$3,350,000**



**18 LONGMEADOW DRIVE**  
**8 BEDS | 10F 3H BATHS | 15,400 SQFT**  
**\$6,500,000**



**80 COMMONWEALTH AVE #PH**  
**4 BEDS | 3F 2H BATHS | 3,560 SQFT**  
**\$6,250,000**

