

THE BOSTON SUN

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY

SERVING BACK BAY - SOUTH END - FENWAY - KENMORE

McKinley School Garden Coordinator ready to grow in his job

By Seth Daniel

When Jay Vilar looked at the path of his life in a high-stakes corporate advertising job, he didn't find the great happiness he had hoped for.

However, when he put his hands in the soil and grew things in his garden – harkening back to memories of his grandmother's garden – it was there he felt at home.

So it was some years ago he traded his corporate job for a job in urban agriculture, and at the end of March, he began plow-

ing the soil in the South End as the new director of the McKinley Garden in the heart of the Ellis South End neighborhood. An off-shoot of the McKinley South End School and the Haley House, the garden is a learning experience for the students and a practical growing patch to provide some food and herbs for the soup kitchen next door at Haley House.

"I transitioned from a corporate advertising career," he said, while sitting on one of the

(MCKINLEY GARDENS Pg. 6)

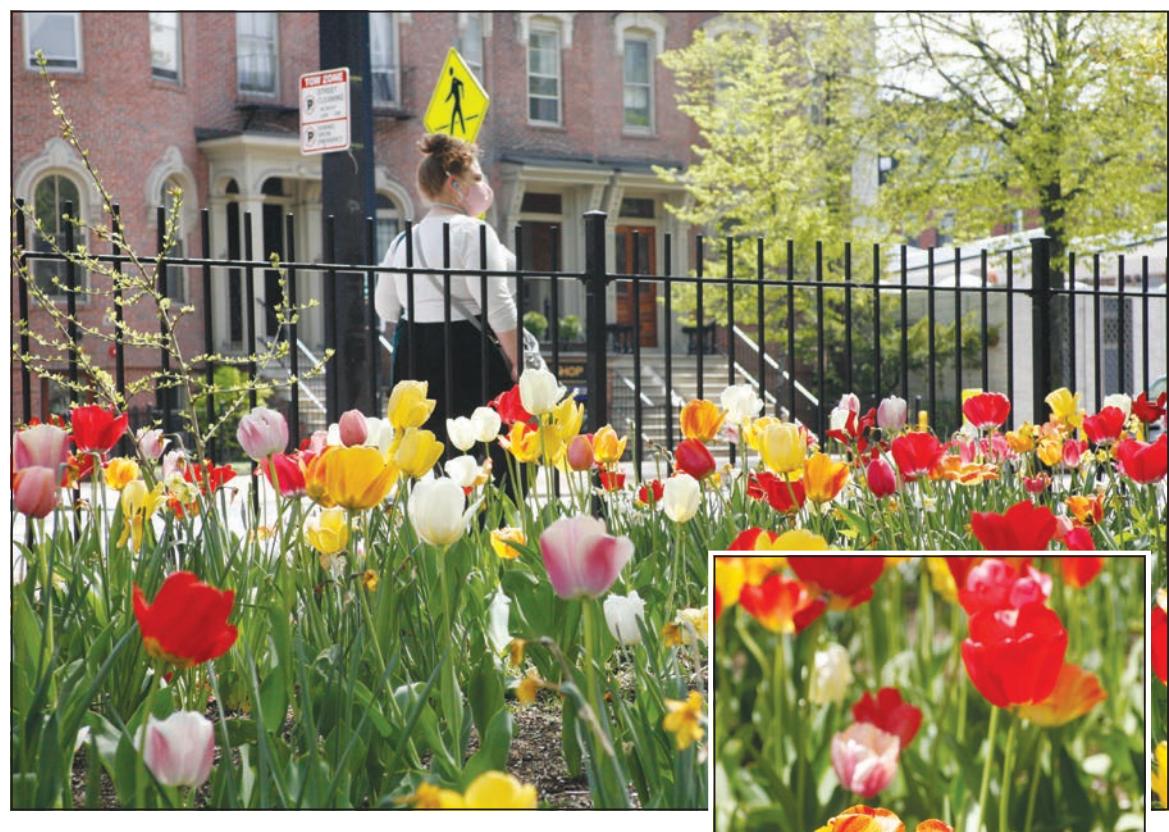
ST. BOTOLPH NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION CLEANS UP



PHOTO BY SETH DANIEL

The St. Botolph Neighborhood Association gathered with friends and neighbors to give their streets a cleaning as part of the Love Your Block initiative on May 1. Here, Kathy Pasqualini cleans the curb on Saturday on St. Botolph Street.

APRIL SHOWERS BRING MAY FLOWERS TO LIBRARY PARK



It was a sea of colorful tulips in Library Park in the South End this week on Monday. As part of the renovations, Library Park was outfitted with thousands of bulbs that largely went unnoticed last year during the height of the pandemic surge. This year, there have been more than a few additional eyes enjoying the colorful show put on by Mother Nature.



Byron Rushing receives Old South Church's Open Door Award for lifelong work on racial justice

By Dan Murphy

Former State Rep. Byron Rushing received the Open Door Award from Old South Church for his lifelong work on racial justice on Tuesday, May 4, and the ceremony will be rebroadcast on Sunday, May 9, during Phillis Wheatley Sunday, the church's annual celebration of the first

published African American poetess.

Active in the civil rights movement from an early age, Rushing worked for the Congress of Racial Equity (CORE) and the Northern Student Movement before becoming President of Boston's Museum of African American History.

Rushing went on to serve 36

years in the Massachusetts State House representing Roxbury, the South End, Back Bay and Fenway. In this role, he helped pass the landmark law to ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, championed marriage equality, led Massachusetts' fight against apartheid in

(RUSHING Pg. 6)

Two mayoral hopefuls on hand for virtual EBNA meeting

By Dan Murphy

Two mayoral candidates – John Barros and City Councilor at-Large Annissa Essaibi-George – were on hand for the May 4 virtual meeting of the East Berkeley Neighborhood Association.

Barros, who previously served as the city's Chief of Economic Development, grew up in Rox-

bury and Dorchester as the son of immigrants from the Islands of Cabo Verde in West Africa and now lives in Dorchester, in the neighborhood where he grew up, with his wife and four children.

His first foray into political activism came when at about age 15, said Barros, when he participated in a neighborhood cleanup

organized by the Dudley Street Initiative, a community-run nonprofit he would later lead as executive director.

In 2014, Barros established the city's new Economic Development Cabinet and served as a member of former Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh's administra-

(EBNA Pg. 4)

EDITORIAL

THE BIDEN DEAL IS LONG OVERDUE

The ambitious proposal set forth by President Joe Biden last week in his speech to a joint session of Congress has elicited the usual negative response from the usual suspects.

However, those who oppose Biden's \$2 trillion plan to invest in America and its people display a total ignorance of history, specifically, the New Deal.

Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal policies raised the wrath of Republicans who, similar to Republicans today, claimed that the New Deal would cost too much and that it was tantamount to socialism.

But the reality of what the New Deal achieved dramatically transformed American life in countless ways and launched America onto its trajectory to becoming the greatest nation on earth. Among the highlights of the New Deal were:

- The New Deal lifted millions of Americans out of poverty, especially older Americans via Social Security;
- The New Deal gave power to labor unions, thereby leveling the playing field with corporate America and creating the great American Middle Class;
- The New Deal enacted necessary government regulation that reined-in the excesses of Wall St. and the banks that had brought the Great Depression; and
- The New Deal included much-needed investment in our infrastructure, including countless projects that still stand today in communities across the country.

The obvious benefits to the nation of the New Deal encouraged policy-makers to enact other programs of investment in America over the next to 40 more years under Democrats and Republicans alike, including the GI Bill (Truman), the national highway system (Eisenhower), Medicare (Johnson), and the Environmental Protection Agency (Nixon).

During this time frame, corporations paid their fair share of taxes, individual tax rates were much higher, and income-inequality was non-existent (by today's standards). America was the unquestioned leader of the world.

Today however, thanks to the shortsighted policies of the past 40 years (beginning with Reagan and abetted by Democrats) that have been highlighted by corporate welfare, excessive military spending, ever-increasing wealth and income inequality, and underinvestment in our people and our infrastructure, America has become the equivalent of a Third World country in many respects.

In short, America has gone from first to worst.

President Joe Biden's speech laid out a path to restore America to our former greatness.

To those who say that we cannot afford the Biden Deal, our response is simple: We can't afford not to.

THE BOSTON SUN

PRESIDENT/EDITOR: STEPHEN QUIGLEY
MARKETING DIRECTOR: DEBRA DiGREGORIO
 (DEB@THEBOSTONSUN.COM)
ART DIRECTORS: KANE DiMASSO-SCOTT, SCOTT YATES
REPORTERS: SETH DANIEL, SETH@REVEREJOURNAL.COM
 LAUREN BENNETT, LAUREN@THEBOSTONSUN.COM

GUEST OP-ED

Customer Service?

By Alison Barnet, Special to the Sun

"I can't help you with that, miss. I can't help you with that, miss." And indeed he didn't. Why did I bother calling?

Customer service isn't what it used to be. As one friend says, "It's nothing." It doesn't exist anymore. I call it customer dis-service.

My least favorite is the "customer service" that is not operated by a human being. A recording asks you to tell it what you want and then doesn't understand. I called a company about a book and couldn't make my request clear no matter how many times I tried. Suddenly, the automatic voice told me she was transferring me to the pharmacy—completely unrelated to my request.

I'm always unhappy to be confronted with a computerized list of options, none of which match my situation. So I have begun to hate making calls to companies or institutions where I'm likely to get someone who can't help me, someone who doesn't know,

or someone I can't understand. Adding insult to injury, I sometimes get cut off as soon as a human being answers and have to dial the number again.

A lot of times, especially since the pandemic, it's often hard to make out what representatives on the other end of the phone are saying. Maybe they're wearing masks, have foreign accents, or have no intention of helping. But crystal clear are repetitive messages asking me to hold for the next operator or telling me that my call may be recorded for quality assurance. What quality? Are they recording my frenzied yelling?

I called a bank one day and was put on hold for half an hour, subjected to the same line over and over: "Your call will be taken in the order it was received. "Or-order"?

By far the worst is being put on hold at my hospital and subjected to cacophony, horrible music—is it music?—loud and abrasive—BLAW BLAW BLAW YACK YACK YACK—in my ear.

I have to hold the phone so far away, I don't hear when a human voice returns. I have promised myself that I will call hospital higher-ups and complain about it but the prospect—like all other such calls these days—isn't pleasant. One of the hospital's recorded announcements informs me that a certain service has changed, so "Hang up now." The voice is authoritative, and the first time I heard it, I *did* hang up. Later I realized it was only one in an on-going list of services.

There are situations in which customer representatives are sociable. A friend of mine contacted Google to find out how to return a package. A man's number popped up. A company representative? He was nothing if not very pleasant as he asked for her credit card number and personal information. She finally realized he was trying to defraud her when he told her to go to CVS and buy him a \$200 gift card.

What will the future bring? I hope "customer disservice" isn't the "new normal."

BBAC subcommittee recommends approval to full commission for 149 Newbury St. building proposal

By Lauren Bennett

A subcommittee of the Back Bay Architectural Commission (BBAC) met virtually on May 5 to continue discussion of the proposed five story building on the lot at 149 Newbury St.

Architect Haril Pandya said that at previous meetings, the design team "received a lot of really great comments" that it has tried to incorporate into the latest iteration of the design.

Pandya spoke about different aspects of the design of the building that had come up at the last subcommittee meeting, including the color of the brick for the facade, the metal tones, the office entrance, lighting, the penthouse, and the location for the Blue-Bikes station.

For the brick facade, he said that the "intent is to be within the family of reds and brick that is familiar to the street as well as the neighborhood," and that the tones of bronze should be darker as well to match the surround-

ings. He said that the goal is to "create articulation with brick detailing" as well as "creating different shadow lines."

Three of the proposed five stories of this building will be office space, with the bottom two dedicated to retail. Pandya talked about the office entrance on Dartmouth St., saying that the proposed canopy could be pulled back, and "warm, welcoming wood tones" could be introduced on the sides of the entrance, which had not been previously proposed.

Pandya then spoke about the cornice, which has been "simplified...to be almost like a coping detail" and is more flat than previously proposed. He also showed both light and dark options for the mechanical penthouse, with many of the commissioners saying they preferred the dark option, as they felt it better blended in with the architecture of the building.

The Commissioners and the team then spoke for a while about the placement of the Blue-

Bikes station, as there are several potential options, both on the sidewalk and on the street near the building.

Chris Johns, a member of the team, said that they are still working out where the best location for the BlueBikes station would be. There is an existing station further down on Dartmouth St., but he said that "the idea of putting them on Newbury St. might make some sense," or even potentially splitting the bikes up and having them in several different locations on the street.

Tom High from backbayhouses.org said that "putting [the bikes] on the sidewalk next to another building I think creates some visual problems as well as potentially some safety problems." He said that moving them to Dartmouth St. could work, so long as they are "not in front of the building."

Commissioner Jerome CooperKing said that he likes the

FOPG celebrate 50th anniversary with virtual retrospective

By Dan Murphy

The Friends of the Public Garden (FOPG) celebrated its Golden Anniversary with a virtual fundraising program called "50 Years of Friends: Moments, Memories & Milestones" on Friday, April 30.

Hosted by WCVB-TV's Rhonda Richardson (who has also emceed the Friends' "Duckling Day" for more than a decade), the retrospective featured Friends president Liz Vizza, Board Chair Leslie Adam and Friends President Emeritus Henry Lee, among others, looking back on highlights from the history of the nonprofit that works in partnership with the Boston Parks Department to renew, care and advocate for the Public Garden, the Commonwealth Avenue Mall and the Boston Common.

The Friends became one of the

first advocacy group of its kind upon its inception in 1970, when a group of concerned residents, led by Lee, first convened to address the deteriorating conditions in the Public Garden. They soon extended their stewardship to caring for the Public Garden and the Commonwealth Avenue Mall as well.

Vizza recounted some of the Friends group's most noteworthy accomplishments, including restoring the 19th-century Brewer Fountain on the Boston Common and returning it to operational use in partnership with the city about a decade ago, as well as the ongoing restoration of the Robert Gould Shaw and the 54th Regiment Memorial on the Common now underway through a partnership between the Friends and the city, the National Park Service and the Museum of Afri-

can American History.

Aptly, the Friends first major fundraising effort in 1981, added Vizza, raised \$200,000 for the restoration of the Shaw 54th Memorial.

Last year, the group also entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Boston Parks Department, said Vizza, that strengthens and formalizes their partnership and shared commitment to the three parks for the next 50 years.

Besides 1,700 trees, the Friends also cares for the 42 pieces of public art in all three parks, said Adam, including the iconic "Make Way for Ducklings" sculpture in the Public Garden, and the long-dormant George Robert White Memorial, locally known as "The Angel," on the Public Garden, which the group has helped bring back to life.

An important goal for the

Friends group now is to make the three parks feel "inclusive and welcoming to all," said Vizza, through programming like the annual "Making History on the Common" – an interactive field trip that teaches local students about the history of the park – along with ongoing programming being sponsored in conjunction with the Shaw 54th Memorial restoration.

The group is also now working with the city on the nearly completed Boston Common Master Plan, which, said Vizza, aims to optimally balance the park's use and maintenance.

The Friends, meanwhile, is marking its milestone anniversary with what Vizza describes as "three transformative projects," including activating the Arlington Street entrance to the Public Garden by making the fountains depicting children on either side of the entry operational for the

first time in decades, as well as adding new benches and plantings to the site; illuminating all the statues along the Commonwealth Avenue Mall; and bringing a temporary, interactive art exhibit called "What Do We Have in Common?" to the Boston Common this fall.

Secretary of Labor Martin J. Walsh (who, along with Lorrie Higgins served as event co-chairs) offered opening remarks and congratulated the Friends on their many accomplishments to date at the onset of the virtual event.

While "50 Years of Friends: Moments, Memories & Milestones" proved to be lucrative for the group, the Friends is still accepting donations in support of the three city parks. Visit <https://friendsofthepublicgarden.org/50th/> for more information.

BPS exploring the idea of offering virtual school for the 2021-2022 school year

By Seth Daniel

The Boston Public Schools (BPS) has sent out a survey to parents this week to gauge whether there is interest in creating a Virtual School program that would continue remote learning options through next school year.

The letter went out in the last few days and contained a survey for those that might be interested, an exploratory approach that would be undertaken if there is sufficient interest, the letter said.

Boston Public Schools is exploring the possibility of

launching a fully virtual school for SY21-22," read the letter. "A virtual school is a school that exists fully online...This survey asks families to share their interest in a fully virtual school option to understand demand for planning purposes. Any virtual school option would need to be approved by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. This survey does not guarantee the option of a virtual school..."

If there was enough interest in a Virtual School at BPS for all grades, the district would

seemingly embark on creating the frameworks and getting it approved by the state in time for next year.

The letter indicates there would be ample opportunities for online learning, and even some opportunities to interact with other students via extracurricular activities.

"Attending a virtual school is similar to attending a school in a physical building in many ways: students have a homeroom, classmates, BPS teachers, a principal, and rigorous instruction," read the letter. "Instead of going

to a school building, students at the virtual school learn remotely, from their homes, using a computer and the internet...There may be some opportunities for in-person engagement with class-

mates, either for special occasions, specific projects, or extracurricular activities."

The results of the survey are expected within a month or so.

BBAC (from pg. 2)

bikes better "at the curb in the utility strip instead of bringing it right up next to the storefront," and Commissioner Robert Weintraub said that while he believes the sidewalk is wide enough to accommodate the bikes, he thinks they're best located on the street.

Overall, commissioners seemed pleased with the revisions presented and praised the design team for their work.

Weintraub said that the "wood at the office entry wing walls is a great idea," and it will help to "soften some of the harshness at the entry." He said he prefers the darker penthouse option as well.

BBAC Chair Kathy Connor also said she prefers the darker option, as it is "easier on the eye," as did Commissioners John Christiansen and Jerome

CooperKing.

Other commissioners, like David Sampson, said that he likes the proposed new trees for the sidewalk area for the building as well as the "fat cornice at the very top," which he said "separates the building itself from the penthouse."

Commissioner Christiansen brought up an "issue with the amount of glass and how it's broken up," and made a few suggestions for how to address that, and there was also some discussion about the sign bands, though the design team is aware that they will have to come before the Commission with a signage plan as a separate application.

"This has been a fabulous process," said Sue Prindle of the Neighborhood Association of the

Back Bay (NABB). She thought that the BlueBikes would work better on Dartmouth St. than on Newbury, as she is "concerned about heavy foot traffic" on Newbury St. She also said she hopes the NABB Architecture Committee can work with the developer on a plan for the timing for the proposed building lights, "so it isn't bright all night," she said. Prindle also said she still had remaining concerns about the size of the mechanical equipment.

After a few more details were discussed between the commissioners, the public, and the design team, the Commission ultimately voted to recommend approval of this project to the full Commission, where it will be heard at next week's BBAC hearing on May 12.

GARY DRUG

For over 75 years, Gary Drug has been serving the residents of Beacon Hill, the West End and the Back Bay.

**Stay Home, Stay Safe
CALL US
YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD PHARMACY**

**NEIGHBORHOOD
DELIVERY SERVICE
MONDAY THRU FRIDAY**

*Delivering Your Medication
And Other Essential Items*

**Store Hours: Mon - Fri 8am-8pm
Sat & Sun 9am-5pm**

Copy & Fax Service • Neighborhood Delivery Service

We accept most prescription drug plans
Let Gary Drug Be Your Neighborhood Pharmacy
59 Charles Street • Phone 617-227-0023 • Fax 617-227-2879

Pine Street Inn hosts virtual home remedy with special guest, CNN's John King

Staff Report

Pine Street Inn, New England's leading organization dedicated to ending homelessness, will host their annual signature Home Remedy fundraising event, virtually this year, on Thursday, May 6, 9-10 a.m.

Major plumbing, HVAC supplier to locate operations on Mass/Cass

By Seth Daniel

A major plumbing supply house, F.W. Webb Company, has filed notice with the City to develop a more than three-acre lot in the heart of Mass/Cass into a major warehouse and distribution hub for their company.

The lot is on 55-115 Hampden St. and is at the corner of Melnea Cass Blvd. and Hampden Street – across the street from Crosstown Center and abutting the Orchard Gardens K-8 School. The lot is mostly vacant but contains the operations of J&J Metals, Bay State Spring and Max Ultimate Foods.

"The proposed project will be located on Lot 1 and consist of one new building containing approximately 66,600 sq. ft. and about 24,000 sq. ft. of subsurface parking," read the Letter of Intent (LOI) to the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA). "The project will be a facility for the Proponent's business that will be used for warehouse, distribution and retail purposes."

The project conforms to zoning in terms of use and requirements, but does trigger the Article 80 Large Project Review with the BPDA. Attorney Paul Feldman of Davis Malm said in the LOI they have started to reach out to stakeholders and looked forward to contributing to the

The event will feature CNN's John King in conversation with GBH's Callie Crossley. John and Callie will discuss some of today's most pressing topics related to homelessness, including the effects of the pandemic, the need for affordable housing, and more. Guests can expect to

get an insider's perspective on policies that are set to shape the new administration, with a particular focus on housing policy.

Registration for this year's Home Remedy is complimentary.

Supporting close to 2,000 men and women daily, Pine Street Inn provides permanent housing, job training, emergency shelter and street outreach, with a goal of moving individuals off the street,

out of shelter and back to a home and community.

For more information go to www.pinestreetinn.org.

EBNA (from pg. 1)

tion for seven years, including five years as Chief of Economic Development.

As Mayor of Boston, affordable housing, education and climate resiliency would rank among his top priorities, said Barros, while his approach to tackling the persistent problems of addiction and homelessness would involve partnering with other service providers, as well as promoting a Housing First model and putting a moratorium on evictions to better combat housing insecurity.

"We also need to create more services for people to get into and stay in housing," Barros added.

To address the ongoing public health crisis at Mass Cass, Barros said his "long-term answer" is to develop Long Island into a comprehensive campus with a hospital.

This will take "some years," however, said Barros, so in the meantime, he believes services offered around Mass Cass need to be "decentralized."

The shelter currently at Mass Cass "is too big," he added, so Barros proposes moving 150 beds to the Shattuck Hospital while relocating "50 at a time" to other parts of the city.

Additionally, Barros proposes putting "more boots on the ground" in the form of street workers to support people in recovery who might not yet be employed.

Barros said he's currently assembling his Mass Cass Plan, which, based on his assertion that about two-thirds of the people there are from outside the city, includes plans to introduce an ID system to verify that people belong in the neighborhood because they live or use services there, and to help people from outside the neighborhood get access to services they might need.

"We have to figure out a way where these conversations have some teeth to them," he said.

As a drummer and visual artist, Barros said he's very much on board with former Mayor Walsh's aspiration of turning Boston into a more arts-oriented city, and was part of the team

that helped keep the Huntington Theatre in its current home at the Boston University Theatre.

Barros, meanwhile, said President Biden's planned infrastructure investments could help free up federal funds for transit improvements, as well as for climate-resiliency measures in the city.

"We need to make sure Boston is shovel-ready for the opportunities coming this fall," Barros added.

City Councilor at-Large Essaibi-George, who was featured during a "political spotlight" with the EBNA about six months ago, prior to announcing her mayoral candidacy, was also on hand for the meeting, and she assured her constituents she would serve out the remainder of her term as city councilor with the same proven commitment to the job she's shown so far.

Essaibi-George grew up in Dorchester as the daughter of two immigrants – her father an Arab Muslim and her mother a Polish Catholic. She went on to become a high school teacher in the Boston Public School system that she herself once attended as a student and said that she continues to put education at the top of her priorities. Essaibi-George ran unsuccessfully for a City Council at-Large seat in 2013 before winning the election for one of the same at-Large seats in 2015.

As chair of the City Council's Committee on Homelessness, Mental Health and Recovery, Essaibi-George said she has seen firsthand the "chaos and failures" at Mass Cass.

Essaibi-George is in favor of rebuilding the bridge to Long Island, which, she said, is expected to cost \$100 million to repair, and that she would further advocate for ferry service to the site.

Essaibi-George said any facility built there should make adequate provisions for long-term recovery, and, she said, as patients go from detox to long-term treatment, "ideally, their beds wouldn't change."

But this, she said, would need to happen in close partnership with nearby cities and towns.

"There are a tremendous saturation of service [around Mass Cass]," she said, "and we need to decentralize them."

Essaibi-George also pointed to the need for more social workers and said she had worked on the council to expand their ranks to 19 positions, which have now all been filled.

More social workers would help alleviate some of the overwhelming burden that now falls on the shoulders of Boston Police, she said, although she would also like to see more officers on the street.

Police reforms, meanwhile, need to be implemented, said Essaibi-George, in such a way that the force as a whole and individual officers can be held accountable for their actions.

As for any federal funds the city receives, that money, she said, should be spent in two ways: first, to support small businesses and the local economy; and secondly, to support public health issues unrelated to COVID (i.e. the opioid crisis.)

Moreover, the city needs to "get back to basics," said Essaibi-George, like fixing potholes and repairing cracks in sidewalks, as well as investing in city playgrounds.

As Mayor of Boston, Essaibi-George said she would also work to nurture arts in the city via a task force that would help recent graduates find studio space and other resources they often lack upon entering the professional world.

"I don't want to lose artists to other city because they've rolled out the red carpet for them," she said. "I want them to be right here in the City of Boston."

East Berkeley Love Your Block cleanup set for May 15

A Love Your Block Neighborhood Cleanup, under the auspices of the East Berkeley Neighborhood Association, is scheduled for Saturday, May 15, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., which will focus on Peters Park. Volunteers are asked to meet at 9:30 a.m. at the tennis courts, and to bring their own gloves.

SERVICE DIRECTORY

YOUR
AD
HERE

JOHN J. RECCA
PAINTING
Interior/Exterior
Commercial/Residential
Fully Insured
Quality Work
Reasonable Rates
Free Estimates
reccapainting@hotmail.com
781-241-2454

ALL
INCLUSIVE
ALL

Boston Harbor
Fort Point



Boston Ready for More

SEE BOSTON WITH NEW EYES AT ALLINCLUSIVEBOS.COM

RUSHING (from pg. 1)

South Africa, sponsored the law to end refusal of health insurance coverage for those with pre-existing conditions, and worked to combat racial disparities in the criminal justice system. He would become Assistant Majority Leader, the highest-ranking leadership role ever held by a person of color in the Massachusetts State Legislature.

Additionally, for more than three decades, year after year, Rushing introduced legislation to change the state's flag, motto and logo that demeans Native Americans, which eventually resulted in the Governor's acquiescence to mandate a committee to propose a revised, less-offensive insignia for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Reached by phone on Monday - a day before he was scheduled to receive the award - Rushing said, "It's always good to receive an award based on what you've done, and it's always good to receive an award from an institution like Old South Church, which is one of the great progres-



COURTESY OF OLD SOUTH CHURCH

Former State Rep. Byron Rushing (center), who received Old South Church's Open Door Award, is seen with the Rev. Nancy S. Taylor (at left), Senior Minister of Old South Church, and the Rev. June R. Cooper (right), Old South Church's Theologian in the City who presented Rushing with the award.

sive churches in New England and probably the country, and has such a positive reputation."

As an elected official, Rushing was recognized with countless accolades, but unlike the Open Door Award, "about 80 percent of the time," he said, something was expected of him in return.

Moreover, Rushing said he's also honored to now be in the distinguished company of other Open Door Award recipients like Larry Kressel of the Boston Living Center.

Of Rushing, Rev. Nancy S. Taylor, the senior minister of Old South Church, wrote: "Byron Rushing is, indeed, a living legend. He has helped to shape and guide the public life of Boston through legislation, moral authority, historical accuracy, and dogged determination. The breadth and depth of his impact on the life of this city is breathtaking."

Old South Church created the Open Door Award in 2014, according to a press release, and besides Rushing and Kessler, other past award recipients have included Boston Globe Metro Columnist Adrian Walker; Callie Crossley, pioneering broadcast journalist and host of "Under the Radar with Callie Crossley" on WGBH; Sarah-Ann Shaw, Boston's first African-American female TV reporter; and Sen. Elizabeth Warren, among others.

The Open Door Award induction ceremony for Byron Rushing will be broadcast during Old South Church's live-streamed worship service at <https://livestream.com/oldsouth/philliswheatleysunday> on Sunday, May 9, during the church's annual Phillis Wheatley service, which begins at 10 a.m.

A Forum, featuring Rushing, follows on May 9 at 11 a.m. (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84953620144?pwd=TnhJZFkQS9MbDEwbWJ0K2R0OEwyUT09>).

MCKINLEY GARDENS (from pg. 1)

benches in the garden, which fronts Montgomery Street. "It goes back to how I want to live my life...I don't make as much money as I did in advertising, but my days of happiness are far greater. You ask yourself, how do I want to talk about my day to those I love?"

For Vilar, he switched gears and immersed himself in sustainable agriculture and nutrition – practicing a type of agriculture that actually leaves the soil in better condition than before the seed was planted. That process is known as beyond organic, or regenerative agriculture.

"My grandmother was an avid backyard gardener," he said. "I pulled a lot of inspiration from helping her. My mother was a holistic nurse practitioner. She inspired me to understand how food is made."

Vilar took over the garden in March and he and the students had a big clean-up day last week. He has major goals when it comes to the garden is to spruce it up and make it a gem in the neighborhood, but also to make it a great learning experience for the students at the school – many of whom don't often have access to gardening and agriculture opportunities.

"What I've heard from teachers and administrators is how the students love the hands-on activity," he said. "At the same time I'm growing food for the soup kitchen at the Haley House...I think there is something therapeutic that comes out of it when someone touches the earth with their hands. If a young person is open to it, they can see the magic that comes with growing your food. When kids grow their own food, they're more likely to try it. This is the kind of experience where they grow the foods they may not know they liked."

In addition to that, Vilar said he would like to improve the edges and make the garden more aesthetic to those walking by. He plans to also improve the sign at the front of the garden, and incorporate QR codes on the beds to allow students to scan them to see what is growing there.

The first order of business is to rebuild the planters and clean up the space to be more presentable and organized. This year will probably feature mostly corn, beans, squash and tomatoes. He also plans to introduce straw bale gardening – a technique where



Jay Vilar, the new McKinley Garden Coordinator, sees great opportunity for the students, the Haley House Soup Kitchen and the neighborhood in the garden on Montgomery Street in the South End. He started at the end of March and is full-speed ahead now as the growing season starts.

vegetables are grown in straw over a period of three years. At the end of the third year, the bales are used as compost.

There is another part of Vilar's vision as well, and that is being a person of color who is also a farmer. He said there were 47,000 farms that were Black-owned in America at the turn of the 20th Century, but that has shrunk dramatically. While 19 percent of the farmland was owned by Black farmers then, now that number is down to 2 percent. That reality has shifted a certain reality for people of color, where many kids don't perceive a farmer to be Black or Latino or non-white. Seeing Vilar as a farmer, an instructor, and someone that makes their living growing food is a powerful image for young people in the city, he said.

"An aspect of this for me is being a person of color who is part of this kind of work," he said. "There aren't a lot of farmers that look like me who are also teaching young people. Being united with the land and seeing it as a part of freedom, it gives them inspiration to want to grow something. If that type of idea evolves as the garden does, it would be a great legacy for me to leave behind."

Vilar founded a nutritional therapy company (Nourish LLC), hosted a weekly podcast, and also published a book (*The One Habit Difference: How Adding One Habit Can Lead To A Lifetime of Good Health*) in 2019. He brings training in organic farming, community leadership, and event management, among other things, to this role with the Haley House.

LUNCH
AND
DINNER

ANTONIO'S
CUCINA ITALIANA

**"Antonio's is
a treasure for
anyone who
happens
upon it."**

—Boston Globe

**Find Us On Your
Favorite App!
or visit us
at ANTONIOS
BEACONHILL.COM**

**288 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02114
617-367-3310**

Uber Eats **GRUBHUB**

ST. BOTOLPH NEIGHBORHOODS HIT THE STREETS FOR LOVE YOUR BLOCK INITIATIVE



Board member Scott Mustard was ready to clean St. Botolph and the side streets on Saturday.



Behind the Midtown Hotel, volunteers from the Neighborhood Association provided dumpsters donated by Northeastern University and stored with the help of the Midtown. (L-R) Mervina Rasimin and Maximus, Vice President Gisela Griffith, Amanda Gaughan, and Treasurer Lorraine Steele.

Photos by Seth Daniel

The St. Botolph neighborhood came out in force to clean up their area as part of the Love

Your Block initiative for their area. Other areas are participating in the coming weeks, but last weekend St. Botolph took its turn.



Marty Pasqualini, Dennis Morris and Kathy Pasqualini.



Dan d'Heilly, Dayron Miles, Ellen Fitzpatrick, Kathleen Enright, and Kirsten Dansey on the corner of West Newton and St. Botolph St.



Paula Kreller pulls off vines from the brickwork on West Newton Street.



Lee Steele was quite busy on Saturday cleaning up his area on West Newton Street.

THE CITY OF BOSTON CAN HELP YOU

access your veteran benefits.

You've served us. Now it's our turn to serve you.

For more information about resources you may qualify for, visit www.boston.gov/benefits or call 311.



CITY of BOSTON

#BOSCanHelp

BOS:311

Boston Medical Center removes controversial Building H from plans

By Seth Daniel

Just prior to the lockdowns under COVID-19, one of the hottest controversies in Worcester Square was a proposed office tower planned by Boston Medical Center (BMC) too close for comfort according to numerous neighbors on East Brookline Street.

Now, scores of neighbors who were concerned about the building no longer have anything to worry about, as BMC has removed the controversial Building H on the loading dock fronting Albany Street from its 2020 Institutional Master Plan (IMP)

program.

The shocking news was accompanied by other changes to the IMP, including more investment in Northampton Square and changing the use of one building from administration to Mixed-Use Supportive housing. All that and more will be discussed next week at an IMP Task Force meeting on May 12 – a meeting triggered by the filing of the IMP on Monday.

"Boston Medical Center has filed an updated Institutional Master Plan with the Boston Planning and Development Agency that reflects the hospital's mission and expected needs for

the next decade," read a statement from BMC to the Sun. "BMC is committed to an open and inclusive process that values our neighbors, stakeholders and the City of Boston. We look forward to discussing the plan in more detail, including key updates incorporated from community feedback when the review process begins with a public Task Force meeting on May 12."

The news to eliminate Building H was a shocker for most in the neighborhood and for Task Force members, as BMC has stood staunchly by their need for that building even in the face of passionate concerns from abutters and neighbors. However, the filing by BMC indicated that the post-COVID world had changed all of that, and also that they had heard the concerns of neighbors.

"Remove proposed new Administration/Clinical Building proposed at the Ramp Parcel site - BMC listened to the feedback from the Task Force and neighbors and will not pursue a new building at this location," read the filing, with that being one of five post-COVID changes to the IMP.

Instead, BMC has changed the use of a newly proposed building at 10 Stoughton St. to go from administration to 170,000 sq. ft. of new research space.

"This new building would provide an alternate location for computational research originally proposed for the Ramp Par-

cel," read the filing. "In addition, COVID-19 has demonstrated a reduced need for new administration use and the need to provide research programs, both clinical-based and laboratory-based, that adequately represent BMC's patient population."

Another topic up for discussion that could go any direction with neighbors depending on the details of the plan is to add a new mixed-use supportive housing program to the Collamore/Old Evans building on East Concord Street. While it does mean the addition of a new social service to the area, something the neighborhood has been opposed to, it also does represent the addition of supportive housing, which the neighborhood has been in line with.

The filing indicated the former use was slated to be administration, and that is not needed any longer. Instead they hope to provide an innovative housing program that addresses one of BMC's five health priorities to improve access to safe and affordable housing options and establish supportive pathways to healthcare services at the hospital.

"Further, COVID-19 has demonstrated the full depth of disparities that exist for BMC's patient population with lack of access to housing stability," read the filing, essentially suggesting the hospital could become an affordable housing developer of types.

Another change in the filing included the intention to acquire or lease more space at Northampton Square. This is pegged at being an alternative location for the outpatient clinic that was supposed to be at the Ramp Parcel, and also to accommodate administrative uses at Collamore to make way for the supportive housing plan. Any action on that would come with a commitment to improve the area.

"In any agreement reached with the City, BMC would commit to locate its Public Safety Headquarters on the 2nd floor of the commercial storefronts along Massachusetts Avenue, as well as revitalize the commercial storefronts along Massachusetts Avenue and maintain community access and use of the gym and the pool," read the filing.

A fifth and final change included changing the use of the added 6th Floor on Yawkey Pavilion from the Women's Health Clinic to addressing needs for patients to be in single-bed rooms. The Women's Clinic would move to the Shapiro Building.

Overall, the theme of the IMP is to "right size" the campus and reduce its footprint and consolidate what is there. The proposed square footage in the 10-year plan reduces the overall footprint by 327,000 sq. ft.

The meeting on May 12 will be held virtually at 6 p.m. on Zoom.

Bok files ordinance to track vacant commercial properties

Staff Report

The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the number of vacant commercial units in the City of Boston, adding to the units that have been vacant years. Councilors Mejia and Bok, in partnership with community advocates Derrel Weathers and Jacob Leidolf, have filed an ordinance to start tracking vacant commercial units and give hopeful new business owners a more representative view of what the city has to offer for commercial property.

The idea to find better ways to track and monitor vacant commercial properties came from advocates Weathers and Leidolf, who hope to see this measure as a means to create avenues for smaller entrepreneurs to set up

shop in brick-and-mortar storefronts. "A lot of the places that were for rent in Boston in 2011 are still for rent today! In that time period those landlords still haven't found a single tenant because...they'll let that place sit empty and won't lower their rent," said Weathers. There is currently no clear way of tracking these vacancies in order to create economic opportunities within them. Establishing a database by using readily available data, such as POS machines and 311 calls, is the first step in the plan for small business development in the neighborhoods that have been most devastated by the pandemic.

"As a lifelong Bostonian, a small business owner and above all, someone who loves my community, I think it is essential for

the city to invest in our local entrepreneurs and incubate and support homegrown businesses. One way we can do this is by filling empty storefronts with local businesses," said Leidolf. "In Boston, the city does not currently track commercial vacancies. With this ordinance we will collect the data we need to make strategic investments and partnerships in our community, turning those vacant storefronts into accessible, affordable and thriving centers of local commerce."

"By identifying vacant commercial units, we can begin matching property owners with vacancies with local small businesses," added Councilor Bok. "I'm hopeful we can help a diverse set of local entrepreneurs

Erin Murphy for Boston City Council At-Large



Happy Mother's Day!
Here's to all the moms who guided their families through a very tough year.
This is YOUR day!

I am a mom, a public school teacher, and a community advocate. I will work hard every day for academic success in our schools, safer neighborhoods, and a healthier Boston for ALL.
I ask for one of your four votes in September.

ERINFORBOSTON.COM

BREWSTER & BERKOWITZ REAL ESTATE

Charles Street Meeting House
121 Mt. Vernon Street Boston, MA 02108
617-367-0505 www.brewberk.com

Sally Brewster
Ron Berkowitz
Betsey Barrett
Toni Doggett

BREWSTER & BERKOWITZ
REAL ESTATE

Charles Street Meeting House
121 Mt. Vernon Street Boston, MA 02108
617-367-0505 www.brewberk.com

Sally Brewster
Ron Berkowitz
Betsey Barrett
Toni Doggett

Councilor Bok running for re-election; will focus on recovery and moving forward

By Lauren Bennett

District 8 City Councilor Kenzie Bok has announced that she will be running for a second term, after winning the seat formerly held by Josh Zakim in the 2019 election. So far, Bok is running uncontested.

With a background in affordable housing, Bok has worked over her first term to try and bring more equitable affordable housing to the district and the entire city. The past year has brought many challenges to people and neighborhoods citywide as the pandemic recovery continues.

Bok told the Sun that her campaign has a “dual purpose” of hopefully being able to see people in person again—which she has started to do to gather some signatures—and then also figuring out “where do we go from here?” when it comes to moving forward.

She said it’s critically important to her to continue working on issues like affordable housing and “combating the climate crisis,” as well as continuing to assist small businesses in their recovery.

Bok also said that with a huge push for lab space in the city and particularly in the Fenway area, “thinking about the workforce development path” is also on her agenda and ensuring that the lab space provides quality jobs for Boston’s youth.

She also talked about the food insecurity that was not only brought to light by the pandemic, but exacerbated in many cases. “That’s been something I’ve been focused on,” she said, and helped organized the distribution

of fresh food boxes to residents in the district and across the city last summer, a program that has continued to serve residents.

“Another big question mark,” Bok said, is “fighting to save pieces of the MBTA service.” Service on the 55 bus was suspended, and following protests by community activists, it was saved a few weeks ago and will now run on a summer schedule. The proposed suspension of the E Line at Brigham Circle was also prevented.

She said that it was “great” that those services were saved, but now “what we really want is better, more reliable service,” as the MBTA service is “critical to our climate goals.” Bok said she is “worried that there might be a little bit of a step back in that from the state,” but “we really have to push back against that.”

Bok said that one thing she learned during her first term is that “what COVID really underlined was our potential collectively in Boston to construct new things together.” She said that as a councilor, thinking quickly and pulling together private, government, and nonprofit funds to coordinate efforts like the food box distribution was proof that Boston is able to solve problems that come its way.

“The City of Boston has delivered an unbelievable number of weekly grocery bags,” Bok said, as well as millions of breakfasts and lunches for BPS students.

“If we have big problems that need new systems and coordinating to solve them,” Bok said, “we have found the wherewithal to do that. Seeing the potential for that was one major silver lining,”

of the pandemic, and something she said she would take into a second term.

Reflecting on her first term as the District 8 councilor, Bok said that she is “really proud” of the fair housing zoning amendment, which she worked on with Councilor Lydia Edwards and was approved by the Boston Zoning Commission and the mayor earlier this year.

The new change, according to the City, “will require developers in Boston to take substantial steps to stem displacement and provide further access to housing to those historically discriminated against.”

Because of this regulation, Boston is the first city in the country to bring something like this into law at the local level “with actual implementation consequences.”

Bok said that “affirmative responsibility as a city to develop inclusive communities...means a lot to me.”

Bok said she also has many things in the works in the coming months and hopefully into a second term as city councilor, such as “pushing for a conservation corps” in the city, which she said there is money for in the proposed Fiscal Year 2022 budget.

Historic preservation is also something that’s important to Bok, as well as to many of her constituents in the district. She said with Boston’s 400th anniversary coming up in 2030, “it’s the right time for us to look again at our preservation tools” and host things like “inclusive” historical events, as well as explore curriculum for Boston Public Schools and exhibits at the Boston Public

Library branches.

“I think there’s a lot of opportunity for that,” Bok said of keeping the city’s residents, especially its youth, “connected” to Boston’s history.

In parts of the district, such as the Back Bay, Beacon Hill, and the West End, those neighborhoods are dependent on tourism, as well as places like the Hynes Convention Center and the many businesses on Newbury and Charles Streets, to stay afloat.

“I think that’s going to be a real concern of mine,” Bok said.

Bok said that there is “so much more to do on housing,” including making it easier for more deeply affordable units to be built in Boston with solutions like building affordable housing on top of libraries, which is being discussed for the West End and Egleston Square branches of the Boston Public Library.

As she heads into her second campaign, Bok said that her favorite thing about being a city councilor is “the window you get into the huge variety of people who are doing their bit every day to make it the great place that it is. As a councilor, you find out about all of these efforts,” like “the people who are watering

the tree in front of their house,” or the “folks during the pandemic who are checking on their neighbors,” she said, adding that there are “so many overlapping but independent active efforts to make the city a real community and make it thrive, and I have so appreciated that.”

Bok also said she hopes everyone will get out and become civically engaged as the City Council and mayoral races move forward.

“I think it’s really important for everybody to pay attention and get involved in the local election,” Bok said. It’s a “really exciting moment to talk about what Boston needs to do and look like coming out of the pandemic.”

She said that District 8 has not historically been one of the neighborhoods with a high voter turnout, but she said she “would love to turn that around this year.”

The city’s primary election will be held on September 14, and the general election is on November 2.

For more information about Councilor Bok and her platform, visit kenziebok.com.



Virtual Public Meeting

Urban Renewal Community Meeting

Monday, May 17

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Zoom Link: bit.ly/3eGkU3j

Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864

Meeting ID: 160 796 0745

Project Proponent:

Boston Planning and Development Agency

Project Description:

The Boston Planning and Development Agency invites the surrounding neighbors to a meeting to discuss a proposal to extend the South Station Urban Renewal Plan for two years until 2024 and allow the School-Franklin and Boylston Essex Urban Renewal Plans to sunset in 2022.

Please reach out with advance notice for any translation or interpretation service needs.

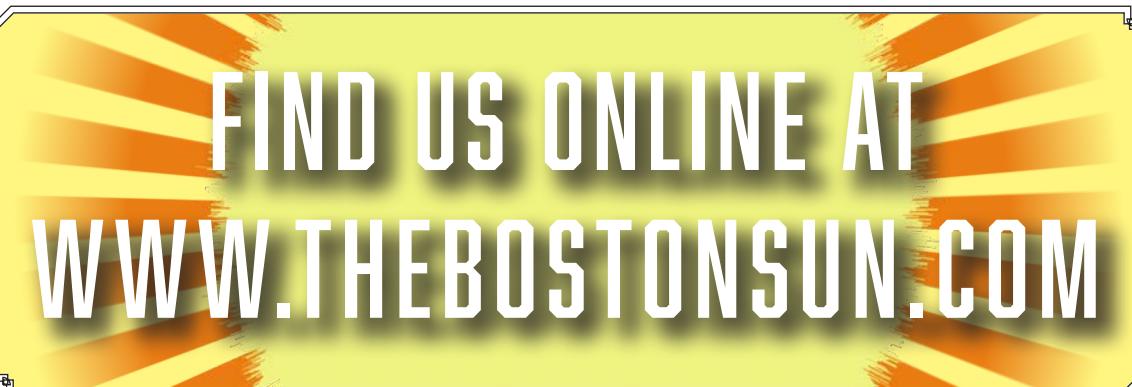
mail to: **Christopher Breen**

Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor

Boston, MA 02201

phone: 617.918.4202

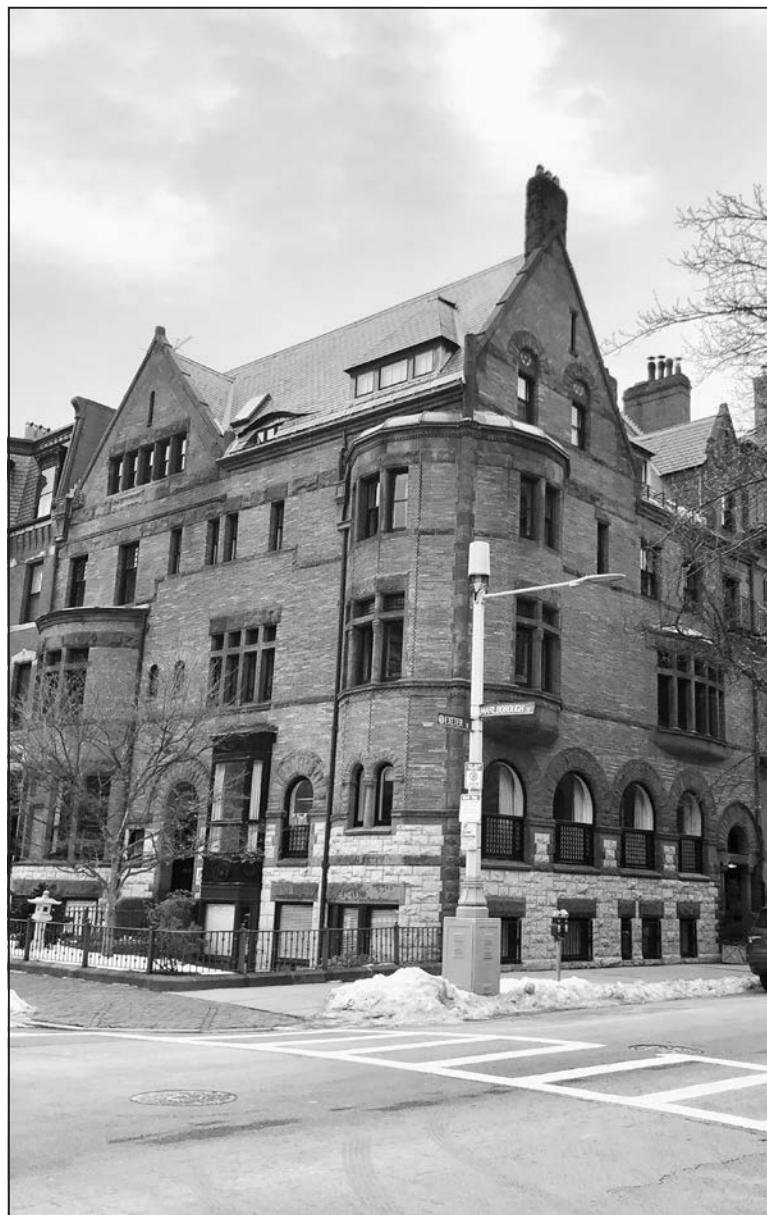
email: chris.breen@boston.gov



ATTENTION TO DETAIL

BY PENNY CHERUBINO

THIS WEEK'S ANSWER



The oriel window in the last clue is on 16 Exeter Street designed by architect William Whitney Lewis and built in 1886. The genealogy of this building, as recorded by the website www.BackBayHouses.org, details its uses across the years as a single-family residence, medical and dental offices, fraternity house, dormitory, sorority house, lodging house, and apartments. Finally, it became condominiums. The next clue will be found in the Fenway.

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

THIS WEEK'S CLUE



Real Estate Transfers

BUYER 1	SELLER 1	ADDRESS	PRICE
BACK BAY			
Thorndike, William N	P R Morgan 2011 T	6 Arlington St #1A	\$2,420,000
Jiang, Shaolay	Bowen, Kerri	236 Beacon St #2E	\$1,850,000
Blitz, Peggy S	D C Cataldo 2017 T	242 Beacon St #10	\$3,249,000
Blitz, Peggy S	D C Cataldo 2017 T	242 Beacon St #9	\$3,249,000
Flint, Meagan P	Paul, Abigail	261 Beacon St #2	\$1,199,000
Smith, Sandra T	Daire Fontaine T	313 Marlborough St #1	\$1,018,000
447 Beacon Street 1 RT	Hartnett, John W	447 Beacon St #1	\$1,525,575
Barbieri, Nicole A	Michael S Forrow NT	403 Marlborough St #14	\$833,000
BEACON HILL			
Rizika, Danielle	Toadvine, Sarah L	66 Chestnut St #11	\$1,325,000
Poe, Jennifer	Naroian, Jeffrey R	45 Garden St #1	\$559,000
Marteeh LLC	Stefater, James	668 Massachusetts Ave #3	\$595,000
Solaris 2 LLC	Silva, Rafael	36 Myrtle St #3	\$664,500
Lammert, Warren B	Goldie, Kenneth S	6 W Hill Pl	\$5,589,000
BAY VILLAGE/SOUTH END/KENMORE			
Farooqui, Hasan R	Farooqui, Mohammed	1 Charles St S #503	\$1,130,000
25 Isabella Street LLC	Isabella Church LLC	19 Isabella St	\$7,250,000
Mehra, Tarun K	OConnor, Mark P	548 Tremont St #4	\$705,000
S&L Vintage Restoration	Cao, Junwei	63-65 Burbank St #23	\$379,000
Franco, Melissa	Farquharson, David	511 Columbus Ave #5	\$1,035,000
O'Neill, Claudia	Reynolds, Suzanne	31 Concord Sq #2	\$1,410,000
Page, Brittany T	Smith, James R	35 E Springfield St #D	\$295,895
Kenney, Leonora M	Petracca, Timothy J	103 Gainsborough St #102	\$749,000
Elias, Darine	Munick, Dana E	103 Gainsborough St #103	\$845,000
Caron, Martha L	Ruth J Wales NT	76-110R Gainsborough St #58	\$95,000
SAF Boston LLC	Ruth J Wales NT	95 Gainsborough St #202	\$510,000
SAF Boston LLC	Lewis, Michael D	96 Gainsborough St #203W	\$615,000
Scillieri, Joseph J	Payne, Martha M	700 Harrison Ave #504	\$1,075,000
Metrakos, James G	761 Harrison Church LLC	761 Harrison Ave #207	\$1,300,000
Nolan, Thomas	761 Harrison Church LLC 771	771 Harrison Ave #308	\$925,000
Brendle, Suzanne	761 Harrison Church LLC 771	771 Harrison Ave #310	\$835,000
Al-Adeeb, Zena	761 Harrison Church LLC	771 Harrison Ave #62	\$635,000
Marteeh LLC	Stefater, James	668 Massachusetts Ave #3	\$595,000
Levy, Shula	Mcknight, Andrea B	51 Park Dr #26	\$390,000
Hall, Jacklyn	Hehir, Thomas	137 Pembroke St #3	\$2,055,000
Brown, Paige K	Baptista, Ramiro A	35 Queensberry St #8	\$492,000
Roy, Nathaniel P	Manganella, Luciano	14 Rutland St #14	\$2,350,000
Breslin, John P	Gray, Jessica R	67 Rutland St #1	\$1,975,000
Kanwal, Amrit B	Hayes, Donald R	1 Saint George St #1C	\$735,000
Falcone, Michael	Husid, Jessie J	476 Shawmut Ave #3	\$1,145,000
Sabra, Daniel I	Abernethy, Samuel P	519 Shawmut Ave #1	\$1,650,000
Reinhold, Lisa V	50 Symphony LLC	50 Symphony Rd #504	\$1,525,000
Kinsel, Patrick	Highline 10 Union LLC	10 Union Park	\$6,750,000
Piccirillo, Lisa M	Derrickson, James F	154 W Concord St #4	\$695,000
Sem, Amanda M	46 Wareham Street LLC	46 Wareham St #4B	\$288,700
Barros, Jolivia S	46 Wareham Street LLC	46 Wareham St #5E	\$186,400
Kelly, Matthew J	Vaule, Lars A	90 Wareham St #301	\$749,000
Cyr, Pamela	Edwards, Carina D	1166 Washington St #504	\$1,820,000
Rittner, Marc D	Reece, Lily	1672-R Washington St #301	\$600,000
Mokszyczyki, Stephen J	Konya, Jeffrey	3531 Washington St #201	\$689,900
Mcmahon, Brian	M Stone Worcester St RT	154 Worcester St #5	\$1,225,000
Keefe, Evan L	Bradley, Michael J	41 Worcester St #1	\$2,125,000
WATERFRONT/DOWNTOWN			
Schoenberg, Roy	Alsaud, H R	2 Avery St #37F	\$2,900,000
PH 6 LLC	Harbour View RT 2	50 Battery St #PH6	\$2,700,000
Treat, Hilary	Boucher, Teresa	342 Commercial St #6	\$764,500
Obrien, Francis	Ng FT	376 Commercial St #2B	\$880,000
Wilson, Ryan	Commercial Waterfront	386 Commercial St #2E	\$647,000
PE Opportunity Fund LLC	Ferriter, Elizabeth D	100 Fulton St #1D	\$979,000
Hiser, Andrew	Mehra, Sumit	88 Kingston St #7A	\$1,750,000
P Leo Corcoran IRT	Unit 705 RT	20 Rowes Wharf #705	\$1,800,000
P Leo Corcoran IRT	Unit 707 Rowes Wharf RT	20 Rowes Wharf #707	\$1,710,000
137 South Street LLC	Kelleher Family RE LLC	137 South St #2	\$685,000
Matuszewski, Susan C	Robert B King Ma RET	15 Union Wharf #15	\$2,995,000

Fenway CDC holds

By Lauren Bennett

The Fenway Community Development Corporation (CDC) held its 48th Annual Meeting virtually on April 29, after not holding one last year because of the pandemic.

The program consisted of a Year in Review video, the distribution of awards to John LaBella, Lifeboat Boston, and Kristen Mobilia, and a keynote speech from Chuck Collins, Director of the Program on Inequality and the Common Good at the Institute for Policy Studies.

The Year in Review video featured members of the CDC's different committees, including the Housing, Organizing, Racial and Housing Justice Committee, and more.

The Housing Committee reported that they have been able to work together virtually on various projects, including the Burbank Terrace project, which consists of 27 units of affordable housing.

The Organizing committee reported on its work with preventing the eviction of women from the Our Lady's Guild House in the Fenway, and Director of

Policy and Community Planning Richard Giordano said that the CDC "continued our work in reviewing projects and development proposals" during the last half of 2020.

The organization continued advocating for more affordable housing in the neighborhood.

The Community Programs team reported that Fenway Fair Foods was able to provide fresh, healthy food for Fenway residents during the pandemic, and the newly formed Racial and Housing Justice Committee reported that they came together in June of last year to discuss how to better include racial justice into the CDC's efforts.

Community Service Awards were given to John LaBella, Lifeboat Boston, and Kristen Mobilia, for their dedication and commitment to the Fenway community.

"The three awardees really encompass what community service means here in the Fenway. From distributing food to starting a mutual aid network to advocating for housing, each of our awardees are leaders in their own right," said Fenway CDC Board Clerk Mia Jean-Sicard.

48th annual meeting virtually

After hearing from the three awardees, holding an election for the the CDC Board, and having participants create a word cloud about what the Fenway means to them, keynote speaker Chuck Collins gave a presentation about disruptions in the city that are impacting wealth equality.

"The Fenway CDC is an organization that is wrestling with invisible giants," he said. He said that in the past 30 or 40 years, there has been an "extraordinary updraft of wealth to not just the top one percent, but the top one tenth of one percent. And then that money is coming into our communities in various disruptive forms."

He spoke about the "short term rental situation" in Boston, which has been a topic of interest to the Fenway CDC, which has worked to regulate short term rentals in the city as housing units were being taken off the market to be used for this purpose.

"This was a force that we could not have anticipated five or 8 years ago," Collins said, adding that more large corporations have been buying "big blocks of rental housing," as they discover that they can make money from

renting them short-term. He said he is "really concerned" about big private companies purchasing large numbers of units.

He also said that "global wealth" is "fueling luxury housing disruption," and the Fenway and other neighborhoods are "right in this vortex of these various invisible giant forces."

Collins mentioned One Dalton Place, saying it is "a building you can see as you walk through the Fenway as kind of a symbol of sort of the new luxury development."

He continued, "Part of what a group like Fenway CDC has to do is sort of shadowbox almost these invisible giants."

Collins also said, "it's hard enough just to do plain old affordable housing development in the current expensive housing market let alone to have to grapple with these forces."

He said a potential solution is thinking about things like continuing to limit the short term rental market aside from those using it as a legitimate source of income on a small scale, as well as how luxury real estate transactions can be taxed, such as the transfer tax passed by the City

Council and signed by Mayor Walsh that imposes a tax of up to two percent on "the transfer of units over \$2 million," Collins said.

He said "if that law had been in place for the first half of the sales of units at One Dalton Place," it would have garnered "\$7-\$8 million in fees for the city's housing funds," and nearly double that once all units sold.

"We still have this challenge," Collins said, "which is we have to get the state legislature to pass our home rule petition to allow the city of Boston to tax itself to create more resources for affordable housing. Boston has done its part and now it's up to the rest of the state."

At the end of the presentation, there was a chance for neighbors to mingle and chat with one another on the Zoom call.

"From awards to games community updates to rousing speeches, there's a lot to look forward to as we continue on into 2021," Jean-Sicard said.

For more information on the Fenway CDC and its programs, visit fenwaycdc.org.

For the Record

C O R O N A V I R U S 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.

CITY COUNCIL BUDGET HEARINGS FOR THE WEEK:

•From the May 6, 10 a.m., CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS WORKING SESSION: The focus of this working session are the FY22 budgets for the Boston Public Library, Office of Food Access, Office of Language and Communications Access, Office of Immigrant Advancement, Human Rights Commission, and Age Strong Commission.

From the May 4 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting, online:

•119 West Newton, South End. Applicant: Tom Corcoran. Violation: Violation Description Violation Comments 9th 780 CMR 1011 Stairways 1011.12.2 All stairways used for roof access to an occupied roof shall be via a penthouse not a hatch.

•18R Union Park, South End. Applicant: Marc LaCasse. Purpose: Construct new

two car garage at rear of existing single family home at 18 Union Park; Amendment to ALT1010357 issued on July 9, 2020. Entrance to garage from Public Alley 701 at rear of 18 Union Park.

•43 Union Park, South End. Applicant: Timothy Sheehan. Purpose: Gut renovation of an existing duplex condominium. A new private roof deck accessed via a stair and hatch, a new kitchen, new bedrooms and bathrooms. Two front existing dormers will be attached, existing rear dormer will be enlarged. ZBA and SELC approval req'd.

From the May 5 License Board meeting, online:

•TECHNOLOGY CHAPTER ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, INC. D/B/A Technology Chapter Alumni Association, Inc.; 526 BEACON St., Back Bay. Has applied for a Lodging Houses License to be exercised on the above 5 story town house with 1 room in basement, 2 rooms on second floor, 4 rooms on third floor, 4 rooms on fourth floor and 4 rooms on fifth floor. Manager: PATRICK MCCABE

•Pivo Ne Vino LLC D/B/A: Fenway Beer Shop; 98 VAN NESS St., Fenway. Holder of a Retail Package Store All Alcoholic Beverages License has petitioned to transfer the license from the above - To: Fenway Beer & Wine Corporation d/b/a Fenway Beer Shop (at the same location). Kevinn Leng, Man-

ager. Closing hour at 11 p.m. Lastly, has petitioned to pledge the license, inventory, and stock to Newburyport Bank.

•86 Mass Ave Wild Duck, Inc. D/B/A: Wild Duck, 86 MASSACHUSETTS Ave., Back Bay. Has applied for a Retail Package Store All Alcohol License to be exercised on the above - on one floor (3096 SF), consisting of a sales area with beverages and food displays, wine tasting area with bar top seating, product gondolas, sixteen (16) product coolers, walk in cooler, storage area with employee kitchen and lounge, restroom, and office. Manager: Lalit Verma. Closing Time: 11 p.m.

From the May 5 C

The BPDA will have a virtual

public meeting for a minor modification to the South End Urban

Renewal Plan for parcels in Villa

Victoria on Thursday, May 6, at

6 p.m. The modification would

update the allowable land uses in

the plan to properly reflect existing

conditions at two sites.

•At 100 West Dedham Street

where allowable land uses would

be updated to include (Residential,

Commercial, Office, Community

and Cultural Land Uses) and

•At 2 San Juan Street where land

uses would be updated to include

(Office, Community, Cultural and

Parking). Feel free to reach out if

you have any questions or if any

translation or interpretation ser-

vices would be needed in advance.

This meeting will be hosted online, using Zoom. Please register in advance for this meeting: bit.ly/32fkGKW.

The BPDA will have a virtual meeting on a zoning amendment in the South End on Tuesday, May 11, at 6 p.m. The Agency will host a meeting to discuss a proposed zoning amendment to Article 64 Section 29 of the Boston Zoning Code. This zoning amendment proposes new language related to affordable commercial and cultural spaces in the Harrison-Albany area of the South End Neighborhood. The BPDA's planning and zoning team will provide a brief presentation outlining the proposed amendment and how it will affect affordable commercial and cultural spaces. There will also be an opportunity for community comments and questions following the presentation. There is a 40 day comment period associated with this zoning amendment. The comment period will open on April 29, 2021 and close on June 8, 2021, at 5:00 PM. If you would like to submit a comment regarding this zoning amendment, please visit bostonplans.org/article64amendment or contact Jared.Staley@Boston.gov. This meeting will be hosted online, using Zoom. Please register in advance for this meeting:

bit.ly/Art64Amendment.

From the May 11 Boston Landmarks meeting, 6 p.m.,

online via Zoom ([HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/85973120866](https://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/85973120866)):

- Update and Discussion of 2021 Work Plan
- Annual Meeting – Election of Chair and Co-Chair

From the May 12 Air Pollution Control Commission hearing, 1 p.m., online ([HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/86329377111](https://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/86329377111)):

- Application for a Modified Downtown Boston Parking Freeze Permit from TPIM TRS Boston Back Bay LLC on behalf of HH Boston Back Bay LLC for 256 exempt parking spaces located at Hilton Boston Back Bay, 40 Dalton St. This permit modification would remove a permit condition that limits use of the parking facility to hotel guests only. Issuance of the permit would have no effect on the Downtown parking freeze bank.

REPORTING WORKPLACE SAFETY CONCERN

- 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.

THE SUDBURY CONDOMINIUMS



 CAMPION
AND COMPANY

172 NEWBURY STREET • BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS • 02116 • WWW.CAMPIONRE.COM • 617.236.0711