

Dorchester Reporter

"The News and Values Around the Neighborhood"

Volume 41 Issue 10

Thursday, March 7, 2024

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Blue Hill Ave. plans are a 'starting point,' says Wu

BY BILL FORRY
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Mayor Wu needed a win. And while it might prove to be a costly one in the near-term, she got one last week in the form of a legacy public works project on Blue Hill Avenue.

Last Thursday, her administration green-lit an ambitious, \$44 million modernization project that includes a center-running bus lane— a contro-

versial plank in a larger plan that will reconfigure lanes, add safer transit for pedestrians and bicyclists, and put order to a chaotic parking scheme that varies up and down the avenue.

As with other big-picture initiatives that her administration is advancing in the face of sometimes fierce push-back, Wu seems determined to press ahead. Last Thursday, two hours after she officially announced that the project was

"a go," she sat with the *Reporter* for an exclusive interview. Her tone was upbeat, but the mayor leavened her optimism with frequent nods to the reality on the ground: She wants, and needs, more buy-in from her most impacted constituents.

"This is one of the most important quarters in the city," Wu said of the Blue Hill Avenue corridor. "Every single week-day, we have the equivalent of two-times

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Mayor Wu at a City Hall press conference on Feb. 12. Mayor's Office/Isabel Leon photo

Grappling with the Article 80 re-booting

BY CHRIS LOVETT
REPORTER CORRESPONDENT

In Boston, the path to new development often leads through negotiation, with a place at the table for different sides with different agendas. If community members end up believing that the outcome had been pre-arranged, or that results fail to match goals and commitments, developers can be frustrated by delays and mixed signals about mitigation and benefits. And community members themselves can be sharply divided.

Welcome to the shadowland between development process and reality, where conflict is governed by the city's zoning code and sometimes prolonged in lawsuits. In parts of the city, former Boston Mayor Marty Walsh tried to reshape

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The small kiosk outside of Shawmut Station wasn't exactly where House of Seven Café owner Tamicka Brown expected her coffee shop dream to take her, but she said it's exactly where she needs to be. See story, Page 18.

Seth Daniel photo

Blue Hill Ave. plan ignores voices of dissent, critics say

BY SETH DANIEL
NEWS EDITOR

A city, state and federally-funded plan to revamp Blue Hill Avenue with center-running bus lanes and other modern infrastructure is drawing negative reviews this week from some in Dorchester and Mattapan, who say they feel frustrated that their input was not factored into the decision to move forward with the \$44 million project.

The merits of the project were heralded by an array of public officials last week led by Mayor Wu, Congresswoman Pressley, Rep. Russell Holmes and other elected officials, who also pledged a "block-by-block" engagement process to inform any final design elements. But some critics say they aren't confident that their voices will be heard in that process either.

"There's nothing about it I like," said Barbara Crichlow, a Mattapan resident, who shared her thoughts during a break at the Mildred Avenue Community Center, where seniors gather weekly.

Her friend Glenola Mitchell agreed, saying she and her fellow seniors don't feel safe walking across Blue Hill Avenue to a center-lane bus platform. They don't think it would be safe for children either.

"Their plan is going to put others at risk," said Mitchell. "The first thing I thought when I saw their rendering was it's going to cost someone their life because it's absurd. When you look at the broad width of the roadway by the (Mattapan) library, I don't know how that will work."

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Tracing the steps of 18 remarkable Dot women

BY CASSIDY MCNEELEY
REPORTER CORRESPONDENT

Dorchester residents are invited to take a "virtual walk" with Anita Danker via Zoom on Sat., March 9 at 3 p.m. as she guides participants through the presentation "On the Trail of Women's History: From Uphams Corner to Savin Hill."

Through a collaboration of the Dorchester Historical Society (DHS) and the Boston Women's Heritage Trail, Danker, a professor,

writer, and local historian, will be sharing the key roles that 18 women have played in Dorchester history.

"I think my main qualification for doing this, besides the fact that I do local history, is that I am from Dorchester," said Danker. "I feel really close to the material. When you're originally from Dorchester, you kind of never leave—or it never leaves you."

Danker became involved in this project after her friend and Trail

advisor, Katherine Dibble, worked on a similar trail in Hyde Park. After realizing her neighborhood did not have one of its own, Danker teamed up with Dibble and DHS President Earl Taylor to establish one.

The trio discovered that numerous Dorchester-based women have made important contributions to the cultural history of the neighborhood.

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Mrs. Huntington (Anna Harris) Smith



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Police, Courts & Fire



A three-alarm fire at 418 Bowdoin St. displaced one resident and sent one firefighter to the hospital last Saturday morning (March 2). The fire was reported around 6 a.m. and commanders briefly called a “mayday” alert when one firefighter was unaccounted for, but he was found unharmed outside the building. Despite flames shooting out of the building, firefighters were able to keep the fire from spreading to neighboring homes. *BFD image*

Rental scammer charged with ‘larceny by false pretense’

A 23-year-old Boston man was arrested by the Boston Police Fugitive Task Force last Wednesday (Feb. 28) on “larceny by false pretense charges” after he allegedly bilked “multiple victims” by falsely advertising a room for rent that “he already occupied.” After collecting payments from unsuspecting people on Facebook, the accused – Bruno Vieira Ferreira – then “ghosted” them— or stopped communicating. He was detained on Exeter Street after detectives tracked him and obtained a warrant. “Despite eviction notices from the rental company, Ferreira persisted in advertising the room online and even offered a key to his most recent victim,” Boston Police reported. Ferreira was arraigned in Dorchester District Court.

A 38-year-old woman was arrested last Wednesday morning near Andrew Square with the help of a quick-footed bystander who saw her making her way along Boston Street with “red smoke pouring out” of her hoodie pocket. Boston Police say Miriam Dealmeida had robbed the Rockland Trust bank branch minutes before— and was also a suspect in an earlier bank robbery in Chinatown that same day. According to police, Dealmeida was making her way down Boston Street when a dye pack in her new cash exploded in her hoodie pocket.

A bystander decided it was very suspicious that a woman would have red smoke coming out of her hoodie and chased her, catching up with her at Father Songin Way and holding her even as he notified a BPD sergeant who, as luck would have it, was right nearby, police say.

Dalmeida was arraigned in South Boston Municipal Court on a charge of unarmed robbery, where she was ordered held in lieu of \$2,500 bail, according to court records. She faces a similar charge in Boston Municipal Court for the Chinatown robbery, court records show.

Murphy said to be seeking SJC clerk post

City Councilor-at-Large Erin Murphy is said to be planning a run for a new office this fall: Clerk of the Supreme Judicial Court for Suffolk County. According to Politico, Murphy will seek to replace the current clerk, fellow Dorchester resident Maura Doyle, who announced last month that she will not seek re-election in November.

“I feel that my decades as an educator and my time... on the Boston City Council have prepared me to take on what will be an important role as the clerk of the Supreme Judicial Court,” Murphy told Politico in a statement published on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Murphy can run for the county seat without giving up her council position; however she would be expected to step down from the council if



Erin Murphy

she wins the clerk’s job. Murphy was re-elected to her second term as an at-large city councillor on Nov. 7., finishing a strong second in the citywide balloting behind current Council President Ruthzee Louijeune. She is a former Boston Public School teacher who first ran for council in 2019 and was elected on her



Maura Doyle

second attempt in 2021. Her political base is in Dorchester’s Ward 16, but Murphy showed considerable electoral growth in other parts of the city in the 2023 election, which will likely boost her candidacy for county-wide office. In addition to Boston, Suffolk County includes Chelsea, Revere, and

Winthrop. Allison S. Cartwright, an attorney and public defender, has said she is exploring a candidacy for the SJC clerk position. Doyle, who has held the position for 28 years, is currently the longest-serving elected official from Dorchester. The clerk’s office is charged with overseeing the caseload of the Supreme Judicial Court and “administrative and disciplinary matters... affecting members of the bar,” including coordinating the formal admission of new attorneys. If elected, Murphy’s departure from the council would create a vacancy that would be filled through the end of the term by the fifth-place finisher in last year’s municipal election— Bridget Nee-Walsh of South Boston. – REPORTER STAFF

Biden puts Marty Walsh in line for seat on US Postal Service board

Former Boston Mayor Marty Walsh could soon be due for his second US Senate confirmation hearing. President Biden last Thursday nominated the lifelong Dorchester resident, who spent more than two years as labor secretary in his Cabinet, for a position on the US Postal Service’s Board of Governors.

Walsh would not need to leave his job leading the NHL players’ union to take the USPS board position.

The board effectively oversees operations of the Postal Service, describing itself as “comparable to a board of di-



Marty Walsh

rectors of a publicly held corporation.” It can have up to nine governors, and according to USPS, seven of those seats are currently filled.

This marks the second time that Biden has nominated Walsh for a major

federal job. In January 2021, he asked him to serve as his secretary of labor. Walsh won Senate confirmation in March of that year, and remained in office until February 2023, when he departed to take over the NHL

Players’ Association. A longtime labor leader, Walsh spent seven years as mayor after serving 16 years in the Massachusetts House of Representatives. – STATE HOUSE NEWS SERVICE

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UPCOMING CIVIC MEETINGS AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

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A \$10,000 raffle drawing event to benefit Saint Brendan church will be held this **Friday, March 8, from 6:30 to 11 p.m.** at Florian Hall, 55 Hallet St., Dorchester. Drawing tickets are \$100 each and you do not need to be present to win. To purchase tickets, see ad on page 17.

The Dorchester Historical Society plans two public programs in March. The first, on this **Saturday, March 9, at 3 p.m.** via Zoom, is “**On the Trail of Women’s History: From Uphams Corner to Savin Hill,**” featuring an illustrated talk by Anita Danker, Ed.D., who will highlight the work of trailblazing women who played a role in Dorchester history. Register for the program at dorchesterhistoricalsociety.org.

On **Sat., March 16, from 1 to 3 p.m.,** the **DHS joins with Jamaica Plain Historical Society and the Grove Hall Branch of the**

BPL to present “Getting It Together in Franklin Park: The Past and Future of a Boston Landmark.” The event is presented in person at the Grove Hall BPL branch, 41 Geneva Ave., Dorchester, and also via Zoom. Register at jphs.org/events.

The **John F. Kennedy Library hosts a forum** entitled “**The Pursuit of Happiness**” on **Wed., March 13, at 6 p.m.** featuring Jeffrey Rosen, CEO and President of the National Constitution Center, who will discuss his new book “The Pursuit of Happiness: How Classical Writers on Virtue Inspired the Lives of the Founders and Defined America.” The book explores what “the pursuit of happiness” meant to our nation’s founders and how that famous phrase defined their lives and became the foundation of our democracy. Mary Sarah Bilder, Boston College professor of law, moderates. See jfklibrary.org to register.

View a screening of the new film “**The Inundation District**” during an **in-person forum at the Kennedy Library that will convene at 6 p.m. on Thurs., March 21.** The film explores the implications of Boston’s decision to build the Seaport District along its coast at sea level, followed by a panel discussion about the threats of climate change with **Joe Christo**, managing director of the Stone Living Lab, and **Sanjay Seth**, chief of staff and senior advisor for Climate and Equity in EPA Region 1, moderated by filmmaker and *Boston Globe* reporter **David Abel**. The post-film conversation will be available for both in-person and virtual attendees and will begin streaming at approximately 7:20 p.m. See jfklibrary.org.

First Parish Dorchester will host a Community Dance on Sat., March 23, from 6

to 9 p.m. Includes square dances, international dances, couples, individual and line and circle dances. This event is for all ages from children to seniors. A caller leads dancers through the steps to make it fun for novices and experienced dancers. Refreshments provided. Suggested donation for adults \$10, children free. For more information call 617-981-5201.

The **BPDA plans a virtual meeting for Thurs., April 4, at 6 p.m.** to discuss a proposal by EJS Investments, Inc. to build a 5-story, 42 unit mixed-use building at 819 Cummins Highway. The building will include ground-floor retail, 25 parking spaces, and 46 bicycle spaces. See bit.ly/819-cummins-highway for more info.

SEND IN EVENT NOTICES TO
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Urban Farming Institute buys historic Norfolk St. property

**By SETH DANIEL
NEWS EDITOR**

The Urban Farming Institute (UFI) has purchased the Fowler Clark Epstein Farm on Norfolk Street in Mattapan, a property it has been taking care of since 2014. The group’s president, Patricia Spence, shared the news of the \$1.4 million purchase at Monday evening’s meeting of the Greater Mattapan Neighborhood Council. The non-profit bought the farm from Historic Boston, Inc., which oversaw a major \$3.8 million restoration of the site in 2018.

“This is something that is for us, meaning for Mattapan and beyond,” said Spence.

“This has been one of the most exciting projects in my career and it’s exciting because it’s for all of us,” she continued. “We all knew that one day we would raise the money and own the property. It was built into our lease. In June 2020, we started fundraising, and we ended that in December 2022 and more has come in to fund some other things.”

She said the fundraising was done by UFI, Historic Boston, Inc., the North Bennet Street School, and the Trust for Public Land. The efforts of those four organizations raised enough money to buy the farm and not be “burdened” with a mortgage or any debt attached to it. They have also created a maintenance fund and pay for a study to produce a 20-year maintenance strategy.

The latter was an important



The historic Fowler Clark Epstein Farm on Norfolk Street in Mattapan has been purchased by the Urban Farming Institute, which has been its caretaker since 2014. They purchased the property for \$1.4 million after a vigorous fundraising campaign that lasted over two years.

Seth Daniel photo

feature of the purchase, given that the circa 1786 farm and farmhouse and 1860 carriage house barn were rescued from total disrepair and neglect by Historic Boston, Inc. and UFI.

Spence even joked that growing up in the area, she and her friends were able to ride their bikes near the farm and that they referred to it as the “creepy house.” Now, she said, the structure of this fundraising and purchase effort will ensure that the property does not fall into disrepair, or into the hands of a profiteer.

“A lot of thought went into this so the next time someone wouldn’t come by and take

the buildings and the land,” said Spence.

The UFI runs many different activities and supports farming teachers who run classes at 16 local schools like the PA Shaw Elementary, the Mildred Avenue K-8, and the Ellison Parks Early Learning Center. They also run a senior citizen program that has about 60 regular participants and a Black men’s discussion group once per week.

Additionally, they run a popular farmer’s market on Fridays during farming season, usually with live music, but their key program is a farmer program, which has seen

trained classes of farmers go into the industry over the last 10 years.

“Fewer than one percent of people of color are farmers,” she said. “This is our homage to getting the land back and holding the land in perpetuity for our farmers and training other farmers in the future.”

MATTAPAN NOTEBOOK

• There will be an online public meeting on April 4 from 6 to 8 p.m. for the forthcoming project at 819 Cummins Highway, which seeks to take four vacant lots (19,491 square feet) next to the Lopes Funeral

Home and transform them into a 5-story, 42-unit mixed use building with 25 parking spaces. The project developer is EJS Investments/Sathuan Sa of Quincy, which is represented by Michael Ross of Prince Lobel. The general contractor is TJD Construction, a Black-owned business operated by Tyshania Dismond.

• A volunteer cleanup day will target the Mattahunt Woods on Sat., March 23, from 1 to 3 p.m. Volunteers will remove trash, weeds, and debris from the area, and get an update on the upcoming restoration project for the woods. Questions can be addressed via email to Nicholas.long@boston.gov.

• District 4 Councillor Brian Worrell announced that he will sponsor a credit and financial literacy camp for high school students on March 13 at 5 p.m. in the Mattapan Teen Center (MTC). The event will include a ‘Shark Tank’ style business pitch contest and the winner will receive a funding prize for their business.

• GMNC’s Azan Reid reminded everyone that Bishop Nicolas Homicil continues to run a very large food pantry for the needy on Saturdays at 1 p.m. at 47 Edgewater Drive. (Voice of the Gospel Tabernacle).

• Mattapan resident Edosa Osemwegie logged his first evening of work at the GMNC meeting, as he has been brought on staff for At-large Councillor Henry Santana.

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• DIVERSITY STEM SCHOLARSHIP

Awarded to high school seniors of color who reside or attend school in the city of Boston, Chelsea, Revere, Winthrop, Worcester, Bedford, Concord, Lexington, or Lincoln, and are involved in community service with a minimum 3.0 GPA.

Scholarship applications must be received by Massport **no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 26, 2024**. For more information on these scholarships, including application and criteria please visit www.massport.com

Grappling with the Article 80 re-booting

(Continued from page 1)

the process almost ten years ago, as part of his drive to boost housing production. And, before she was elected mayor, Michelle Wu outlined more sweeping recommendations for change in a 2019 report that also called for abolishing the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA).

Four years later, at Wu’s direction, the BPDA started work on reforms, including a revamp of Article 80, the section of the city’s zoning code that applies to projects with at least 20,000 square feet or 15 dwelling units. Last week, following surveys and talks with consultants and stakeholders, the BPDA looked for advice and reaction at two public meetings.

The Article 80 reform is part of Wu’s larger effort to overhaul zoning and repurpose the BPDA, the successor to the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), the quasi-independent authority established in 1957. Under the ordinance Wu filed with the City Council in January, planning would become a core city function—with the accountability of a line department. The BRA’s focus on eliminating “blight” and “urban decay” would be replaced by a mission of “enacting affordability, equity, and resilience citywide.”

In her letter to the Council, Wu said the new agency would enable the city to “transition away from a reactive approach centered on responding to private development proposals, to instead planning proactively to the needs of Bostonians with coordinated citywide efforts for direct accountability, transparency, community engagement, and predictability.”

By the time the BPDA held its first public meeting on Article 80 reform, on February 28 at the Bolling Municipal Building in Roxbury, it had already heard calls for changes from neighborhood leaders and people from the development sector, as well as suggestions from people under-represented at community meetings about how to improve engagement.

As the meeting got underway, Devin Quirk, the BPDA’s deputy chief of Transformation and Development, told a gathering of 30-40 people, “You believe that we can do better in the way we manage planning and development in the City of Boston, and we believe that, too, and that’s what this process is all about. Generally, we can all agree that the way we do development in the City of Boston is not a predictable, linear process that is transparent and accountable to our community members and stakeholders, whether they’re in business, small businesses, or development.”

It didn’t take long for some residents to shift the focus from process to desired outcomes: reparations, construction jobs for Boston residents, or holding the line against gentrification and displacement. That also shifted the focus from design of process to intentions of decision-makers.

“How do you do this kind of process if the vision of what we’re trying to do isn’t the starting point?” asked Jamaica Plain resident Weezy Weinstein. “And that statement of vision has to be more than one word, ‘equity.’”

Providing one example, she said, “If we want to have children in the city, we have to build family-sized units. You build all studios at once, no wonder the school [population] is getting smaller. But, if no one says that as part of the vision, then it gets fought over at the very tail end of a project discussion.”

Before officials invited comments, they summarized eleven “emerging themes and ideas” about how the Article 80 process could be improved. One possibility was to communicate the city’s intentions about development projects “early and often.” Among the other possibilities: to streamline review for projects aligned with city priorities—such as affordable housing, and to have a more predictable approach for determining mitigation and community benefits.

Yet another possibility was to reform the appointed “impact advisory groups” (IAGs) that identify a project’s impact and recommend mitigation measures. In the BPDA’s surveys, the “impact advisory groups” were criticized for spotty performance and sometimes not adequately representing the cross-section of their neighborhoods.

Adding to the criticism at the Roxbury meeting was Tarshia Green, a Dorchester resident and deputy director of Action for Equity, a regional advocacy group for jobs and preventing displacement.

“As someone who served on an advisory group before I tell you it’s a joke,” said Green. “You get a packet about a project. You meet never, only in the public meetings. You have no time to discuss with community or with each other about the projects. You get yelled at by people. And then if the project doesn’t happen, you don’t know. And if it does, you don’t know.”

One possible alternative mentioned by officials was a citywide advisory group that could be trained and paid. The reaction to the idea at both meetings was negative.

The president of the Garrison-Trotter Neighbor-



A Feb. 28 meeting at the Bolling Municipal Building in Roxbury drew an audience to discuss proposed changes to the BPDA’s Article 80 review process. Pictured, at right, is Nupoor Monani, Deputy Director of Master Planning and Policy and Kristiana Lachiusa, left, the BPDA’s Deputy Director of Community Engagement. *Chris Lovett photo*

hood Association in Roxbury, Louis Elisa, told officials that switching from a local group familiar with “small details” to a citywide body “is an issue of concern.” During the following night’s virtual meeting, officials heard a suggestion for IAG members to receive training, but Elisa said the city should engage with the community on how planning objectives fit.

“I’m hopeful you’ll begin to plan in the context of the people that you are planning for, because it’s not one size,” Elisa told officials. “What may work in Charlestown will not work in Mattapan, Dorchester, and Roxbury.”

During the virtual meeting, the BPDA’s Deputy Director of Master Planning and Policy, Nupoor Monani, noted that the current Article 80 framework lacks standards for quality, whether to distinguish a project that’s adequate from one that’s exceptional, or even reduce time spent on getting to a rare “no” vote by the BPDA board. “We want to proactively set those standards,” she said, “and we want to set them in a way that is transparent, so that everyone understands what a grade A is as opposed to a B-plus.”

Local residents vetting proposals usually give attention to design and recommend changes, only to be puzzled sometimes by what results from the BPDA’s design review. Monani suggested that the disconnect could be bridged through better communication by the city. “We want to kind of be an active participant in the dialogue in these community meetings with the developer and the community, and not just sort of a mediator,” she said.

During the same meeting, Monani said that the BPDA intended to have draft recommendations for Article 80 reform “toward the end of May.” But she also said there would be more public meetings.

“You know, we’re doing this for the first time in 30 years,” she said at the Roxbury meeting. “We want to make sure we absolutely get it right, so we are not beholden to the timelines here. These are purely ambitious, and we are open to adjusting them as needed to get the best product.”

Along with the BPDA ordinance and Article 80 reform, Wu is also trying to update zoning to allow for development with more density near main streets and transit service, under the “Squares + Streets” initiative. Officials stress the new zoning would be within range of what has long been allowed with variances, which are granted through a process that includes neighborhood input. But that would also require a trade-off: the familiar limits of locally based leverage, exerted mainly by neighborhood groups, for the less familiar possibility of more collaborative planning by the city, possibly with more inclusive engagement of the neighborhood.

During the virtual meeting, Angie Peguero, director of Resident and Community Engagement with the Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation, reminded officials that a reform process does not hit pause on development.

“The community is concerned with how fast everything is moving,” she said. “And, although the change is happening as it is moving, development is still happening, and there’s no clear transparency of what’s going to change with what’s happening now versus this plan that’s going [into effect] in five or ten years. We’re not adjusting to now, I guess, is what the community’s feeling.”

Monani replied that planning processes in the past

have taken “a very long time,” with market and regulatory clocks not always in sync. “The directive we have from the mayor is to do more and be nimble,” she said. “I think the previous iterations of this agency haven’t necessarily done that. And that’s what our planning staff is trying to do now through initiatives like “Squares + Streets.” She went on to say that the city wants to make timelines more “realistic and predictable.”

Wu’s proposed reforms also follow a coupling of more permissive zoning with gains for affordable housing and construction jobs that goes back to 1983, with adoption of the “linkage” policy for large downtown projects. The reforms also come after targeted efforts to recalibrate zoning on a neighborhood scale by her predecessors. That happened along Boylston Street in the Fenway under Thomas Menino and, on a wider scale throughout the city, by Walsh. In his citywide housing goals, Boston2030, where Walsh targeted zoning adjustments, and higher contributions for affordability required in his inclusionary development program, the nexus between density and affordability was reaffirmed.

In October of 2014, during Walsh’s first year as mayor, he made zoning relief part of a plan to add 53,000 units of housing in Boston by 2030. Less than three months later, he announced plans to boost housing development on locations near rapid transit lines in South Boston and Jamaica Plain.

The city followed up by creating a master plan for development in areas straddling the Orange Line between Forest Hills and Jackson Square. “Plan JP/Rox” called for clear, predictable standards to “inform future development proposals.” There would also be updated base zoning, a new “density bonus” in “eligible, strategic areas” where developers were encouraged to create affordable units averaging 50 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI)—at the time, as much as \$39,400 a year for a household of two.

Before the formulation of the plan started, in July of 2015, regulatory expectations were already on the rise and developers were already on the move. In October 2014, one day after Walsh released his first Boston2030 plan, a team of local developers bought three parcels near Egleston Square that would later be transformed into 3200 Washington Street, a six-story complex with 73 housing units.

Even before August of 2015, when the project was approved by the BPDA, there were protests calling for the units to be more affordable. The plan approved had 12 on-site units affordable for between 65 and 100 percent of the AMI—well above incomes for the surrounding neighborhood, and half of those units were studios or single-bedroom. A realtor supporting the plan filed a letter hailing improvements of an area she called an “eye sore (sic),” but developers themselves were already touting a “vibrant” area enhanced by diversity.

The protests would continue, even to March of 2017, when Plan JP/Rox was approved by the BPDA Board. By then, the original developers had already bought another property on Washington Street. In September 2016, before even starting construction at 3200 Washington street, they sold the parcels for the project –acquired for \$3 million in 2014 – for \$6.2 million.

Though Plan JP/Rox would spur more affordable units at other locations, the disappointment in the

Tracing the steps of 18 remarkable Dot women

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“Many of these [women were in] areas that kind of belonged mostly to men,” Danker said. “For instance, somebody being a doctor, it isn’t really a big deal, but it was a big deal for women in the 1800s.”
Going along with this year’s Women’s History Month theme of women who advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion, the women on the trail worked in a diverse range

of fields. The 18 stops on the first trail represent the different areas where the women lived or worked during their lives. Since Dorchester is geographically large, the entirety of the trail has been divided into three sections. This first section, which Danker will discuss on Saturday, begins at Dudley and Howard streets. The section covers Uphams Corner, Jones Hill, and Savin Hill.

While Danker looks forward to sharing the stories of all 18 women, she is especially excited to discuss the singer, philanthropist, and American Civil War nurse Elida Rumsey Fowl; the Boston-born civil rights activist and associate editor of *The Boston Guardian* Geraldine Pindell Trotter; the founder of the Animal Rescue League Boston Anna Clapp Harris Smith; and the public

reader and teacher of elocution Elizabeth Stanton Chadbourne.
The second and third sections of the trail are expected to take another year to complete. The second will include Meetinghouse Hill, Fields Corner, and Clam Point, while the third will cover Neponset, Lower Mills, and Grove Hall.
Earl Taylor added that people should attend Saturday’s meeting because

“the history of women is not just about women. It’s a pathway into all aspects of Dorchester history and you can learn through their lives.”
Like Taylor, Danker hopes many people will join her remotely. “There are Dorchester women we should learn more about. This is not the end this is just the beginning of this history,” she said. “Hopefully, we will continue to highlight these women



Geraldine Trotter
every way we can and keep the project going in that way.”
Those interested in attending can register online at dorchestherhistoricalsociety.org.

‘Boba tea’ shop to open soon opposite St. Mark’s church

By Cassidy McNeeley
REPORTER CORRESPONDENT
The lone retail space in a new mixed-use building at 1700 Dorchester Ave. across from St. Mark’s Church will soon be home to DOTTEA, the neighborhood’s newest boba tea shop. “I’m most excited to bring the new version of

Vietnamese boba milk tea and fruit tea to this area and community,” said owner and operator Cee Nguyen. “All the teas and coffees are imported from Vietnam.”
The building, which was completed last year, includes studio, one-, and two-bedroom apartments above the retail site,

which is set to open in late spring. In addition to boba milk tea, the store will offer fruit tea, Vietnamese coffee, and snacks such as waffles and crepes.
Along with his wife, Gigi, Cee also owns Ban Toi, a Vietnamese restaurant at 1035 Dorchester Ave. in Savin Hill. The

couple live in the St. Mark’s neighborhood and hope to see their businesses continue to positively impact the community they call home.
Leslie MacKinnon, of MacKinnon & Co., was tasked with leasing the space six months ago. She believes DOTTEA is the

perfect fit and that residents in the apartment units above the retail space and on the streets nearby will enjoy having a “cafe hangout” space.
“We’re really hoping that it’s a place for the neighbors to gather and socialize in a casual setting without having to go too far,” said MacKinnon.

“I think it’s really great for the neighborhood, and it’s nice to have a local family that lives right there in the neighborhood be owners and operators of it.”
More details about the opening will be available later this spring.

Grappling with the Article 80 re-booting process

(Continued from page 4)
Egleston Square neighborhood resurfaced at the BPDA’s Article 80 meeting in Roxbury, in comments by Marie Turley, a neighborhood activist from Jamaica Plain. She acknowledged the gain for affordability on Washington Street in another

project, developed by Pine Street Inn and The Community Builders, but she lamented a street increasingly defined by taller buildings hugging the sidewalk and a loss of tree cover. She also took issue with the heavy representation from the development sector on

Wu’s steering committee to advise on Article 80.
“You know,” she told officials, “if you really want us to trust that it’s fair, it’s equitable, and we’ve heard, and it’s not about developers and displacement, then you really have to refocus.”
Also talking about

trust, in the virtual meeting, was a long-time activist and expert on urban design and transportation, Kenneth Kruckemeyer, who asked for attention to how projects proceed and how decisions are made.
“I wanted to reinforce the fact that, unless there is transparency in the

decision-making process as well as in the work that you’re doing about the development process,” said Kruckemeyer, “then your efforts to create trust between the neighbors and the city will go unrealized, because it seems to me that that trust is essential and it relies upon transparency.”

Monani credited him with an “excellent challenge.” She ended the meeting by telling him, “I don’t think any of us believe that we comprehensively have trust in our communities, and it’s what we are here to build.”

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Biden, Trump win in Boston, statewide



Boston voters went to the polls on Tuesday to complete balloting for the presidential primary. President Joe Biden was, by far, the top vote getter, receiving 40,141 votes or 77 percent of votes cast by those who picked a Democratic ballot. The “no preference” option was the choice of 7,288 voters on the Democratic side, constituting roughly 14 percent. Dean Phillips received 4 percent and Marianne Williamson about 3 percent of the Democratic vote.

On the Republican side, a far smaller number of voters across the city chose former President Donald Trump as their nominee, with 9,428 votes— or 51.4 percent. Nikki Haley, who has since suspended her campaign, was competitive, winning 8,195 — roughly 45 percent of Republican votes in the city. Trump was the clear choice in several Dorchester precincts that have a history of favoring more conservative candidates.

At the double-precinct Florian Hall, Republican voters went with Trump over Haley, 209-63. At Adams Street Library, which includes two precincts in ward 16, it was Trump over Haley, 274-87. Biden was the overwhelming choice among those who pulled Democrat ballots in those same precincts. At Adams Street Library, for example, Biden won 396 votes and there were 89 “no preference” votes. Statewide, Trump beat Haley by a wider margin— 60-37 percent, according to unofficial results. STAFF




US Sen. Ed Markey spoke about expanding access to and ownership of solar panels during an event last Saturday inside the Fields Corner Business Lab. The event highlighted a new cooperative that includes the Dorchester Food Co-op. For more information about the opportunity, see bostoncommunitysolar.org. Image courtesy Sen. Markey's office




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Clergy leaders repeat their call for action on housing

By COLIN A. YOUNG
STATE HOUSE
NEWS SERVICE

More than 115 members of the Massachusetts clergy signed onto an open letter to House and Senate leadership on Sunday, saying that “it is clear that the issue of housing has all but consumed the hearts and minds of our people” and urging the Legislature to take five specific steps to contend with the state’s housing crunch. The Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO) letter asks the legislators to increase the public housing operating budget from \$107 million to \$189 million to fund repairs for vacant units in state-funded public housing, support at least \$1.6 billion in capital repair funding for public housing as part of Gov. Healey’s pending housing bond bill, support that same bill’s proposal

to authorize cities and towns to levy real estate transfer fees, provide state identification to people leaving incarceration, and increase rental assistance for formerly incarcerated people in need of housing by \$6 million. Housing in Massachusetts is often inaccessible or unaffordable, and Healey last year identified housing as “the number one issue facing this state.” The Legislature is in the midst of renewing the five-year, \$4.12 billion housing bond bill (H4138) that Healey filed seeking to kickstart production of new housing units. And though there is broad agreement that the state has an economic imperative to make more housing available, some pieces of the governor’s bill — like the potential for local-option real estate transfer taxes — are viewed as controversial

in the Legislature because they will add to housing costs. “We are aware that our state faces urgent budget and shelter crises,” the 117 clergy members who signed the letter said, acknowledging that lawmakers have little wiggle room when it comes to budget decisions lately. “These actions will immediately impact many of our most at-risk neighbors and get people off waiting lists and shelters and into homes. In the long run, decisive action on affordable, secure housing will help avoid such crises as it saves money and helps solve housing problems that afflict us all. They are simple, urgent, and moral solutions that will make a concrete difference on the crisis we face.” The letter was publicized Sunday at a GBIO event at the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center in Roxbury, attended by more than 1,700 people, according to organizers. GBIO clergy and volunteers have advocated for a legislative solution to the state’s pressing housing problems since early 2023.

Since October, the organization has held 18 “in-district meetings” to let state lawmakers hear directly from impacted constituents and to publicly respond to the organization’s platform. GBIO said almost 60 elected officials attended, including more than half of the Senate’s leadership group. “I don’t want to have to say goodbye to another member of my parish because Roxbury’s rent is so sky high,” Father Oscar Pratt of St. Katharine Drexel Parish in Roxbury, a GBIO member institution, said. “We are building 217 units of affordable housing around our church. We are bringing solutions and leaving nothing on the table. We need the Legislature to do the same.”



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\$50k grant will help open doors to city’s first community birth center

By TAYLOR BROKESH
REPORTER CORRESPONDENT

The Mayor’s Office of Women’s Advancement has awarded a \$50,000 grant to Roxbury’s Neighborhood Birth Center (NBC) to support the advancement of Boston’s first community birth center, the city announced last month.

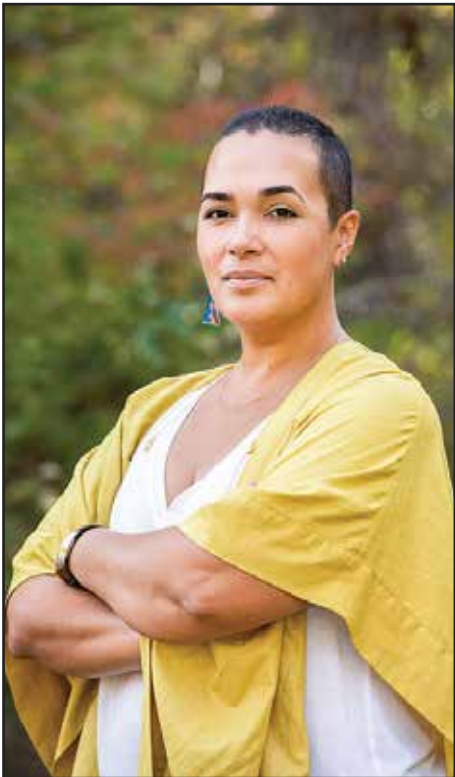
A birth center is different from a hospital in that it aims to offer a more homelike, comfortable, and non-medical atmosphere and allows patients more agency and choice in the way they deliver their baby. Typically, birth centers are staffed by midwives and other support staff.

There is only one other birth center in the state, Seven Sisters Midwifery in Northampton, which is independently owned. Two other birth centers owned by hospitals in Cambridge and Beverly were closed in 2020 and 2022, respectively, because of the pandemic. In total, 38 states professionally license midwives, but Massachusetts is not one of them, which means they can’t accept insurance.

“Ensuring that residents have access to support before, during, and after birth is critical for their health and well-being,” said Mayor Wu in the grant’s announcement. “As we work to make Boston a city for everyone, we are excited to invest in organizations that are working to improve birth outcomes and secure reproductive justice for all families.”

Nashira Baril, the executive director of the birth center in Roxbury with a masters in Maternal and Child Health from Boston University School of Public Health, said she remembers the exact moment when she realized she wanted to take on establishing the birth center after having had home births with her two children.

“I was having lunch with my BU



Nashira Baril

advisor years after I graduated, Dr. JoAnna Rorie, a midwife,” Baril said. “And I was saying something about how I had the most incredible home birth experience, but it’s just terrible that I could only access it because I could afford to pay for it. And she said, ‘Well, yeah, that’s why we’ve been wanting a birth center.’ And I said, ‘a what?’ I’d gone through undergraduate and graduate school without hearing those words or knowing that was even an option.”

The Roxbury operation grew slowly but surely – in 2023, the staff grew to five. In just under two years of fundraising, NBC was able to raise \$3 million and purchase land at 14 Winthrop Street in Roxbury’s Nubian

Square. The center plans to officially open for business in 2025.

Tiffany Vassell, co-manager of community engagement and communications, has designed 14 workshops and informational sessions that NBC is running throughout 2024. The purpose of these, she said, is to empower and inform.

“Generally, people know when you go to have your baby, you’re either gonna have the baby vaginally or with a C-section,” Vassell said. “But a lot of times, people don’t understand that there are so many components to that. Things like bodily autonomy, like ensuring that your healthcare team knows that you are the expert of your body and when you say something is wrong, or you have an inkling of something, it should be followed up on. Also, things like reproductive justice, what’s that? Informed consent? What does that mean and how do you obtain that?”

Vassell said people sometimes overlook the fact that not only is there a new baby once someone gives birth, but there’s also a new parent.

“We’re wanting to bring community back, and help people feel connected and that they have resources, and that there’s someone they can talk to that will listen and that’s available to listen to them,” she added.

Baril said that a major goal of NBC is to integrate as seamlessly as possible into the neighborhood.

“One of our biggest commitments is to be a good neighbor and to be bringing midwifery back into the community,” she said. “We didn’t want to build in a commercial zone. We spent the last year listening to neighbors and designing and redesigning. And we’ll go to the neighbors again before we go to the [Zoning Board].”

Another crucial aspect of birth centers, Baril said, is that they aim

to serve whoever wants to be served. And NBC is aiming to be as inclusive as possible, especially since they will be located in the heart of Roxbury. The neighborhoods with the highest percentage of low birthweight at birth – a common indicator of infant health – from 2019 to 2021 were Mattapan, Dorchester, Hyde Park, and Roxbury.

Baril said it’s not a coincidence that these neighborhoods are also where a majority of Boston’s people of color reside. But, she noted, maternal outcomes for women in the United States in general, regardless of race, are less than acceptable.

“I think it’s important that, when we talk about inequity, that we’re also talking about how the system isn’t working for anyone,” she said. “So, when we grow this center in Roxbury for some of the folks with the worst outcomes, we’re also going to create the best birth center in the city of Boston. We’re aiming for that saying, ‘A rising tide lifts all boats.’”

Baril said midwifery is “age-old” and only over the past century have people switched to hospitals, in part because of smear campaigns from medical stakeholders to paint midwives as unsanitary and unsafe.

Nevertheless, Baril and Vassell said, midwifery and home birth are once again becoming a more and more popular option, particularly after the pandemic limited hospital options. The city’s grant highlights their commitment to establishing the birth center in Boston, they said.

“It’s felt very isolating as a nonprofit start-up to fundraise in people’s backyards trying to do this, all the while like, ‘Boston, hello! This is the answer to our wildest dreams,’” Baril said. “To have the city’s attention now, it just feels like there is so much possibility.”

Doulas say that state rates won’t cover costs, demand

By ALISON KUZNITZ
STATE HOUSE NEWS SERVICE

About 50 doulas are expected to enroll as new MassHealth providers this spring, but maternal health care advocates warn that the state’s payment structure is too low and may hamper the workforce from growing enough to keep up with demand for publicly funded doula services.

Doulas, who are non-medical individuals trained to support people throughout pregnancy, delivery and the postpartum period, could make up to \$1,700 per client under a revised payment scale rolled out by MassHealth in December following a public comment period.

The overall amount includes \$900 for labor and delivery support, a figure that doulas say is inadequate when factoring in the average number of hours it can take for a client to give birth — in addition to other costs doulas face, including liability insurance, transportation, food, and childcare expenses.

“We’re Massachusetts. We’re supposed to be the lead for most things medical-related, so why are we not setting the bar?” Katia Powell-Laurent, a birth

and postpartum doula and the founder of Black Girls Nutrition, said. “I do not know where they got the \$900. It’s definitely not enough. We live in Boston — everything is expensive, really expensive.”

For high-risk clients, Powell-Laurent said she charges a bundled rate between \$2,500 and \$3,000. When labor exceeds 15 hours, she calls in for back-up support from another doula and uses a cost-sharing agreement that Powell-Laurent said could be difficult to deploy under MassHealth regulations.

While doulas are grateful that the state is rolling out the new MassHealth program, advocates like Powell-Laurent said they’re also pushing Massachusetts to reevaluate how it can be more attractive to the private doula workforce and aspiring providers – and to other states with similar doula initiatives.

Maternal health advocates say they’re also focused on supporting doula workforce legislation (H 1240 / S 782), which remains in the custody of the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing, that could boost competitive rates and diversify the provider landscape. The committee reported the bill out favorably last session, but the House Ways and Means

Committee did not take further action on it. It was sponsored last session by Rep. Lindsay Sabadosa and then-Rep. Liz Miranda.

Erika Laquer, a doula and childbirth educator based in western Massachusetts, said she wants to enroll as a MassHealth provider to help vulnerable people who could benefit most from the service. Yet she expressed worry that the state’s payment scale may drive people away from joining the already small doula workforce. More reasonable compensation would land between \$2,200 to \$2,800, she said.

“I’m concerned that from doulas’ point of view, there won’t be an incentive to carry a full load of MassHealth clients compared to clients if they are doulas who do private pay,” Laquer said.

Asked about criticism of the maximum reimbursement rate of \$1,700, a spokesperson for the Executive Office of Health and Human Services said the regulations incorporated feedback from doulas, clinicians, hospitals, and other stakeholders through various public listening sessions, requests for information to collect feedback, a public hearing and a public comment period.

Columbia-Savin Hill civic votes to let Dot Bay EDC manage \$750k donation

By TAYLOR BROKESH
REPORTER CORRESPONDENT

Members of the Columbia-Savin Hill Civic Association on Monday night (March 4) voted to approve a plan to outsource management of a \$750,000 donation from a local developer to the non-profit Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation (EDC).

The vote was based on a recommendation from the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) that it would rather let an established 501(c)(3) accept and manage the funds than

a civic association, which is typically not set up to accept large-sum mitigation funds.

Don Walsh, who co-chairs the civic association’s Community Benefits committee, said more details need to be worked out as to how exactly the partnership between Dorchester Bay EDC, based in Uphams Corner, and the civic association will be structured. But with Monday’s vote, Walsh said, the association can start to consider what the money can be used for.

Some ideas outlined

in a planning document include hiring one or two staff members to handle administrative duties, strengthening the capacity of the newly formed Government Affairs and Public Health committees, and hosting more community events.

Others have proposed the establishment of a first-ever Main Street district along the stretch of Dorchester Avenue that is included in the civic association’s catchment area.

The donation is from Center Court LLC, which won approval from city

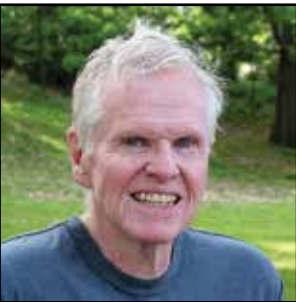
planners last year to build a seven-building campus at 35-75 Morrissey Blvd that includes the site of the former Channel 56 television studio. Members of the civic group have stressed that the “no-strings-attached” contribution came long after any debate about the merits of the developer’s plans. The association voted to accept the donation at the group’s January meeting.

Bill Walczak, the civic’s president, said donations like this could help the community come togeth-

er in a variety of ways.

“With Dorchester Avenue and other commercial areas around here, could we organize them better? Could we have marketing? All those kinds of things could help make our community more cohesive about how things happen. And the money could even go to beautifying Dorchester Ave, or frankly anything we want,” Walczak said. “These are things that are very possible to do, but especially if we have money.”

The Community Benefits Committee expects to budget its use of the funds over three years, with a \$250,000 allotment for each year. The panel’s role, Walsh said, will be



Don Walsh

to establish guidelines for spending the \$750,000, but the CSHCA’s executive board would be in charge of handling budget requests from the civic association’s various sub-committees. The membership of the civic association would then approve the budget after the executive board presents a final draft.

Henderson School student is Curry College's secret weapon on and off the ice

By Cassidy McNeeley
Reporter Correspondent

Brayden Gero has had a pretty-exciting last few years. He met President Barack Obama at the White House in 2014, rode a Duck Boat with Tom Brady in the 2015 Super Bowl Parade, and was honored by the Boston Police Department in 2018. Now 19, he is a proud team impact member of the Curry College hockey team, having signed on with the school in the fall of 2022.

"I love Curry College," says Gero. "I signed a contract, and I made it so far. The guys love me."

Gero, who has Down Syndrome, attends the Dr. William W. Henderson Inclusion School in Dorchester, which serves children of diverse ability backgrounds from early childhood through 12th grade. He joined the Curry Colonials squad through Team IMPACT, a national nonprofit organization that matches children facing serious illness and disability with college athletic teams.

He has been at the Henderson since middle school and is now in its transition program, which provides students over the age of 18 with additional skills and support.

He is proving to be a multi-tasker. He also works for the Boston Police Department, where his father, Jarrod Gero, is a sergeant. "I like school so much," Brayden said. "I'm in transition this year and I got a job some days for Boston Police. This is my dream come true, my dad's a cop for Boston."

Even with his busy school and work schedule, Gero never fails to make time for the Colonial skaters. Over the past two seasons, he has attended almost every game, both home and away. When the Colonials host games at the Canton Ice House, Brayden arrives in his suit, makes



Brayden Gero

his presence known in the locker room, and stands right by the bench throughout the game.

While he is technically a team impact player, he tends to take on the role of coach. "He wears a lot of hats, he considers himself like a player-coach," said head coach Peter Roundy. "He's here once a week for practice. He's talking with all the guys, talking with us, and he comes up with plays. He's always thinking about how to help the team."

One way that Brayden does this is by reading off the starting lineup before the game, an opportunity Roundy gives players throughout the season. The rule being, if the team loses, someone new steps up, and if the team wins, that person continues to announce the starters. When it was finally Brayden's turn, the team went on a 12-game winning streak.

Both Roundy and assistant coach Paul Russell believe Gero's energy helped the team go 20-5-1 this season. "He is as important as our first-line center," said Russell. "He's a big part of our team and he knows that and takes pride in that. He's an electric guy and he gets us fired up."

While Brayden appreciates the talents of every player on the team, he said that senior captain George Vonakis is the best because he is "fast" and "almost" scores a lot. He also plays center, which is Gero's favorite position. "I like center because of the passing and shooting," he said.

"They help the team and build the team."

Vonakis, who has compiled 45 goals and assists in his career at Curry, shines on the ice, but he thinks that Gero is the one who lights up the rink.

"Brayden signed on as our team impact player in the spring of my sophomore year. I've been here ever since he's been with the team and his impact has been just awesome," said Vonakis. "He always comes in with good energy and he's always keeping us in line, too. He's just been a bright spot the entire time he's been here and is an awesome addition to the team. I'm glad he's here."

Like his coaches, Vonakis sees Gero as a role model for the whole team. "Even through the challenges he goes through, we see him still being positive and loving life," he said in an interview with the Reporter.

Not only does Brayden spread his positivity around the rink, but he also takes this same energy to Curry's campus in Milton.

"I enjoy him at the rink, but I think it's really fun when we can see him outside the rink," said junior forward Elis Laaksonen. "He comes by the school a couple of times a month and has dinner with us and that's always fun. We can see how much it means to him, and I think anything that we can do to make him happy or help him out is really important and pretty special."

At these dinners, Gero enjoys his favorite food, hamburgers, and laughs with his teammates. Occasionally he'll even get up and dance, which is junior defenseman Jacob Crespo's favorite memory. "We do team dinners now and again and we'll bring him to our student cafeteria. One day he was coming up to me saying 'I want to show you my dance.' He put his head-



Brayden Gero is flanked by Curry College players, l-r: Elis Laaksonen, Jacob Crespo, George Vonakis, who sees Gero as a role model for the whole team.



Brayden Gero "considers himself like a player-coach," says Curry College's men's hockey head coach Peter Roundy. "He's always thinking about how to help the team." Cassidy McNeeley photos

phones on and just started dancing and we were hitting the table. He was just buzzing around, and we got everyone buzzing with him," said Crespo.

Brayden's Irish step to "Shipping Up to Boston," is just one way he keeps his teammates smiling throughout what can be a long and tiring hockey season. "He notices when guys are down and he'll come sit with you and talk about anything and ev-










everything, which is fun," Crespo said. "He takes your mind off things here and there and is constantly being positive all the time."

Gero's teammates and coaches hope to see him stick around for many more seasons and already look forward to next winter. "It's just a great way to give the guys some perspective on life and ground them," said Roundy. "He lives life with such a passion and enthusiasm that it's infectious and I think it rubbed off on the guys. It makes them realize

what's important."

In the fall, Brayden will continue his education in Dorchester but this time at UMass Boston where he will be seeking a certificate in Travel Training.

Editor's Note: The Curry Colonials' season just got a little bit longer. Despite a 7-2 loss in their playoff game against Salve Regina on Feb. 24, the Colonials have received an at-large bid to the NCCA DIII tournament. Their first game will be against SUNY Geneseo at the Ira S. Wilson Ice Arena in New York this Saturday at 7 p.m.



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by Anita Danker, Ed.D.

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It was 238 years ago this week that Washington took fateful gamble atop Dorchester Heights

By PETER F. STEVENS
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

On the night of March 4, 1776, officers gave the order to 2,000 or so men: No one was to speak above a whisper as Patriot batteries opened up on British positions in and around Boston to cloak the long file of Continental Army troops in “blue and buff” greatcoats or other hues who had lugged timber and cannons as silently as possible through the darkened streets of Roxbury and into Dorchester.

Wincing from the blustery blasts off the Atlantic and from the heft of their ordnance, the troops pushed ever closer to their objective — Dorchester Heights.

If spotted by the Redcoat batteries, disaster loomed; but if the procession reached the hills, the British regiments in Boston below and the British warships in the harbor and the Charles River would be left wide open to lethal blasts of Colonial artillery from the Heights.

Gen. George Washington, the American commander, was rolling

the dice in Dorchester. Washington had the wherewithal to destroy Boston if necessary, “notwithstanding the property and friends within it.” Since his arrival in Cambridge in late June 1775, the Virginian had been grimly determined to drive Sir William Howe’s Redcoat regiments, over 9,000 strong, from the region and break the stalemate.

With the eye of the surveyor and the soldier, Washington soon grasped that emplacing batteries atop Dorchester Heights could put the British at his mercy. The problem he faced in doing so was twofold: where to come up with the heavy cannons necessary to pour metal upon the redcoats, and how to take the Heights before the British could respond with sea and land bombardments on exposed American troops approaching the hills or seize the Heights before Washington could.

On January 24, 1776, Henry Knox, a bold, portly bookseller and former Bostonian, solved the first problem. Having seized Fort Ticonderoga

in upstate New York, he and his men dragged the garrison’s ponderous cannons through dense snow and icy gusts all the way to Cambridge, allowing Washington to turn his attention in earnest to Dorchester Heights.

The American commander’s counterpart, Howe, also had his sights on Dorchester Neck and the Heights. As “The History of Dorchester” notes, “For a long time, the English officers had their attention fixed on what they denominated, on their plan, the twin hills, with the intention of fortifying them; but while they were awaiting reinforcements enough to hazard it, the good judgment of General Washington prompted him to secure the hills, and he improved the opportunity.”

In early March, Washington and his staff rode out to Dorchester, and reined in at the farm of Captain John Homans, who lived in “the upper end of town.” Because the “ground was so much frozen that earth could not be used, even had there been time for it,”



Gen. Washington at Dorchester Heights, 1776.
Portrait by Gilbert Stuart/MFA Boston collection

for any potential forts, embrasures, and gun emplacements on the Heights, the Patriot commanders were combing the region for “fascines,” bundles of wood used to erect defenses. Homan’s acreage was full of white birch.

Washington ordered a lieutenant and thirty men to cut down the birches and make the fascines. Then he sent out dispatches summoning “the citizens of this and the neighboring towns...to cart them [the fascines] on the night of the 4th, to the Heights.”

The ground upon which Washington intended to gamble his force was inhabited by “nine dwelling houses on the Neck, now South Boston.” Proof of the importance that the British attached to the Heights was Howe’s map, which detailed each home’s location, as well as “the road and principal trees.”

The war was literally about to arrive at the front doors of those nine Dorchester households, those of “Mrs. Foster, Mr. Bird, Mr. Deluce, Mr. Williams, Mr. Farrington, Mr. Harrington, John Wiswall, Deacon Blake, and Oliver Wiswall.” Since Mrs. Foster’s home “was one of the best in the neighborhood...it was difficult to convince the continentallers [sic] that it did not belong to a Tory, as some of the rooms were even papered, which was considered very luxurious in those days. This house was the most westerly, and Dea. Blake’s the most easterly, of any on the peninsula, and these were both burnt by the

British, who now had possession of Boston.”

On the night of March 4, as the cannons opened up on British positions, a procession of some 300 wagons and carts piled high with fascines creaked toward the slopes. So, too, did approximately 2,000 of Washington’s troops, cannons in tow, the ranks snaking forward with as much silence as possible.

Washington, anticipating that once his men climbed onto the Heights, the British would mount a bombardment and assault, had ordered the men moving through Dorchester to pack 2,000 bandages and be “prepared to dress the wounded.”

Many residents of Dorchester hauled timber toward the Heights on that blustery night. “The History of Dorchester” records: “The late Mr. William Sumner, of Dorchester, so well-remembered by many of those now living [in the 1850s], drove one team. He carried five loads before daylight and remembered it with great satisfaction to his last days.”

With each step along the frozen track to the Heights, the men’s collective tension swelled: “No man was allowed to speak above a whisper, and thus the work went on silently, and unknown to the enemy, whose attention was in the mean time attracted elsewhere by a constant cannonading kept up from the American camp at Cambridge and in Roxbury.”

The troops went right to work on the hills’ summits, erecting gun

emplacements and bastions with a “bird’s-eye” and deadly view of Boston and the water below. Once the Patriots had secured the position, they dug in mortars and large-bore cannons.

Howe, stunned to wake up on March 5 and find the Patriots on the high ground of the Heights, wrote to Lord Dartmouth: “It [the capture of the Heights] must have been the employment of twelve thousand men.” Reportedly, the British general added: “The rebels have done more in one night than my whole army would have done in a month.”

As the Americans solidified their perches in Dorchester, their labors did not come without a price. A group of soldiers who “were so imprudent as to build a fire for their comfort” gave British gunners a vivid target. The Redcoat cannons erupted in “a severe fire upon them” from a battery at the corner of latter-day Washington and Dover Streets. Four Patriot soldiers and a surgeon named “Dole” died in the hail of shot.

On March 10, Abigail Adams wrote: “Sunday evening...A most terrible and incessant cannonade [against the Heights] from half after eight till six this morning. I hear we lost four men killed and some wounded in attempting to take the hill nearest the town, called Nook’s Hill.”

The Americans’ fortification of the Heights had placed the Redcoats in peril – and Howe knew it from the moment he first spied the “breastwork this morning [March 5th] ...on Dorchester peninsula, which from its proximity had an entire command of Boston Neck and the south end of the town - a work which the king’s troops had most fearfully dreaded.”

Outmaneuvered by Washington and his “ragtag band” of Patriots, Howe had no choice but to abandon Boston. His nearly ten thousand Redcoats boarded the 125 transports and warships in Boston Harbor, with Washington’s guarantee that the British could leave unmolested if they did not burn Boston.

When the victorious Americans entered Boston on March 17, 1776, the town had not been torched, but the Redcoats had vandalized churches, homes, warehouses, and other structures.

The day of Boston’s liberation would become Evacuation Day. It is a date that would never have been possible unless the Patriots had taken and fortified Dorchester Heights.

This article originally appeared in the Reporter in 2001.



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Reporter's

People

News about people in and around our Neighborhoods



The Robert J. Dole Institute of Politics and Dorchester’s Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate have launched a joint initiative to promote investment in America’s electoral system. The two institutes have assembled a team of policy experts and practitioners, led by expert Tammy Patrick, to examine why the study of funding our election systems is so difficult when compared to other government services and to highlight models of success at the local level. Pictured from left, Adam Hinds, CEO of the Kennedy Institute; Scott Schwab, Kansas secretary of state; Jamie Shew, Douglas County clerk; Tammy Patrick, former member of the Presidential Commission on Election Administration; and Audrey Coleman, director of the Dole Institute.

Photo courtesy EMK Institute

Mattapan native cited as ‘Hero Among Us’ at Celtics-76ers game

Mattapan native Bianca Sullivan was honored as a Hero Among Us at the Boston Celtics home game against the Philadelphia 76ers on Feb. 27 as part of the team’s celebration of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU).

The Howard University alumna serves as the president of the Howard Alumni Club of Boston and works to open pathways for students of color to explore higher education opportunities at the nation’s HBCUs.

Over the last decade, she organized college readiness and mentorship programs, and raised thousands of dollars in scholarships for more than 60 Howard freshmen from the Greater Boston Area.

Since its establishment



Bianca Sullivan

in 1997 by the Boston Celtics, the Heroes Among Us program has recognized outstanding individuals who have made exceptional and lasting contributions to their communities.

The award is presented at every Celtics home game and pays tribute to the heroic achievements of these outstanding citizens.

BC High Honor Roll Second Quarter

The following students have been named to the Second Quarter Honor Roll at Boston College High School:

High Honors: Seniors Ruben Berganza, Jamari Carvalho, Mason Cleary, Carlos Henriquez, and Matthew Hunt; juniors Shane Coleman, Conor Forry, Daniel Le, William Nguyen, Andrew O’Connell, Kenny Vu; sophomores Benjamin Cleary, Jacob DePina, Elias Melo, Charles Springer, Quang Truong, and David Zhang; freshmen Liam Bell, Jace Dasilva, and Quinlin Ezekiel.

Honors: Seniors Domenic Cellai and Sal Teixeira; juniors Jacob Glynn, James Jones, Marek Powell; sophomores

Thomas Ahern, Jonason Carvalho, Kise Flannery, Charles Kelly, Nicholas Loschiavo, Thomas Misilo, Nolan O’Sullivan, Brady Thach; freshmen John Coppney, Logan Mahoney, and Christian Noto,

For High Honors a sophomore and junior must have at least a 3.80 quality point average and all grades “C+” or higher. Freshmen need a 3.6 quality point average and all grades “C+” or higher.

For Honors a sophomore and junior must have at least a 3.20 quality point average and all grades “C-” or higher. Freshmen need a 3.165 quality point average and all grades “C-” or higher.

Xaverian Brothers High School

Khang Nguyen, a senior from Dorchester, earned Ryken Honors, which are awarded to

students who achieve marks that are all A- or above.



Noa Taylor, a member of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Dorchester (BGCD), is pictured with Boston Police Superintendent Nora Baston. Taylor portrayed Baston during a Living History presentation staged by club members at the Walter Denny Youth Center on Columbia Point on Feb. 29. About 20 teens and kids made brief presentations about the lives of notable Black Americans, including several living Bostonians, like Baston, former Mayor Kim Janey, Massachusetts Supreme Court Justice Kimberly S. Budd, and former UMass Boston Chancellor Dr. J. Keith Motley, Jr. Also portrayed were national figures from history, like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Kobe Bryant, and Jesse Owens, and the late Bruce Seals, a longtime coach and mentor at the BGCD. At the end of the program, Noa Taylor sang a stirring rendition of the Same Cooke classic, “A Change Is Gonna Come.”

Bill Forry photo

Thayer Academy Honor Roll Second Semester

High Honors, Upper School: 12th graders Jaden Smith, Michelle Le, and Maxine Baker; 10th graders Justin Le, Gabriella Monteiro, and Ava Teehan; 9th grader

Amaro Harrington. **Honors:** 12th graders Benjamin Baker and Isabelle Loschiavo; 11th graders Annadella Agbonjiazoe and Michael Scully.

YESTERYEAR ARCHIVE

DORCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Eaton Tavern

The Eaton Tavern was located in a triangle of land near today’s St. Peter’s Roman Catholic Church. The little park is now known as Father Coppens Square. Over the years it has been called Percival Square, Eaton Square, Dorchester Square, and Father Francis X. Coppens Square.

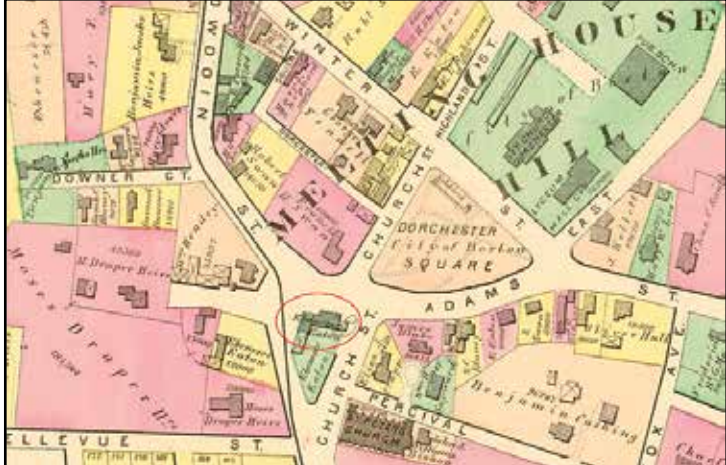
It is said that American troops gathered at Eaton Tavern in 1775 to participate in the fortification and defense of Dorchester Heights. They and the wagons coming from all directions to Boston Street proceeded from there to the Heights, now in South Boston.

Parson Eaton kept a grocery and general store at this location and entertained parties in a hall in the house. The tavern contributed to the social life of the Bowdoin Street community, which was the cultural center of



the town. His son, Ebenezer, carried on the business. The following is from William Dana Orcutt’s “Good Old Dorchester: A Narrative History of the Town.” (Cambridge, 1893). [Ebenezer Eaton] “was born June 8, 1787, at Meeting-House Hill, in Dorchester, on the site of what is now called Eaton Square. He was at one time a captain in the militia and he retained the title of “Captain” until his death. After his marriage to Mrs. Mary Withington, a daughter of Thomas Moseley; they lived in the house above mentioned.

“In politics Captain Eaton was a democrat and held the position of inspector of the Custom House for many years. After his removal by a change in administration, he became an auctioneer and appraiser, and held the office of selectman. He also represented the town in the Legislature. Although Dorchester was a strong Re-



publican town, he never was defeated at the polls. For many years, together with E.E.R. Ruggles and Lewis F. Pierce, Captain Eaton was a member of the “old board” of selectmen, which managed their part of the town affairs with prudence and discretion. He was also one of the trustees of

the Dorchester Savings Bank.” Ebenezer died in 1874. These posts can be viewed on the blog at dorchesterhistoricalsociety.org. The Society’s William Clapp and James Blake Houses are open to the public on the third Sunday of the month from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Editorial

‘Back to the future’ on Blue Hill Avenue

The Wu administration last week confirmed that it’s moving ahead with a “multi-modal” public works project that will bring infrastructure changes to Blue Hill Avenue and, hopefully, shorten commute times for the tens of thousands of bus-dependent residents who live along the corridor.

It should not have come as a surprise.

The decision to proceed with the conceptual plan – including dedicated, center-running bus lanes – was telegraphed in a 112-page report published last October that summarized the city’s engagement effort, which stretched out over nearly two years and continued on even after the report was released. It concluded that the residents they talked to over that period were ready and eager to see a new approach. And it wasn’t just city officials who reached the conclusion that Blue Hill should be transformed into “a boulevard-like street that is part of the neighborhood, not a street designed to get people from the suburbs into and out of Boston as quickly as possible.”

As MBTA General Manager Eng said in the report: “Based on the engagement summarized in this report, we know our bus operators and our bus riders want to see improvements for Blue Hill Avenue in order to better serve Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan.”

The report was also transparent about the reservations that many of our neighbors have to these changes – and the notion that enforcement of existing rules or simple fixes, not new infrastructure, would be an easier, more efficient route to improve conditions. Others told city officials that they don’t like the center lane buses that already exist on Seaver Street and Columbus Avenue. And some said bluntly that they don’t feel the city listens to or cares about their concerns in any event – and that the “design decisions about BHA were already made and that the project was essentially ‘a done deal.’”

Sure enough, that’s been the reaction from hundreds of people who’ve commented about the initial news story that the *Reporter* published last week. Our Facebook page was flooded with negative reviews of the plan, most of them from residents who feel ignored despite the unprecedented steps taken by city government to engage in new ways. Some have even launched a petition drive to register their opposition.

A slice of these reactions are overwrought, mean-spirited, or just plain ill-informed. But there’s an undercurrent of legitimate anxiety here that city planners and engineers would do well to listen to and incorporate into next steps. For one, there are sincere fears that small businesses along Blue Hill Avenue might suffer from parking restrictions that could impact deliveries and customer flow.

Mayor Wu, Congresswoman Pressley, and other leaders who are pushing this proposal forward have made it clear that there will be at least 18 months of “block-by-block” engagement done to fine tune whatever designs are finalized. Much of that work will fall to city planners and engineers, who’ll have their work cut out for them to reach consensus.

In the final analysis, there’s plenty of room for major improvements to this essential corridor, especially speedier commute times for the thousands of public transit-dependent neighbors who live and work there now. In the case of this critical corridor, the quest for perfection should not be the enemy of progress. Blue Hill Avenue can – and should – see enhancements that will make day-to-day life better for the people who use it and those who live there. This project is a step in the right direction.

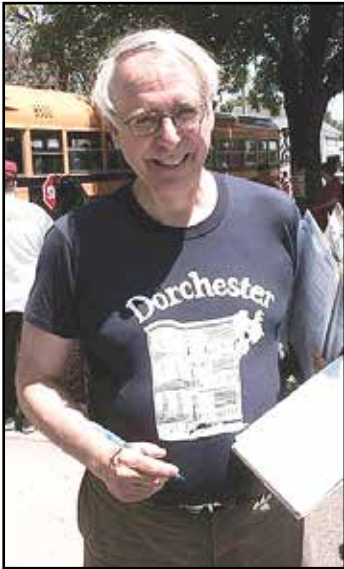
-Bill Forry

What’s not to love about the three-decker?

BY LEW FINFER
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

What’s not to like about Dorchester’s signature housing, the three-decker?

On your floor, you get two porches, a living room, a dining room, a kitchen, a bathroom, two or three bedrooms, and a back yard. Many came equipped with a beautiful stained-glass window on one wall and a built-in china cabinet in the dining room.



Lew Finfer

In their heyday, three-deckers were built in many communities in Eastern Massachusetts, in Worcester, and in Connecticut and Rhode island, and even Manchester, NH. There were upwards of 115,000 of them in the Boston area, with Dorchester having the most.

It should come as no surprise, though, that that the anti-immigrant groups of an earlier era – like the Massachusetts Civil League and Immigration Restriction League— campaigned a hundred and more years ago to ban any more three-decker construction.

In 1911, the Massachusetts Civil League wrote: “Foreigners are coming in increasing number, and with them are also coming ... the wooden “three decker,” which besides being objectionable on other grounds, is a flimsy fire trap and a menace to human life.”

I say that it’s people who say things like that who are the real menace to human life. By the late 1920s, it was almost impossible to build a three-decker in Massachusetts communities.

That’s too bad. With three units, the owner could rent to relatives or friends who needed housing. It’s a little counter-intuitive, but three-decker owner occupants often made less than single-family homeowners,

as they needed the rents to meet the mortgage.

Al Mickiewicz, who lived in a three-decker in Uphams Corner, told me of Polish weddings with the band on the second floor and all the guests on all three-floors. So, a three -decker could double as a low-cost wedding hall! Three-deckers were a step up from the tenements of the West End, North End, and South End that had no porches, no back yards, no space between the housing units.

My family has had its time in three-deckers. My wife Judy was born into one on Leslie Street. When her family was up to five of their six children, somehow her three-year-old sister Susan got loose from the back yard. A kind lady brought her to the District 11 Police Station— which was then on Adams Street. The lieutenant on duty took charge of the child, who just happened to be his granddaughter! Imagine Judy and Susan’s mother’s embarrassment when he called his daughter-in-law and asked, “How are the kids, Martha? How’s Susan?”

I lived in two three-deckers on Edison Green—just off Dot Ave, one block down from Columbia Road. Those two were not-so-glorious, as they were run into the ground by the notorious slumlord George Wattendorf and eventually torn down, to be replaced by the Kit Clark Senior Housing.

Soon after we were married in 1986, we moved to a three-decker on Percival Street and my daughter Sophia was born there in 1987.

The washing machine and dryer were in the basement, and we were on the third floor. And we had cloth diapers (remember those?) so I easily got my exercise just going up and down and up and down on the diaper-washing run.

Time traveling fascinates a lot of us when we read novels about it or see movies about. On my list for time traveling is going back to Dorchester in 1910 when all these three-deckers were being built. There must have been hundreds of huge, horse-drawn wagons taking a forest worth of lumber for these dwellings. I wanted to be there to see that.

We have an incredible housing crisis. So, let’s build more and more glorious three-deckers and don’t forget the porches.

Lew Finfer is a Dorchester resident and a frequent contributor to the Reporter.

Decisions ahead: Preparing for the end of Covid-19 relief funds

A Boston Municipal Research Bureau Report

Boston is at a crucial turning point as Covid-era federal relief funds used to address a broad range of ongoing challenge, will be depleted over the next three years.

With \$559 million in American Rescue Plan Act (Covid relief) funding, Boston used just 17 percent of the funds to supplement operating revenues, dedicating the rest to challenges in housing, economic opportunity and inclusion, and climate.

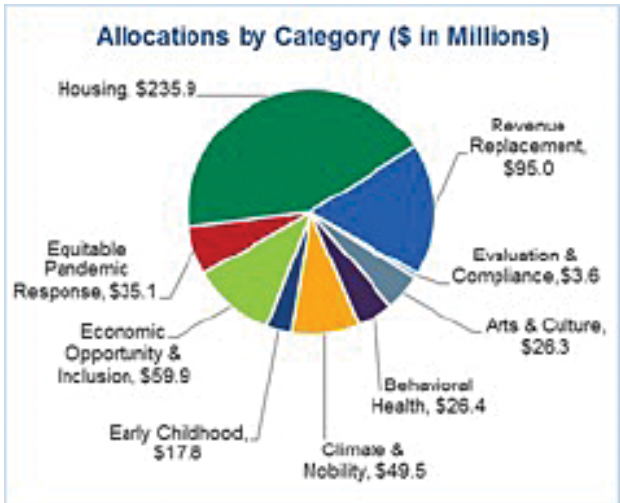
As those funds run out, crucial decisions loom regarding which programs should continue and how the city will pay for them. The assessment of programs and the decision-making process regarding their continuity should be an ongoing initiative, commencing now to ensure that the city makes timely, informed, and effective decisions.

The allocation of funds to various city departments, businesses, and non-profits underscores the multi-faceted approach taken by the city and highlights the potential budget hole that will be left once the monies are spent. Some programs address one-time needs such as specific physical infrastructure updates or expanded public health services required by the pandemic. However, many programs provide services to Boston residents such as commercial rent and mortgage relief, food insecurity alleviation, and workforce training.

These services are often ongoing rather than one-time in nature, which means the end of Covid relief funding will create a funding gap. This underscores the importance of the city’s proactive preparation to sustain programs where deemed suitable and financially prudent. As shown on the accompanying chart, to date, Boston has allocated relief funds targeting areas such as housing (\$235.9M), economic opportunity and inclusion (\$59.9M), and climate and mobility (\$49.5M).

The next steps for Boston hinge on thorough evaluation, prudent decision-making, and sustainable funding mechanisms. With \$3.6 million of Covid relief funds set aside for overall evaluation and compliance, the city has demonstrated a commitment to scrutinizing the impact of funded projects.

As the evaluation process unfolds, the tough work comes in determining which programs to continue and how to pay for them. Given the uncertainty in Bos-



ton’s post-Covid economy, the financial implications of program continuation necessitate a transparent approach. Boston must communicate the sources of funding and multi-year sustainability of any program that it seeks to continue.

One Covid-relief-funded program, Boston’s fare-free bus pilot, to which the city allocated \$10 million, was recently extended for two more years. A mid-program evaluation revealed increased ridership on free bus routes, indicating the value of this service and its merit for continuation. The cost of the program, \$350,000 per month, is covered by relief funds, which raises the question of how the initiative will be paid for long term.

As Boston steps beyond the end of Covid federal relief funding, it is crucial for the city to develop a strategic and well-communicated plan for sustaining essential services. The Wu administration should be up front and transparent about program evaluation, decision-making, and funding sources when continuing any of these programs.

The Research Bureau is an independent, member-supported, non-partisan research organization, established in 1932 to provide objective and impartial research and policy analysis in order to promote more efficient, effective and responsible government for the City of Boston.

The Reporter

“The News & Values Around the Neighborhood”
A publication of Boston Neighborhood News Inc.
150 Mt. Vernon St., Dorchester, MA 02125
Worldwide at dotnews.com

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Next Issue: Thursday, March 14, 2024
Next week’s Deadline: Monday, March 11 at 12 p.m.
Published weekly on Thursday mornings
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Recalling Dot’s Dr. Robert White, a prophet about climate change

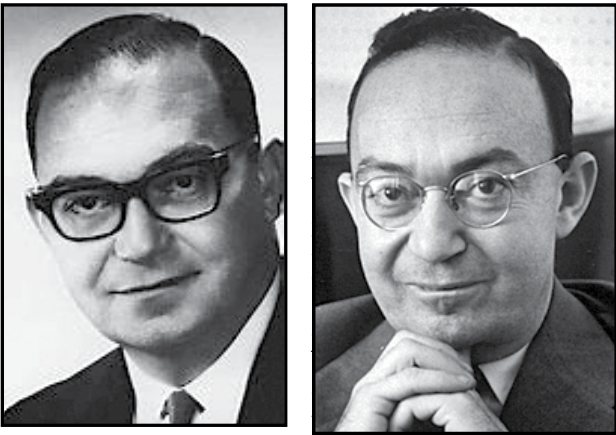
By **BILL WALCZAK**
REPORTER COLUMNIST

As our world wrestles with the impact of climate change, The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has emerged as the most important government agency for tracking, predicting, and communicating environmental changes. NOAA contains the agencies that monitor and predict weather, protect the ocean and fisheries, and combine the scientific and technological departments related to our atmosphere and oceans. Locally, NOAA has offices and ships in Woods Hole on Cape Cod, where it also operates a small aquarium for visitors.

NOAA’s founding administrator was Dr. Robert M. White, who grew up on Erie Street in the Four Corners neighborhood of Dorchester. Though celebrated in his day, Dr. White has been largely forgotten, even inside NOAA. I came upon the fact that he was founding director of NOAA when I was re-reading Theodore “Teddy” White’s 1978 autobiography, “In Search of History,” which starts with a chapter on growing up in Dorchester in the 1920s.

White describes Dorchester as an “ethnic ballet” of the various groups that then lived here. It’s great history, relevant today in explaining the demographic patterns of the neighborhood today. Anyone who loves Dorchester history will enjoy that chapter.

Teddy White, who became a major American journalist, historian, pundit, and a confidant of the Kennedys (he was asked by Jackie Kennedy following the assassination of JFK to refer to the Kennedy Administration as “Camelot”) is perhaps best known today for his “Making of the President” books, beginning with the 1960 election campaigns. He and his younger brother Robert grew up in poverty after their father died young and both sold newspapers before heading to school to help the White family survive. Both went to Boston Latin School and Harvard, and Robert continued his education at MIT.



The brothers White: Robert, left, and Theodore.

studied in that building when it was a library – Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, the Wizard of Oz scarecrow Ray Bolger, Teddy White, the columnist Beverly Beckham, the historian and radio personality Jack Beatty, and so many other Bostonians of note.

Teddy’s autobiography discusses how his interest in China grew enough during his years at Harvard (1934-1938) that he found himself in that country in the spring of 1939 on a fellowship working for Chiang K’ai-shek’s government’s propaganda office. He quickly grew disenchanted with that assignment and in early 1940, he was hired as a China correspondent covering the war for Time Magazine, which leads to him referencing his brother Robert.

The connection between China and his brother had to do with Teddy’s journalistic interactions in the 1940s with Chiang. Teddy had come to the conclusion that the Nationalist leader was useless and incompetent, an opinion he backed up in a post-war book, “Thunder Out of China.” The problem was that Chiang’s opponent was the Communist leader Mao Tse-Tung, and after the war and into the 1950s, US

foreign policymakers were paranoid about communism to the point where those who were opposed to someone who was opposed to communism became suspects themselves.

Robert White was working for the US Weather Bureau in 1952 and had nothing to do with China, but the fact that he was the brother of Teddy White resulted in his being threatened with removal of his security clearance and dismissal from his Weather Bureau position. Luckily for his brother, and for NOAA, Teddy covered more than China in World War II, and was a trusted acquaintance of Dwight Eisenhower, then the Republican candidate for the presidency, and many other officials. So, Robert was able to continue his career as a government meteorologist.

He worked his way up the ladder of the government agencies that dealt with the environment, and in 1970, the federal government combined all of the environmental agencies to form NOAA. Dr. Robert White was the obvious choice to be its first administrator.

Dr. White died in 2015 at the age of 92. The *New York Times* described him as “a meteorologist who revolutionized the nation’s weather forecasting system, was the first to lead the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and warned of climate change long before it was widely recognized.” The paper noted that he constructed a satellite and computer network that “fundamentally changed how people observe the atmosphere, leading to major improvements in early warnings for floods, tornadoes, and hurricanes. He also represented the United States at the first global forum on climate change.”

NOAA is an integral part of our daily news, issuing reports on our warming world, the effort to save the Right Whales, wildfires, hurricanes, tornadoes, or just tomorrow’s forecast. All the legacy of Robert White, OFD.

Hailing a treasure: COMPASS at 50

By **DAVE MANZO**
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

The metal door slammed as Jamal ran from the Blackstone School in Boston. I’d not seen him in more than seven years, but I recognized him immediately. My first thought was robbery. My second: Who robs an elementary school? For what, some kid’s lunch money?

How wrong I was!
This year Community Providers of Adolescent Services, known across eastern and central Massachusetts as COMPASS, celebrates 50 years as a feisty, responsive non-profit that has transformed the lives of more than 42,000 children, parents, and family members, offering special education, enrichment, therapeutic services, vocational training and so much more.

In January 1984, almost by default, I became the executive director of COMPASS. At the time it was a sinking ship. One of the founders had mispent funds and fled the state. As a result, funding partners lost faith and terminated contracts. Our budget was under water. An organization that once had locations in South Boston, Charlestown, Jamaica Plain, and Roxbury, now had a skeleton staff in a small rented space in the Roxbury Boys and Girls Club. My hope was to remain afloat until June so that our few remaining students could complete the school year without disruption.

How wrong I was!
Jamal (not his real name) came to us from the Department of Youth Services. His arrest record was as impressive as his ingenuity. Along with three friends, he picked the pockets of riders on the T, moving quickly from station to station separating money and credit cards from unsuspecting passengers. Referred to our school, he was an angry, aggressive 16 year old.

For the nearly two years he was in our care, nothing appeared to work. He was unsuccessful in our school program. Job placement and counseling were fruitless. His offensive comments, especially toward women, were endless. At 18, he aged out and was gone from COMPASS.

To be honest, there were two feelings among the staff. On the one hand, sadness at failing this young man. On the other, good riddance and a collective sigh of relief that we were free from his rude and hurtful comments and out of control behaviors. I presumed that violence, either as a victim or perpetrator, lay ahead for Jamal.

How wrong I was!
When Jamal shouted my name from the front of the Blackstone School, he had my attention. What he said next stunned me.

“Dave, Dave, I just saw you from my classroom window. I wanted to say hi,” he said. “What are you talking about?” I responded. “I’m a student teacher here. I need to get back to my classroom,” he said. “When can we talk? I want to hear more. Are you free for lunch?” I responded. “Tomorrow,” he said as he ran back to his students.

The next two days we met for lunch. His life had taken a path I never anticipated: a GED, military service, marriage, fatherhood, and now a student teacher. I was both happy for Jamal and shocked.

Then I heard him say, “I am grateful for the help COMPASS staff gave me.” I turned to him and said: “For what? We did nothing for you. We were ineffective and to be honest, you were rude and challenging. You drove us crazy.”

He disagreed. “No, COMPASS was there when I needed it,” he said. “You helped me through a very



rough time in my life. I needed the teachers and counselors to get me through it and COMPASS was there for me.”

Jamal is one of the thousands of young people whom COMPASS has served for the past 50 years. He is not our smoothest or most obvious success story, but he is a good example of two things: First, COMPASS staff are responsive and do not give up, even when the young person is difficult and the path forward uncertain.

Second, we don’t always know the “fruits of our labors.” We may be planting seeds today and not see the harvest. Even during the most difficult days with a child or family, we need to move forward, be consistent and provide quality care.

And about that struggling organization that was on the brink of closing in 1984? How did it survive and grow? Three words: Faith, risk, and responsiveness.

First, staff in January 1984 did not abandon ship. They were young, in their 20s and 30s and willing to work together with an uncertain job future. Even in the darkest days, they always put the needs of COMPASS’s children and families above their job security. Forty years later, this group, which was led by John Lydon, AC Malone, and Yvonne Vest are still involved with COMPASS. They set a tone that our work was about those we serve and not about us.

Look around COMPASS today and you will see the same selflessness and resilience at every level of the organization from the person who answers the phone to the teacher in the classroom to the community services staff member providing home-based services. It has always been a place where staff could laugh and support each other and believe in a brighter future for each person they serve.

Second, back in 1984, in order to keep the lights on and pay our staff, we needed a line of credit from a bank, money that would bridge the gap between what we owned and what others owed us. Twenty banks in Boston saw us as too large a credit risk. One banker, John Marston, gave us a loan. He had faith in us and was willing to take a risk. We repaid every penny we borrowed. Years later John’s commitment to COMPASS was so strong that he became our Board Chair.

It has been a long road from the dark days of 1984. This year we celebrate the extraordinary men and women, past and present, who gave of their time and talents to create the treasure that COMPASS is today!

Dave Manzo’s involvement with COMPASS began as a caseworker; He later served for 20 years as its president, followed by 20 years as a board member.

Homeless need access to safe, stable housing

To the Editor:

According to the City of Boston’s 43rd Annual Homeless Census conducted in 2023, the number of

Letter to the Editor unhoused adults living in the city has increased by 42 percent. Additionally, much of Boston’s unhoused population is actively navigating substance use and other mental health disorders.

Mayor Wu and a number of organizations in the Boston area have supported members of the unhoused community in finding housing and substance use treatment since clearing the Mass. and Cass encampment in November 2023. However, the “offers” for low-threshold shelters, emergency and transitional housing, medical facilities, and treatment centers do not provide our unhoused community members with the continued support and stability that they need to promote long-term wellness. This is especially true for unhoused individuals who may not have access

to these facilities and programs due to restrictions around active substance use.

In response to this issue, I believe that social workers should stand united in our advocacy for a Housing First Program in Boston that would provide safe, permanent housing and uphold tenets of harm reduction.

Passing legislation to fund and to support social workers leading the charge in establishing a Housing First program would aid in addressing the prevalence of substance abuse among unhoused folks in the area. Ultimately, this program would offer a community that is systemically and socially devalued the choice and opportunity to establish a stable environment, at which point they can begin addressing subsequent and related challenges.

Submitted by Kiara Olatunde, a candidate for a Master of Social Work degree from Boston University this spring.

City seeking bids for key Cummins Highway parcels

By SETH DANIEL
NEWS EDITOR

The city of Boston has released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a key piece of land on Cummins Highway in Mattapan, just as the corridor is set for a \$32 million infrastructure transformation, the first of its kind since the 1950s.

The site includes two city-owned vacant lots at the corner of Cummins and Regis Road next to the recently developed Cote Village housing development and steps away from the Blue Hill Avenue MBTA station on the Fairmount Line.

Just two blocks from Mattapan Square, the two parcels include a 10,366-square-foot lot and a 6,250-square-foot lot. Bids from interested developers are due on May 20. The property comes under the umbrella of PLAN: Mattapan zoning and priorities.

In previous public visioning meetings for the site, housing for middle-income residents was stressed as a need in the community, as well as first-floor activation in a building that could be up to four stories tall.

“The community has conveyed that a mixed-

use development would be preferred,” reads the RFP. “The community has expressed that there is a need for housing for the missing middle, 80-120% AMI...either rental or affordable homeownership for moderate-income households, but affordable homeownership is the preferred residential use.”

In reaction to the request, Acting Director of Neighborhood Development for the Office of Housing Christine O’Keefe said, “We are excited about this transformative opportunity for the Mattapan neighbor-



An overhead view of the large lot at the corner of Regis Road and Cummins Highway. The property is next to the new Cote Village development, and steps from the Fairmount Line train station.

Renderings courtesy of the City of Boston

hood. The RFP to develop this land is not just about constructing buildings; it’s about building homes and fostering a sense of belonging.”

“Through an inclusive community engagement process, we have designed this opportunity to cater to moderate-income households and emphasize the importance of affordable housing. This approach ensures that our neighborhood remains diverse, vibrant, and resilient for generations to come.”

The first-floor space



could be a welcome center for the community and refugees, arts space, small business space, workforce development programs, a youth center, or a community center.

The appraised value

listed by the city for both lots was \$700,000. A possible construction timeline was pinpointed to start in the winter of 2025 and the development completed and leased up by spring 2027.

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A woman with dark curly hair, wearing an orange shirt, is smiling and looking towards the right. She is standing in what appears to be a cannabis dispensary, with shelves of products visible in the background.

The logo for the Cannabis Control Commission of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, featuring a stylized 'C' and the text 'Cannabis Control Commission' and 'COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS'.

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The Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission’s Social Equity Program (SEP) is a free, statewide technical assistance and training program that creates pathways into the legal cannabis industry for individuals most impacted by the War on Drugs.

To learn more about the Social Equity Program, visit masscannabiscontrol.com/equity



BTU President Jessica Tang kicked off negotiations on a new teacher contract with a press conference at the union’s Dorchester hall on Thursday by noting four priorities that union members are asking for. *Seth Daniel photo*

Teacher’s union details priorities as contract talks begin

BY SETH DANIEL
NEWS EDITOR

The Boston Teacher’s Union (BTU) kicked off a new round of contract negotiations on Feb. 29 with a press conference at its Dorchester headquarters, where leaders spelled out four major priorities the union says it will be calling for in any new contract.

With six months left on the existing contract, BTU members say they have agreed on their priorities, which they highlighted in a partnership with the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization.

BTU President Jessica Tang said that over the last year the union has conducted conversations with thousands of educators, families, and community members to identify key issues they “want to take to the bargaining table.”

“We are committed to working with the district to ensure that all our educators, students, and families are getting the resources they need to access the best education possible no matter the zip code they live in,” she said.

“We are pressing for fair and equitable pay,” she noted. “Our educators need to earn a living wage that allows them to stay in the communities they serve. We need to pay our hard-working educators, including our multi-lingual and multi-licensed educators, at the value they are worth.”

The other priorities highlighted include high-quality buildings and programs; “inclusion done right; and student well-being.

Oriana Dunker, a Boston Latin School junior from Roxbury, noted that better facilities and extra-curricular activities would help students like her compete for scholarships with better-resourced students in the suburbs.

“Having a baseline budget for arts, sports, STEM, and extra-curricular facilities is not just about providing services that are nice to have; it’s about giving us young people the tools to discover who we are,” she said.

“Having these opportunities in school is especially important for stu-

dents in this city because in many cases we don’t have the privilege to access them elsewhere,” she added. “What people fail to consider is how extremely significant extra-curriculars have become in the college admissions process.”

Library paraprofessional CasSandra Samuels, of JP’s Curley K-8

School, said that every school should have more library staff, and that paraprofessionals need to be better compensated.

“Our job requires more than one person,” she said, noting that she used to stay far after her day officially ended to build up the library. “That is why we’re proposing that

all BPS school libraries have a librarian and a library (paraprofessional), and every school shall receive \$20 per pupil to fund and maintain our libraries.

“We as paraprofessionals should be able to live and work in the city we have grown up in and dedicated our personal lives to,” she continued.

“How can we create a community around our school if we cannot even afford to live in this community? It doesn’t make sense that we work for BPS and cannot afford our own home, and I am one of those people that cannot afford this.”

Tang noted that the BTU doesn’t foresee a teacher’s strike such as

what happened in Newton this winter.

“Educators, students, families, and our communities are united around our very reasonable and student-centered proposals,” she said. “We are optimistic that we are able to achieve these goals through our regular bargaining process.”



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Officials offer an update on Neponset Superfund plans

BY TAYLOR BROKESH
REPORTER CORRESPONDENT

Federal environmental officials gave the public an update on plans to clean up the contaminated Lower Neponset River along a 3.7-mile stretch of the waterway from Mother Brook in Hyde Park to the Walter Baker Dam on the Dorchester-Milton line in Lower Mills at a meeting in Hyde Park last Tuesday night (Feb. 27).

The section was added to the “National Priorities List” by the Environmental Protection Agency in March 2022—

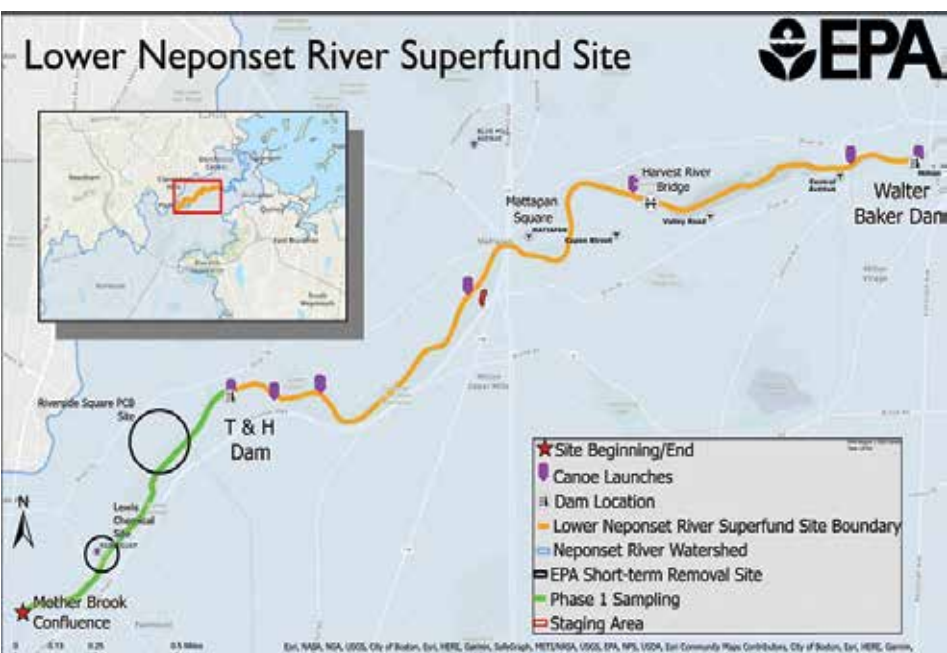
making it eligible for funding as a so-called “Superfund” site.

Natalie Burgo, a project manager for the EPA, told attendees that the agency is currently in the “characterization” phase, in which officials are investigating the extent of the contamination and developing the best course of action.

The Neponset is contaminated with chemicals called “polychlorinated biphenyls,” more commonly known as PCBs, which were used in a variety of industrial products for decades

but were banned in the United States in 1976 because they are highly carcinogenic. They can cause liver damage and a variety of skin conditions if a person is exposed for extended periods of time.

A major point conveyed through last week’s meeting was that fish from the river should not be eaten by anyone, but especially children, people who are pregnant or expect to become pregnant, and nursing mothers. People who don’t belong to that category are advised against eating fish from the river altogether as



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well, or at the very least to limit consumption to two meals per month. White sucker and American eel were explicitly named as species that should not be consumed by anyone.

The EPA has been sampling most extensively in the more upstream areas of the river. Burgo said because of time and cost restraints with contractors, they haven’t yet reached sampling by the Tileston & Hollingsworth Dam in Hyde Park near the Milton town line.

The next sampling session that will happen this year, she said, will focus on the section between the T&H Dam and the Walter Baker Dam in Lower Mills. She also said that because of the build-up of sediments and, therefore, PCBs, the T&H Dam “has been identified as a priority dam for removal.” She

noted that it would have to be a multiagency decision between several other state entities, including the state’s Department of Conservation and Recreation.

The meeting also discussed the need to form a community advisory group, or CAG, that would not only hold the proxy of the community and voice concerns to the EPA and related groups but would also be able to distribute information to the public.

For more information on the Neponset River Superfund Site or on community advisory groups, please visit epa.gov/neponsetriver.


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Mattahunt Community Center to open April 1

More BCYF pools expected to re-open by summer

By SETH DANIEL
NEWS EDITOR

The long-awaited and delayed \$12.7 million renovation of the Mattahunt Community Center is about to come to an end, according to city officials, who say students at the Mattahunt School are now able to use the facility after many years of closure. The public will be able to access the center by April 1, according to officials who briefed members of the Greater Mattapan Neighborhood Council (GMNC) on Monday.

The re-opening will allow public access to a long-shuttered pool at the Mattahunt. Several other pool openings are expected in Dorchester this summer – a stark contrast to last summer when most every pool in Dorchester and Mattapan was closed.

District 5 City Councillor Enrique Pepen said the project, which stalled out several times due to contractor issues, has concluded and final signoffs are underway. Sources in the Mayor’s Office also confirmed the timing.

Beacon Hill leaders plan hearing on Steward crisis

Top House and Senate Democrats plan to hold a hearing on the role of private equity in the health care system. The topic has exploded on Beacon Hill this year as Steward Health Care’s financial troubles have surfaced serious concerns over the status and future of its nine hospitals in Massachusetts, some of which could soon be in line for new ownership. Last Friday, Democrats announced plans for a hearing, but didn’t say when it would be held.

“Today, we are announcing our intention to hold an informational hearing hosted by the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing in the coming weeks, which will focus on the role of private equity in the Commonwealth’s health care system. The hearing will examine the relationship between health care regulators and private equity and will solicit information and recommendations to help ensure that what is happening with Steward Health Care doesn’t happen again in the future,” the statement said. “Details will be forthcoming soon.”

The statement was signed by Senate President Karen Spilka, House Speaker Ronald Mariano, and Joint Committee on Health Care Financing Chairs Sen. Cindy Friedman and Rep. John



The BCYF Marshall Community Center Pool reopened this fall after several repairs were made throughout last year. On Feb. 28, Boston’s Human Resources Chief Jose Masso and BCYF Director Marta Rivera celebrated the reopening with a ribbon cutting that included the UP Academy Dorchester students.

Pepen told GMNC members that students from the school were allowed into the gym for the first time on Monday, and Boston Centers for Youth and Families (BCYF) would begin programming at the center for the public on April 1.

“Finally, the Mattahunt Community Center will be able to open up,” he said.

Pepen also noted that Raymond Heath will

be the manager of the Mattahunt site, coming over from the Marshall Community Center in Dorchester with 12 years of BCYF experience. The Mayor’s Office said the Mattahunt Pool will open this summer.

The long-closed Marshall Community Center pool in the UP Academy Dorchester building has also re-opened. A ribbon cutting ceremony was

held on Feb. 28. Officials said last week they expect to have more pools open this year than in previous summers. The list includes the Mat-

tahunt, the Marshall, and the long-shuttered Perkins Community Center pool attached to the Joseph Lee K-8 School in Dorchester.

Photo courtesy of BCYF

LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
THE TRIAL COURT
PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT
Suffolk Probate & Family Court
24 New Chardon Street
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 788-8300
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL APPOINTMENT OF SUCCESSOR PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE
Docket No. SU21P2397EA
ESTATE OF:
VINCENT WAYNE
DATE OF DEATH: 01/26/2021
To all interested persons:
A Petition has been filed by Jennifer Tran of Lincoln, NE requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order that Jennifer Tran of Lincoln, NE be appointed as Successor of Personal Representative(s) of said estate to service Without Surety on the bond and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. You have the right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on 04/04/2024. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return date, action may be taken without further notice to you. The estate is being administered under formal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but recipients are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration.
Witness, HON. BRIAN J. DUNN, First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 22, 2024
Stephanie L. Everett, Esq.
Register of Probate
Published: March 7, 2024

STATE HOUSE NEWS SERVICE

LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
THE TRIAL COURT
PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT
Suffolk Probate & Family Court
24 New Chardon Street
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 788-8300
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Docket No. SU10P1022EA
ESTATE OF:
DUGARD REMPONNEAU
DATE OF DEATH: 12/13/2009
To all interested persons:
A Petition for S/A - Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Sherry A. Remponneau of Revere, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that: Sherry A. Remponneau of Revere, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration.
IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 03/26/2024. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return date, action may be taken without further notice to you.
UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)
A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.
Witness, HON. BRIAN J. DUNN, First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 20, 2024
Stephanie L. Everett, Esq.
Register of Probate
Published: March 7, 2024

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A Kiosk and a Cup: Stand at Shawmut Station brings caffeination to commuters, community

By SETH DANIEL
NEWS EDITOR

A cup of coffee, a holistic tea, a muffin, and a newspaper, then a dash to catch the train to downtown. That’s the rhythm around the new House of Seven Café set up in a kiosk outside Shawmut Station as owner Tamicka Brown serves commuters and neighbors in a throwback to the days of newsstands and coffee carts.

The kiosk sits on land owned by the Epiphany School, which fully supports her venture, but faces the piazza and main entrance of the Shawmut Station. After opening on Mon., Feb. 26, Brown’s small corner of the city is generating excitement from those who have come upon it.

“Here we are now more than a week later, and so far, it’s been such an amazing response from the community, the commuters, the schools, and the students from the schools,” she said. “It’s a breath of fresh air to just get started...It’s definitely a throwback, something you would have seen in the past. But it’s well-received



A throwback to days past, but fully embraced in the modern world, too, Brown’s café kiosk hearkens back to the day of newspaper stands and coffee carts outside of subway stations. Seth Daniel photo

today too.”

Originally used to store and distribute free food to the community during Covid-19 shutdowns, then used as a home for the Winter Farmer’s Market in 2022, the kiosk was slated to be torn down and thrown away this year until Cynthia Loesch-Johnson, chair of the Codman Square Neighborhood Council (CSNC) and a coordinator of the Codman Square Farmer’s Market, began brainstorming with Brown, who was the coffee purveyor at the Farmer’s Market. Soon enough, the two of them began to ask – why not the kiosk?

“My family is from Dorchester and I kept the dream here in Dorchester,” she said. “I thought I’d have to leave the state to do it, but that didn’t end up being the case. I think this is a great start. Being a mobile barista at farmer’s markets was a good setup for me to land in this kiosk, and I think it will be a good setup for future opportunities...I love it.”

And so far, neighbors have come to love it as well. Already, she has regulars who take time out on their way to the train. Several curious passers-by stop in confusion, though teachers and students at three area schools have been early adopters of the business, as are neighbors working from home who need an outdoor break.

Brown said her family has lived nearby in the West of Washington neighborhood along Spencer Street for more than 50 years. While she moved around and lived in Michigan and Colorado and went to college in Detroit at Wayne State University, she made her way back to the neighborhood more than a decade ago.

While living in Matapan 11 years ago, she applied for a barista job at the Starbucks in Brookline’s Chestnut Hill section. She immediately took to it and discovered

making coffee in that fashion was her calling. “I am a barista at heart; that’s who I am,” she said with a laugh.

After having her son in 2017, she took a leave from Starbucks to focus on raising him, and then changed gears and went to work at Boston Children’s Hospital. However, she never shook the dream of being a barista in her own café.


After starting a cheesecake baking company out of Dorchester’s Commonwealth Kitchen during the pandemic, she was pulled back into the coffee life last year, launching House of Seven on July 7, 2023 (hint: 2 + 0 + 2 + 3 = 7).

“I always thought I would go to Washington, D.C., and have a coffee truck, but that didn’t happen,” she said. “This year I decided to focus on my café dreams. So many things delayed that dream, and I thought now was the time.”

At her kiosk, Brown sells traditional coffee, but also promotes her holistic teas, homemade baked goods, sandwiches, and soon, her cheesecakes. Her signature beverage is a medicinal mushroom coffee – an alternative to coffee that uses functional mushrooms that are healthy, but the drink doesn’t taste like mushrooms. The drink is gut-friendly and is made with a non-dairy alternative, like almond milk.

“One of my customers was won over to it and said it tasted like a unicorn waffle,” she said with a chuckle. “Now I don’t know what that means, but it did sound like a delicious drink. However, I call it Divine Ryzing and it’s the number one favorite here.”

The House of Seven Café kiosk is open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Shawmut Station, and accepts all forms of payment. Brown intends to add bistro seating on the side in the spring.



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Bach Project plans March 10 concert



Sylvia Berry

The Bach Project at Ashmont Hill Chamber Music continues its seventh season of concerts in Dorchester in Peabody Hall at All Saints Church on Sun., March 10, at 4 p.m., with a concert exploring some of Bach's secular vocal and instrumental music.

Ah, coffee! How much would you be willing to

give up for your daily cup? In Bach's delightful "Coffee Cantata," Ulysses Thomas, Elise Groves, and Andrew Bearden Brown will find out how far devoted coffee lovers will go to maintain their habit! Also on this program of Bach's secular music is his thrilling 5th Brandenburg Concerto, written for flute, strings,

and featuring Sylvia Berry playing the sumptuous harpsichord solo.

The Bach Project, with Andrew Sheranian as director, is a collaborative endeavor between the music program at the Parish of All Saints in Ashmont and Ashmont Hill Chamber Music. For more information: ahchambermusic.org



The Savin Hillbillies will play 2 shows for St. Patrick season

The Savin Hillbillies, a five-piece ensemble that plays "old-time country and western and Irish songs" will celebrate the St. Patrick's Day season with two concerts this month. The first is Sat., March 9, from 2 to 5 p.m. at Dorchester Brewing Company, 1250 Massachusetts Ave. The second is on the following Saturday, March 16, from 8 to 11 p.m. at Tavolo Restaurant, 1918 Dorchester Ave.

They invite all to come
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ditional and modern Irish music. Singalong sheets will be available for those

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Local Real Estate Transactions

Buyer		Seller		Address		Date	Price
Isiam, Maidul		Bridges, John A	Bridges, Minnie	106 Rosseter St	Dorchester	02/16/24	\$1,120,000
Hammer, Sara	Venegas, Mario R	Hedemann, Gabriel J		92 Claybourne St	Dorchester	02/12/24	805,000
Liu, Maria	Liu, Vivian	Pierre Odette Est	Samson, Jennifer V	33 Kingsdale St	Dorchester	02/16/24	838,000
Ti Mezon LLC		Lin, Shirui		244 Neponset Ave	Dorchester	02/16/24	790,000
Bertocchi, Paulmichael		625 Gallivan Boulevard Rt	Achorn, Mark W	625 Gallivan Blvd	Dorchester	02/12/24	495,000
Saço LLC		Nugent, Lloyd C	Deutsche Bk Natl TCo	25 Fottler Rd	Mattapan	02/16/24	357,000
Mortell, Rachel	Mortell, Elliot	Perine, Nicole	Cabral, Bernard J	465 Ashmont St #3	Dorchester	02/14/24	650,000
Sanyal, Sourav		Gladness Builder LLC		18 Fabyan St #2	Dorchester	02/15/24	519,000
Pahuja, Fay J	Pahuja, Vijay	19-23 Clapp St LLC		19-23 Clapp St #1	Dorchester	02/15/24	720,000
Good, Melissa		42-44 Dorset St Cbc LLC		44 Dorset St #2	Dorchester	02/15/24	1,105,000
Jones, La C		19 W Trelett Street LLC		19 W Tremlett St #1	Dorchester	02/16/24	450,000

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International Association of Heat & Frost Insulators and Asbestos Workers Union, Local No. 6, Joint Apprenticeship Committee
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Tel. 617-436-4666 Fax. 617-265-9887
www.insulators6.org

Jeffrey W. Saliba
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Richard Rothwell
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Applications will be accepted from March 1 to March 31st. They will be available on our website, www.insulators6.org beginning March 1st. Print and complete an application. Please drop off the Application or Mail the application to the address listed in the instructions. Must be postmarked by March 31, 2024.

To apply you must meet the following requirements:

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Be a high school graduate.
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Reside within the jurisdiction of Local 6.
Own a reliable vehicle.

Copies of the following documents must be submitted with your application:

Valid, current driver's license (No photo ID's)
High school diploma, GED certificate or a certified, sealed transcript showing your graduation date.

You must also submit a non-refundable aptitude testing fee of \$25.00. **Only checks or money orders accepted, made payable to "Local 6, J.A.C."**

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Virtual Public Meeting

Citywide ADU Zoning

MARCH

13

6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Zoom Link: bit.ly/3woZsNd

Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864

Meeting ID: 161 147 3982

Project Description:

Please join the BPDA Planning team for a conversation on zoning for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)! The BPDA is launching a new zoning initiative to update residential zoning to make ADUs as-of-right in every neighborhood. This initiative aims to expand lower-cost housing options, empower residents to build wealth, and foster diverse, multi-generational living spaces. Come learn how ADUs can benefit Boston!

mail to: **Adriana Lasso-Harrier**
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201

phone: 617.918.4367
email: adriana.lasso-harrier@boston.gov

Scan QR Code to Register



BostonPlans.org | @BostonPlans
Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary



Virtual Public Meeting

Zero Net Carbon Zoning Proposal

MARCH

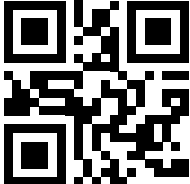
20

6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Zoom Link: bit.ly/3IkAlO9

Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864

Meeting ID: 160 305 9552



Project Description:

Please join the BPDA and Boston's Environment Department to discuss the newly released draft proposal for Zero Net Carbon Zoning. The ZNC team will walk through the draft proposal and invite questions and comments. Come learn about one of the City's sustainability initiatives.


Wednesday 3/20 from 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

To attend the public meeting, please visit the 2024 Zero Net Carbon Zoning webpage to find the Zoom link: bit.ly/48B6Xhh

mail to: **Astrid Walker-Stewart**
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201

phone: 617.918.4496
email: astrid.walker-stewart@boston.gov

Website:
bit.ly/48B6Xhh



Virtual Public Meeting

819 Cummins Highway

APRIL


4

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Zoom Link: bit.ly/3P11LML

Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864

Meeting ID: 161 214 4471



Project Proponent:

EJS Investments, Inc.

Project Description:

A five (5) story, forty-two (42) unit mixed-use building, with twenty-five (25) parking spaces and forty-six (46) bicycle parking spaces. The ground floor will offer a residential lobby and retail space accessible to the public.

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

phone: 617-918-4362
email: camille.platt@boston.gov

Close of Public Comment Period:
4/18/2024

Website:
bit.ly/819-cummins-highway



33rd Annual Marr Scholars Catholic Schools Awards at BGCD: See details below.

CONNECT THE DOT:
33rd Annual Marr Scholars Catholic Schools Awards at BGCD: BGCD would like to congratulate the 2023-2024 class of the Marr Scholars Catholic Schools Scholarship Program. The group received a combined \$52,500 in scholarship aid for the current school year. The program was established in 1992 by a gift from the estate of the late Daniel F. Marr, Jr.'s Catholic Schools Scholarship Fund and has since been augmented by his late brother Robert L. Marr and wife Cynthia through the Robert & Cynthia Marr Charitable Foundation to provide scholarships for tuition assistance for members of BGCD to attend Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Boston. This year marks the 33rd year of the program, and in that time has awarded nearly \$1.6 million in scholarships to BGCD members. Many thanks to the Marr Family for their continued support of this special initiative!

FIND OUT WHAT'S INSIDE:
BGCD Members Shine in Living Museum To Honor Role Models for Black History Month: Boys & Girls Clubs of Dorchester's Walter Denney Youth Center, located in the Harbor Point community celebrated our Annual Living Museum event to celebrate Black History Month. In character, our members and staff brought to life key figures through their words and attire. In all, 19 participants took the stage to share the roles each of these individuals have added to our past growth as a nation as well as those continuing the work today. This year included local community heroes such as BPD Superintendent Nora Baston and Massachusetts Municipal Justice and Club Alumni, Steven Key. Congratulations to all the members who took to the stage! For more information on the Denney Center, please contact Queenette Santos at qsantos@bgcdorchester.org.



BGCD Members Shine in Living Museum To Honor Role Models for Black History Month: See details below.

DID YOU KNOW:
BGCD Welcomes Dr. Alex Rodman to Power Forward Career Cafe: This past week, Boys & Girls Clubs of Dorchester's Power Forward program hosted our monthly Career Cafe Speaker Series featuring Dr. Alex Rodman, Asst. Professor of Psychology at Northeastern University. Dr. Rodman and her team of students discussed the field of Psychology and the brain, including such topics as learning, behaviors, and social cognition. A special thanks to Dr. Rodman for spending her evening with us!

Next up on the Power Forward calendar will be a session for Juniors & Seniors (3/6) followed by a workshop for Freshman & Sophomores (3/13).

For more information on BGCD's Power Forward program, please contact Tricia Chapple at pchapple@bgcdorchester.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Winter Dance Showcase
March 8


Elevate Youth Outing
March 9

Youth of the Year Program
March 13


Spring Enrichment Begins
March 18

Walter Denney Welcome
Wednesday @ Harbor Point
March 20


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Blue Hill Ave. plan ignores voices of dissent, critics say

(Continued from page 1)

Crichlow said she feels city planners who sought input from her, and other Mattapan neighbors, wasted her time.

“We told them, and they did exactly what they wanted anyway. It’s like any project presented to the city, they ask us and then do what they want. I’m heated, and I am not impressed,” said Crichlow.

At the Carter American Legion Post 16 in Mattapan Square, Mary-dith Tuitt had strong words against the plan, which she reviewed personally last year when the city hosted a meeting about the project at the post, where she served as commander. She worries that the re-design will eliminate precious parking spaces near the post, which counts on party rentals to keep the doors open.

“It’s a shame that they wasted two years of our time with meetings knowing they were going to do what they wanted anyway,” she said. “It was like a parent saying, ‘If you do the work, you will get what you want.’ We did the work and the parent said, ‘But this is better for you.’ The city wasn’t listening and was going to do the center bus lane even though we don’t want it.”

The voices of dissent stand in stark contrast to much of officialdom who herald the public works project as a landmark moment for the corridor. In addition to Mayor Wu and Congresswoman Pressley, leaders like State Rep. Russell Holmes, Councillor Enrique Pepen, Mattapan transit activist Vivien Ortiz, and Grove Hall Main Streets Director Ed Gaskin, stressed the benefits for 37,000 bus riders along the corridor.

“Medians account for a significant amount of real estate in our cities and as critical green infrastructure can be used to collect solar energy, help with decarbonization, storm-water management, and beautification including landscaping and public art,” said Gaskin. “We are excited to learn about Mayor Wu’s desire to redesign the medians in Grove Hall as part of a complete street vision for Blue Hill Ave. This will further the transformation of Grove Hall.”

But other elected offi-



State Rep. Chris Worrell and Peter Papadogiannis discuss the plans for Blue Hill Avenue that are to roll right past Boulevard Cleaners and Tailors in the 1300th block of the Avenue, which he has overseen since 1981. He said the center-lane bus and bike lanes are the “wrong idea” for the corridor. Likewise, Rep. Worrell said he has concerns about the plan as well, and said it needs “overwhelming” support, which he said it doesn’t have.

cials who haven’t been publicly supportive of the idea say they’ve been barraged with phone calls and taken to task at the grocery store, the dry cleaners, or at local restaurants. State Rep. Chris Worrell has generally supported the mayor on most initiatives, but said he has strong reservations about the Blue Hill Avenue plan.

“As someone who has lived my entire life right off of Blue Hill Ave and owned a business there, I understand the concerns of many residents and business owners,” Worrell said. “We all know that traffic issues need to be addressed. However, any proposed change of this magnitude needs overwhelming community support and a real opportunity for input.”

Other elected officials applauded the \$44 million investment, but noted the full design plan is not yet finalized.

“Blue Hill Ave is a major thoroughfare in our city with long-standing commercial districts and has lacked proper investment for a long time,” said state Rep. Brandy Fluker-Oakley. “Our community deserves transit-friendly roads that both drivers and pedestrians feel comfortable using regularly. Double parking is a constant reality on Blue Hill Ave, and the City of Boston must ensure that



Mary-dith Tuitt, commander of the historic Carter American Legion Post 16 on Blue Hill Avenue, said the Post feels like the city didn’t listen to them and wasted two years of their time in meetings.

the needs of our small businesses and their patrons are prioritized so that they can sustain and flourish.”

Added State Sen. Liz Miranda, who represents the entire Blue Hill corridor from Mattapan Square to Dudley Street: “I am grateful for the public investment in the corridor, which will enable improved safety for students and seniors, while improving the built infrastructure with new sidewalks, crosswalks, tree canopy, and lighting. Hearing both positive and concerning feedback from constituents, the part we can all agree on is that our neighborhood deserves the same investment as others across the City of Boston.”

The Greater Mattapan Neighborhood Council (GMNC) hasn’t fully embraced the plan either, even after two years of being the most active

civic voice in the process. The group hosted a well-attended “block by block” planning exercise for Blue Hill Avenue last year. Fatima Ali-Salaam, who chairs the group, said her fellow members are puzzled at the price tag – pointing out the smaller Cummins Highway re-design has an investment of \$32 million, while the larger Blue Hill Avenue corridor is only slightly bigger at just \$44 million.

Beyond that, she said the GMNC has demanded that all projects consider public health outcomes and job creation, and interconnectedness to the rest of the city.

“If you’re not approaching it as an integrated city with an entire network, you’re not connecting people to the city as a whole,” she said. “You’re not thinking about it as people who are going through their entire day



Bishop John Borders III, leader of the Morningstar Baptist Church on Blue Hill Avenue, said he supports the center-running bus lane, but has concerns about Blue Hill Avenue changing quickly like the South End. Seth Daniel photos

going to school and to jobs and entertainment arts venues and the rest of the city.

“You can’t just be doing things to do things if you’re not addressing health outcomes, and Mattapan has some of the worst health outcomes for children,” she added. “It’s about people, jobs, public health, and public safety. If you’re going to do it and not address those things and just do it half-hearted, don’t even put a shovel in the ground.”

Major churches on the corridor are not as critical.

Jubilee Church Pastor Matthew K. Thompson, and Morningstar Baptist Church Bishop John Borders III are mainly voicing support, although Borders has concerns.

Pastor Thompson said Jubilee would not be affected because they have a large parking lot. Beyond that, he said he has always been supportive of transit solutions that bring economic empowerment – as did the Blue Hill Avenue commuter rail stop next to his church.

“I’ll never be a disparaging voice of the economic empowerment of our city,” he said. “When the commuter rail was proposed to locate next to the church, I was for that. I see the positives in that way, but I do understand what it will do for other businesses and churches with the traffic and flow. I empathize with them and understand, but I am for (the project) and support it.”

Rev. Borders also supports it but worries that Blue Hill Avenue could change like the South End, leaving large historically Black churches with no local congregants

and churches disbanded or sold for housing conversions. That, he said, worries him.

“Overall, we know it will be an economic boom for our neighborhoods,” he said. “One of my primary concerns is that Blue Hill Avenue does not become what the South End has become for Black and Brown churches and businesses... We must address the parking issue. Parking is a problem now. If we lose parking, we hurt churches and businesses currently sustaining the corridor.”

He noted that Pressley, Wu, Holmes, and Council President Ruthzee Louijeune, who also supports the plan, have committed to ongoing conversations over the next year.

“They assure us that no church or business will be ignored or displaced. I believe we will create the most efficient plan possible for our families and businesses,” he added.

Elsewhere along the avenue, merchants are less confident.

Peter Papadogiannis, who has spent 11 hours a day since 1981 operating Mattapan’s Boulevard Cleaners and Tailors in the 1300th block, calls the center-lane bus “the wrong idea.” He recommends a smaller center lane for frequent emergency vehicles that send gridlocked drivers into a panic, but he isn’t sure anyone seriously considered his idea.

“That’s my opinion. They’re going to affect the businesses too because where will people park? Now it’s two lanes and people double park, and if you put it down to a single lane, it’s going to be chaos... I just hope they don’t do it the way they’re talking about now.”

He added: “Then there’s the bike lanes. If I see two or three bikes go by the whole day, that’s a lot. I don’t know why they need that here.”

The city has noted it will begin comprehensive meetings on the plan as early as this spring, going block-by-block to determine the layout of the roadway to inform a final design. Construction is pinpointed to begin on the larger items, like the bus lane, in 2026. Smaller, less controversial fixes will start in a few months.

Councillor Worrell calls for Crispus Attucks statue in city

City Councillor Brian Worrell says that Crispus Attucks, a Black man who was one of five people shot to death by British soldiers during the 1770 Boston Massacre, should be memorialized with a statue in the city.

“It’s beyond time for Boston to recognize Crispus Attucks more formally,” Worrell said on March

5, the 254th anniversary of the bloody incident that unfolded in front of the Old State House in Boston.

He added: “He was an accomplished sailor and advocate for human rights before he died. The world should know more of how Black Boston contributed to America’s history, and Crispus At-

tucks, as the first Patriot, is one of the finest examples of that.”

Attucks is already memorialized with public statues in New York City and Philadelphia. Haroon A. Rashid, president of the Dorchester-based Friends of Crispus Attucks Association, has been pushing for Attucks to get the recognition he

deserves here in Boston. There is a public street named for him in Roxbury — Crispus Attucks Place — and an early childhood center in Dorchester carries his name.

“Crispus Attucks is a historical Boston martyr for equal human rights, who sacrificed his life as the 1st American Revo-

lutionary War Patriot,” Rashid said. “It is only fitting that in the 21st century, the era of multicultural global inclusion, that there should be erected a life-size standalone statue in the downtown location of Boston and that citizens and tourists alike on March 5 each year should find ways to honor and com-



Crispus Attucks memorate his sacrifice on Crispus Attucks Day in the City of Boston.” — SETH DANIEL

With plan to move O’Bryant school shelved, the question is: What next?

By MAX LARKIN
WBUR

On a sunny day last June, Boston Mayor Michelle Wu called a surprise press conference on Malcolm X Boulevard in Roxbury — just outside the shared campus of two of the city’s largest high schools, the John D. O’Bryant School of Math and Science and the Madison Park Technical Vocational High School. Joined by Mary Skipper, the superintendent of Boston Public Schools, Wu praised the schools, but noted that space constraints have held them back from expansion and “from having a true home of their own.”

As part of her broader makeover of BPS buildings, known as the Green New Deal for Boston Public Schools, Wu then announced an ambitious proposal to relocate the O’Bryant seven miles away to an educational complex in West Roxbury that had been left empty after four school closures in 2019, in turn giving room for Madison Park to expand on site.

But the plan was met with months of community resistance. Many faculty, students, and alumni loudly opposed the prospect of moving the O’Bryant from a diverse, central neighborhood to a hard-to-reach and predominantly white corner of the city on the border with Dedham.

Ultimately, the O’Bryant move was abandoned on Feb. 27 — just as abruptly as it had been proposed.

In an email to the two school communities, Wu, Skipper, and Boston School Committee Chair Jeri Robinson wrote, “With a lack of consensus around moving the O’Bryant School to the West Roxbury Educational Complex, we are halting those plans indefinitely.”

The letter gave little insight into what comes next for the O’Bryant, and implied that the school will remain mostly unmodified at its current Roxbury site, at least while most of the promised renovation and expansion goes forward at neighboring Madison Park.

While many skeptics in the O’Bryant community are relieved that the move has been called off, they’re also grappling with the fact any change is on hold, and that the school is cast back indefinitely into a building that everyone — including Wu and Skipper — agrees is inadequate.

“I feel pretty mixed,” said Nora Paul-Schultz, who has taught physics and engineering at the O’Bryant for the past 10 years. “I’m very excited we’re not moving to West Roxbury. And I’m very concerned that the district doesn’t have a plan for the future of our building,” she said.

A reversal of course

The initial outcry against the O’Bryant’s move began to ring out almost immediately after the proposal. In the weeks after Wu’s announcement, teachers, parents, students, and alumni banded

together to raise wide-ranging concerns. The group pointed to West Roxbury’s lack of diversity and its remoteness from many parts of the city. For instance, the proposed site is more than 90 minutes away from East Boston’s Maverick Square via public transit.

Due to a planned “gut renovation” of the West Roxbury complex, the new O’Bryant wasn’t set to open until fall 2026 at the earliest. But a coalition fronted by O’Bryant teachers and parents convinced city leaders that no matter when it occurred, the move was wrong for the school.

Some joined the opposition early. Just hours after Wu’s press conference, Erin Murphy, an at-large Boston city councilor and former BPS educator, put out a statement saying that given its student population and after decades in a too-small building, the O’Bryant deserves “a state-of-the-art campus ... that is centrally located in the city.”

Of the city’s three exam schools, the O’Bryant’s student body is the most diverse in terms of race, language, and socioeconomic status. While it uses the same competitive selection process as the Boston Latin School and Boston Latin Academy, nearly half of O’Bryant students speak a first language other than English. Sixty percent are classified as low-income and its Black and Latino enrollment hovers near seventy percent.

With that distinction in mind, City Councilor Julia Mejia, who serves as chair of the council’s committee on education, held a December meeting on the O’Bryant move that ran for nearly five hours.

During testimony at that hearing, BPS officials said they had sought, but not found, an alternative site that worked as well as the West Roxbury campus, which sits on a 14-acre lot equipped with relatively new athletic facilities, including turf fields, tennis courts, and a track. But in the end, by a vote of 9 to 2, the council passed a non-binding resolution opposing the move, and calling for more engagement with O’Bryant parents, students and teachers.

The resolution said that “the viability of the proposed plan should be thoroughly examined, considering factors such as funding availability, construction timelines, transportation logistics, and the long-term sustainability of relocating.”

That resolution prompted little in the way of a formal reply from city or district officials. But in a conversation on WBUR’s *Radio Boston* almost two weeks later, Wu seemed to signal hesitation.

“These are hard conversations that are complex and involve a lot of communities,” Wu said about the pushback. “I just want to acknowledge that I am always learning in this job as well.” What had felt to many like the only option under consideration became, in Wu’s words, “a proposal on the table ... something for people to react to.”

Wu did not respond to requests for comment Wednesday about her reasoning for the reversal,



though her staff shared Tuesday’s letter with WBUR.

However abrupt, the reversal of course won applause from many in education leadership citywide. Jessica Tang, president of the Boston Teachers Union, called it evidence of “responsive leadership.”

“You know, they put an idea out there,” Tang said of Wu and Skipper. “They thought it would be a good idea for many reasons but having heard overwhelming opposition and not a ton of support,” they took it off the table.

After Skipper announced the decision to drop the plan as part of her opening remarks before the Boston School Committee on Feb. 28, several members said they were relieved, given the O’Bryant community’s concerns.

Echoing colleagues Stephen Alkins and Chantal Lima Barbosa, Brandon Cardet-Hernandez, a committee member since 2022, called it a “great decision,” adding, “I think it takes a lot of courage, [because] politically, it’s often easier to try to save face.”

Like other members, Cardet-Hernandez said he had been surprised that the move was announced without prior discussion by the committee, and that he hoped the episode was a lesson in “not getting ahead of ourselves.”

Skipper also said that the district will hold a discussion with members of the two school communities over Zoom on March 13 at 5 p.m.

Though the O’Bryant is the smallest exam school, with just under 1,600 students, it’s also one of about 50 Boston Public Schools deemed to be over capacity, according to data shared with WBUR by the district. One argument for the move to West Roxbury was that it would have allowed the O’Bryant to expand capacity to match Boston Latin School, growing to roughly 2,000 seats.

And in a recent assessment of district facilities, the shared O’Bryant and Madison Park complex received an “overall building score” of just 19 out of 100 — well below the district average.

Even the many students at the O’Bryant who opposed the move are left dissatisfied with an “indefinite” extension of the status quo.

As a senior, Isabella Pedroza Munóz, of Mattapan, wouldn’t have been present for the planned relocation. But she said that ever since she came to the O’Bryant in the 10th grade, “We’ve always had our roof leaking. Even our bathroom flooded... That needs to get fixed.”

WBUR reporter Carrie Jung contributed to this report.

Blue Hill Ave. plans are a ‘starting point,’ says Wu

(Continued from page 1)

the home audience for the Celtics on the bus going down Blue Hill Ave. I think we have heard —and everybody’s known for a long time— that there are investments that are needed.”

She added: “We’ve agreed on the principles, we agree on what we need to do broadly, and now how do we translate that into a specific block-by-block design that people can really see and feel and start to envision. As we make the leap to now having a process to figure out the details to make it better and to direct the investment where it’s been needed for a long time, we see that as many, more conversations [to come]. Not the end point, but the starting point.”

It’s a tension familiar to most, if not all, elected officials, but definitely to big-city mayors: How does one advance a change agenda in a city that, at times, seems hard-wired to resist any deviation from a long-established status quo? In the case of Blue Hill Avenue, which traverses the city’s predominantly Black communities in Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan, there’s an added complication: A deep-seated mistrust of government stemming from generations of disinvestment.

As Wu herself puts it: “When something’s been the way that it’s been for such a long time, even if it’s problematic, there’s a little bit of getting used to that.”

The mayor’s approach, in the specific instance of Blue Hill Ave., seems to be an improvement over other City Hall-led initiatives that have been encountering more existential roadblocks in recent weeks. A plan to rebuild and repurpose Franklin Park’s White Stadium has been slowed, if not mortally wounded, by legal challenges and critiques from key stakeholders—including park and preservationist lobbies

that are foundational parts of the Wu coalition. A plan to relocate the John D. O’Bryant High School to a now-empty BPS facility in West Roxbury was scuttled in the last week—one year after Wu and BPS Superintendent Mary Skipper rolled out the proposal as the marquee move in a larger plan to modernize the school district.

By contrast, the Blue Hill Avenue roll-out last week was notable for its team approach. Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley is a vocal supporter whose advocacy landed a \$15 million federal grant that kick-started the idea of “transforming” Blue Hill Avenue in 2021. Pressley was a key voice in last week’s announcement, calling the current conditions along the thoroughfare “unacceptable,” adding “it must change.”

The announcement was also peppered with supportive comments from US Sens. Ed Markey and Elizabeth Warren, and from a key ground-level ally, state Rep. Russell Holmes, who lives in the impacted corridor and who has a long record of standing up to constituents wary of infrastructure changes in Mattapan and Dorchester.

On Thursday, Wu leaned into the team dynamics that drove the Blue Hill plan.

“We would not be able to move forward at this point, had Congresswoman Pressley and the entire federal delegation not secured this \$15 million grant,” the mayor said. “That is a huge part of the financing for this. And it’s not just about the dollars. This coalition and this group of colleagues in public service—from the congresswoman and the senators to Representative Holmes, and the city councilors and state Senator Miranda... everyone who’s been involved in this, I think there’s been a shared understanding that transportation is at the foundation of every other challenge that we’re hearing about in

our communities.”

While some critics say last week’s announcement was pre-baked, Wu counters that in fact her team went far beyond the normal community “process” to solicit input from constituents who don’t normally attend civic group meetings.

“There’s been years of engagement in all different venues: small chats, surveys, hopping on the bus and trying to survey as many riders as possible. Shadowing the bus drivers and interviewing them while they’re driving... recording anyone who would give feedback as they were waiting for the bus,” said Wu. “So, we’ve gotten a good sense of what needs to be fixed and now begins the hard work of what will be at least a year and a half, if not more, of really getting to the block-by-block design.”

Foes of the center-running bus lanes, Wu thinks, would do well to note that Blue Hill Avenue was once home to streetcars that ran along the center of the thoroughfare in the first half of the 20th century.

“I think it’s important also just to remind everyone of the history of this corridor – that, in fact, there used to be much more reliable public transportation that prioritized the residents of the city way before many areas had electrified rail running down their streets,” said Wu. “But then along with decades of disinvestment, as demographics shifted, that was replaced with prioritization of suburban commuters. And we now have to get back to a balance.”

“We know Boston’s a key for the entire New England region — and that connection to cities outside Boston is really important. But we need our residents, and those who are on public transportation who already make up more than half the commuters on the corridor, to have just as smooth of an experience.”

RECENT OBITUARIES



DUFF, Maureen M. (Smith) of Dedham formerly of West Roxbury. Wife of Thomas G. Duff. Mother of Anna M. Duff of Dedham. Sister of James Smith of West Roxbury, Nancy Nelligan of Humarock, Stephen Smith of Medfield, Kevin Smith of West Roxbury, Carol O'Donnell of Scituate,

and Sheila Serra of Florida. Daughter of the late George J. and Eileen (Walsh) Smith. Daughter-in-law of Irene Duff of Dorchester. Sister-in-law of Nancy Zuray of Weymouth, William Duff of Dorchester, John Duff of Dorchester, Daniel Duff of Hingham, and the late Paula O'Donnell. Also survived by many nieces and nephews. Maureen was a former letter carrier for the Needham Post Office.

HARDEN-GILLET, Margaret, 84, of Mattapan, originally of Alabama, with her parents preceding her in death. Margaret was raised by her grandparents the late Margaret Johnson and



Lee West Johnson. She was an usher, deaconess, and choir member at Mt. Sinai Baptist Church. In 2017 Margaret retired from the Boston Public School System. She enjoyed attending the PACE Program where she gained a host of extend family and friends. Margaret was preceded in death by her daughter, Lisa M. Harden (Varela). She leaves her husband, Jean Gillot, her seven children, Gus Williams (Yolanda Williams), Shirley James-Robinson (Gary Robinson), Tina Williams (Roosevelt Johnson) Robert Harden, Louise Harden-Scott (Fernado Scott), Jimmie Harden, Keisha T. Bell (Larry Bell), 22 grandchildren, 23

great-grandchildren, and 2 great-great-grandchildren and a host of extended family and friends.



JACOBS, Edward A. "Ted", 93, of Dorchester. Husband of the late Mary E. (Gorman-Conroy) Jacobs. Son of the late Edward A. and Mary V. (Sullivan) Jacobs. Ted is also survived by several nieces and nephews, and many dear friends from the Knights of Columbus. US Army veteran. Member of the Bishop Cheverus Assembly Order of the Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus for over 50 years. He was also a member of the St. Vincent DePaul Society for over 50 years and a longtime volunteer at Boston Medical Center.

medical staff at Carney Hospital from 1959-2015. He practiced general surgery with a specialty in hand surgery. He served in many roles at Carney Hospital, including Secretary, Vice President, and ultimately President of the hospital's medical staff. He served on the hospital's development committee. He was an original founding member of the Carney Hospital Foundation, serving on the board of trustees. Dr. Charles also mentored and trained surgical residents through the Boston University Medical School surgical training programs. He was also on the medical staff at St. Elizabeth's Hospital, the Milton Hospital and the Youville Hospital (formerly the Holy Ghost Hospital), where he also served as President of the medical staff. During his time at St. Elizabeth's and Carney, he treated patients at the Chelsea Soldier's Home. Husband of the late Marjorie (Gorman). Father of Charles A., Esq., Susan (Bill Curtis), Elizabeth, M.D. and the late Richard. Brother to Robert Mahanor, Beverly Jansen, Lawrence Mahanor and the late Donald Mahanor and Alan Mahanor. He is also survived by many nieces and nephews. Please direct any donations to The Little Sisters of the Poor Holy Family Home via their website: littlesistersofthepoorphiladelphia.org/in-memory-of/ or by mail to the Little Sisters of the Poor, 5300 Chester Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19143 or to the charity of your choice.

nieces, nephews, and dear friends. Kevin was a retired Boston Municipal Police Officer assigned to Boston Housing. Please consider making a donation in memory of Kevin to the Children of Fallen Police Officers Foundation at policeofficersfoundation.org/.



PERKINS, Edward M., Jr., 86 of Milton, formerly of Dorchester. Son to the late Edward M. and Florence G. (Connell) Perkins. US Navy veteran. Edward was a teacher and librarian for many years with the Boston Public Schools. Husband of Helen K. (Higgins) Perkins. Father of Rosemary Sprague and her husband Walter of Whitman. He is also survived by his sister Maureen Perkins of Dorchester. Edward was predeceased by his daughter Kathleen M. Antoniazzi.



WHITE, Edward "Eddie" Joseph, 49, of Braintree, formerly of Dorchester. Eddie is survived by his wife Eileen (Fewer) and children Maeve and Teddy as well as his parents Edward and Patricia (Hill) of Yarmouth and his five siblings: Timmy (Heidi) of Braintree, Robbie (Amanda) of Norwell, Shannon (Patrick) of Savin Hill, Kevin (Kevin) of Savin Hill, and Brendan of Yarmouth. Special godson of Monica and Wally White of Florida. Eddie was blessed with many aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews as well many amazing friends including his lifelong partners in crime Richie Higgins of Dorchester and Eric Vinitsky of Squantum. Eddie spent 20 years as a laborer with Local 223. He spent the last 8 years working at the Commuter Rail. Donations in Eddie's memory can be made to Archbishop Williams High School, 80 Independence Avenue, Braintree, MA 02184 (awhs.org).



McGRAIL, Kevin P. Sr. Deputy Sheriff, Plymouth County, of Quincy, formerly of Dorchester. Father of Anthony McDonald and his wife Katie of Burlington, Kevin McGrail Jr. and his wife Corrie of Plympton, Darcy Hislop of Boston, and the late Melissa Magee. Partner of Danielle Rosales of Quincy. Former spouse of Michelle McGrail of Plymouth. Brother of Barbara and Eamon McDonald, Donna and Dara McGrath, Teresa Mannion, Elizabeth and Mark Wiley, Harrison Coyne, and Cheryl Barber. Grandfather to many grandchildren and one great grandson. Also survived by many



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Contact the office for information on the cost of burial needs, memorial benches and memorial trees. The Cemetery office is open Monday – Friday 8:00 to 5:00, and Saturday 8:00 to noon. The Cemetery grounds are open year round 7:00 am to sunset – weather permitting.

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LEGAL NOTICES

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
THE TRIAL COURT
PROBATE & FAMILY COURT
SUFFOLK DIVISION
24 NEW CHARDON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02114
Docket No. SU24D0233DR
DIVORCE SUMMONS
BY PUBLICATION and MAILING
DAVID M. RORIE
vs.
BEVERLY J. RORIE
To the Defendant:
The Plaintiff has filed a Complaint for Divorce requesting that the Court grant a divorce for Irretrievable Breakdown of the Marriage. The Complaint is on file at the Court. An Automatic Restraining Order has been entered in this matter preventing you from taking any action which would negatively impact the current financial status of either party. SEE Supplemental Probate Court Rule 411.
You are hereby summoned and required to serve upon: David M. Rorie, 32 Bellevue St., Dorchester, MA 02125 your answer, if any, on or before 04/25/2024. If you fail to do so, the court will proceed to the hearing and adjudication of this action. You are also required to file a copy of your answer, if any, in the office of the Register of this Court.
Witness, HON. BRIAN J. DUNN, First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 6, 2024
Stephanie L. Everett, Esq.
Register of Probate
Published: March 7, 2024



MAHANOR, Charles, Jr., MD, 95, of Milton, formerly of Brockton. US Army veteran. He served on the

LEGAL NOTICES

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
THE TRIAL COURT
PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT
Suffolk Probate & Family Court
24 New Chardon Street
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 788-8300
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Docket No. SU24P0240EA
ESTATE OF:
WINSTON C. ROBINSON
a/k/a: WINSTON CHURCHILL ROBINSON
DATE OF DEATH: 12/16/2022
To all interested persons:
A Petition for Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Ernest E. Robinson of Dorchester, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that: Ernest E. Robinson of Dorchester, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve With Personal Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration.
IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 04/11/2024.
This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.
UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)
A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.
Witness, HON. BRIAN J. DUNN, First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 21, 2024
Stephanie L. Everett, Esq.
Register of Probate
Published: March 7, 2024

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