THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2020

FREE

CHARLESTOWN

PATRIOT-BRIDGE

Neighborhood COVID-19 rate in Charlestown remains on lower end

By Seth Daniel

The numbers of cases and rate of COVID-19 infections in Charlestown remains lower than most of the rest of Boston in the latest neighborhood statistics released by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) on Friday evening, April 10.

The statistics were taken as of Thursday, April 9, at 4:12 p.m.

The infection rate in Charlestown moved from 'similar' to the rest of Boston to 'lower' than the rest of Boston in the newest figures – which show a total of 50 cases in the Town and an

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Peace Park effort wins grant for pro bono re-design of McGrath Park

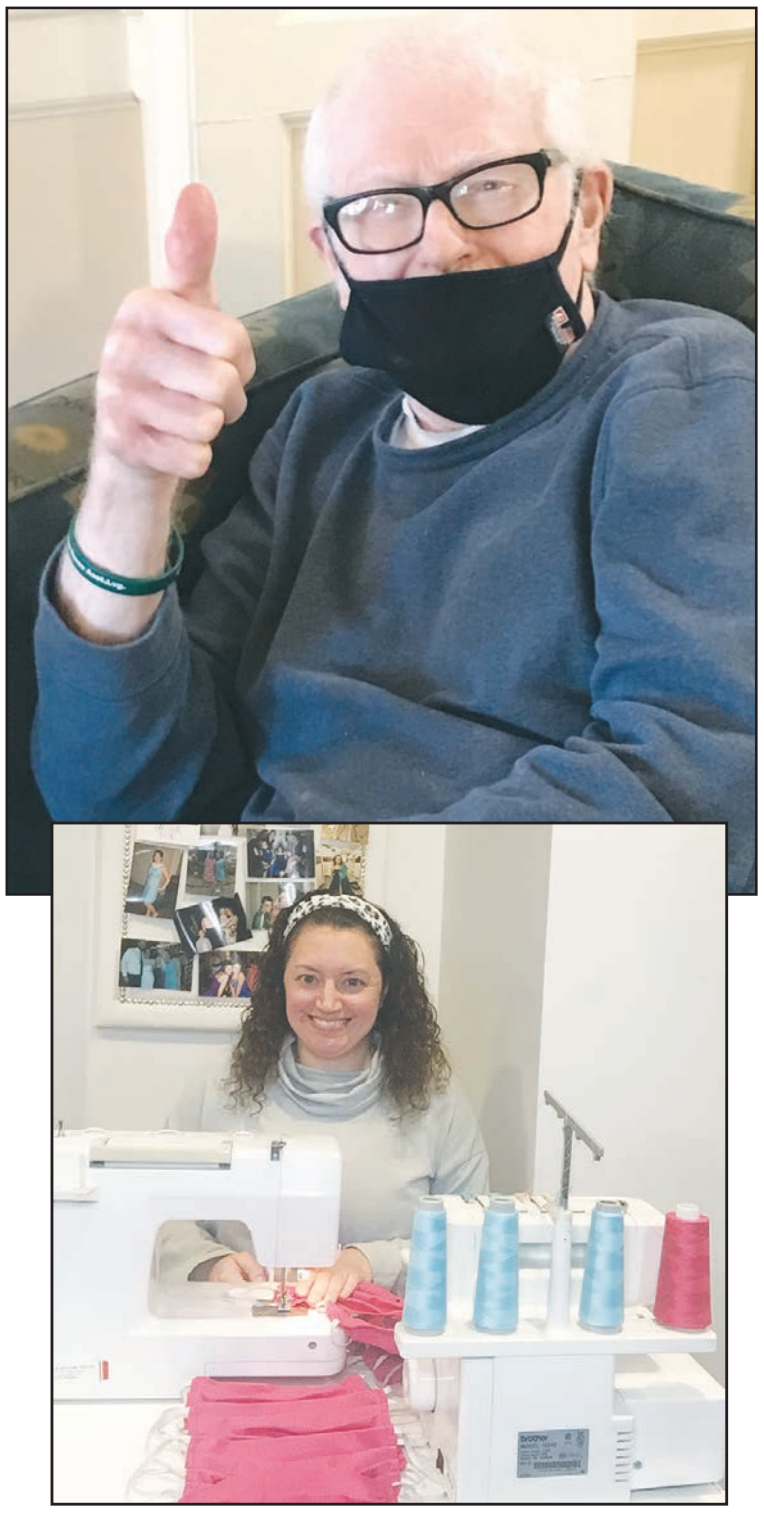
By Seth Daniel

The Peace Park effort in Charlestown has taken a major step forward this week to re-design and upgrade the park so it is sustainable over time – with the goal of pursuing Community Preservation Act funding to build out the plan.

Officially known as McGrath Park on Lowney Way, and known over the past few years as the Peace Park, the effort fronted by The Charlestown Coalition and the

(PEACE PARK *Pg.* 3)

MAKING MASKS



Courtesy Photos

Don Snow (top photo) gives the thumbs up with his mask at the Zelma Lacey House. Several residents and employees were stocked with homemade masks from a grass-roots network of many "seamsters," cutters and delivery drivers throughout the Town. Here, Shannon Gilligan works diligently on making masks for the Zelma Lacey and other senior buildings on her sewing machine. She joined several residents who jumped to action when they heard the senior buildings in Town were in need of protective masks.

Recovery becomes a struggle with isolation of COVID-19

By Seth Daniel

Being part of a vulnerable population during the current pandemic has forced a lot of choices – and in the recovery community it has forced many underground.

As the COVID-19 response continues on, those in recovery for drugs and alcohol who are vulnerable to relapse have been increasingly weighing the risks of not attending in-person meetings with the risk of contracting COVID-19 – and many are choosing to participate in so-called "secret" meetings.

Shannon Lundin White of the Charlestown Coalition said there

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EMPTY CATHEDRAL

Photos courtesy Archdiocese of Boston

Cardinal Sean O'Malley celebrated many Holy Week services and Easter Masses last week in front of an empty Cathedral of the Holy Cross. While many in the neighborhoods watched online or on television as he carried out services during the holiest time of the year for Christians, an empty sea of pews was commonplace. It was unprecedented, but necessary during the COVID-19 response efforts. Here, Cardinal O'Malley delivers his homily in an empty Cathedral on Holy Thursday.

State construction projects will continue through COVID-19

By Seth Daniel

Transportation Secretary Stephanie Pollack said on Monday that state bridge and roadway work – such as the North Washington Street Bridge project or the Mystic/Tobin rehabilitation work – will continue on through the COVID-19 response while using protective measures on the job sites.

"On the one hand, we have to address health and safety first, but on the other hand it is construction season and we have a limited construction season here," she said. "In any case we can continue safely with construction, we hope to do so."

Critical infrastructure and

(CONSTRUCTION *Pg.* 3)

For the latest news in Charlestown that you need to know, check

charlestownbridge.com

Walsh announces mortgage relief partnership with banks during covid-19 pandemic

Building on his Administration's commitment to keeping the people of Boston stably housed during the COVID-19 pandemic, Mayor Martin J. Walsh announced last week that 12 of the largest housing lenders in Boston will offer at least three months of deferred mortgage payments for homeowners who contact them and demonstrate they have been financially impacted by the public health crisis.

In addition, the lenders have committed not to charge late fees, or report non-payments to the credit bureaus. Homeowners will not be required to pay back the deferred mortgage payments in a lump sum, but will instead work with lenders on an affordable repayment plan.

"No person should have to worry about losing their home right now. During these times of global uncertainty, homeowners and renters in Boston can be certain that we are doing everything we can to help ease the burden brought on by this pandemic and give them much-needed flexibility," said Mayor Walsh. "I want to thank our lender partners who have stepped up to the plate to meet the needs of our residents during this time, and I encourage others to follow suit. Now more than ever, we have to work together to make sure that we can keep people in their homes."

The participating lenders will provide at least three months in a loan deferment for homeowners, with the option to extend for longer periods, if needed. They have also agreed to the goal of approving deferments within 21 days of application and with only essential paperwork needed from the homeowner. The lenders will not report this deferment as a bad loan, nor report it to the credit bureaus as being a late loan. They will not charge late fees on the late loan payments or deferments. Once the deferment period is complete, the homeowner is not required to pay the total deferment/forbearance amount in a lump sum.

The 12 lenders that will offer this relief to homeowners include: Bank of America, Boston Private, Cambridge Trust Company, Century Bank, Citizens Bank, City of Boston Credit Union, Dedham Savings Bank, Eastern Bank, Mortgage Network, Inc., Prime Lending, Salem Five Bank, and Santander Bank.

"Bank of America is pleased to work with the City of Boston on a goal we share: to help the clients we serve get the assistance and support they need to get through this crisis," said Miceal Chamberlain, Massachusetts President, Bank of America.

Many lenders are offering deferral periods longer than those required in the plan, and homeowners should contact their servicer directly for more information. However, the Boston Home Center is available to answer any questions and can be reached at 617-635-4663, ext. 3.

The financial relief being offered by these 12 lenders is the latest in a series of actions aimed at supporting Boston's renters and homeowners during this difficult time.

12-percent spike in Part One crime this year

By Dan Murphy

As the first quarter of 2020 drew to a close, Charlestown had seen a 12-percent increase in incidents of violent and property crime from last year.

According to Boston Police, 73 incidents of Part One crime were reported in Area 15 between Jan. 1 and March 29 of this year, compared with 65 during the same timeframe in 2019.

No homicides were reported either this year or last while the number rapes and attempted rapes dropped from one in 2019 to none in 2020.

In contrast, robberies and attempted robberies doubled as the number spiked to four from two in 2019.

The rate of domestic aggravated assault remained steady with six incidents both this year and last while non-domestic aggravated assaults were down 50 percent as the number fell to three from six last year.

Commercial burglaries dropped from one in 2019 to none this year as residential burglaries increased four-fold, spiking to eight from two last year.

No incidents of other burglary were reported either this year or last.

Larcenies from a motor vehicle were up nearly 67 percent as the number increased to 20 from 12 in 2019 while other larcenies were down slightly, dropping to 28 from 29 last year.

And auto theft was down around 33 percent, with four incidents this year, compared to six in 2019.

Citywide, Part One crime was down 2 percent as the number of incidents fell to 3,536 from 3,626 in 2019.

Real Estate Transfers

BUYER 1	SELLER 1	ADDRESS	PRICE
Mullane, Maurice P	Drackwicz, Stacy	45 1st Ave #207	$410,000
Morgan, Jennifer A	Gillis, Richard C	197 8th St #524	$1,049,000
Garfield, Alexander M	Sheerin-Bshara, Melissa	57 Bartlett St #5	$615,000
Kessler, Noah	Hickey, Sean	5-9 Franklin St #3	$780,000
Santamaria, Joseph	Gould, Kevin	47 Harvard St #B303	$805,000

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RECOVERY *(from pg. 1)*

are in fact "secret" meetings being held around the town for those in Alcoholics Anonymous and those in Narcotics Anonymous – the 12-step programs for men and women that lean heavily on camaraderie and in-person meetings of the groups. Some of the meetings in Charlestown, such as the 'Loonie Noonie' have been going on daily at noon for generations, but suddenly were cancelled indefinitely due to the restrictions on gatherings.

Though some tried technology, she said, and that worked for some people, others felt they had to take the risk of meeting in person.

"People in the recovery community are more afraid of relapsing and dying of an overdose than catching the Coronavirus and getting sick, which I think is valid," she said. "People are still in isolation and are all alone in some cases, and these are triggers for relapse. Some in recovery are able to stay home and they're doing Zoom meetings and that works for them. For others, it isn't enough…There are groups that are meeting, but they are doing it on the downlow and they're doing it safely.

"People who are in recovery and are vulnerable to relapse into alcohol and drug use are already at high risk, and they are at an even higher risk now because they don't have the camaraderie and social connections that they developed and that has been critical to staying sober," she continued.

To make sure the covert meetings are safe, those conducting them are practicing social distancing and trying to keep the numbers down. They wear masks when they can and have hand sanitizer in use. They are wiping down all the surfaces and chairs that are used, and being smart about their gatherings.

Lundin-White said she is helping supply those meetings that have continued with products to help them. She is also working to provide Narcan to individuals and families in the Town who are at high-risk to relapse without a support system. Already, she said, it has been too late for some.

"There's definitely been an uptick in relapses and overdoses in the last few weeks," she said. "I've lost two clients just last week."

The situation started out okay during the first part of the COVID-19 responses, whereby recovery groups were allowed to meet with proper precautions. However, as things became more stringent, their meetings were officially shut down and many of the places they meet had to close due to Gov. Charlie Baker's advisory.

"After the meetings had to stop, it got very hard for folks," said Lundin-White. "There are people who go to two or three meetings a day and they've been doing that for years. To have that taken away suddenly is scary. People rely on 12-step programs like AA and NA to stay sober one day at a time. It's their medicine – essential medicine. This disruption for this pandemic is creating a lot of other risks."

For those who are able to stay in, or maybe only need to attend a "secret" meeting occasionally, she said the Coalition is providing tips and materials to keep calm.

This week, the Coalition handed out adult coloring books and pencils to those in their programs. They've encouraged people to take pictures and share them with one another, letting everyone know some tips they've used to keep on the right track. Zoom meetings have been coordinated consistently, and the Coalition is stressing folks talk on the phone, practice meditation and prayer and take up healthy hobbies.

Still, there are those who are cut off from this sort of technology and they need a helping hand. That, at times, has to be an in-person meeting, Lundin-White said.

"We have people who have been in jail for a long time and just got out and they have never used a phone or a computer," she said. "We have old-timers who aren't able to access or figure out the technology. What about those people? I'm really worried about people relapsing and dying."

THINK OF IT AS AN OWNER'S MANUAL FOR YOUR MONEY.

The free *Consumer Action Handbook*. In print and online at ConsumerAction.gov, it's the everyday guide to getting the most for your hard-earned money. For your free copy, order online at ConsumerAction.gov; write to Handbook, Pueblo, CO 81009; or call toll-free 1 (888) 8 PUEBLO.

A public service message from the U.S. General Services Administration.

Chain Forge developers agree to pay $1.22 million in fees as construction capital becomes more complicated

By Seth Daniel

The developers of the Chain Forge hotel project in the Navy Yard have always had a complicated financing plan for redevelopment of the old Naval chain factory, but with COVID-19 hitting the markets, it has become much more complicated – and now the developers are asking to pay $1.22 million in fees to be allowed to continue putting financing in place through August.

"The impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic are far reaching and dramatic," read a memo from the Boston Planning and Development Agency prepared for its virtual Board meeting on April 16. "Millions of U.S. residents have been ordered to remain in their homes nationally and unemployment claims have reached unprecedented levels. The capital markets are in great flux and the hotel industry has been seriously impacted. Equity investors and lenders, uncertain of the new underwriting models, are cautiously refraining from new hotel loans for the time being."

The project has been suffering from numerous delays for several years, and developers began paying $250,000 fees to the BPDA last year, with one term being $375,000. Now, they have agreed to pay $1.22 million in total fees to the BPDA in order to keep the project going, all of which will be added up in the final ground lease. They would now have until Aug. 31 to wrap up construction funding and pull a building permit, with the failure to do so resulting in a renegotiation of the terms of their lease.

The developers told the Patriot Bridge earlier this year that they were close to getting things sealed up and hoped to begin construction in April or May. That has taken a sideways turn with the COVID-19 outbreak and the delicate nature of their funding "stack."

One delay that went on for some time revolved around negotiations with the National Park Service to require the developers to commit a certain portion of profits from the hotel towards upkeep of the National Park in the Navy Yard. After that was solved, the developers began to seek new tax credits for being in an "opportunity zone." That program was created in the federal Tax Reform Bill and was implemented late last year.

"In short, the 'capital stack' or financing for the rehabilitation of the Chain Forge Building will be immensely complicated," read the BPDA memo. "However, the result will be the rehabilitation of an historic building that has been vacant for over 40 years, making historical equipment available for public view, new hotel rooms to accommodate visitors to Boston, and the successful use of a new economic development tax incentive program in Boston for the first time."

The Board will vote on the new terms April 16 in a virtual BPDA meeting.

•The Whitaker Wind Sculpture exhibit scheduled for this May in the Navy Yard and put on by the Navy Yard Garden Association is being considered for a major extension of the exhibit.

The kinetic wind exhibit created by a very reclusive and unique artist was supposed to be installed in May with a ceremony, but that might be in flux. It was supposed to wrap up in September. However, the BPDA is asking its Board to consider extending the exhibit agreement through May 31, 2021.

•The Charlestown Marina is just about to begin work at long last on the Pier 6 project, but before that can happen, the BPDA is asking that their lease on Water Parcel D be extended at the same rent for one year, through May 1, 2021.

The parcel is under water, and was procured by the Marina when it took over for the disgraced Captains Quarters Marina in 2014. They have been paying $35,000 per year for use of the parcel since 2015, but have been tied up in major red tape from the state regarding the sins of the past owner. In that time, they have constructed a huge, new marina further up the waterfront in the Navy Yard. Pier 6 was phase 2 of that effort. Now, with COVID-19 hitting, they are asking that their rent payments for Parcel D not increase as it was supposed to do in May.

They hope to freeze the $35,000 payment for another year.

"The impacts on the tourism industry for 2020 are unknown at the time of writing of this memo, but expectations are for a dramatic decrease in vacation travel," read the BPDA memo. "Much of the business for Charlestown Marina, LLC is seasonal and involves vacationers visiting Boston for pleasure in their recreational vessels. That business, at least for 2020, is likely to be seriously impacted."

The Board will vote on the matter April 16.

CONSTRUCTION *(from pg. 1)*

repair work has been deemed essential since the beginning of the COVID-19 response, as has most construction, but some have opted to shut down for worker safety anyhow. Pollack said completing projects can be done as long as it is done with care.

She said they have new job site protocols and are requiring Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) with a zero tolerance policy towards those that don't follow their explicit direction.

Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver said they have been taking precautions with their own staff that investigates sites for compliance, and also a set of precautions for the contractor community.

All sites must practice social distancing first and foremost, he said. When that's not possible, they turn to protective equipment.

"When social distancing isn't possible as part of construction, such as working inside a mechanical room or placing a beam when two people have to be in close quarters with one another, in these situations contractors are expected to implement protections by supplying masks and eyewear and other PPE that is necessary to do that operation in a safe way," he said. "We've been really clear with contractors and our staff that to be prepared with PPE is as essential as having a hard hat on the job."

Gulliver said they are prepared to shut down job sites that don't comply, but so far they haven't had to.

"There have been no occurrences where we've had to do a full shutdown, but we've had to ask contractors to modify their work in several important ways," he said.

•In news from the Registry, it was reported that the federal government has given the state an extension to comply with the Real ID requirement.

Everyone with a license was supposed to have a new Real ID by October. Now, that has been continued to next year.

PEACE PARK *(from pg. 1)*

Turn It Around youth group won a competitive competition with Community Outreach Group for Landscape Design (COGdesign) to gather community input and re-design the park. The competition awards the services of COGdesign for free.

"It is at a little bit of a standstill right now because of the virus, but did apply for this and were selected for completely pro-bono design," said Sarah Coughlin of the Coalition. "We hope to be able to get this design and be able to compete for CPA funding in 2021, which can be a grant of up to $500,000. We don't want to delay too much so we're going online and posting a community-wide online survey. If it's going to be another month before we all return, we'll host virtual meetings, but if we get back open earlier, we'll have presentations to the community at the end of May."

"COGdesign is thrilled to have taken on the revitalization of the Lowney/McGrath park in Charlestown as one of the our eleven 2020 projects," said Jen of COGdesign. "To have the opportunity to work with the Charlestown Coalition, an organization which is focused on community and healing, perfectly matches our mission. The landscape architects who have volunteered for this project are excited to listen to and learn from the Coalition's youth group Turn It Around as well as all the immediate neighbors. With the idea that the Peace Park could continue to serve as a memorial for Joseph McGrath and go on to become a memorial space for all those lost to violence and overdose, design opportunities are wide open. COG looks forward to learning more about what the community would like to see."

The Peace Park has garnered considerable attention over the last eight months due to a situation where it had fallen into a bit of disrepair, and that allegedly prompted some to apparently dismantle parts of the memorial. It has resulted in a criminal case and police investigation that continues at West Roxbury District Court.

That situation, however, has prompted a greater effort to re-build the small spot next to the Mystic/Tobin Bridge in a larger way with a more focused mission for peace, reflection and healing.

Coughlin said they went from a budget two years ago of $2,700, some cans of paint and a lot of elbow grease, to a professional design and potentially up to $500,000 in funding to build out the plan.

"I think the ideas will come from the community as to what is there and how it will look," she said. "We have to get that input and the designers will carry it out. It will be kept to its original mission though as a place of peace and a place for people to grieve and heal. It doesn't have to be a memorial site, but depending on funding, we might do memorial bricks like they have at the Boys & Girls Club. There is also a desire to get more trees and more greenery if we can. Whatever happens, peace and healing and remembrance will be part of it."

She said the effort will include a plan to sustain it so there isn't a lapse in maintenance, and State Rep. Dan Ryan is working on that piece at the moment. The Park is actually state property, but Rep. Ryan is in discussions to transfer it from the state to the City of Boston. That will help ensure continuous maintenance along with community efforts led by Turn It Around.

The Coalition is now creating the online survey, and will notify the community through many channels when it is ready to gather input.

CHARLESTOWN BEAT

POLICE/COMMUNITY MEETING: Meet the police & discuss public safety issues on the last Wednesday of every month at the police station, 20 Vine Street, at 6:00 p.m., 2nd floor, community room. POLICE RELATED INFO: Contact the District A-1 Community Service Office at 617-343-4627.

Drugs

04/08/20 - As a result of an investigation on North Mead Street, an individual will be summonsed to Charlestown Court for possession of a Class A substance (heroin).

Larceny

04/09/20 – A victim on Belmont Street reported he parked his car at 6 p.m. on April 7, but when he returned at noon the next day, he found that his credit card, glasses and an Easter basket had been stolen from the vehicle.

Larceny

04/10/20 – A victim on Cross Street reported she parked her car at 3 p.m. on April 9, but when she returned at noon the next day, she found that someone had taken a baby blanket from the vehicle.

EDITORIAL

A LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL?

The United States now is the official epicenter of the coronavirus pandemic.

We have more deaths and more cases of disease than anywhere else in the world.

However, this past weekend the experts began to give us a glimmer of hope that we are turning the tide against this dreaded foe and the possibility that our lives may return to some semblance of normality in incremental steps within 30-60 days.

We are the first to concede that there are many "ifs" to any discussion of ending the shutdown of the U.S. economy and the present lockdown mandates currently in place throughout most of the nation. A vast increase in testing in order to identify both virus carriers and those who may have immunity will be essential before we can begin to emerge meaningfully from our life of quarantine.

It also is clear that even with some sort easing of the lockdowns, life still will be far from normal: Schools most likely will remain closed for the rest of this school year, professional sports will not take place anytime soon, public gatherings of all kinds will be banned, and the travel industry will continue to be in a state of non-existence indefinitely.

But the experts' insights about the possibility of some degree of easing of our current situation brought to mind the famous words of Winston Churchill amidst the worst days of World War II when Nazi Germany's advance had been stopped by England with the defeat of Rommel at El Alamein:

"Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."

Our war against the coronavirus still has a long way to go. But with the outbreaks and death toll dropping in many places around the world, including New York City, perhaps we can see a pinhole of light in the long, dark tunnel in which we find ourselves.

SO LET'S TALK ABOUT THE WEATHER

The weather this April has been full of irony. We had mild months for January, February, and March, with above-average temperatures (among the warmest on record) and few storms of any consequence.

However, April has been anything but spring-like. Temperatures have been below normal and two fierce storms, including this past Monday's, left many of us without power.

So although April thus far has ranged from seasonably unpleasant to rather ferocious, weather-wise, at least it has provided us with a diversion from our preoccupation with the coronavirus.

CHARLESTOWN PATRIOT-BRIDGE

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PHONE: 617.241.8500 © 2008 INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER GROUP.
EMAIL: editor@charlestownbridge.com • WEB SITE: www.charlestownbridge.com
NEWSSTAND PRICE: FREE / SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: $75 ANNUALLY
PRESIDENT - STEPHEN QUIGLEY - EDITOR@CHARLESTOWNBRIDGE.COM
MARKETING DIRECTOR - DEBRA DIGREGORIO - DEB@REVEREJOURNAL.COM
REPORTER - SETH DANIEL - SETH@REVEREJOURNAL.COM

GUEST OP-ED

We are a resilient city of resilient people

By Mayor Martin J. Walsh

The coronavirus is unlike anything we've experienced in living memory, and it's testing our city in a way that it's never been tested before. It has required a major, all-hands-on-deck response, and it has affected every aspect of daily life in Boston. Every day, we are sending our love, our support, and our prayers to everyone who's battling this terrible illness, and our hearts break for the families who have lost loved ones.

The grief I feel for these families is coupled with an immense sense of pride for our city. The people of Boston have shown bravery, strength, and solidarity with one another since this crisis began. We've had to close our schools, postpone some of our most beloved traditions, and ask residents to keep their distance from the people they love the most.

I know that these changes have been very difficult for many people. But I'm not hearing complaints; the overwhelming reaction has been support and cooperation.

People are focused on protecting their fellow Bostonians, especially the most vulnerable among us. People understand that the measures we're taking, no matter how drastic they may feel, will save lives. That is our top priority, and the people of Boston have rallied around it. I've seen people, businesses, and organizations stepping up and doing the right thing. I've seen wonderful acts of kindness. And I've seen people of all ages showing what it means to be Boston strong.

In the face of challenges like this one, our city shows its true colors. We are a resilient city of resilient people. That's reflected in our strong neighborhoods, in our enduring traditions, and in the way we govern at the local level.

The fact is, we've been strengthening Boston's ability to respond to a crisis like this for years. We've built deep connections between city government, neighborhood leaders, community groups, and the faith community. We've built up one of the strongest shelter and healthcare networks for homeless individuals in the country. We've made city services more accessible, in more languages, across a variety of platforms.

We've helped more people get connected with affordable internet. And we've worked to close equity gaps to make sure that more people have access to stable housing and financial safety nets. All of these things have allowed us to act swiftly, get people the information they need, and soften the blow that this public health crisis is having on our communities, our economy, and people's lives. To me, this is the definition of resilience. It means planning ahead, and building connections before we need them, so that we can adapt to any challenge that we face.

We've got a long road ahead of us. Even after we overcome the immediate threat to people's health, there will be a long eco-

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CLERGY VIEWPOINT

FROM THE CHARLESTOWN CLERGY ASSOCIATION

The conundrum of suffering

By Very Reverend James Ronan, VF – Pastor, St. Mary-St. Catherine of Siena Parish

The world all around us and within us is suffering. Some are ill with the virus and with family members unable to be near to bring them comfort. Others are out of work and in financial stress of one form or another. Still others are homeless or alone with no one to aid them in this moment. Many are overwhelmed by worry and loneliness. All are suffering.

When my mother labored in pain to birth me, her fears, pain, and exhaustion lifted when she held me and poured into her newborn son a love beyond measure. That very love has sustained me to this day. I know the same is true for my sisters and brothers, just as it may be for each one of us. This reality causes me to wonder: "Is there a relationship between suffering and love?"

As I live these days in Charlestown and virtually with so many others, there is something happening: yes, people are suffering. Yet there are also many who are speaking about love. Relationships with family and friends, colleagues and neighbors, have taken on a new dimension. Appreciation, at least, but more like admiration, fondness, respect, and caring have surfaced in places heretofore unnoticed.

To become aware of this happening, one must step out of oneself. If this time of suffering turns one inward so that everything is about oneself, the suffering is amplified and the "Woe is me" becomes destructive. However, if one looks around, listens, and takes note, beyond the nonstop news bulletins which are overwhelming, there are persons of all ages acting, speaking, writing, and living with beauty and love.

I am coming to think we are all enrolled inescapably in this COVID-19 "School of Suffering." However, what if this School of Suffering is also a School of Love? The curriculum, of course, is Love, something we all know about, each from our own stories and dreams. Nonetheless, we may still be stymied about this course we are in, afraid of how to get through it. Don't be afraid. We happen to have a Master Teacher in Jesus Christ. In this holiest of weeks, Jesus shows us exactly how we are to Love – selflessly - and in so doing, to come to live ever more fully.

In this sweet and bitter experience called life, we are all enrolled in this course with an explicit plan of God that we pass it - with distinction! Just so happens this COVID-19 era makes the course more intense than ever, but then, don't worry, so are the resources to succeed – they are everywhere. Be attuned to them and, especially, to our Master Teacher, who is Jesus.

Neighborhood network ramps up to produce masks for senior citizen buildings

By Seth Daniel

Just two weeks ago, Julie Hall and Amanda Zettel heard from Doug MacDonald that there was a bit of shortage of masks at the Zelma Lacey House – the senior citizen assisted living building located behind the Bunker Hill Mall.

Troubled by those reports, and reports that other senior buildings also needed more face protections, they put out the call.

It was an explosion of a response, and the newly-described "seamsters" haven't stopped making masks since.

"My phone blew up with texts very quickly and we started calling it 'Operation Townie Mask,'" said Hall. "It's such a good thing everyone is doing. It started with helping the folks at the Zelma Lacey House, but it also helps those sewing, cutting and delivering the masks because they have something positive to do. Many people are just stuck inside a building…It's an example of the incredible resilience of the human spirit. People just want to help."

Zettel, who has a sewing machine and had practiced sewing before COVID-19, quickly gathered designs for the masks – which have to be 100 percent cotton – and contacted others she knew that also had sewing skills.

She heard that Ocean State Job Lots was giving away free fabric, so MacDonald was able to travel there and pick a lot of it up. From there, they were able to organize folks who couldn't sew, but wanted to cut out the materials.

Soon, a Townie assembly line had formed.

MacDonald would deliver material to the cutters, then pick up the cut materials and distribute them to the sewers. When they finished, he would then deliver it to those who needed it – in the first instance it was Zelma Lacey.

"Now that all of Boston is supposed to be wearing masks when outside, everyone needs fabric and elastic to make masks," said Zettel. "We were able to get a lot of fabric, and we've also been buying sheets and napkins at Target and places like that, but there is no elastic to be found anywhere. We had to customize the design a bit and we began using a tie-on mask. That design is actually better in the end because it's a more universal fit."

The operation was so efficient, and gathered about 25 "seamsters" (men and women), that they had the fabric delivered by April 5, and all of the masks were made and delivered to the Zelma Lacey by April 7. It was a remarkable turnaround, and one that was gratefully accepted by the seniors and staff at the home.

"The Zelma Lacey House residents and staff would like to thank the Charlestown Community for all of the donations we have received," said Tabitha Jones. "A special 'Thank You' to everyone who has taken the time to make masks for our entire community. We are truly grateful and appreciate the kind gesture."

Now, they are focusing on other senior buildings – having provided masks to most senior buildings in the Town by now.

The seamsters include a diverse group of Townies, including Lan Tran who came to Charlestown in 1985 and raised two daughters here. Having great sewing skills, her daughter got her going on the effort, and the mask making hasn't stopped since.

Shannon Gilligan was another seamster that quickly went to work at her sewing machine – sitting in front of a sign reading 'Shannon's Happy Place.'

J.D. Mangrum of Christ Church Charlestown also mobilized his congregation in the effort, and they were able to produce 120 masks that were delivered to the Park Street senior building.

Clearly the effort has been as meaningful for the producers as it has been helpful for the recipients.

"Our seamsters are dying to do more," said Zettel. "When we're delivering them around the Town, we sometimes see an older adult out without a mask and Doug will stop the car, get out and just give them one of our masks while he's delivering. Everyone is grateful."

Hall said it was an effort that really sprung out of the momentum and familiarity developed during the Master Plan community process last summer and fall. With the 02129 Neighbor Alliance already intact, Hall said it was easy to reach out to a huge swath of the community electronically.

"We all got to know each other so well through the planning process and we were able to easily reach out to everyone through that network," she said.

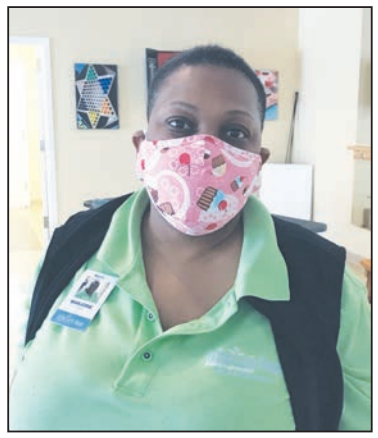
Anyone who would like to be involved in the effort is encouraged to email hello@02129neighboralliance.org.

Courtesy Photos

Maria Debourbon sporting one of the masks.

Sissy Ahern left her apartment, but not before putting on her mask.

Ruthann Swenson.



Marjorie Louis showed off her mask as she worked

Mary J. Kane used her mask to run some quick errands.

Edward Kelly shows off a leopard print mask made for him.

Bill Stella.

Lan Tran, who has lived in Charlestown since 1985, heard about the mask-making project from her daughter and immediately took to her sewing machine.

Ray Ford was happy at the front desk of the Zelma Lacey with her mask.

Wash Your Hands • Social Distance • Stay Home (if you can)

We are still here to provide care to the community including virtual (telephone and soon, video) adult medicine, pediatric, and behavioral health visits. You can also still call our adult and pediatric practices for same-day urgent in-person visits when necessary.
Hours: Mon – Fri -8:30 – 5pm Sat. – 8:30 – 12noon (Adult patients only)

MGH 1811

MGH Charlestown HealthCare Center
73 High Street 617 -724-8135
www.massgeneral.org/charlestown

RATE *(from pg. 1)*

infection rate of 25.8 per 10,000 residents. The numbers of cases was up from 29 on April 2, and a rate of 14.9 per 10,000 residents.

Charlestown has the fewest confirmed cases of COVID-19 of any Boston neighborhood, but has a higher infection rate than Fenway (12.4/10K) and Downtown [North End, Back Bay, Beacon Hill] (23.2/10K).

Other areas of Boston grew much quicker over the past week than Charlestown, particularly in the South End where there has been a spike of cases in the homeless and drug dependent population, causing numbers there to jump to 78.9 per 10,000 residents and 282 confirmed cases. The South End rates were similar to some of the highest rates in the state, with it being just above the numbers for Lawrence – which had the second highest estimated rate in the state at 75 per 10,000. Chelsea was the hardest hit community with an estimated 106 cases per 10,000 people, according to hospital officials from Mass General and Beth Israel.

Though East Boston is only a stone's throw across the Inner Harbor from Charlestown, it's numbers of cases and rates of infection were much higher. There were 238 confirmed cases in Eastie and it had a rate of 50.7 per 10,000 residents – highlighting what many in the City administration are touting as societal inequities that are being spotlighted by the pandemic.

The second hardest hit neighborhood was Hyde Park, which had an infection rate of 66.6 per 10,000 and 228 cases.

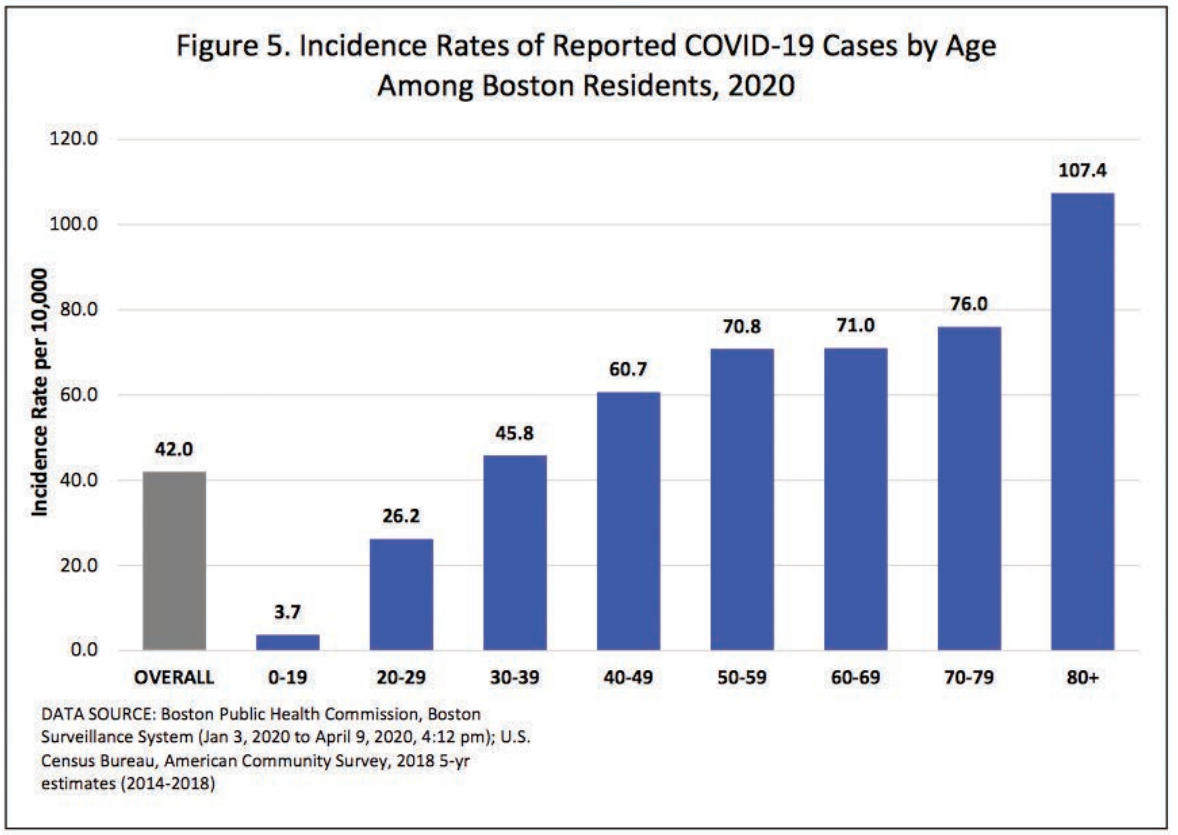
In terms of the most cases, South Dorchester – one of the City's largest neighborhoods by population – still had the most confirmed cases with 444.

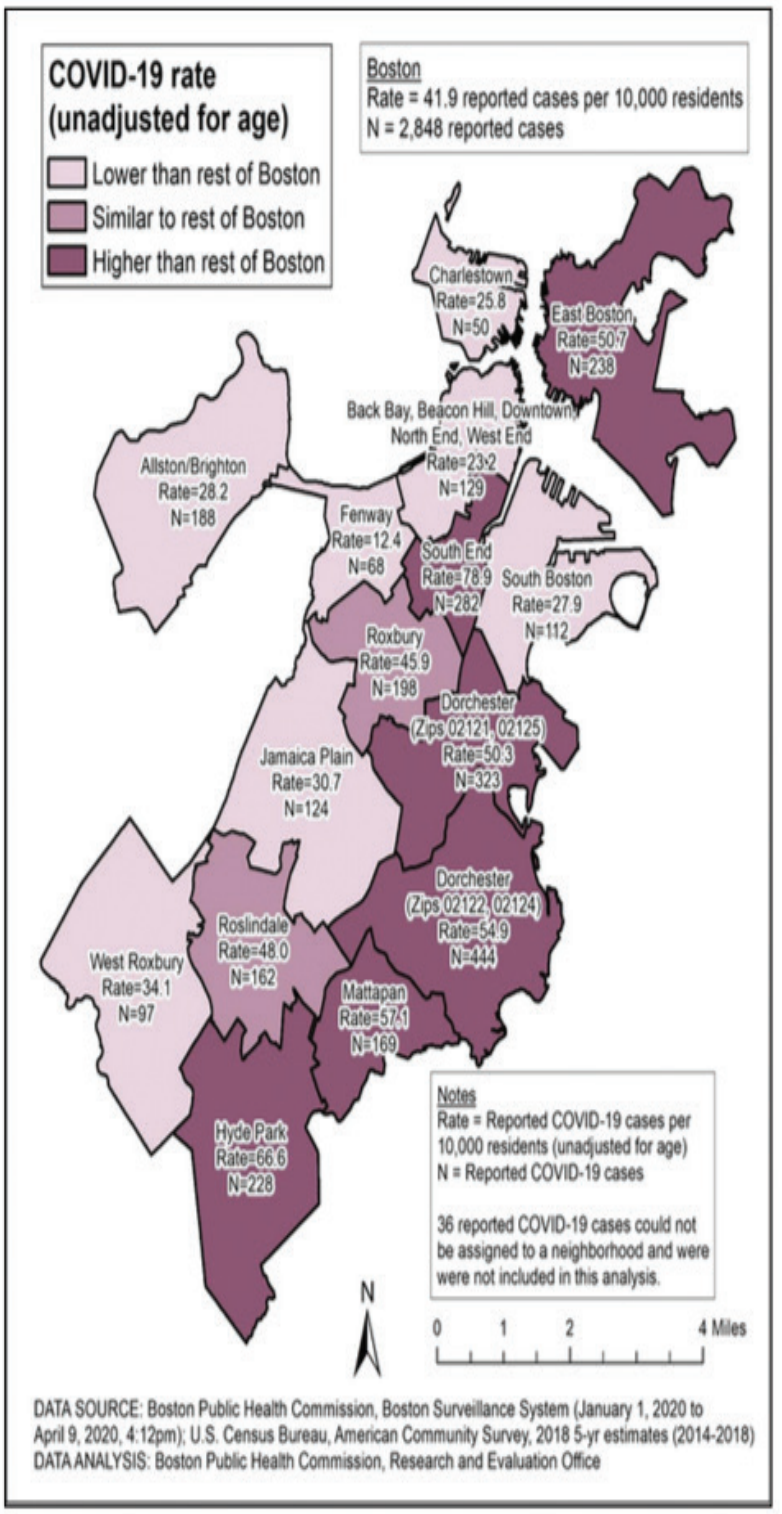
Overall, the citywide infection rate was 41.9 per 10,000 with a total of 2,848 confirmed cases of COVID-19. There had been 35 deaths from COVID-19 in Boston and 339 people had recovered.

In another reversal of the trends, older adults above age 80 really began to show a much greater infection rate, climbing to 107.4 per 10,000 resident. It was a startling jump from one week ago when those 80 and over had a rate of 22.9 per 10,000. It is a true wake-up call for those older adults to be very careful and for younger people to show concern for keeping them safe by practicing social distancing.

There is a low percentage of Boston residents under 20 who have tested positive, and a low (26.2 per 10,000) infection rate among those 20-29. However, the numbers begin to climb for those reaching age 30, and then seem to level off for those ages 40-79 – all having rates between 60-76 per 10,000 people.

Nearly 30 percent of all COVID-19 cases were in persons age 60 and above, and rates are seen as increasing substantially with age – according to the BPHC.





Neighborhood ZIPS

Allston/Brighton (A/B) =02163, 02134, 02135
Back Bay, Beacon Hill, North End, West End, and Downtown (BB) =02108, 02114, 02116, 02199, 02109, 02110, 02103
Charlestown (CH)=02129
East Boston (EB)=02128
DOR=Dorchester
DOR (02121, 02125)=02121, 02125
DOR (02122, 02124)=02122, 02124
Fenway (FW)=02115, 02215
Hyde Park (HP)=02136
Jamaica Plain (JP)=02130
Mattapan (MT)=02126
Roslindale (RS)=02131
Roxbury (RX)=02119, 02120
South Boston (SB)=02127, 02210
South End (SE)=02111, 02118
West Roxbury (WR)=02132

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Tobin Bridge traffic plummets, toll revenues down in March

By Seth Daniel

Trips across the Mystic/Tobin Bridge have plummeted over the last month, reducing toll revenues and creating much less congestion over the Bridge that drivers have become used to over the years.

For the most recent data available, which is the week ending April 3, trips in both directions on the Bridge are down 55.4 percent, according to data released from MassDOT on Tuesday. That includes an average weekday decrease of 45,639 trips over the Bridge compared to the same week in 2019.

The number of trips over the Bridge on Monday, April 1, 2019 was 87,299, while on Monday, March 30, 2020, it was 35,509.

For the month, going from March 2 to April 7, use of the Bridge has gone down from about 80,000 trips per day on March 3 to about 22,000 trips per day (both ways) on April 5. There was an uptick in usage between April 5 and April 7, which has been a bit of a pattern emerging for weekend and weekday differences.

That decrease over the Bridge and throughout the highway network all over Greater Boston has led to dramatically cleaner air. NASA has grown very popular online lately in posting its satellite photos of nitrogen and particulate matter releases from previous years compared to the months of March and April this year.

The differences are astounding throughout the northeast and Ohio Valley – where red-colored emissions in previous years have given away to blue colored clear air pockets. This is very noticeable in Boston.

The decreases also lead to major losses in toll revenues too.

However, at the MassDOT Board meeting on Monday, Secretary Stephanie Pollack said despite loss of revenue on the Bridge, tunnels and Mass Pike, they will be able to use reserves to make up the losses.

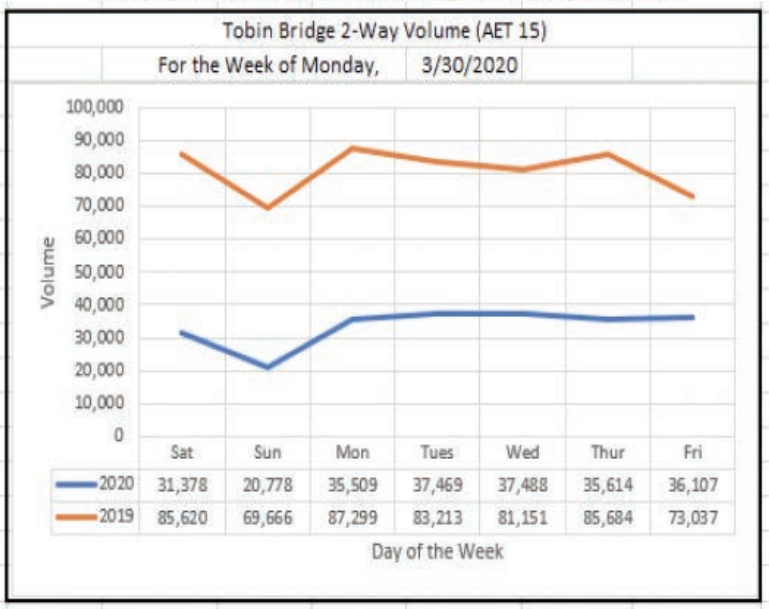
"Even with the preponderance of lost toll revenue through FY 2020, we are in good shape," she said. "We even have reserves to cover construction projects…We do have reserves to get through the remainder of Fiscal Year 2020… We are not putting specific restrictions to keep expenses down or putting on things like hiring freezes or anything like that."

Pollack said toll revenues had been tracking ahead of budget for the first eight months of the fiscal year, which is helpful now. The year-end projection, however, will be substantially impacted by COVID-19 losses. She said they expect toll revenues to be below projections by 8 percent.

MassDOT said it expected to have operating reserves of $625 million available to cover any shortfalls to cover capital projects on July 1, 2020 (the beginning of FY 2021).

Toll revenues pay for improvement and construction projects on things like the MassPike and the Mystic/Tobin Bridge.

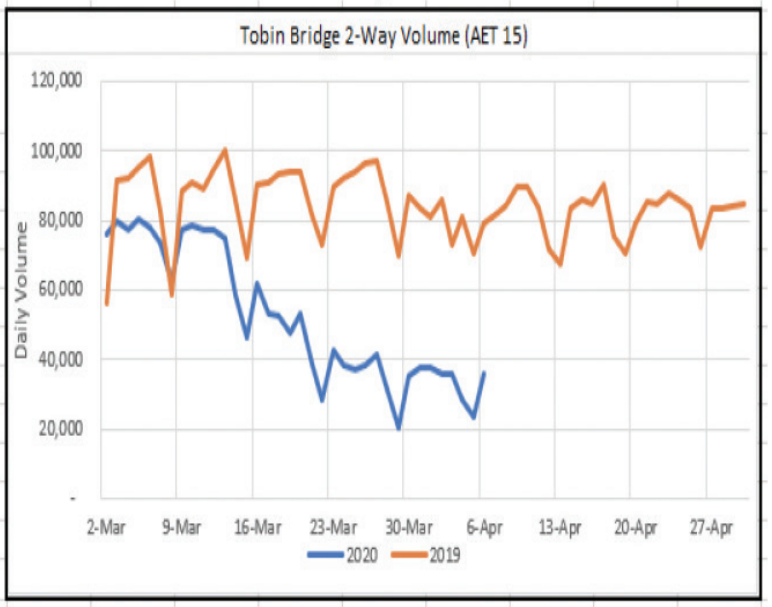
Trend for the weeks of Monday, March 30th, 2020 and Monday, April 1st, 2019

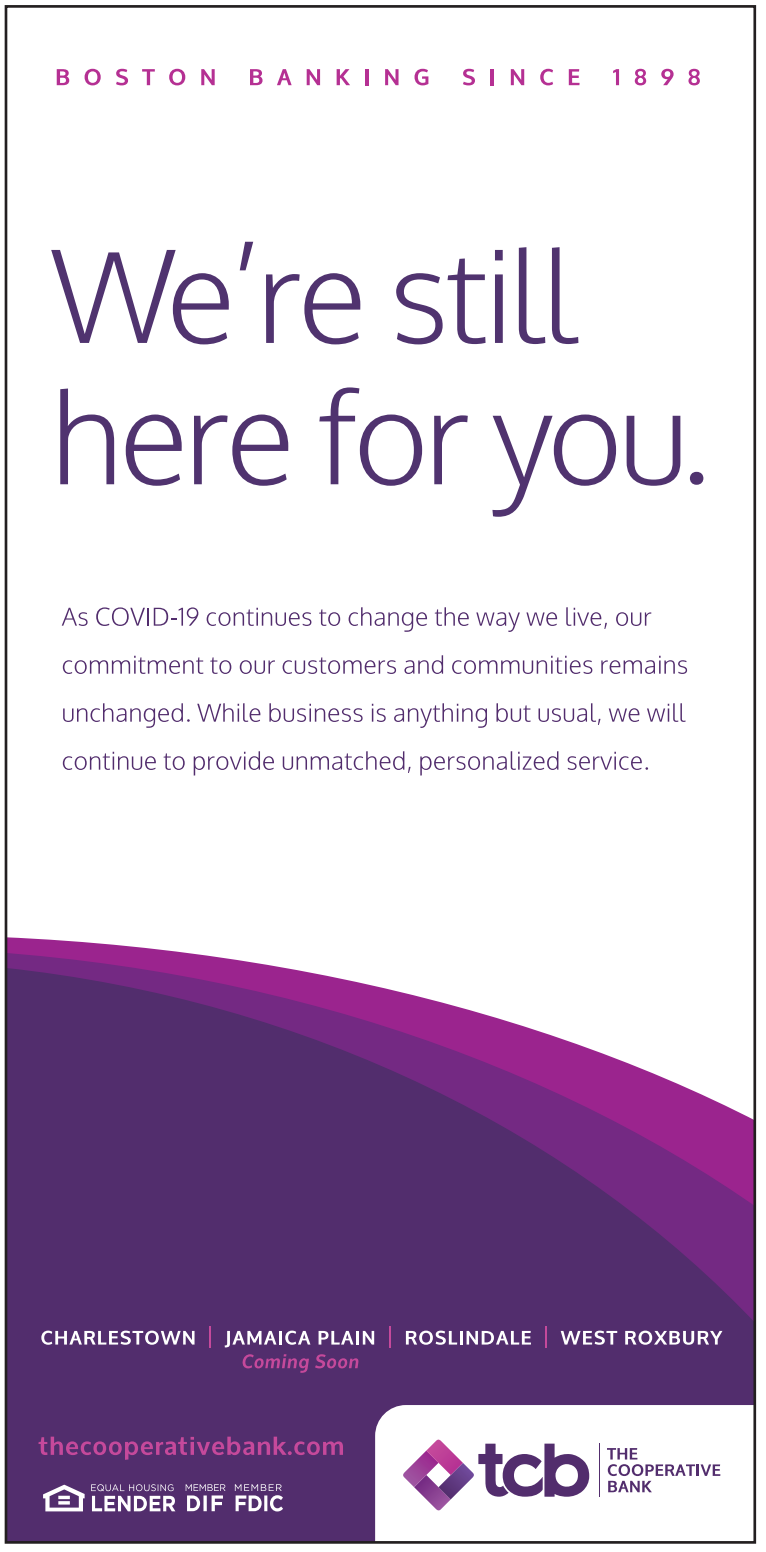


2020 Traffic Volumes			2019 Traffic Volumes			Volume Change (# / %)	
Sat	3/28/2020	31378	Sat	3/30/2019	85620	-54242	-63.35%
Sun	3/29/2020	20778	Sun	3/31/2019	69666	-48888	-70.17%
Mon	3/30/2020	35509	Mon	4/1/2019	87299	-51790	-59.32%
Tues	3/31/2020	37469	Tues	4/2/2019	83213	-45744	-54.97%
Wed	4/1/2020	37488	Wed	4/3/2019	81151	-43663	-53.80%
Thur	4/2/2020	35614	Thur	4/4/2019	85684	-50070	-58.44%
Fri	4/3/2020	36107	Fri	4/5/2019	73037	-36930	-50.56%
AVG Weekday		36,437			82,077	-45639	-55.4%

US 1, Tobin Bridge 2-Way Volume (AET 15)

Monthly Trend





MENTOR PROGRAM SCHOLARSHIPS

ACE Mentor Program of Greater Boston, the non-profit organization which introduces high school students to the architecture, construction, and engineering industries, is at the helm of helping develop future talent in those industries. On March 11, the ACE Mentor Program hosted a student showcase event where the scholarship winners were announced and honored.

•Charlestown students Stephen Wu and Georgesandy Bazin, students at John D. O'Bryant School of Mathematics and Science, are a few of the 30 impressive high school students from a community in and around Boston that received a scholarship this year. With professional guidance by industry mentors who are full-time employees of construction, design and engineering firms, students participate in a five-month design project and construct a hypothetical project in order to learn about each discipline and take part in activities such as the ABX (Architecture Boston Expo) exhibition hall scavenger hunt, site visits, Revit training and trade day.

Michael Tecci of Simpson Gumpertz & Heger and President of ACE Mentor Program of Greater Boston presented the scholarships to the students.

FRIENDS OF CITY SQUARE PARK

The Friends of City Square Park took the morning last Saturday to (responsibly) clean out the decorative urns that adorn the Fountain in City Square. Summer is around the corner, folks! If anyone has interest in becoming a Friend of the Park please contact Grace Bloodwell at bloodwell@gmail.com.

Fourth Anniversary

Brian P. Hingston

"Our Hero"

4-17-16 4-17-20

The Gentleman Brian

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How to mail and ship without leaving the safety of your home

You don't have to go to the Post Office to use many postal products and services. In fact, most simple tasks can be done from the convenience and safety of your home with or without a computer.

Like purchasing stamps. Using your computer, you can go to the Postal Store on usps.com and select different stamp denominations. USPS will deliver them right to your home.

No computer? No problem! Ask your local Post Office or carrier to bring you a Stamps by Mail order form, complete it and put it in your mailbox with a check. Again, USPS will bring you your stamps.

What if you need to send a package? You can order free Priority Mail and Priority Mail Express boxes, or other package supplies at usps.com. Again, USPS will deliver items to your address. And at usps.com, using Click-N-Ship, you can print a mailing label with the appropriate postage right from your computer.

Need that package picked-up? Go to usps.com and schedule a free carrier pick-up. In your

(MAIL *Pg.* 9)

Baker provides update on hospital surge capacity

On April 9, the state provided an update on the Commonwealth's hospital capacity and efforts to add more beds to the system to meet the expected surge in COVID-19 cases, identifying the need for 14,500 treatment beds and expanding to that number through the use of field hospitals.

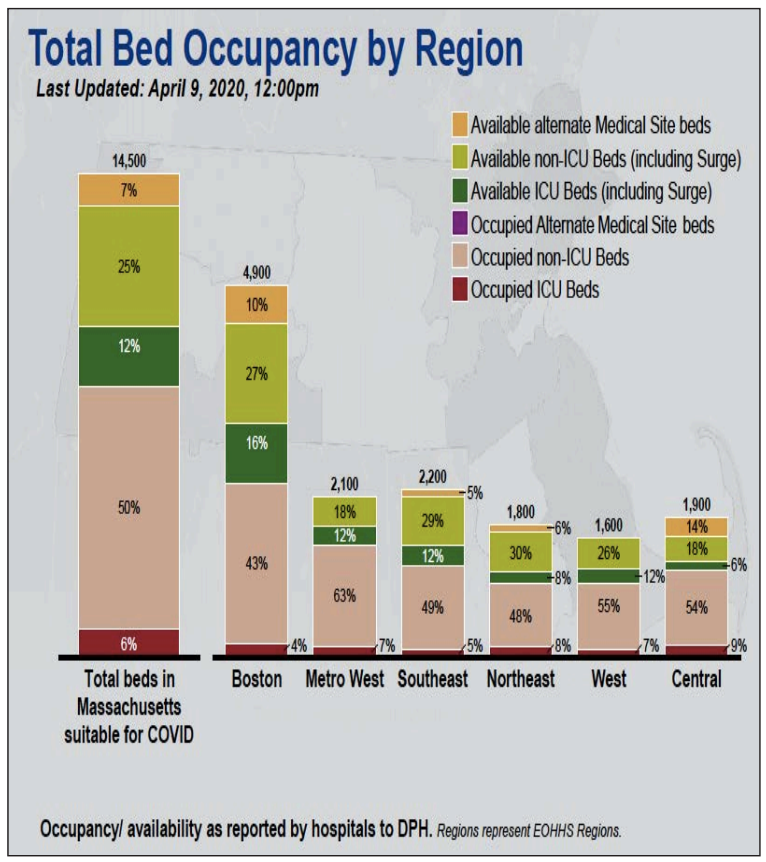
Hospital Surge Capacity: The Administration's COVID-19 Response Command Center released its initial projections on the surge two weeks ago. Since then, the Command Center has remained in regular contact with the Commonwealth's hospitals on a daily basis as they work to increase acute and ICU bed capacity. As of today, the Commonwealth has worked to make a total of approximately 14,500 treatment beds available ahead of the surge:

•11,000 beds could be available for ICU and acute care in the existing hospital system. This represents a breakdown of roughly 9,400 acute care beds and 1,500 ICU beds.

•Through hospital surge planning and field hospitals, the Commonwealth is bringing approximately 3,500 new beds online for ICU and acute care. This breaks down to approximately 2,500 new hospital beds coming online from hospital surge planning, and 1,000 beds coming online though field hospitals.

The Command Center continues to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on different regions and tracking how many hospital beds are available across the Commonwealth. As of April 9, hospitals had reported that 8,100 beds are occupied statewide, or approximately 55 percent (this figure includes hospitalizations for non COVID-19 patients). This meant that 6,400 beds were currently available for both ICU and acute care, or roughly 45%.

Field Hospitals: In the coming days, hundreds of new beds will come online that will help the Commonwealth significantly ramp up care capacity ahead of the surge to support existing hospitals. The Command Center is targeting five alternate care sites. These field hospitals will serve as an alternative site for hospitals to treat patients, particularly individuals who need acute care. They are being built all around the state to ensure all residents have access to this emergency care. The field hospital at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center opened late last week. Field hospitals at the DCU Center in Worcester and Newton Pavilion in Boston started accepting patients April 8. Over the coming week, additional facilities will open up in Cape Cod, Springfield, and Lowell. All in all, these facilities will provide approximately 1,000 additional beds for patients who do not require ICU-level care.



City Council to discuss ways to help residents facing displacement or in need of rental assistance

By Lauren Bennett

The City Council Committee on Housing and Community Development held a virtual Zoom meeting on April 9 on two different hearing orders that have been filed regarding assistance for those facing eviction, displacement, and who are in need of rental assistance.

Councilor Ed Flynn filed an "order for a hearing to discuss ways to support tenants facing eviction and displacement," and Councilor Lydia Edwards filed an "order for a hearing regarding the creation of temporary rental assistance to support residents impacted by COVID-19."

Councilor Edwards pointed out that "this is not a new conversation for many…" as "many people are already dealing with a 6, 7, 8 alarm fire and this pandemic poured gasoline on it," she said. This hearing was the first of many conversations that will help the City "hopefully come up with additional resources to not only deal with this pandemic, but the housing crisis moving forward," she said. "We cannot continue the way we did before this pandemic."

Councilor Ed Flynn said that over 16 million Americans have filed for unemployment over the past few weeks. "This hearing would be a good vehicle to discuss how we can continue to protect tenants," he said. "I still believe that this is an important conversation to have and I suspect it will be one we will continue to discuss in our city."

The $3 million in City funds to help residents pay rent "is just the tip of the iceberg," said City Councilor Kenzie Bok. "This comes on top of a situation where people were not able to keep stable housing," she said. She added that recently released data show "an enormous, off the charts application for SNAP benefits."

"Big pieces of this are going to have to be done at the federal and state level," she continued, but she said the Council will do "what we can to push some of our larger agendas around tenants rights."

Dominique Williams, Director of the Office of Housing Stability, said that 4,467 households had applied to the rental relief fund as of April 8, and the city is targeting those relief funds to those who are either not eligible for unemployment benefits or whose titles would mean that they would not receive enough money to pay their rent.

Due to the number of applicants, Williams said they decided to hold a lottery, and "[the Department of Neighborhood Development (DND)] is working very hard to find additional funds," she said.

Taylor Cain, the Director of the Innovation Housing Lab, said that the housing lottery form is available in six different languages, and they are also thinking about households who don't have "reliable access to the Internet."

DND Housing Policy Manager Tim Davis said that the federal CARES Act "provides significant resources which will keep many renters stabilized." He also said that Black and Latino Bostonians are most likely to be in jobs where they will be laid off.

Additionally, "we are concerned that unemployment benefits will not do enough" to help the city's 18,000 undocumented workers. "We are already working to add additional funds to the $3 million," he said.

He said they figured that the $3 million would go to between 700 and 800 applicants. "We're still waiting to figure out exactly how this is going to play out," he said, "considering we don't even know how long this crisis is going to last."

DND has also screened out tenants who are not from Boston to "ensure that the resources are going to the right folks. We really just want to stress that this money is not directed towards the landlord," he added," so as to not "penalize the tenant for the landlord's inaction."

The lottery ended at noon on April 10, and the goal after the lottery is to get the payments issued before May 1, said Katie Forde, Operations Manager for the Office of Housing Stability.

City Councilor Julia Mejia asked what would be done for the residents who enter the lottery but do not win. Forde said that the city is "tracking people to make sure they don't fall through the cracks," and staff across DND who speak multiple languages have been engaged and will be in touch with those residents.

Some public comment included concerns about undocumented immigrants and language barriers when it came to the application, as well as the short window of time for people to apply for this round of funding.

"Our focus has been on the work of this fund and we know that there's that need out there and some people might fall through the cracks and that is on us," Forde said. "We want to make sure that this is a fair and equitable process."

Councilor Edwards said that the City Council will have a "follow up conversation on this exact fund. The questions don't end today and the concerns don't end today because the crisis doesn't end today," she said. "There's lessons we can learn as we go along." She said she believes the people working in the city departments are "doing the best they can," and that she will make sure that the working session related to these hearing orders is interpreted to reach the most residents.

"This is the beginning of a conversation," she said.

MAIL *(from pg. 8)*

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29-year Boston Police veteran dies of COVID-19

By Lauren Bennett

Mayor Walsh and Boston Police Commissioner William Gross on Tuesday announced the passing of 29 year veteran officer Jose Fontanez.

Fontanez passed away from COVID-19 at the age of 53 and was an officer in District E-13 in Jamaica Plain.

"First and foremost, this is a devastating blow to a family," Walsh said. "We hold them in our prayers. This is also a very devastating blow to our city, the Boston Police Department, and the entire public safety family. We honor him and remember him as a hero."

Walsh told residents to stay at home in memory of Officer Fontanez and "in gratitude to health care workers who are working for us the way he was."

"He fought a valiant and courageous fight against COVID-19," Gross said of Fontanez. He called Fontanez "a great man," and one who "loved" Boston, his family, and the police department.

Commissioner Gross thanked the nurses and doctors at Boston Medical Center for "taking care of our brother." He also told residents to adhere to CDC guidelines to further prevent the spread of the virus, as no one is immune.

"Again, this man was a very courageous man, but it lets you know our first responder families, we're not robotic, we're not immune," Gross said. "This virus is devastating almost everyone that it touches."

Gross said that the community has "stepped up and helped us to fight crime," and only "one or two percent" of people are not listening to the guidelines. He warned that "they will be locked up" for not complying.

"You won't get a COVID-19 break because while people are out here doing the right thing, helping each other out during this pandemic, there are those who try to prey upon this hardship," he said. "It won't be tolerated. I'm here to tell you now—thank you to the community because people are stepping up. They're not desensitized and they are helping us put away the people that need to be put away."

Gross also said that so far, 67 officers have tested positive for the virus, and 53 of them are still out of work. He said that anywhere where there has been a concentration of the virus, stations are not shut down but rather thoroughly cleaned to prevent further spread to officers.

"It's tough being on the font lines as a Boston police officer, but we're not alone," Gross said, adding that Boston EMS, Boston Fire, and other first responders and those who provide city services are all on the front lines together.

Jose Fontanez.

Gross said that the Boston Police department is "adequately supplied with PPE," but did not share specifics about the equipment on hand.

He thanked those that reached out and offered condolences to Fontanez's family, and both he and Walsh reminded residents to follow guidelines of social distancing.

Gross reminded Bostonians that those protecting the city are vulnerable to the virus, and by working together the city can prevent further spread: "we're not expendable; we're human too and that virus can definitely affect us."

For the Record

•Warren-Prescott School Dates:

School has been canceled until May 4.

•Harvard-Kent School Dates:

School has been canceled until May 4.

BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS:

Boston Public Schools has issued a needs assessment survey to all students in the district. Families should respond to the survey to help us determine how to better support them throughout the school closure. The survey is available in 10 different languages.

As of April 9, Boston Public Schools has distributed 28,000 Chromebooks to students who do not have consistent access to a computer at home.

The City of Boston, in partnership with Project Bread, YMCA of Greater Boston, Boston Centers for Youth and Families, and other community organizations, has served over 100,000 meals since schools have closed, averaging 13,000 meals per day.

Free breakfast and lunch will be provided throughout the school closure including on April 20 (Patriots' Day) and April 21-24 (April vacation).

Meal Distribution sites in Charlestown and the North End:

•Charlestown High School -240 Medford St, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

•Kennedy Center - 55 Bunker Hill St, 8 a.m. - noon

•BCYF Nazarro - 30 N Bennet St. (North End), 9 a.m. - noon

•CONSTRUCTION

Due to the public health emergency caused by the spread of COVID-19, Mayor Walsh announced that he is extending the City of Boston's order to pause non-essential construction for City of Boston permitted sites. The initial order announced on March 16 was set for 14 days and will now continue until further notice.

HELP COVID19 EFFORTS

•Stay home. If you must go outside, practice physical distancing from others (6 feet apart); avoid crowded places.

•Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol; avoid shaking hands

•Cover your coughs and sneezes; clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces; and avoid close contact with people who are sick.

•If you think you might be sick, please call your doctor or 311 to be connected to the Mayor's Health Line 617-534-5050. Buoy Health has created a free online diagnostic tool which screens for COVID19 at buoy.com/mass.

•Donate supplies to first responders.

•Donate to the City of Boston Resiliency Fund.

•Volunteer with the City of Boston.

•Fill out the 2020 Census. The Census informs how billions of dollars in federal funds will be allocated by state, local and federal lawmakers annually for the next 10 years. It's more critical than ever to ensure that all Bostonians are counted.

From an April 17, 1 p.m., Council Housing and Community Development hearing, virtual via Zoom meeting:

Order for a hearing to discuss rent relief for commercial and residential tenants in City and BPDA owned properties. This matter is sponsored by Councilor Michelle Wu and was referred to the Committee on Housing and Community Development on April 8.

From the April 22, 10 a.m., Council Committee on Government Operations meeting, virtual meeting via Zoom:

The Committee on Government Operations will hold a working session on Docket #0232, order regarding a text amendment for the Boston Zoning Code Relative to Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing. The Chair of the Committee and Sponsor of the docket is Councilor Lydia Edwards.

•HOW TO REPORT A PROBLEM PROPERTY

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

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Neighborhood Round Up

Free wellness for Health Care Providers

ASANA Charlestown is now offering free live-streamed Yoga, Meditation, and Barre classes to Health Care Providers. The virtual studio's aim is to offer a new way for people to sustain their wellness practices from home. If you or someone you know would like more information on this initiative, please visit www.asanacharlestown.com/health-care.

Harvest on Vine Food Pantry appeal

The Food Pantry has had a great need for cereal to include in its distribution. At this time donations of all non-perishable foods are also greatly appreciated. Donations drops are: Food Pantry, 49 Vine St. (Hayes Square), The Cooperative Bank - 201 Main St. or the Parish Center - 46 Winthrop St. (by the Training Field). Or donate by sending checks to: Harvest on Vine, Parish Center, 46 Winthrop St., Charlestown, MA 02129. They are also looking for volunteers to assist with distribution. For more information, call Tom MacDonald 617-990-7314.

Virtual Tours of USS Constitution changed to 10 a.m.

USS Constitution is hosting daily live tours via Facebook Live at 10 a.m. At this time, no Sailors assigned to USS Constitution have tested positive for COVID-19, and USS Constitution is following all preventative guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Department of the Defense and Navy leadership. At this time, USS Constitution's crew has hosted 20 virtual tours, and they have been viewed by more than 500,000 people. The virtual tours are available at www.facebook.com/ussconstitutionofficial. During the virtual tours, the ship's active-duty Sailors take viewers through the ship, to include several areas normally closed to the public, and provide an opportunity to ask live questions. The USS Constitution Museum serves as the memory and educational voice of USS Constitution by collecting, preserving, and interpreting the stories of "Old Ironsides" and those associated with her.The Museum has temporarily closed in response to the coronavirus public health emergency and will reassess the situation at the end of March 2020. To serve students and the public who are working remotely, the Museum is providing complimentary access to additional content on its digital platforms. For more information, visit www.usscm.org.

The Charlestown Boys & Girls Club Closed

The Charlestown Boys & Girls Club will be closed until further notice.

Applications available for CMA Scholarships

The Charlestown Mothers Association is pleased to offer up to $15,000 in college scholarships, to men and womenwho have been residents of Charlestown for at least five years, and will be attending college full-time this fall. The amount of each scholarship awarded will be determined by the CMA Scholarship Committee. Last year, the CMA awarded 10 scholarships. Copies of the application are available at the "Scholarship" tab on the CMA website, www.charlestownmothersassociation.org, and also at the Charlestown Branch Library at the circulation desk. The completed application is due by April 24.

Charlestown Girls Softball Cancelled

All Charlestown Girls Softball canceled until further notice. If you have questions or concerns, contact Jack Schievink at 617-201-4507 or Billy Nugent at 617-447-3106 or via email at charlestowngirlssoftball@gmail.com.

Op-Ed *(from pg. 4)*

nomic recovery, to get our local businesses and their hard-working employees back on their feet. We will need to be flexible, and work together to get daily life back to normal. And we will continue to grieve, together as a City, for the lives lost. Many families are experiencing incredible shock and sadness right now. We all need to give them the time and the space to mourn their loved ones, with the full support of their city behind them.

My hope is that when we get through this, we will have a new appreciation for all the things we hold dear. I hope that we will never again take simple joys and freedoms for granted.

Normally, this is one of the best times of the year in Boston. Any other year, we'd be getting ready to welcome athletes and fans from all over the world for the Boston Marathon. We'd be celebrating the home opener at Fenway Park.

We'd be holding the first of our annual coffee hours in neighborhood parks across the city. Kids and families would be enjoying the warm weather and all the festivities that come with the end of the school year.

When we get through this, and return to these traditions, it will be a cause for celebration. Each of us will have a renewed opportunity to embrace the things that make Boston the greatest city in the world. This is a defining moment in our history that will inspire new strength and resilience. I think it will inspire a new sense of what makes us Bostonians, and what makes us all family. That's what gives me hope, and that's what drives me, every day, to lead our City through this.

Martin J. Walsh is the Mayor of Boston

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All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status (number of children and or pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, or any intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertising in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development " HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

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