



# CHARLESTOWN

P A T R I O T - B R I D G E

## A Rare Leader

Sudden retirement of Commissioner Gross brings praise from officers

By Seth Daniel

Police Commissioner Willie Gross stunned the City and the Boston Police ranks on Thursday morning, Jan. 28, when he suddenly announced – with Mayor Martin Walsh – that he was retiring after 37 years and after being the first African American Police Commissioner in Boston for the past three years.

The announcement came with an abrupt departure on Friday, and an announcement as well by Gross that he wouldn't be running for mayor – even though he

(GROSS Pg. 7)

## White sworn in as Boston's new police commissioner

By Lauren Bennett

Mayor Marty Walsh swore in Boston's 43rd police commissioner, Dennis White, on Monday morning, following former Commissioner William Gross' retirement on January 29.

At the swearing-in, Walsh thanked Gross for his "leadership and his 37 years of service" in the Boston Police Department (BPD). Gross became police commissioner in 2018.

"He led the department with passion and purpose," Walsh said of Gross. "He embodied a strong

(WHITE Pg. 9)

**Celebrate Super Bowl Sunday with help from Local Favorites! Support your local businesses. See Page 5!**



*The development team for one of the floating community plans for Pier 5 (seen in the background) believes they have assembled the right amount of local talent, and the best design professionals from Europe, to be able to build Boston's first floating community on Pier 5. A community meeting Feb. 8 will hear their proposal and two others on Monday, Feb. 8. Pictured here are Al Carrier, Bill Caulder, Gregg Nolan and Gosder Cheriuis.*

## New realm of development

European architecture team joins local developers to try to bring first floating homes to Boston

By Seth Daniel

Great leaders have often said if one doesn't know exactly how to bring something innovative and new to the market, then go find someone that does.

That's exactly what has happened for 6M Development's Bill Caulder and his local team in their Pier 5 proposal for the first floating housing community in Boston, reaching out all the way to the Netherlands and London for the pre-eminent floating community architects in the world.

Architects Richard Coutts, of London, and Koen Olthuis, of the Netherlands, were brought onto

the 6M team in an attempt to design and implement the first floating housing community on the East Coast, and maybe the United States. Both are very excited to apply what they have learned over the last 15 to 20 years in the Netherlands and United Kingdom to Boston Harbor – if they are chosen out of the three competitive bids now before the City's Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) for the pier.

"There is a lot of pressure here to make sure this is a financially viable plan," said Coutts in an interview this week. "If it is a good example of development, it will

(FLOATING HOMES Pg. 10)

## Boston Public School submits budget

By Seth Daniel

The Boston Public Schools (BPS) submitted its budget proposal to the School Committee Wednesday night, and it was a budget that included a \$36 million increase in funding over last year in what is the second year of a \$100 million commitment made by Mayor Martin Walsh in January 2020.

The budget submission is being titled 'Return, Recover and Re-Imagine,' and focuses heavily on health and wellness and the resources that are believed to be necessary once children return to

school next fall with the weight of COVID-19 still lingering even if the pandemic is over.

The overall budget is \$1.29 billion and is the largest appropriation for the schools ever made in the history of BPS.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has clearly exposed inequities that persisted for our students for far too long, and this recovery budget is centered on student services and supports to immediately address concerns and promote an equitable recovery," said BPS Superintendent, Brenda Cassellius.

(BUDGET Pg. 10)

## Finding Hope after Isolation

Zelma Lacey residents ecstatic about vaccination program

By Seth Daniel

It may just be a shot in the arm for a lot of folks, but for the residents of the Zelma Lacey House – a long-term care and assisted living facility in Thompson Square – the COVID-19 vaccine is a chance at recovering the basic freedoms they've lost since the pandemic hit last March.

Executive Director Charles James said the home had its first vaccination clinic last month with CVS bringing in the Pfizer vaccine, and they came back this week to deliver the second dose to residents and staff. He said that he was proud to report that 98 percent of residents and staff have chosen to take the vaccine.

"We are really excited about getting this second dose," he said. "I think if anything else, especially with the year we've just had, we are very blessed we didn't have anyone die at the facility. We did have a few positive cases, but everything was okay. This gives residents and staff a sense of relief that they will be okay and might



*Dianna Turner, of the Zelma Lacey House, was all smiles after getting the COVID-19 vaccine.*

be able to go back to some normalcy."

In fact, while many along Main Street and Bunker Hill Street and in the Navy Yard have gone about their business in a safe and careful way over the past 10 months,

(ZELMA LACEY Pg. 7)

## Governor, Education Secretary say not to wait for vaccine to return to school

By Seth Daniel

Counter to the sentiment in some places, State Education Secretary Jim Peyser told a group of educators last Friday that all school districts should make it a goal to get students back in school, even before a COVID-19 vaccine is available to teachers.

Peyser was featured as a keynote speaker at the Rennie Center's program last Friday for innovation in education. Of course, top on everyone's mind was about schooling and getting kids in school.

Peyser said all studies show it's safe to return to school, and he said the education gaps that are growing, particularly in all-remote, low income communities like Boston, should be the top thing on everyone's minds.

"Let me be clear, we do not think schools should wait for testing or vaccines to be deployed before

bringing their students back into classrooms for in-person instruction," he said. "As you all know this issue isn't only about COVID. It's about educational progress, mental health, social-emotional development and equity. Our children, especially those in traditionally underserved communities and high-needs students, are suffering the most – creating developmental losses and exacerbating achievement gaps. For these reasons we need to open up our classrooms for as many children as possible as soon as possible."

Peyser said that the rollout of COVID-19 education has shown remarkable foresight, innovation, caring and planning. However, he said all-remote schooling in underserved communities has not been a highlight.

He said these gaps and the lim-

(SCHOOLS Pg. 4)

# EDITORIAL

## MINIMUM WAGE SHOULD BE AT \$15

In 1971, the minimum wage across the United States, as mandated by federal law, was \$1.60.

Today, the federal minimum stands at \$7.25.

One might look at those two numbers and think that because the minimum wage has increased by more than four-fold in the past 50 years, America's lowest-paid workers are doing alright compared to their grandparents.

But the reality is far different.

In fact, had the federal minimum wage kept pace with workers' productivity in the past five decades, the inflation-adjusted minimum wage would be \$24 an hour.

The reality of the \$7.25 minimum wage, which has been at that level since 2009, is that a person working a full-time job at the minimum wage officially falls below the national poverty level, a reality that would be laughably absurd if it were not so harmful to millions of Americans.

President Joe Biden has proposed increasing the minimum wage across the country to \$15.00 by 2024, essentially bringing it into line with Massachusetts and a few other states that already are near or at that level. (The minimum wage in Massachusetts presently stands at \$13.50 and will increase incrementally here and in seven other states to \$15.00 within the next two years.)

Raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2025 would raise wages of up to 27.3 million workers -- almost 20 percent of American workers -- and lift 1.3 million families out of poverty, according to a report by the Congressional Budget Office.

Some on the political spectrum speak exultingly about the dignity of work.

But they ignore the other side of the equation, which is that it is below the dignity of anyone to work for wages that amount to not much better than slave labor.

The time has come to raise the minimum wage and yes, to Make America Great Again -- for everybody.

## OREGON LEADS THE WAY ON DRUGS

For more than 50 years, America has been fighting the "war on drugs," an endeavor that began under the administration of President Richard M. Nixon, who had the avowed purpose of arresting and incarcerating as many Blacks and other minorities as possible, especially for simple possession of marijuana.

The war on drugs has been a failure by any measure. Not only have we spent hundreds of billions of dollars on failed law enforcement efforts both in this country and around the globe, directly leading to the destabilization of many nations that has had profound effects both for those countries and ours, but it is fair to say that the drug war has destroyed the lives of more individuals, families, and communities than the drugs themselves.

Thanks to the war on drugs, the prison population in the United States exceeds every other nation on earth, both in terms of sheer numbers and based on population.

At long last, after 50 years of fruitless and costly failure, things are about to change.

Voters in the State of Oregon recently approved a ballot question that decriminalizes the possession of illegal drugs. Instead of throwing people in jail, the state will view drug use as a health issue, offering addicts treatment instead of prison time.

In Portugal, this approach has been used for 20 years. The result has been stunning. Drug overdose deaths and HIV and other drug-related infections have decreased dramatically. In addition, the removal of criminal penalties did NOT increase the rate of drug use.

The time has come for our society to acknowledge that the war on drugs, which was based on racism to begin with, must come to an end.

Oregon is leading the way -- and change is coming none too soon.



THE ECONOMY IS A TWO WAY STREET

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### THANK YOU, ABRAHAM LINCOLN POST #11

To the Editor,

I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to the Abraham Lincoln Post #11 scholarship committee for my selection as the William Noonan Award recipient. As I wrap up my senior year at St. Joseph College (ME), this award will go a long way in helping me defray my college expenses. The continued support by the Abraham Lincoln Post #11 to so many "Townie" kids trying to obtain an education is another example of how very special the Charlestown community is. Again, thanks so much and GOD BLESS!!!

Patrick Kelly

### DIVISION WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY

To the Editor,

The moment for building a more diverse, inclusive, resilient, and climate friendly, Boston is now. And yet, the current BHHR plan calls for segregating hundreds of Charlestown residents into separate low income buildings and removing hundreds of mature trees from Boston's oldest neighborhood. Such a plan is in direct opposition to the city's commitment to protect the well-being of its residents.

YES, people need and deserve

good, safe, homes. People also need access to trees, clean air and shade. By pitting the need for housing against the need to care for the environment the BHA has deepened a division within our community that is based on a false choice. The notion that we must choose between the much needed development of new and improved housing for our neighbors, and preserving hundreds of mature trees, is a narrative we need not buy into.

I recognize the conditions which exist at the current Bunker Hill/BHA housing present a significant threat to the health and safety of those who live there. We all agree urgent measures must be taken

to create better homes for the BHA residents, in both the short and long term. This letter is not an attempt to prevent the project from happening. On the contrary, my hope is that it begin as soon as possible guided by the values that make our community so special.

To date, the development team's proposed design for phase one has not been approved by the BCDC which means there is an opportunity to craft a more considerate, non-segregated, climate conscious, approach. The City of Boston should seize this opening and fulfill its promise to protect its residents from the stigma of sepa-

(LETTERS Pg. 3)



# CHARLESTOWN

PATRIOT-BRIDGE

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# Super Sunday: No Super Bowl team, no problem

By Seth Daniel

The New England Patriots might not be front and center this year, and maybe our quarterback is wintering in Florida this time around, but Boston still ranks as the third best city for football fans this season, according to the annual Super Bowl rankings done by WalletHub.

Every year, the company does an analysis based on several metrics about which city has the best football fans. Naturally, with the Patriots on top – and despite a meager following of college football, which is also ranked – Boston has come out in the top part of the list for years. Even with some of the magic missing, this year Boston landed and #3 for the best football town.

“Boston is the third best football city for fans,” said WalletHub Analyst Jill Gonzalez. “The Patriots’ performance level is the sixth highest among NFL teams, and they’ve won six NFL

Championships, topping all the other teams. They also have 21 division championship wins, the fourth most, and the second highest franchise value in the country. Other reasons why Boston ranks so high include fan engagement, attendance, popularity, and the fact that they’ve had the same coach for the past ten seasons.”

This year, Boston ranked only behind Pittsburgh and Dallas, and Pittsburgh ended up on top mostly because it has a much higher following of college football than Boston.

Dallas, of course, is Dallas.

The numbers were as follows:

- Pittsburgh – 62.61
- Dallas – 55.55
- Boston – 54.19
- New York City – 49.88
- Miami, FL – 48.61

In order to determine the best and worst cities for football fans, WalletHub compared 245 U.S. cities based on 21 relevant metrics. Each metric was graded on a 100-point scale, with a score of

100 representing the most favorable conditions for football fans.

For their sample, they chose cities with at least one professional football team (NFL) or at least one college football team (NCAA, including FBS and FCS). They grouped the cities by division — “Pro Football” and “College Football” — and assigned weights to each divisional category based on its popularity among fans.

Finally, they determined each city’s weighted average across all metrics to calculate its overall score and used the resulting scores to rank-order our sample.

Due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the NCAA schedule for the 2019-2020 season, for some metrics we considered the values up to the 2018-2019 season. This helps to ensure a level comparison field among the teams.

Interestingly, Boston also tied Las Vegas and San Francisco for the most expensive ticket prices for a football game.

# Walsh, Martinez discuss COVID, vaccination update

By Lauren Bennett

On Monday, Mayor Martin Walsh provided an update on COVID-19 in Boston, saying that the numbers have improved over the past few weeks, but people need to continue to take precautions to prevent the spread of the virus.

February 1 marked Boston’s re-entry into Step One of Phase Three of the state’s reopening plan. The list of businesses permitted to reopen with restrictions can be found at [boston.gov/reopening](http://boston.gov/reopening).

Walsh also told residents that they should not gather for the Super Bowl this coming Sunday, and to ensure that testing is “part of your routine.” Boston has more than 30 testing sites, and information about where to get a test can be found at [boston.gov/coronavirus](http://boston.gov/coronavirus).

“We continue to work with the state on COVID-19 vaccine rollouts,” Walsh said, as well as “expanding vaccination sites to ensure that every community has

equitable access to vaccines.”

The Reggie Lewis Center also opened as a mass vaccination clinic on February 2, and is equipped to administer about 1000 vaccinations per week, Walsh said. Many eligible residents have also said they are frustrated with the process for signing up for a vaccine across the state.

“The rollout has caused frustration; it’s been a confusing and inefficient process, especially for those who do not have access to the internet,” Walsh said. He said the city is working to make people aware of the vaccination program.

Chief of Health and Human Services Marty Martinez said that the city is “actively preparing for phases to come.” As of February 1, those 75 and older are now eligible to receive the vaccine.

Martinez also said the city is pursuing partnerships with places like community based clinics “over the next several weeks,” and “for the city, we’ll continue to do that and make sure folks can get access when necessary along the way.”

## LETTERS (from pg. 2)

rate but supposedly equal housing, and the destruction of a precious urban forest. Reducing density is the key.

The City owns a lot of land in Charlestown. Plan Charlestown ought to encourage the City to put these parcels to good use by carving out space for a mix of market rate and deeply affordable apartments. Any strategy with the potential to reduce density on the Bunker Hill parcel, provide the BHA residents with new homes as quickly as possible, eliminate segregation once and for all, and preserve hundreds of mature trees, is worth exploring.

There will be 2 hearings (via zoom) this month - the first, is on Wednesday, Feb 10 with the

Zoning commission and the second is with the Boston Design Commission (date tbd). The developer needs approval from both of these groups to begin the project. By showing up to these meetings with constructive concerns, questions and feedback we will send a clear message to the City that in order for ‘our’ expectations to be met we will need a plan that promotes a diverse, vibrant, healthy, and resilient neighborhood.

Johanna Hynes

### THANK YOU, ABRAHAM LINCOLN POST #11

To the Editor,

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Abraham

Lincoln Post 11, GAR and President, Joseph Zuffante for the generous scholarship award from the Veterans Outreach Program. It is an honor for me to have applied for the scholarship in the name of my grandfather Leo C. Boucher USMC Korea. The tremendous dedication and commitment that the Abraham Lincoln Post has shown to our Charlestown veterans gives this scholarship even more significance. I would also like to thank all of the Charlestown veterans who have served and continue to serve our nation with honor and distinction. This scholarship will assist me as I continue my studies in my junior year at Catholic Memorial High School.

Aidan Boucher



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# Patty Suprey: First female 1,000-point scorer in Boston

By Seth Daniel

Patty Suprey took a brutal hack on the arm as she drove down the lane, two points shy of being the first girl in the history of Boston Public Schools (BPS) to score 1,000 points in a career.

Standing in the Charlestown High School gym on Jan. 30, 1980 – some 41 years ago this week – she stepped to the free-throw line, looked over happily at her mother and swished both free throws to make Boston City basketball history.

“I had 10 points to go and we were playing a home game at Charlestown High,” she said. “I needed 10 points to get to 1,000 and I had scored eight. I went up for a layup and got cracked by the other girl and missed the shot. I had to go to the free throw line to get it done. The gym was packed; there were probably 300 people in there. I took the ball and looked right at my mom because she was my idol. I got the first one, it swished through, and that was 999. Then the second went through and that was 1,000. They stopped the game and we had a huge ceremony.”

Suprey was the first girl in BPS history to score 1,000 points in a career.

It was a moment in Charlestown sports history, and in Boston City sports history, that few would think they could ever forget, and that has been cemented in neighborhood sporting lore. Yet, at the same time, the monumental feat has slipped the mind of some in BPS, and her banner denoting the historic moment doesn't even hang in the high school anymore.

Suprey, now 59, hasn't forgot-

ten a moment of it, and credited all of her success to her father and mother, Walter and Mary (McNeil) Suprey.

“I owe everything to my parents,” she said. “If it wasn't for them, I wouldn't have achieved anything.”

Certainly, Suprey grabbed some of her athletic ability from her mother, Mary. A trailblazing athlete herself, Suprey said her mother was the stuff of legend as she played Women's Professional Baseball in the 1940s for a team called the Olympettes – likely based in East Boston, she said.

Neighborhood Sports reporter Kevin Kelly said Suprey's mother was said to have played an indoor baseball game in the 1940s at the Boston Garden as well.

She also credits her father, who was a Boston Police Officer for more than 30 years, and was always willing to play sports at the park with his 10 children, including Patty.

“My father was a lot of fun and he would always take us to the park next door and shoot baskets with us in the park, especially the girls,” she recalled.

Kelly said Suprey was a pioneer for girls sports in the neighborhood, and was also a great swimmer, hockey player and softball player – in addition to the hoops.

“Patty, along with other female athletic phenoms, earned their stripes playing youth sports - Little League and CYO baseball and basketball - against the boys,” he said. “She paved the way for other female hoop phenoms such as Corey Gallagher (Jason and Derek Gallagher's sister), who scored over 2,000 points at Matignon and over 900 points at perennial power

Bentley College, as well as Nicole Matson - another 1,000 point scorer for Charlestown High. Sharon Fidler was also a standout hoop player at Christopher Columbus High and at Suffolk. Ellen Crotty Pistorino is in the New England Basketball Hall of Fame as a scoring legend at Suffolk College, and she is also in the Suffolk Hall of Fame for softball.”

Suprey said she also credits her athletic development to simply having a park – Doherty Park – right next to her home. That, and having nine siblings to play against.

“We grew up directly across from the park and it had basketball courts, a playground, an Olympic-sized swimming pool and a place to play hockey on the courts,” she said. “In the winter we even used to throw our nets over the fence at the pool and play hockey in there...My mom would take us to the park and say, ‘Here you go.’”

Beyond that, she just wanted to play and have fun, build on teamwork.

“I heard a girl in Somerville had scored 1,000 points and I figured I could do it too,” she said. “I never really set out to do that. My thing was about teamwork, and having fun and building relationships and growing.”

She said she could have accomplished the feat in her junior year – after three years of varsity – but broke her ankle badly during a game in January 1979. She didn't return that season, but easily made the mark her senior season.

Part of that team and teamwork was the fact that Suprey played in the busing era and Charlestown High was central to that piece of

## Suprey: unsung superstar

By Anne McGrath  
Globe Correspondent

Her team rarely grabs headlines. Her name, oft-repeated on Bunker Hill, Main, Monument and Medford streets, doesn't ring familiar in basketball towns like Westwood, Salem or Newton. But the image of Charlestown's Patty Suprey looms large before every coach and player in the Boston City League.

Left, spotted and held together by senior Patty Suprey, Charlestown is 4-0 to date, defeated defending Division 2 city champ Jeremiah Burke in the season opener, and has at least four girls capable of scoring in double figures.

“She makes the difference in there. She doesn't panic. She doesn't get excited. No matter what the situation, she has great court knowledge. Coaches who have scouted her have been very impressed. Everyone of them said the same thing – she doesn't get rattled, and she puts the lid on everyone out there.”

— Charlestown coach Mike Sheeran

“She's the catalyst,” says coach Mike Sheeran, who took over the girls' coaching job four years ago when Suprey made varsity as a freshman. “This year she's doing more things than she's ever done in the past three years. She's rebounding more. Her assists are unreal. She can really pass the ball.”

“She makes the difference in there. She doesn't panic. She doesn't get excited. No matter what the situation, she has great court knowledge. Coaches who have scouted her have been very impressed. Everyone of them said the same thing – she doesn't get rattled, and she puts the lid on everyone out there.”

Although she keeps the Charlestown pot from overflowing, she also fans the team's offensive flame. In her busing era, she scored 92 and 33 points when



Boston history. She said many of her friends had been taken out of Charlestown High and sent to Matignon to avoid the busing issues, but she stayed on and was always grateful for it.

“I stayed with the public schools and I was grateful,” she said. “It taught me character and how to be tough...We went to school with busing and I met a lot of my Black friends there from Dorchester and Roxbury. We were always very good. We always hit number one. We went to states, but the suburban teams always beat us out. They had the height.”

Suprey recalled her coaches, especially the late Mike Sheeran, John ‘Ditzo’ Doherty and Joe Gunn. She said in the era of busing, the white and black team often found themselves in precarious positions on the road.

She said one night in Jamaica

Plain, they whole team got jumped after winning a road game. The girls fought their way to the bus and Suprey laughingly remembers Coach Doherty protecting them.

“We got jumped in JP one night,” she said. “We won the game and a group jumped us. The coaches got us on the bus and then Doherty came out of there swinging a bag of basketballs and telling everyone to get away from the bus. It was crazy.”

Nowadays, Suprey still plays and stays active, though she has been injured from her job as a Corrections Officer. However, once past that, she said she plans to re-join a few adult basketball leagues. Most of her relatives still live in Charlestown as well, including many brothers, uncles, nephews and nieces that work as nurses or for the Boston Police or Boston Fire.

## SCHOOLS (from pg. 1)

itations of all-remote schooling are reason enough to get back into the classroom.

“It doesn't mean everything has gone smoothly or that there haven't been significant gaps and setbacks especially in regard to student learning and development and particularly in those communities that have been providing mostly remote instruction throughout most of the school year so far,” he said.

“There is an ever growing body of evidence and first-hand experience here in Massachusetts and across the country and the world that schools are safe spaces for children and adults when the standard health safety protocols are followed.

“Even in communities with higher level of COVID cases, there is little or no evidence of in school transmission with various studies

showing rates for students who are in school are lower than for kids that are learning at home,” he continued.

Returning to school, he said, should not be a monetary issue.

He said the CARES Act originally funded \$200 million in the state for schools, and Gov. Baker added another \$200 million of that for schools returning to in-person education.

Of that, \$170 million has yet to be drawn down by school districts to be used to return kids to school. He said there is also another \$734 million in school-district funding on the way to Massachusetts as part of the December federal Stimulus plan.

He said there is plenty of money available or coming to districts that would allow costs not to be a barrier to returning to the classroom.

He also touched on the touchy

subject of testing and vaccinations for teachers, noting they are deemed essential workers, but would not be moved up in the Phase 2 plan already outlined.

“We are rolling out a first in the nation statewide testing program for students and staff to provide for even more support for instruction,” he said. “The Governor has dedicated those working in early education and schools as essential workers in order to prioritize them for the vaccine in the Phase 2 of the vaccine plan.”

He said there is no evidence to suggest those working in schools are at a higher risk based on the numbers from those returning to in-person learning.

As a consequence of an all-remote year, Peyser said they are prioritizing summer learning programs in cities like Everett. They will be known as Acceleration

Academies and will provide catch-up – likely in person – education for students who are struggling and have struggled through a remote education year.

“This is not a one and done challenge,” he said. “For many students it will take years of this effort to get back on track.”

His comments were preceded by a strong call from Gov. Charlie Baker for kids to return to schools during his State of the State Address on Jan. 26.

“Study after study makes clear that kids need to be in school,” he said. “Their educational and emotional development depends on it. And while in person learning is especially challenging during this time, many schools have found a way to get it done. Relying on state guidance, as well as federal and state funding, many special education programs, early educa-

tion providers and some school districts have been able to make in person education work safely since the fall.”

He used the example of parochial schools in the state, which have largely been open since last fall for in-person learning. He said 45,000 kids have been attending school in-person since mid-August.

“To encourage more public school districts to reopen their classrooms, we've been working with a number of lab partners to develop a weekly Covid testing program for kids, teachers and staff,” he said. “The goal is to get as many kids as possible back in the classroom as soon as possible. This first-in-the-nation Covid testing program will help more school districts make the call to offer full time, in person instruction now.”

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# New England Development files further plans for Mall revamp

By Seth Daniel

New England Development has filed a detailed Project Notification Form (PNF) with more specific plans for a project seeking to build an 85-foot-tall apartment building around the 99 Restaurant and revamp the look of the Bunker Hill Mall on Main Street – with an eye toward also looking at the future of the rest of the Mall.

New England Development filed the PNF late last month, and that began the Public Comment period, which ends on March 1. The company had officially notified the City and community of the plan last July, but filed detailed plans for the upgrade recently. Official Article 80 review meetings are expected to begin this spring.

The project would include 240 units of housing, with 128 of them being Compact Living Units and 48 of the units (20 percent) being Affordable housing opportunities. The building would be in a seven-story, 85-foot tall structure built in a U-shape around the existing 99 Restaurant. The new structure would run along Austin, New Rutherford and West School Streets and would have 49 spaces for parking.

“The new building will have a ‘front door’ at the corner of West School Street and Rutherford Avenue,” read the filing. “The proposed amount of parking is consistent with multi-modal transit availability at this location—e.g., the 92 bus, Rutherford Avenue pedestrian overpass to the MBTA Orange Line Community College



A rendering of the new residential building at the Bunker Hill Mall as seen from Austin Street with the existing 99 Restaurant in the middle and the skating rink across the street.

Station, ZipCar and other car sharing or ride services, and the proposed Rutherford Avenue/Sullivan Square Design Project cyclist/pedestrian shared path and the City of Boston’s Compact Living Policy.”

The design of the structure would be rather unique and would fit on what is vacant and mostly unused land. That said, what is now not very noticeable acreage would suddenly become a major gateway into the Town.

“The Project is designed around the existing 99 Restaurant, which will remain in its present use and location,” read the filing. “The U-shaped form of the Project accommodates 240 units within the available site geometry. The building width along each leg is optimized for unit size but narrows to a single-loaded corridor

between the 99 Restaurant and Austin Street. The main building lobby entrance on West School Street and the individual apartment entrances along Austin Street are designed to enhance pedestrian activity and encourage an active street life.”

A major concession already in the filing is on affordable housing. Instead of the required 13 percent affordable, the company has built in a 20 percent affordable component, which would be 48 units. The affordability is a tiered offering, with 31 units available to 70 percent AMI and 17 available to the more standard 80-100 AMI. The Compact Living Units are also touted as being more affordable because they are smaller in size. There are 128 Compact units in the project, with 77 being Studios and 51 being one-bedrooms.

Beyond the actual building, New England Development is proposing to spend about \$2 million

to enhance and upgrade the Mall on the Main Street side. The filing details completely rebuilding the storefronts on the Main Street side so they don’t look like back entrances, and also making it a more active area for shopping. The breezeways on Main Street and from Thompson Square would also be upgraded with a more open feel to the and festive lighting and colors.

“Existing metal canopies will be removed and replaced with new materials such as zinc, painted aluminum or high-performance concrete panels,” read the filing. “Existing storefront will be removed, existing brick sills demolished, and openings cut for new 10-foot tall storefronts that extend down to the sidewalk and create a more open, visually interesting and accessible retail presence on Main Street. Tenant signage, colorful fabric awnings and new entrances will encourage browsing and shopping as well as walking through the passageways to and from the mall-side businesses. Lighting strung across the new pedestrian ‘lane’ will create a festive atmosphere for pedestrians passing through the formed metal arch that frames the Main Street entrance. At the Austin-Main Plaza, new entrances and storefronts soften the boundary between the park and the shops, especially when tables and chairs are set out in addition to the permanent park seating.”

As mitigation, already, the developer has proposed a \$1 million payment in a Community Fund that would upgrade community assets near the proposed project. Some areas identified as potentially

benefitting from that Fund would be the Emmons Horrigan O’Neil Memorial Ice Rink across the street, Rutherford Union Park, and Preservation Park in Thompson Square.

The developers also propose to rebuild and provide a manhole access to the antiquated sewer main under the Mall. They estimate it would come at a cost of \$600,000.

Of course, no one could look seriously at the project and not think of the future of the entire site – including the mall. That is also contemplated in the filing, and the developer indicates they would like zoning approved now to help begin looking at that future. Right now, the filing indicates that several long-term leases with retail tenants are in place that prevent the re-development of that side of the property. Beyond those leases, though, New England Development indicated it could see up to 250 more units on the site.

“Beyond the timeframe of the leases, further development of the Bunker Hill Mall site could deliver approximately 250 multifamily residences above newly constructed ground floor retail uses,” read the filing. “The Proponent is coordinating with the BPDA regarding adoption of a U-Subdistrict overlay for Bunker Hill Mall to support long-term planning for the overall site in alignment with the Charlestown Urban Renewal Plan.”

The U-Subdistrict zoning is the same tool that was approved and is being used for the Bunker Hill Housing Redevelopment project on the other end of the Town.

Already, around the Town, many have trepidation about the project and more than a few have expressed outright opposition to the idea.

At the Charlestown Neighborhood Council (CNC) on Tuesday, President Tom Cunha and Member Tera Lally said residents should take note of the comment period ending March 1 and let their opinions be known.

“I’ve talked to a lot of people around here and I don’t know anyone who likes or supports this,” said Cunha.

The project will go through the Article 80 process with BPDA meetings in the near future. Already an Impact Advisory Group (IAG) has been appointed and the members are: Stephanie Ward – Lawnwood Place; Greg Poole – Tremont Street; Joe Savage – Monument Court; Nick Vuono – Green Street; Sean Getchell – Dunstable Street; Michelle McGee – Concord Street; Toby Goldstein – Lawrence Street; Tera Lally – Monument Avenue; Derek Gallagher – Green Street; and Niko Skiadis – Soley Street.



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# Kennedy Center expanding services to seniors in need

By Crystal Galvin

Community inclusion and equity is always front and center at the Kennedy Center. We have been on the frontlines of the pandemic since March 2020. The Center quickly mobilized to ensure that critical safety nets were in place despite disruption to our core services. We launched a Grab and Go Meal site, developed virtual early education and family engagement programs, maintained JFK Home Care operations, and reopened in-person early education and remote learning supports.

We have witnessed incredible acts of kindness, generosity, and resiliency within our community. However, the pandemic continues to disproportionately impact our clients and exacerbate pre-pandemic social and economic inequities. In response to the growing demand for services, the Center created JFK CARES. The JFK CARES program is a continuation of our multi-pronged efforts to provide support to families and individuals facing the economic impacts of the COVID pandemic. Unemployment, food insecurity, direct relief assistance, and combating social isolation are among

our top areas of concern. In addition, we have completed hundreds of wellness calls to seniors in the JFK network. These calls have been to inquire about their lives, needs and ways the Kennedy Center can assist them during the restrictions of life in lockdown with COVID. Many have expressed frustration with isolation and hibernation as a result. This has brought requests to our Case Managers to assist with a range of referrals for medical home services, an increase in home maker hours, walker repairs, food and shopping assistance.

As an organization deeply embedded in the community, we are continuing to focus our efforts on access, equity, and support for seniors navigating the new normal. This includes accurate health information, transportation, and support. The Kennedy Center recognizes our unique role in supporting the coordination of an effective COVID-19 community response. Special Thanks to Emily Shea, Commissioner of the Age Strong Commission for her ongoing leadership and support. The Center is looking forward continuing our work with Age Strong, Boston Senior Home Care, and our community partners

to address the unique needs of Charlestown seniors.

The JFK Senior Services Department is proud to host a virtual COVID-19 Vaccine Information Session on Wednesday, February 10, 2021, from 1-2 PM. Bill Nguyen, Geriatric Fellow at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences' Pharmacy Outreach Program, will present information on the vaccine and be on hand to help answer some of your questions as well. The meeting will take place via Zoom or can be joined by telephone. To register, please call Kim Kyle, Senior Services Coordinator, (617) 241-8866 x. 1351 or email [kkyle@kennedycenter.org](mailto:kkyle@kennedycenter.org).

We are also pleased to announce the JFK CARES Senior Grocery program in partnership with Stop & Shop. Eligible participants must be 65 years or older, live in Charlestown, and have an income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. Intake and income verification are required. For questions or more information, please contact Crystal Galvin, Director of Community Services, (617) 241-8866 x. 1352 or email [cgalvin@kennedycenter.org](mailto:cgalvin@kennedycenter.org).

GROSS (from pg. 1)

had been considering it.

Instead, it became a time of reflection for those that served with and under him for many years – particularly police officers hailing from Charlestown who came to appreciate Gross as a natural leader who always had time for those in the Department.

“He was a natural leader,” said Steve Fabiano, who currently serves on the Boston Police Department. “Everyone was included with him and no one was left out. He asked questions and listened to your answers. He didn’t just move on and not listen. He wouldn’t ask you to do anything that he wouldn’t do himself...I haven’t been around for all Commissioners, but I haven’t seen a Commissioner that knew his or her Department the way Willie did.”

Paul Mahoney, who served as a deputy superintendent under Gross and has since retired, said he first began working alongside Gross while stationed in Dorchester. He said he worked on one side of that neighborhood, and Gross worked on the other side. They often ran across each other on the beat, and he said Gross always made an impression.

As they went up the rank, he and Gross grew closer and eventually Gross promoted him to deputy.

“Willie’s style is absolutely unique in policing,” he said.

“I have worked under a lot of great police executives, but I don’t think they took the time to get to know the community level cops and the community groups the way he did,” he continued.

Long-time BPD officer Cecil Jones said it was the personal interest that Gross took in officers, and his willingness to listen first that made him so popular amongst the rank and file.

He said he retired from the Department last month, and on his last day, Gross called him into his office for a chat. It ended up being a two-hour casual talk about life and policing, and Gross even cancelled an appearance to spend more time with Jones.

Jones – who does a lot of work for charity involving the Department – said Gross always listened to his ideas.

“He is and always was just very real,” he said. “That’s the best way to describe him – real.”

Mahoney and Jones shared that on the evening that late Officer George Collier died tragically, Gross was at the Collier family home in Charlestown to be with the family and care for them.

“He was the Commissioner, but he was a wonderful person and very caring,” said Mahoney. “In

our line of work, people don’t understand there are caring people out there. No matter what race, creed or neighborhood, he was the same to everyone...It is no act with him. The kindness and caring and compassion is something that he can’t turn off.”

On Friday, in his last act of the Department, Gross addressed all officers and staff on the Police Radio to sign off. After vigorous ‘thank you’s’ Gross said – nearly in tears – that the Boston Police would continue responding to calls no matter what happens.

“You are the ones that answer the call each and every day – sworn and civilian,” he said. “Never ever forget your self-worth. And if the haters are listening, so be it. We’re still going to answer these calls each and every day. Our first responder family. Boston Police, Fire and EMS. The nation began here. Don’t forget it...I love and appreciate you all. Thank you. Yankee C-1 Oceanfront.”

Mayor Martin Walsh also thanked the Commissioner for his service, being the mayor that appointed him – and in the process – appointed the first African American police commissioner in Boston.

“I want to thank Commissioner Gross from the bottom of my heart for his 37 years of service to the Boston Police Department and for his two and a half years leading the department as Commissioner,” he said. “Throughout his decorated career, he’s always embodied the spirit of community policing that is so important to building trust with the people we serve. Anyone who knows Willie can instantly feel his love for the job and his passion for keeping communities safe. No matter the situation, his warm smile, dedication, and love for meeting people made him uniquely capable of taking on the toughest challenges.”

Mahoney said he was thankful that Gross always took time to come to Charlestown. As an area with low crime and on the northern edge of Boston, Mahoney said the neighborhood can be forgotten. It wasn’t the case with Gross, who began his policing career on the streets of Charlestown in the 1980s.

“In Charlestown a lot of times we get overlooked,” he said. “Some Commissioners may come to Charlestown for Bunker Hill Day for a half-hour and then get shuttled out. That wasn’t Willie. He took the time to make friends and he would greet people on the Parade route...He wasn’t just walking around the Monument when he came here. He was walking on Decatur Street too.”

ZELMA LACEY (from pg. 1)

many in the Zelma have not been able to venture out. With compromised health, James said most have been terrified and have been isolated.

“Residents are isolated and staying in their rooms,” he said. “We have opened up a little, but residents are self-quarantining anyway because they are very scared they could get infected. The vaccine has brought a sense of hope here. Residents are excited they might be able to socialize with one another again and be able to visit with friends, family, and grandchildren in person once again.”

In fact, there has been quite a bit of celebratory delay in their lives from the past year, missing out on the usual fun things of being a grandparent.

James said one resident had a grandchild born during the pandemic, and she hasn’t really been able to see or welcome that child. It has been heartbreaking, but it is the vaccine that gives such



William Enos got his COVID vaccine.

residents hope that such deferred living will end.

“She did get to have a window visit and see the child, but it just isn’t the same as being able to hold a grandchild in one’s arms,” he said.

The state and federal government prioritized long-term care



Ramiro Correia showed off his new ‘Vaccinated’ shirt.

and assisted living facilities as some of the first to receive the vaccine. In a public-private partnership around the country with pharmacies like CVS and Walgreen’s, most homes are looking at wrapping up their vaccination programs by March 1.

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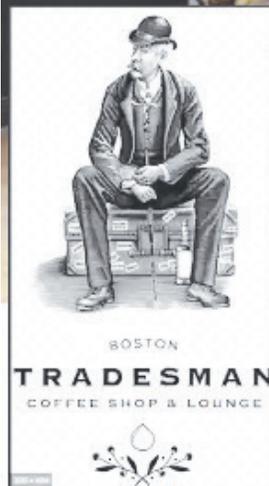
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# Downtown restaurant duo focuses in on space at Hood Park



Two downtown restaurateurs are looking to expand their Tradesman concept to Charlestown in a new space at Hood Park in The Harvey.

By Seth Daniel

Two experienced restaurateurs in the downtown area are looking to bring Tradesman concept to Charlestown, locating a brand new space on Hood Park Drive.

Mark Grzelak and Mevzad Durakovic, with Attorney Dennis Quilty, held an online meeting late last month to announce their plans for Tradesman Charlestown to be located in Hood Park at a space that had been identified as

restaurant space during planning meetings a few years ago.

"We have several licenses in the City already and we're looking to expand our Tradesman brand to Charlestown," said Grzelak. "It's going to be a coffee shop by morning, and a full service American restaurant for lunch and dinner. We understand what the neighborhood is and we want to be good and compliant with neighbors. We are really excited to open up a new spot to serve a really underserved market over there."

The new spot is a large new

space in The Harvey ground floor retail space.

Quilty said they would be applying for an All Alcohol Restaurant License with a 1 a.m. closing.

He said they already operate Tradesman Downtown, Louie's on Batterymarch Street, and Fin Point Oyster Bar + Grille on Broad Street. Grzelak said the two have been working in restaurants for 15 years, and then branched out on their own about five years ago.

Their next step will be at the Licensing Board for their restaurant and liquor license permits.

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# Sports betting gets state attention as Wynn Resorts ramps up plans

By Seth Daniel

A new sports betting bill has been filed in the State House within the last two weeks, and it comes just as Wynn Resorts – parent of Encore Boston Harbor – has ramped up efforts to launch its new online casino and sports betting operations across the country.

All eyes are on the topic of sports betting this week as the Super Bowl unfolds amidst record numbers of people planning to wager on the game in areas where it's legal, and that is followed close behind by the NCAA Final Four tournament in March – both big takes for the sports betting world.

Wynn Resorts has greatly expanded its existing sports betting book in Las Vegas over the last several months, announcing its new WynnBet online casino and sports betting operations last fall in an investor call, noting their first base of operations were in New Jersey and Colorado.

“We’ve been very focused on this topic the last couple of years, but we’ve been admittedly quiet about it,” said Wynn CEO Matt Maddox last fall.

“We have a strong casino brand, and we think that’s particularly true for us,” he continued. “On the sports side, we’ve operated our own sports book for many, many years. We understand trading and we understand what excites the customer and where the

market is. We are working with a team that understands it as well as we do...You have to understand the market and what the customer wants and scale into that. That’s what we’re in the process of doing now in New Jersey.”

Since that time, they have mobilized and seized a great deal of market share in numerous states – with the hopes that Massachusetts would also approve the new wager and give them first crack at a model that could help them emerge after so many COVID-19 shutdowns.

Lynn State Sen. Brendan Crighton is on board with the idea as well, re-filing his sports betting bill two weeks ago with the hopes it can get some attention, provide needed new revenues to the state and help with the revival of properties like Encore post-COVID.

“Certainly sports betting is alive and well in Massachusetts, but is done thought the illegal market and over our state borders in Rhode Island, New Hampshire, New York and soon to be Connecticut,” he said. “Our goal is to get the consumer out of the shadows and into a regulated marketplace and make sure that money doesn’t go offshore or over our borders.”

Crighton said estimates are that about \$6 billion is bet on sports annually in Massachusetts, and that would equate to about \$61 million annually that the state could recoup in revenues at a

time when COVID-19 is set to bust State Budgets for some time to come.

His bill would legalize wagers in person at the state’s existing licensees – which includes two casinos, a slot parlor, Suffolk Downs, Raynham Dog Track and Wonderland Dog Track. The bill also has an online component to it as well, and would allow mobile sports betting in the state.

The licensing fee would be \$10 million to start out, with a renewal fee each year as well.

“If everyone we expected to apply did so, you’re looking at \$70 million right there in licensing fees,” said Crighton.

His bill, unlike previous bills, would allow sports betting on college sports. Gov. Charlie Baker excluded college sports in his bill three years ago, and Crighton said some Massachusetts institutions have said they don’t want to be included in the betting world. However, overall, he said consumers wouldn’t switch from the black market or out of state without college sports.

“Colleges need to be a part of it,” he said. “They are such a big part of sports betting that you won’t get people to switch their app or come on over if you don’t allow sports betting on college football and basketball. It’s just such a large part of this market.”

An even bigger piece for those in and around Encore is the revival of visitors to the casino follow-

ing an up and down year with COVID-19 shutdowns and occupancy limits. Crighton said casinos don’t make a killing off of sports betting in general, but adding that activity brings in more foot traffic.

“The revenue a casino brings in for sports betting isn’t going to necessarily be a game-changer,” he said. “It is a way to bring folks in for restaurants and shopping. That’s something we’ve heard loud and clear from the stakeholders. It would make them more competitive by keeping consumers in the state.”

Wynn Resorts’ Craig Billings said they had been examining how to best break into the market and found a great partner in the United Kingdom with BetBall.

“We scoured the Earth and we found a company in the UK called BetBall,” he said. “The founder and operators of that company, we had a great cultural fit...They understand it intimately and built the product in the UK to be very social. The engagement they had with their customers was really quite extraordinary. When you see your friend making a bet, it will pop up on your phone to ask if you want to follow your friend. It’s very parlay heavy and moves you into chat rooms fairly quickly. It’s quite fun.”

Maddox said they invested in the company in 2019 and began working on a U.S. rollout. Now, Wynn Resorts owns a 70 percent share of the company and call

that section of the company Wynn Interactive. Last fall, they had 150 people employed and they have signed market-share agreements in several states.

Billings predicted they could have 50 percent of the accessible market share in the U.S. with WynnBet in the near future.

“It’s encouraging what we’re seeing,” said Maddox. “We will be rolling out this product in the various markets we have access to and we’re very focused on it. We’ve invested \$80 million into that company to focus on user acquisition and continued development over the next few months. We’ve had lots and lots of interest from people...who want to be a part of it...We’re going to build an amazing product and have real business opportunity and rollout. We feel very good that while currently Wynn Interactive does \$20 million in revenue, that number will grow at a very exponential rate as we move forward.”

Crighton said his bill is expected to go through the usual process and he expects a public hearing very soon, followed by it being assigned to Committee. This time around, he hopes there is more of an appetite for unleashing this new market in the state.

Crighton was one of the first legislators to offer a regulatory framework for legal sports betting in Massachusetts after the U.S. Supreme Court opened up the industry in 2018.

## WHITE (from pg. 1)

spirit of community policing. He made our neighborhoods safer and he took Boston’s national leadership to a whole new level.”

Walsh acknowledged Gross’ leadership and work throughout “monumental change” and working with the city to create the “most ambitious set of police reforms in BPD’s history.”

Walsh said that Gross “leaves behind certainly an inspiring legacy, whether it was making history as Boston’s first Black commissioner, appointing the most diverse command staff in this department’s history, reducing crime, getting guns off the street, creating the first ever Bureau of Community Engagement, or serving as a role model for our men and women in other offices...”

Walsh said that Gross’ commitment to the community was evident throughout his time as police commissioner, and told Gross that he and the City of Boston “hope you enjoy a well deserved retirement. Thank you for every-

thing that you’ve done.”

Dennis White, who is Boston’s second Black police commissioner, began his time with the department as a patrol officer in D6 in South Boston, Walsh said, and then became D2 sergeant patrol supervisor and a sergeant detective in D4 in the South End and Internal Affairs, Walsh said.

“Before he joined the command staff in 2014, he was a lieutenant and duty supervisor in District 2 in Roxbury, District 3 in Mattapan, [and] District 13 in Jamaica Plain,” Walsh said. “He served as Deputy Superintendent in the Office of Superintendent and Chief in the Bureau of Field Services Night Command. He was promoted then to chief of staff... to the rank of superintendent.”

White is also a member of the Boston Police Reform Task Force. He has served with the BPD for 32 years.

“I am confident he will continue the Boston Police Department’s reputation as a leader in

community policing, and advance the department’s commitment to accountability and transparency and help lead the Boston Police Department into a new era.”

After he took the oath of office and was pinned by his wife Jackie, White said in his remarks that he is “humbled and honored to be appointed.” He said he will “forever appreciate” Walsh’s friendship as the mayor most likely heads off to Washington, DC soon.

“I wish you nothing but the best, Mayor,” White said.

White also addressed Commissioner Gross, wishing him “the best in your next chapter.”

He also provided an anecdote about his mother.

“Today, I am fulfilling a dream of my mother that she saw for me,” White said. He said that during his swearing-in ceremony as deputy superintendent in 2014, his mother, who was ill with lung cancer, attended the ceremony in a wheelchair and with an oxygen

tank.

“She pinned my badge to me,” White said, and then his mother said, “God can take me now.”

Claiming he was his mother’s favorite child, he said that her hopes for him were to meet President Barack Obama, which he did in 2015, and to become Boston’s police commissioner.

White said he was grateful for the love and support of his family. “It’s been a long and sometimes difficult road,” he said. “I truly love you all.”

He also said that the “BPD has been tested this past year. The COVID pandemic has strained our resources with our officers working long hours in difficult situations. Still, the BPD has answered all calls to service without hesitation to our citizens.”

White told residents that he will work to bring communities together during this difficult time.

“I will continue to prioritize health and wellness efforts for our sworn and civilian officers. To the

residents of Boston, many relationships between the police and the communities they serve have been strained due to COVID and the national reckoning on racial justice. As commissioner, the BPD will continue to prioritize community engagement to build trust and relationships with our citizens and community.”

He continued, “We will get through this together, but we will have to make changes,” adding that he will ensure all recommended made by the Boston Police Reform Task Force are implemented.

“I know this will not be easy, but I am confident that the BPD will get the job done,” White said. “I look forward to working closely with the members of the department, the communities, and all our partners to continue to make the BPD the best department in the country.”

## FLOATING HOMES (from pg. 1)

be expanded and replicated. If it isn't, then this concept will stop here. There is huge pressure for us to make it a great environment and financially feasible."

A key part of the project is bringing the canals of Amsterdam to Boston Harbor, and Caulder and his co-developer, Gosder Cheri of Bastion Companies, believe they've found the right professionals to bring Boston into a new realm of development – that being on the water where they can forgo the high land costs that plague development in the city.

"I can tell you with certainty it is financeable and financially viable," said Caulder. "We're looking forward to vigorous debate in the community and in the BPDA... We see the status quo is not an option. An abandoned pier is something no one in Boston deserves."

After living on the water himself in the North End for years, Caulder wanted to do something that would bring people to the water – if not live on the water. To

date it hasn't been attempted, but the team believes their architects can steer their proposal towards reality.

The idea is to strategically demolish parts of the existing pier in phases, and use it as an anchor that will support 138 units of floating housing and amenities where Pier 5 now sits abandoned. It will include a partially underwater restaurant, and parks as well. All of this while keeping the community floating with the tides and not exceeding 35 feet above the water so as not to block views of those behind the Pier.

"It really would be a wonderful neighborhood with a different focus, but with parks, restaurants and other amenities," said Olthuis. "It's really an exciting thing to be part of it, something that would be done for the first time in this part of the world."

Olthuis and Koutts said there is a history of floating communities in Amsterdam, and in some parts of London too. Living on the water is not a totally new concept

in Europe, but about 15 years ago the two architects teamed up to actually make it real housing that was desirable to live in.

In Amsterdam, floating housing was not desirable and was usually simple wooden structures floating on the water. If not that, it was large single homes that were exclusive and blocked off access to the water. The two architects brought a bit of normal to the market, they said, by creating homes and activating the waterfront to the public.

"What was there could barely be called a house," said Olthuis. "Richard and I brought a quality product that could be constructed really efficiently with a mortgage and such."

The success of that development market led to opportunities in London, where Coutts is from, and they were able to construct floating homes in the heart of that city that were less expensive. They said that enabled key middle-class workers like nurses to suddenly be able to afford a home in the heart

of the city and not have to live far away or in substandard housing.

They said with land at a premium in Boston, New York and Chicago, such major cities in America might be perfect for just such a concept – which is why they've decided to give it a first try on Pier 5.

Now, however, they are more confident – along with the local development team – that they'll have success, if chosen, due to the fact that they've learned from so many mistakes over the years.

Some of those include not including green space early on in Amsterdam, and then having to add it after the fact. That isn't a mistake in the Pier 5 design, which features several parks. The same is true of storage areas. Something they learned was that floating communities lack indoor storage, so they have designed storage areas into the parks in a way that isn't noticeable.

"All this knowledge we bring is from experience and something we wouldn't have done 10

years ago because it was new to us," said Olthuis. "You have the advantage in Boston now that you don't have to make the same mistakes again with this concept."

Caulder has also brought onto the team Gregg Nolan of the Nolan Group and Al Carrier of Carrier and Associates – both with Charlestown ties. That has led to an ultra-local team that has an international flair.

"We are excited for this project because we believe it's a game-changer," said Carrier. "This is going to be something great for Charlestown because we have a local team and we've brought in the best professionals from Europe to provide the design. It's a great team. We won't build something that isn't going to work for Charlestown. I still have to live here. I don't want to go out and have someone throw a cup of chowder in my face at the Warren Tavern because I built something that didn't work out."

## BUDGET (from pg. 1)

"This student-centered and community-focused recovery budget proposal builds upon our investments made last year in student and family advancement, at a time when our community is most in need. As we move forward and recover from the pandemic, we remain committed to a safe return, opening access and closing achievement gaps, and ensuring an excellent and equitable education for all students, particularly our students most impacted this past year."

CFO Nate Kuder said it is unprecedented for a major school district to be expanding its budget in the times of COVID-19. He said Boston is really fortunate that the City has continued its commitment of \$36 million in the second year when financial times are so uncertain.

"Boston stands alone in increasing financial investments into

schools," he said.

One of the key measures is per pupil expenditures. This year, he said, that has gone up by \$1,700 per student to \$23,500 per student.

One of the biggest worries has been the trauma and educational setbacks that students and their families might bring with them when they return to school buildings for the first time in a year. That is why Cassellius said they hired 95 new full-time social workers for the schools, and 80.5 new full-time multi-lingual family liaisons. Already, last year, in the first year of the five-year transformation plan, several social workers and liaisons were hired as well, and Cassellius said their work has been critical to families and students over the pandemic.

One major funding piece that still falls into uncertain waters is how to deal with declining

enrollments due to the pandemic. Typically, schools are funded by the numbers of students they have enrolled. However, during COVID-19, enrollments have plummeted in BPS. No one is quite sure why, and no one knows if it will continue. However, Kuder said they would be investing \$18.5 million into schools with declining enrollment to make sure they are not penalized for the situation.

"The drop in enrollment is real and significant," he said. "We don't know what the future will hold for enrollment. But we want students to return to school with the same programs and specials like music and art – and with social workers and liaisons... We don't know where it will be at next year. We don't as a district want to close capacity for some facilities and then a lot of new families show up and we have to open capacity and quickly re-hire

teachers."

Instead, they will invest that \$18.5 million in making up for any enrollment declines that persist into next fall.

Cassellius did confirm that there would be no new school closures next year that aren't already planned.

Facilities also have a big part of the budget too, and an investment last year in custodial staff has continued this year – but this time it is more important than ever due to the needs of COVID-19

and keeping buildings safe. With that, an additional \$1.417 million has been invested in adding more daytime custodians to the district's school facilities.

There will be additional budget hearings for the community to participate in over the coming month. On Thursday, Feb. 11, there will be another budget hearing online; and it will be discussed again at the Feb. 24 School Committee meeting also. The School Committee Budget vote is expected on March 24.

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2/1, 2/8, 2/15, 2/22

# Hood Park finding success in leasing lab space

By Seth Daniel

The new lab space at Hood Park is leasing at a brisk pace, and another lab space company has just signed a lease this week to occupy most of the DHL building on the campus – marking what appears to be success for moving forward on several pieces of the project through the pandemic.

Mark Rosenshein, of Trademark Partners, appeared at the Charlestown Neighborhood Council (CNC) on Tuesday night to deliver a report on Hood, which is currently pushing ahead on construction of several of the amenities to their campus plan – after having finished The Harvey residential building in late 2019 and the Office/Parking Garage last summer.

Most important was the fact that much of the lab space – a new venture for Hood – has been leased at 100 Hood Park Drive, 500 West and 500 South. Most importantly, that includes 60,000 sq. ft. of lab space in the new parking garage that is now completely leased and full only months after completion.

Additionally, the DHL building at 500 West just signed a lease for more lab space, he said.

“The DHL building at 500 West will have a new façade and new windows cut in it,” he said. “We just contracted with a lab company to lease two-thirds of that space.”

Rosenshein said they are a new entity in the lab space world, and because of that they can offer lower prices than Kendall Square

and Cambridge lab spaces. That is drawing tenants to the property, he said, but they do tend to be pioneers due to the unproven location.

“We’re getting good response to the market from lab companies and other folks that don’t want to pay the prices that are in Kendall Square now,” he said. “We are a half-mile away from MIT and some say why not pay less and still be that close...With the new leases in place, we want to start the new (office) building (at 10 Stack Street) by the end of the year. We wanted to be 100 percent fully leased by the fall.”

He said it has taken some work, but the Kaneb Family has been patient and believes the market for lab and office space on Rutherford Avenue will only take off. That is why, despite the pandemic, they have moved forward and are looking to continue forward with 10 Stack Street and other parts of the campus.

“I don’t want to make it sound like this was easy,” he said. “We are brand new. We’re just at the beginning of the curve to convince people that Hood Park is a place you want to grow your company. There is a price point difference, but there is some hesitation out there because there is a reason for the price point difference. There is some convincing that has to be done.”

Rosenshein said later this year they would begin engaging the community on the next part of the development puzzle, and that is a 154,000 sq. ft. addition to the top of the recently-completed parking garage. That would turn

the garage into a much larger building and would offer more lab and office space. It wouldn’t hit construction until after the 10 Stack St. office tower is completed and occupied – meaning it will be several years off before that starts.

“That will be the next piece in the development plans,” he said.

Meanwhile, through the summer and fall, construction crews have kept busy working on the amenities at the eastern end of the site. Those upcoming completions include:

- The 6 Stack Street bicycle parking garage/public bathroom – the first of its kind in the city – is slated to be completed by May.

- The 500 Rutherford South Plaza is under construction and would also be completed in May. That contains vast amounts of open space, a pond feature and a water/spray deck. That is all open to the public.

- The new signalized crossing of Rutherford Avenue from mainland Charlestown is also going to be installed and completed in the spring. He said they have the permits and the go-ahead from the City. They will be able to start construction when the freeze on street opening permits is lifted. The crossing will allow pedestrians to stop traffic on Rutherford in order to cross in either direction.

- A new retail offering in the summer of 2021 will be a 4,000 sq. ft. bicycle shop from an established and experienced owner in the Greater Boston area. It could even be open by spring, he said.

## OBITUARIES

### John Duffy

Long active in many Charlestown organizations



John R. “Jack” Duffy, 86, a life-long resident of Charlestown, entered into eternal life suddenly on Friday, January 29 at his Charlestown home.

Jack was born in Boston on October 11, 1934, a son of the late James J. Duffy and Winifred (Talbot) Duffy. He grew up in Charlestown where he was educated at St. Mary’s Parochial School and graduated from Malden Catholic High School. He furthered his education and received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Accounting from Bentley College. Jack enlisted in the United States Air Force on October 16, 1952 and served his country faithfully and with courage during the Korean Conflict. He was honorably discharged on October 15, 1956 with the rank of Staff Sergeant.

Jack worked for Raytheon Corporation for several years before working for the United States Postal Service and retired as a Supervisor following 38 years of dedicated service.

Jack was Past Commander of American Legion Post # 26, Treasurer of Charlestown Lions Club, Past Grand Marshall of The Bunker Hill Day Parade in 2011 and member of Old Charlestown Schoolboys Association and the Bunker Hill Day Parade Committee. He was a volunteer at Harvest On The Vine Food Pantry in Charlestown and for the last 30 years enjoyed his winter months in St. Petersburg Beach, Florida where he was a member of the LIDO Beach Association.

In his spare time, Jack enjoyed coin and stamp collecting but his most enjoyment came when he was surrounded by his loving family and all the special moments he was able to share with each one of them.

He was the beloved husband of the late Dorothy M. “Dotty” (McCormick) Duffy, the devoted father of Ann-Marie Duffy-



Keane and her husband, James, John M. Duffy, Patty McLean and her husband Robert, Peggy-Ann Duffy-Shea and her husband, Luke Penney and the late Joanne M. Duffy; the loving Papa to Marc, Jenny, Andrew, Kelleigh, John, Danny, Connor, Colleen, Bridget, Molly and Papa 2 to Adeline, Maeve, Kinley and Wyatt; the beloved twin brother of the late Robert J. Duffy and beloved brother of James J. Duffy Jr., Francis Duffy, Susan Graham and the late George Duffy and the loving uncle to Chris, Patrick, David and many other nieces and nephews.

Relatives and friends are invited to attend Jack’s visiting hours on Tuesday morning, February 9 from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. in The Carr Funeral Home, 220 Bunker Hill St. Charlestown followed by his Funeral Mass in St. Mary’s Church, 55 Warren St. Charlestown at 11 a.m. His burial will take place at Woodlawn Cemetery in Everett. (FACIAL COVERINGS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING IS REQUIRED INSIDE THE FUNERAL HOME AND CHURCH).

In lieu of flowers, kindly make a memorial donation in Jack’s name to Harvest On The Vine Food Pantry, 49 Vine St. Charlestown, Mass. 02129

To send a message of condolence, please visit [www.carrfuneral.com/HOT](http://www.carrfuneral.com/HOT)

## CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

### North Washington Street Bridge construction look-ahead through Feb. 6

This is a brief overview of construction operations and impacts for the North Washington Street Bridge Replacement Project.

#### VIBRATORY HAMMER NOISE IMPACTS

- A vibratory hammer is being used to install the five cofferdams which will be needed to build the piers of the new bridge. Installation of each cofferdam takes about two weeks.

- The project has positioned a combination of hanging sound blankets and temporary barrier to minimize noise impacts from the vibratory hammer. These measures will be adjusted as needed and appropriate.

- Use of the vibratory hammer began on 10/6/20. Work hours are during the day (7 a.m. – 3 p.m.)

#### DESCRIPTION OF SCHEDULED WORK

- Installation of north and south abutment haunch, installation and maintenance of silt curtain, installation of drilled shafts, and sheeting and bracing of cofferdams.

#### WORK HOURS

- Most work will be done during the daytime (6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.)

#### WORK THAT HAS BEEN COMPLETED

- Prior to 1/24/21, crews con-

tinued preparatory work to build the new bridge. Cofferdam installation is 88% complete.

#### TRAVEL TIPS

The westerly sidewalk, Lovejoy Wharf stairs near Converse are open to the public with the opening of the temporary bridge, the adjacent section of the Harborwalk passing under the bridge remains closed.

The Tudor Wharf Walkway (under the bridge next to the water in Paul Revere Park) will be intermittently closed for safety during construction operations, with access provided via the Water Street underpass.



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