



CHARLESTOWN

PATRIOT-BRIDGE



For the second year in a row, Marathon Daffodils lined the walkway up to the Monument in Charlestown – that coming due to the Boston Marathon being cancelled for the second year in a row and the project (championed by Charlestown’s Diane Valle) diverting some colorful flowers to Charlestown to show ‘Boston Strong.’ Last year’s placement was at the height of the COVID-19 surge, and it was a lonely and desolate Monday, Patriot’s Day, up at the Monument that day. This year, on Monday, the mood was still one of caution, but people were out and about and celebrating the beautiful spring day and the ability for everyone to be vaccinated. Here, Charlestown friends Nora Brennan, Caroline Sodergren, and Michelle Hingston took a break after walking up to the Monument to take some pictures with the Marathon Daffodils.



Judge sides with School Committee on Exam School policy

By Seth Daniel

Federal Judge William Young late last week issued his decision on the challenge to this year’s altered Exam School Admission process, saying that the temporary admissions system did not discriminate by race against white and Asian students, but it should be a system in place only one year to accommodate COVID-19.

In a 48-page opinion, Judge Young stressed that the plan was well-thought out and accomplished the goals of making the school more geographically and economically diverse, and though race was spoke of, it wasn’t a plan that sought to racially balance the Exam Schools – which would be unconstitutional.

“It comes down to this: This year, the best way for a rising seventh or ninth-grader to get into one of Boston’s three prestigious exam schools is get excellent grades all around (the GPA Criterion), attend a school with a high level of grade inflation, live in a Boston zip code heavily populated with school-age children (geographic diversity) - but hopefully not too many rising seventh or ninth-graders (your direct competition), but a zip code encompassing the poorest residential area of the city (socioeconomic diversity),” he wrote. “...Only the third and fourth criteria bear any correlation to racial demographics at all, and both have been approved

(EXAM SCHOOL Pg. 4)

Happy Birthday, Rose, a true ‘lady’ turns 100 at Zelma Lacey

By Seth Daniel

There were balloons and flowers and no shortage of well-wishings from neighbors, family and staff at the Zelma Lacey house this week for Rose Walsh – a long-time Charlestown resident who turned 100 years old on Wednesday.

“Sometimes I feel much older than 100, but at other times I still feel much younger,” she said with a smile.

Walsh has lived at the Zelma Lacey since the doors opened 15 years ago, moving in with her husband George Walsh, who passed away not long after they moved in. An ace at Bingo, her favorite meal – which was served Wednesday afternoon – is a peanut, butter and jelly sandwich. She is also very religious and has taken care of the chapel at Zelma since moving in – keeping the figurines in place and the space in order.

“Rose is very organized and meticulous,” said Tabitha Jones, of Zelma. “She is a true lady. For 15 years she has always worn a skirt and blouse buttoned up all



Rose Walsh of the Zelma Lacey House turned 100 years old this Wednesday, shown here celebrating this week with balloons and flowers. A small party was held last weekend and on Wednesday – when the Zelma resident dined on Walsh’s favorite dish, PB&J sandwiches.

the way to the top. She’s also pretty feisty too.”

(ROSE Pg. 4)

Growth begins at Sprouts Garden project on Terminal Street

By Seth Daniel

It’s been a long and winding regulatory road, but this week the Sprouts Garden refurbishment has begun with the demolition of the old garden infrastructure and the beginning of the large, Phase 1 rebuild.

The Sprouts Garden has been in existence since the 1970s on Terminal Street next to the soccer and softball fields, and the more

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The Sprouts Garden on Terminal Street has undergone demolition this week in preparation for a major rehabilitation project that will begin next Thursday. The Garden will be completely cleaned up and rebuilt, then expanded in the fall.

CNC CORNER

The Charlestown Neighborhood Council will hold a public meeting on Tuesday May 4 at 7pm. We will start to assemble what questions to ask the mayoral candidates. The meeting will be held both via Zoom and in-person at the Knights of Columbus (<50% capacity; masks required), 545 Medford Street. Please send questions via email to cnc02129@gmail.com.

EDITORIAL

AT LAST, SPRING HAS SPRUNG

Spring officially may have arrived on March 21, but the past month has been anything but spring-like.

For those of us who live along the Massachusetts coastline, this is nothing new of course. The prevailing, on-shore sea breezes at this time of year transport air from the ocean that still is in the low 40s. So on days when the temperature may be in the 60s in central Mass., we're at least 10 degrees cooler, with a wind-chill factor that makes it feel 10 degrees cooler than that.

In other words, the 60s elsewhere feel like the 40s for us.

But this week finally brought a measure of spring, not only because of the warmth, but because of the daffodils, forsythia, and flowering trees that signal the end of winter and the promise of nicer days ahead.

With the coronavirus pandemic hopefully coming to an end, the arrival of spring is coming none too soon.

MASS SHOOTINGS ARE OUR NEW EPIDEMIC

Mass shootings with high-powered weapons are nothing new in America. The recent tragedies in Atlanta and Indianapolis are just two more of a long string of the slaughter of innocent Americans who simply were going about their everyday lives at work, in school, or at a shopping mall.

But as horrific as these well-publicized incidents have been, they are just the proverbial tip of the iceberg when it comes to mass shootings all across the country, which have been occurring at ever-increasing rates.

In the past 30 days since the Atlanta massacre, there have been 45 mass shootings -- defined as incidents where four or more people have been shot -- across the U.S.

The vast majority of these shootings never make it into the national headlines to the extent of the Atlanta and Indianapolis incidents, but they are real. For example, on April 8 in Bryan, Texas, a gunman (who apparently was a disgruntled former employee) shot six persons at a cabinet-making company. One was killed and five were wounded, four critically.

We could go on and on, but the bottom line is that America is the only place in the world where mass shootings are a daily part of life. And the reason is very simple: America is the only country where there are more guns than people and a large percentage of those weapons are high-capacity, semi-automatic firearms.

Ardent supporters of gun ownership make the time-worn argument that if there are restrictions on gun ownership, then only criminals will have guns.

But the reality is that the perpetrators of mass shooting incidents are not criminals -- they're typically the guy next door who has some sort of mental health or anger issue, but who has been able to buy a high-capacity weapon on a whim and go on a shooting rampage a short time later.

The shooter in Atlanta, for example, had purchased his gun just a day before he went on his murderous spree.

Other nations -- principally narco-terrorist states such as Mexico and Honduras -- may have higher homicide rates, but mass shootings by, and of, ordinary civilians are a uniquely American phenomenon.

Countries with broad gun-ownership, such as Australia and New Zealand, have instituted common-sense laws that have eliminated mass-shootings. Australia did so after a school massacre in 1996 -- and there have been no similar incidents since then.

What will it take for America to reach the tipping point that will persuade Congress to implement common-sense gun legislation?

We're obviously not there yet. Our guess is it will occur only when Americans will be fearful of gathering such that it will affect travel and business. After all, who wants to travel to a state where people are allowed to openly carry high-capacity weaponry?

But in the meantime, America tragically will remain among the most randomly-violent places on the planet.

MONTEIRO RUNNING FOR COUNCIL AT-LARGE

To the Editor,

My name is Carla B. Monteiro and I'm running for Boston City Council At-Large. My story is the story of so many Boston families, one of struggle and rising above it.

My parents emigrated from Cabo Verde in 1979. As the daughter of immigrants, my family, like so many others across Boston, struggled to navigate language barriers in our daily lives. At age 4, my father walked out on us and we were evicted. I was too young to fully understand what was happening, but, in so many ways, that day would form the rest of my journey.

As a 16-year-old, I dreamed of buying a house in Boston and moving my family in to protect all of us from housing insecurity. Eventually, I transformed my dream of owning a home into a reality and at 28 I purchased a triple-decker in Dorchester to provide a home for my family and create a stable foundation for my son, Mesiah.

As a social worker, I know families and our youth are struggling to navigate Boston's social safety net just as I did.

As one of my many jobs, I am an emergency psychiatric social worker at Boston Children's Hospital where I provide therapeutic support to our youth. Every weekend, we are flooded with young people who are experiencing symptoms of depression and anxiety and need help. When COVID-19, hit I collaborated with other community leaders, elected officials, and institutions to gather masks, hand sanitizer, and hot food then went door to door across the city delivering them to our elders and those most vulnerable. Many times the people who need support must struggle the most to find resources.

Even before the pandemic hit, the systems meant to meet our basic needs to survive were failing us. I'm running for City Council to use my experience to ensure every Bostonian has what they need to thrive. In this period of healing and recovery, our City Council needs a social worker, one who knows how to put services in place for the people. I know what it takes to help our families and children be successful.

I know that Boston's families

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

are struggling because I have lived that struggle and see the consequences of the gaps in our social services daily. But the reality is this: We can achieve a Boston where everyone's basic needs are met if we're bold enough to imagine it and passionate enough to fight for it. Join our neighborhood by neighborhood movement at CarlaForBoston.com

Carla B. Monteiro
Candidate, Council at-large

RFP FOR PIER 5 SHOULD BE HALTED OR CANCELLED

To the Editor,

Since the Patriot-Bridge writes frequently about issues in the Navy Yard, I am surprised that it didn't question the timing or the location of this most recent RFP from the BPDA.

The issues brought up by the BPDA's RFP for the Shipyard area have distinct implications for the proposed development of Pier 5. How can the process continue to go forward when the ground near the proposed construction area has a growing number of sinkholes? It is dangerous to have heavy construction equipment and vehicles crossing over this area. Why is a study being done now and not before Pier 5 RFP's were put forth? Sinkholes have been a continuous issue here; they didn't just crop up overnight.

I believe this recent RFP calls into question any proposals on Pier 5 and the RFP for Pier 5 should be halted or cancelled.

Thanks for your continued coverage of Charlestown and The Navy Yard.

Kathy Elliott
Resident of Flagship Wharf

PIER 5, A PUBLIC PLACE FOR THE PEOPLE

To the Editor,

If I were inclined to write a book about Charlestown and the Boston Planning and Development Agency, the title would be, "Too Many and Still Never Enough." This is referencing the ever-growing number of units being built in Charlestown while the community is experiencing dwindling open and green space. This is, to me, unacceptable.

The latest disturbing proposal coming from the BPDA is to privatize Pier 5 with resident units. This historical, "jewel" of the Navy Yard should be reimagined as greenspace, a living shoreline, a climate buffer, and a waterfront park.

Just the facts:

We in Charlestown, living on one square mile, according to the 2016 census, have a population of around 17,000 residents. With the current building and the permitted proposals, the census is swelling to over 22,000 residents. The average square mile of population in Boston is 14,000.

Every buildable parcel in Charlestown is being considered for more housing, thus more people and less green and open space. Building private residences on Pier 5 is a travesty and we in Charlestown will not let that happen. As an aside, Charlestown is bordered on three sides by water. We are living in a flood zone. Is the BPDA aware of our vulnerability?

It is time for the BPDA to be accountable to the residents of Charlestown. Since the Navy Yard

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CHARLESTOWN
PATRIOT-BRIDGE

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What to do? An infusion of cash resources into BPS calls for careful planning

By Seth Daniel

For what seems like an eternity, Boston Public Schools (BPS) had to make funding decisions based on limited resources, but with nearly half a billion dollars coming to the district over the next few years, many educators and education non-profits are urging careful planning right now for how to best use this rare infusion of cash to schools.

Will Austin, of the Boston Schools Fund, said the influx of money comes from many different sources, but all of it should be carefully planned for right now to support students in the district in the most meaningful way.

“Not all of the money is coming all at once, but if you think about it, together it’s about a half a billion dollars,” he said. “That’s about an extra \$10,000 per kid. Think about what an extra \$10,000 per kid could get you. For once, we’re not talking about kids in Boston losing resources for education, but gaining resources.

“If you lived in a household and someone in the home got a 33 percent raise, it’s an incredible increase in money,” he continued. “What we’re concerned about at the moment is the federal dollars don’t have any real process or engagement around them. It’s not the usual process where it goes through the School Committee and the City Council votes on it. That’s not how it works. The question is what is the transparency and how will the stakeholders know if that money is spent on what’s important to families and education.”

Already, in the spring of 2020, BPS got \$32 million as part of the first CARES Act to buy things like PPE and other COVID safeguards. In December 2020 and January 2021, the second CARES Act delineated \$123 million to BPS for COVID relief. Now, in the most recent plan, BPS is slated to get approximately \$260 million. That alone makes up around \$415 million in federal funding that has or will come to the district.

Then there is also the first round of Student Opportunity Act (SOA) Funding that is slated to be anywhere from \$10 million to \$25 million from the state, then the second year of the \$100 million commitment to BPS from the City is also to be considered. Adding that to the federal dollars – all of which is over and above the annual operating budget – and that makes up around \$475 million coming to the district over the next three years.

Austin said the federal money does have some very specific uses that guide how they can be spent, as does the SOA dollars from the state. The City commitments have fewer guidelines around how they can be spent.

Right now, the City Council has put together a special committee to look at the expenditure of all new federal monies, including the BPS federal dollars. That Committee is chaired by Councilor Michael Flaherty, and the Vice Chair is Charlestown Councilor Lydia Edwards.

Supt. Brenda Cassellius said

they will be engaging with students, families and stakeholders for what is a “once in a lifetime” opportunity for BPS.

“We are excited to have this once in a lifetime opportunity to meet the needs of our students who have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID pandemic,” said Supt. Cassellius. “We are looking forward to engaging with our students, families and key stakeholders to leverage our collective efforts throughout Boston to address, return strong, recover and reimagine the Boston Public Schools.”

Austin said his non-profit – which has been around for six years, and prior to that he was an educator in Boston – is advocating for being prudent with the money. While some things should be put on the fast track, other things should roll out slower and carefully – and everything should be aimed at helping students and families.

“You do have to be prudent,” he said. “You don’t want to start things you can’t afford three or four years from now. At the same time, there are things that schools need now and could be deployed quickly with this money.”

For instance, Austin said they would advocate using City Year/AmeriCorps tutors for one year to be assigned to students that need help catching up on what has been lost to long-term remote schooling.

Some immediate concerns, he said, also revolve around mental health services and social-emotional health.

“There is some important mental health stuff that needs to happen in the first year or two,” he said. “They need to do screening of students immediately one, two or three times. You have to do that now because we can’t wait to see how much interrupted learning kids have suffered.”

He said there should also be

some priorities for high school kids, as they have been out of school in-person the longest, and likely won’t be able to return for very long this year when they do go back.

“They will need social-emotional help now and in the year’s ahead,” he said.

Austin pointed to history to make his case for helping students in new and different ways, noting that students that missed large amounts of school in 1918 due to the Spanish Flu suffered most of their lives as a result.

Studying that demographic from 1918, he said kids that missed school due to the Spanish Flu had greater rates of not finishing high school, of making less money than their peers throughout their lifetime, and of ending up in jail.

“If we know that has happened before, then we cannot think it won’t happen again,” he said. “This is not a one-year thing. It’s going to be a lot of money that’s needed and a lot of years.”

Austin said there will also be good uses of money for investing in one-time infrastructure improvements – such as removing lead pipes from buildings to provide safe drinking water, and making the schools more technologically solid to better accommodate some type of remote schooling moving forward.

All of that said, Austin advised that parents, students and families should be demanding a process from BPS on how to spend this infusion of money to best support the young people so there is no repeat of the after-effects of 1918.

“We have a lot more money and not the same exact requirements on how to spend it,” he said. “There is no mechanism to have a specific conversation in any school district, including Boston, for planning the use of this money.”

LETTERS (from pg. 2)

was decommissioned decades ago, the BPDA has been collecting rent on its properties, the water sheets, leases, as well as 2% of any real estate sale. Which brings me to the question, “Where is the money that has been collected over the years from Charlestown?”

Why was Pier 5 left to rot? The BPDA, being the landlord or steward of this property should be charged with “dereliction of duty” for not addressing this historical piece of Charlestown and letting it decay. If you or I owned a piece of property and left it blighted for decades, we would be hauled into court and fined.

The argument that there is no money for the rebuilding of Pier 5 must STOP. It is time to come together and find the money to keep Pier 5 as a climate resiliency buffer and space for people to enjoy.

As I was reading a recent publication of the Dorchester Reporter written by Bill Walczak, “Use Federal Funding to make Boston a Hub of Equity,” it was stated that the Biden administration has allotted over \$434.6 million for city operations which would include climate resiliency and open space for recreation.

It seems to me, a public space versus private development is not a money maker for the BPDA. My take is that money matters and is preferable to the BPDA and they are not concerned about the quality of life for its residents. It is time to CHANGE the thought process of the BPDA and put people first. The mission of the BPDA

includes transparency, as stated in their vision. I have asked the BPDA for an accounting of the money generated by properties in Charlestown and have received no response. “Where is the money?” If the BPDA practiced “due diligence”, perhaps the pier would have been attended to decades ago.

Recently, as I was reading the Martha’s Vineyard Weekly Gazette, April 2nd, I came across an interesting and informative article regarding their sales of real estate for the week of March 26 which reported revenues of \$260,628 for the land bank. And where did that money come from? The 2% fee charged on real estate transactions. And where did that money go? The land bank uses its revenues to purchase and manage land for purposes of conservation, preservation, and PASSIVE RECREATION. To date, the Agency has purchased more than 3,882 acres of Vineyard land.

The BPDA, sadly, has misdirected or mismanaged the funds in the Navy Yard for decades and now they are taking a little over 2 acres to make more money for their coffers and disregarding the Charlestown community and their need for more open and green space.

The last 5 years continues to show growth in their agency while the budget for 2020 is \$75 million dollars with a surplus of \$5 million dollars. That money SHOULD go to the repair of Pier 5 for public use.

The vision of the BPDA states, “planning for the future of the

neighborhood with the community.” The petition to keep Pier 5 public has over 1500 signatures and growing. Please visit the web site and add your name to this once in a lifetime opportunity to save our pier, pier5.org. The BPDA should also take a look and read the thoughtful comments written by some of the signers. This is what the community wants, a PUBLIC space.

Can the BPDA help me understand who are the stakeholder, residents, other parties advocating for residences on Pier 5?

If the BPDA has no answer for the above question and no answer for “Where is the money generated from the Navy Yard” for decades, and no significant plans for more green space and climate resiliency, then the BPDA has no business turning Pier 5 into a private entity.

Imagine the possibilities for Pier 5, a place for people to be refreshed, rejuvenated, and recharged as well as a great place to recreate. Pier 5, an historical piece of America’s past should be the ONLY acceptable outcome. This is the RIGHT thing to do for the thousands of residents who call Charlestown home as well as a destination for surrounding communities and visitors.

The BPDA needs to do the RIGHT thing for the people, which is to advocate for funding, get the Pier repaired and make sure that Pier 5 will NEVER be home to a handful of people but a place for ALL people.

Ann Kelleher
Charlestown

Councilor Lydia Edwards submits statement of candidacy

Staff Report

Councilor Lydia Edwards has submitted her Statement of Candidacy to the City’s Elections Department. Edwards had previously announced she will be seeking re-election in the fall to the District One seat.

Edwards must now collect signatures from 200 registered voters in the district between April 27 and May 18 in order to appear on the ballot.

“I’m so excited to kick off the

campaign and get out into the district collecting signatures,” said Edwards. “Representing this district for the last three years has been the honor of a lifetime. I’m excited for the opportunity to continue serving in this role. I can’t wait to get out there and safely collect signatures.”

Volunteers interested in helping Edwards collect signatures (while observing strict COVID safety protocols), phone bank, or hosting a virtual meet and greet can sign up at <http://bit.ly/EdwardsVolunteer2021>.

Charlestown's weekly COVID positive test-rate decreases

By John Lynds

After posting a 97 percent increase in the positive test rate two weeks ago, Charlestown's weekly COVID-19 positive test rate decreased last week according to the latest data released on Friday by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC).

According to the BPHC report, last week 796 residents were tested and 4.6 percent were positive. This was a 3 percent decrease from the 6.7 percent that tested positive two Fridays ago. Between April 2 and April 9 the weekly rate spiked 97 percent and went from 3.4 percent to 6.7 percent.

According to the weekly report, of the 14,810 Charlestown residents tested for the virus since the pandemic began 9.2 percent were found to be positive by last Friday. This was a 2.2 percentage increase from the 9 percent reported by the BPHC two Fridays ago.

Positive test rates citywide decreased and fell below the 5 percent threshold.

According to the BPHC 26,430 residents were tested and 4.9 percent were COVID positive--this was a 2 percent decrease from the 5 percent positive test rate

reported by the BPHC two weeks ago. The 5 percent threshold has been used to plan Boston's phased reopening strategy.

The infection rate in Charlestown and surrounding neighborhoods increased 3.5 percent in one week according to the latest city statistics.

The BPHC data released last Friday showed Charlestown's infection went from 668.5 cases per 10,000 residents to 691.7 cases per 10,000 residents.

An additional 45 residents became infected with the virus last week bringing the total to 1,343 confirmed cases in the neighborhood.

The statistics released by the BPHC as part of its weekly COVID19 report breaks down the number of cases and infection rates in each neighborhood. It also breaks down the number of cases by age, gender and race.

Citywide positive cases of coronavirus increased 4 percent last week and went from 65,474 cases to 68,114 confirmed cases in a week. Five additional Boston residents died from the virus last week and there are now 1,361 total deaths in the city from COVID.

ROSE (from pg. 1)

Walsh met her husband, George, on Revere Beach at the Spanish Gables at an 'Old Timer' dance on a Wednesday evening. Rose (Gaetani) was from Medford and George - fresh out of fighting in Germany during WWII - was a Charlestown boy. He took down her number on a matchbook in the lounge at Revere Beach and they went on their separate ways.

Walsh didn't believe George would call her, but he did and they dated for two years before having a small wedding in Medford. They moved to Austin Street in Charlestown, and then to Salem Street where they lived for 53 years.

Walsh worked at Jordan Marsh for 35 years as a buyer, and retired from Macy's. Her late husband worked for the Boston & Maine Railroad, and later the United States Post Office.

They were one of the first Charlestown couples to leave their home in the Town and move into the assisted-living at Zelma.

Since then, Jones said Walsh has been a vital and vibrant member of the community, even at the age of 100.

"Everyone loves Rose," said Jones. "We are so happy to be able to wish her a happy 100th birthday."

EXAM SCHOOL (from pg. 1)

by the Supreme Court...The fact that the policymakers appreciated the correlation does not render these diversity criteria unworthy of consideration as rationally advancing proper educational goals for Boston's children.

"Here, this Court rules only that this one year Plan has a rational basis and denies none of Boston's citizens the equal protection of the laws," he continued. "Nor does it violate Massachusetts General Laws. Judgment shall enter for the School Committee defendants."

That said, Judge Young also ruled that the plan should only be in effect for one year and the new mayor elected in November should champion a robust discussion about how these schools handle admissions in the future.

"The education of one's children is a matter of prime concern to any parent," he wrote. "Thus it is worthy of remark that the Plan the Court today upholds applies only to the 2021-2022 school year. All parties here concede there may be better race-neutral ways to handle Exam School admissions. This is also the year of a mayoral election. As the mayor appoints the School Committee, these matters are sure to be, and of right ought be, the subject of lively civic debate."

The Admissions Process to the three Exam Schools - Boston Latin School, Boston Latin Academy and O'Bryant High School - typically involved a standardized Admissions test and the consideration of grades for students, who all must live in Boston. This year, because of COVID-19, it became impossible to conduct the exam, so that was scrapped for a new system based on zip code and grades that also sought to make the school population more geographically and economically diverse - while at the same time likely increasing the racial diversity as a consequence.

In February, the Boston Parent Coalition for Academic Excellence filed suit against the School Committee and its plan, saying it - among other things - violated the 14th Amendment and discriminated against white and Asian students. The students and families were from West Roxbury, Chinatown, Beacon Hill and Brighton.

Judge Young said he did not agree with the arguments made by the attorney for those parents, that there was an illegal racial diversity

goal that was discussed when formulating the plan and that discussion influenced the plan.

"The School Committee's goal of a more racially representative student body, although more often discussed and analyzed, did not commandeer the Plan, and it in fact necessarily took a back seat to the Plan's other goals, which the Plan more aptly achieved," he wrote. "Consequently, any effect on the racial diversity of the Exam Schools is merely derivative of the Plan's effect on geographic and socioeconomic diversity -- not the reverse. This Court finds and rules that the Plan is race-neutral, and that neither the factors used nor the goal of greater diversity qualify as a racial classification."

That said, the judge did not take lightly the racial comments made by the School Committee members in formulating the plan, and even racially-insensitive comments toward Asian Americans allegedly made by the former Chair of the School Committee during a hearing on the Admissions Plan in October. He said some of the comments made by the Committee and the Admissions Working Group were cause for concern, but didn't drive the plan.

"...this Court does not take lightly the statements made by the School Committee and the Working Group," he wrote. "Without question, some statements raise cause for concern. The statement within the Equity Planning Tool, for example, about a hard pivot away from equality and towards equity simply has no support in the Equal Protection jurisprudence of the Supreme Court...Had this Plan unconstitutionally substituted equality of result for equality of opportunity along racial lines, this Court would not hesitate to strike it down. But that is not what happened here. Apparently well counseled, the School Committee considered diversity and developed its Plan within the permissible framework of the Supreme Court precedent."

The Boston Branch of the NAACP, The Greater Boston Latino Network, Asian Pacific Islander Civic Action Network, Asian American Resource Workshop, Anti-Defamation League of New England, and the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, who are intervenors on the lawsuit, said the ruling was a victory for all students in Boston.

"Over the past year, the

COVID-19 pandemic has revealed deep inequities in our education system, and created unprecedented and unforeseen challenges for students, educators, school leaders, and families," read the statement. "The admissions criteria that were the subject of this lawsuit were designed thoughtfully and intentionally to respond to this crisis in a way that is fair to all of our students. By upholding them, Judge Young has helped ensure that every student in Boston, despite the pandemic, will have the chance to attend some of the most selective schools in our city. We look forward to continuing our multi-racial coalition work with Boston Public School leaders, educators, students, and families to ensure that this policy is implemented with integrity and transparency."

Almost immediately, the Boston Public Schools sent out instructions about how they would begin issuing invites to students who had applied to enter the seventh grade or ninth grade at the Exam Schools. Due to the lawsuit, sixth grade to seventh grade assignments citywide were delayed for about a month.

"The court issued a ruling today in the exam schools admissions suit that means Boston Public Schools (BPS) can now proceed with the temporary Exam Schools admissions policy as adopted by the Boston School Committee in October 2020," read the letter. "This one-year policy was developed in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges of administering the entrance exam during a public health crisis. We are in the process of finalizing exam school invitations and working with our external independent partner to make sure our final calculations are accurate. Invitations to the three exam schools will be sent via email and regular mail by the end of April as soon as that work is completed."

In a simulation released in January, Charlestown would be scheduled to lose approximately 30 percent of its Exam School seats - going from 56 seats last year to approximately 39 this year. That is only from the allotment of 80 percent of the seats that go by zip code. Another 20 percent of the seats go to the students with the top GPA citywide, no matter what zip code they are within.

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With a little behind the scenes work, Monument guest books to return to the Town

By Seth Daniel

The missing Bunker Hill Monument guestbooks will once again be under the shadow of the Monument – after having nearly been lost again in an antiques auction last week.

The three guestbooks were from the 1860s during the Civil War era, when the Bunker Hill Monument Association still operated the Monument as a visitor's attraction – a Monument they built with private funds and donations. Guests would sign the books when they visited the Monument and the books had been filed away. The current books had notable signatures in them from Civil War military figures and even First Lady Mary Todd Lincoln. While Monument Association President Arthur Hurley, and Board mem-

bers Paul Lane and Julie Hall, believed they were the property of the Association, there was no proof to that and there was no idea when or how they disappeared – due to the fact that so many artifacts have been spread out or stored or confiscated during the changes in oversight from the Association to the Commonwealth to the National Parks Service.

Hall and Hurley had instituted a fundraising drive to try to become the highest bidder at the University Archives online auction, but there just wasn't enough time to get the money. Hall said last week she had given up on the cause, and the Association had resigned to begin cataloging their archives and artifacts more carefully going forward – making sure nothing gets lost and they have some funding to re-claim other

long-lost items that might come up at auction.

That's when University Archives President John Reznikoff stepped in, feeling bad for the Monument Association and wanting to try to right a wrong done long ago.

"I felt bad for them," he said. "I had to make a few calls, but I wanted to get it to them...I thought it would be good to try to arrange what happened, and it did happen."

The books had a top bid of \$17,000 as the auction was winding down, and Reznikoff reached out to a top Americana dealer in White Plains, NY – Seth Kaller. Kaller was apprised of the situation and he reached out to the bidder, who was a philanthropist from New York with a big interest in history.

Kaller said his client didn't hes-

itate at all to say 'yes' to returning the books.

Kaller said the guestbooks would return to Charlestown soon, and the Monument Association has said they hope to put them on display June 17 for the Battle of Bunker Hill Day ceremonies.

"I'm very happy it ended well and in this way," said Reznikoff, who had been skeptical of the effort at first due to some scams

run on Americana dealers in the past. "It was a last-minute effort and I'm very happy the way it turned out. I've been on the other side of this too. I'm a member of the Board at the Wilton (CT) Historical Society. Wilton's Revolutionary War history is very, very rich too...I am sympathetic to them because I've been in their shoes. I really understand."

Councilor Edwards files resolution in support of electronic signature gathering

The day after candidates for municipal elections were able to submit their Statement of Candidacy, Boston City Councilor Lydia Edwards introduced a resolution calling for the number of signatures required to appear on the ballot to be reduced, allowing signatures to be gathered electronically, and for restrictions on how many nomination petitions each registered voter may sign to be eased. The resolution was unanimously adopted by the Council during Wednesday's council meeting.

Boston candidates have some of the highest signature thresholds in the state and one of the shortest windows of time to gather those signatures.

"We're still in the middle of a pandemic," said Councilor Edwards. "I don't know how candidates can be expected to gather hundreds or thousands of signatures safely. These three changes are common sense solutions that have been proven to work in both keeping people safe and allowing for candidates to collect the

required signatures. I hope the state will move quickly and implement these changes."

East Boston, part of Councilor Edwards' district, has seen some of the highest covid infection rates in the city and just saw a 10% increase from last week.

Patrick Roath, a Boston attorney and voting rights activist who led the legal effort to reduce in-person signature collection requirements during the pandemic last spring, praised the resolution and called for the changes to be implemented.

"Requiring candidates to gather large numbers of signatures to reach the ballot in the midst of an ongoing pandemic diminishes our democracy and is a threat to public health," said Roath. "We can fix this. There is nothing preventing state officials from acting to provide candidates temporary relief from the signature collection rules. I hope that the resolution offered by Councilor Edwards opens the door to meaningful, urgent reform."

DND Income Restricted Rental Opportunity

Madison Park IV 2011, LP
122 Dewitt Drive,
Roxbury, MA 02120

126 Affordable Units

# of Units	# of bedrooms	Estimated Square Feet	Rent	Maximum Income Limit	# built out for mobility impairments	# built out for vision impairments	# built out for Deaf/hard of hearing
42	2-BR garden	550 sq ft	30% of household income**	50%	6	1	2
84	2-BR townhouse	700 sq ft	30% of household income**	50%	—	—	—

**Rent will be reduced by the electricity and gas allowance with tenant payment. For more information on the utility allowance, contact us at the phone number listed below.

Minimum Incomes (set by owner + based on # of bedrooms + Area Median Income (AMI))

Maximum Incomes (set by DND + based on the household size + Area Median Income (AMI))

# of bedrooms	Minimum Income 50% AMI	HH size	50% AMI
2-BR	0	1	\$47,000
	0	2	\$53,700
	0	3	\$60,400
	0	4	\$67,100
	0	5	\$72,500
	0	6	\$77,850

Applications are available from Monday, May 10, 2021 to Monday, June 21, 2021

HOURS:

Monday – Friday (9 AM – 1 PM)
Saturday, May 15, 2021 (10 AM – 2 PM)
Thursday, June 10, 2021 (3PM – 7 PM)

To request an online application or to have one sent by email, visit <http://bit.ly/madisonparkiv> or call 857-308-2026

After careful consideration and an abundance of caution, the City of Boston has decided to cancel the in-person application distribution period. If you cannot complete the application online, please call us at 857-308-2026, to request that we mail you one and to ask us for any support or guidance you might need to complete the application.

We will be holding 2 virtual informational meetings on **Wednesday, May 12, 2021 at 10:00 AM and Tuesday, June 8, 2021 at 3:30 PM** through the following link:
<https://zoom.us/j/2330849100?pwd=YmqvK3R6aU53WGsxL0JuZkdMQks4UT09>

DEADLINE: Applications must be submitted online or postmarked no later than **Monday, June 21, 2021**
Mailed to: Madison Park Village, 122 Dewitt Drive Roxbury, MA 02120

- Selection by Lottery.
- Asset & Use Restrictions apply.
- Preferences Apply.

For more information, language assistance, or reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities please call 857-308-2026 or email madisonparkiv@gmail.com



Public Notice Smart Choices Funding Available

Massachusetts General Hospital announces availability of funding for "Smart Choices for Charlestown" for 2021. The program is designed to help Charlestown organizations meet the health and human service needs of the community. Funding will be awarded to organizations serving the Charlestown community.

Information on how to apply on-line will be posted on <https://www.massgeneral.org/community-health/cchi/programs/smart-choices-program>.

The deadline for submission is 12:00 Noon on Friday, May 21, 2021. Incomplete applications or applications received after this deadline will not be eligible for funding. Awardees will be notified of decisions in July.

If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Maria Doherty of MGH Community Health Associates at mldoherty0@partners.org.

GARDEN (from pg. 1)

modern iteration of the garden started in the 1990s – with many people growing herbs and vegetables to help feed their families.

The garden has been active for years, but some boundary issues and caretaking problems had resulted in some blight to the garden, but those days are now long-behind the space.

“We’re trying to create a nice tranquil space that doesn’t accumulate garbage,” said Board member Jesse Gallagher. “That’s a challenging street there... There’s something about reinvigorating that space. It’s a beautiful area. We have an opportunity here to reset the tone...and make a place where people find a safe community...I think it’s going to be beautiful and people will approach it differently and they will see it’s nice. I think its going to be a re-birth.”

Gerald Robbins, also a member of the Board, said the Garden will just be a nicer place to be, and the new fencing will allow a better understanding of how the School Department and the Garden can better care for the space.

“I am excited and leading a community garden is surprisingly

a lot of work and a lot of people working in the same direction. With this project and the fencing there will be a cleaner and safer space around it. The School District owned part of that land. We’ll have our space marked and outside of the fencing, the City will be able to clean up their part and everyone can enjoy it. It’s an important space for neighbors to meet each other, exercise and help with food security.”

The plan began in 2019 to refurbish the garden, and there were some very lively and productive meetings in the late part of 2019. However, COVID-19 got in the way of the plans, and due to regulatory issues, the garden plan had to jump through many permitting hoops that just ended in January. In the meantime, fundraising efforts have gone from having \$118,000 to \$183,000 with more expected very soon.

The demolition began this week, and by mid-week the old garden and some of the blighted areas had been cleaned up and removed. That will wrap up soon and next Thursday, the contractor will move in to build out Phase 1 of the project, which

should take about one month and leave ample time to plant for the summer months.

Phase 1 includes rebuilding the pathways to make the garden more accessible, building out 36 cedar-lined garden plots on the part closest to the playing fields, building a fence, putting in irrigation, building about eight raised beds for those with mobility challenges, adding compost tumblers, and perhaps adding benches for sitting.

Phase 2 will begin in the fall and will include an expansion of about 10 to 15 plots on the hill area closer to Terminal Street. There, they will use granite bed liners so that they are more permanent.

Already, the garden plots are filled up. Last year, they had about 32 people put in deposits for new garden plots this year, and they have about 10 people that have been added since then.

“We do have more people interested than plots available at this

point,” said Robbins.

The Sprouts Garden began the journey after receiving \$92,000 from the City’s Grass Roots program. They have also received \$20,000 from the casino mitigation fund, another \$29,000 from the Ora McCleary Fund, two state agricultural grants, and other funds from private donors.

A Grand Opening celebration is planned for June 26, though details on that will come later.

DND Income-Restricted Rental Opportunity

Newcastle Saranac Apartments
599 & 607-627 Columbus Ave, South End, MA 02118

94 Affordable and Income-Restricted Units

32 units are available through the lottery and all units will build a waiting list

# of Units	# of bedrooms	Estimated Square Feet	Rent	Maximum Income Limit in AMI
1*	Studio	407	30% of HH Income	30%
2	Studio	407	30% of HH Income	30%
1	Studio	407	\$1,301	60%
1	Studio	407	\$1,432	80%
1	Studio	407	\$2,063	100%
3*	1-bedroom	498	30% of HH Income	30%
4	1-bedroom	498	30% of HH Income	30%
14	1-bedroom	498	\$1,389	60%
3	1-bedroom	498	\$1,529	80%
4	1-bedroom	498	\$2,206	100%
5*	2-bedroom	883	30% of HH Income	30%
6	2-bedroom	883	30% of HH Income	30%
12	2-bedroom	883	30% of HH Income	50%
15	2-bedroom**	883	\$1,671	60%
8	2-bedroom	883	\$1,840	80%
8	2-bedroom**	883	\$2,653	100%
1*	3-bedroom	1,245	30% of HH Income	30%
1	3-bedroom	1,245	30% of HH Income	30%
1	3-bedroom	1,245	\$1,933	60%
1	3-bedroom	1,245	\$2,126	80%
2	3-bedroom	1,245	\$3,065	100%

*10 Homeless Set-aside units will be filled through direct referral from HomeStart. For more information, please contact us at the email address or phone number below. For direct referrals, please visit <https://www.homestart.org/bostonhsa>.

**One unit built out for persons who are deaf/hard of hearing and/or with vision impairments.

Minimum Income (set by owner + based on # of bedrooms + Area Median Income (AMI))
Maximum Income (set by DND + based on household size + Area Median Income (AMI))

# of bedrooms	Minimum Income***					HH Size	Maximum Income				
	30% AMI	50% AMI	60% AMI	80% AMI	100% AMI		30% AMI	50% AMI	60% AMI	80% AMI	100% AMI
Studio	0	\$33,600	\$39,030	\$42,960	\$61,890	1	\$26,880	\$44,800	\$53,760	\$66,650	\$83,250
1-bedroom	0	\$36,000	\$39,870	\$45,870	\$66,180	2	\$30,720	\$51,200	\$61,440	\$76,200	\$95,250
2-bedroom	0	\$43,200	\$50,130	\$55,200	\$79,590	3	\$34,560	\$57,600	\$69,120	\$85,700	\$107,100
	0	\$43,200	\$50,130	\$55,200	\$79,590	4	\$38,370	\$63,950	\$76,740	\$95,200	\$119,000
3-bedroom	0	\$49,890	\$57,990	\$63,780	\$91,950	5	\$41,460	\$69,100	\$82,920	\$102,850	\$128,550
	0	\$49,890	\$57,990	\$63,780	\$91,950	6	\$44,520	\$74,200	\$89,040	\$110,450	\$138,000

***Minimum Incomes Apply. Minimum incomes do not apply to households with housing assistance (Section 8, MRVP, VASH, etc.) or for the units in this development that include a project-based housing assistance voucher.

Applications are available from April 8, 2021 to May 20, 2021

To request an online application or to have one sent by email, visit <http://bit.ly/newcastlesaranac> or call **617-307-5951**

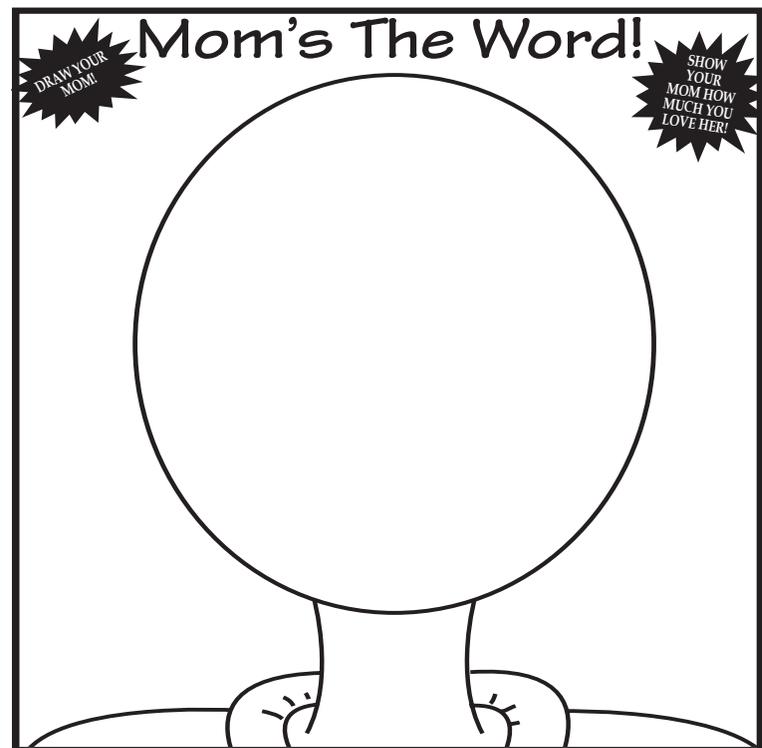
After careful consideration and an abundance of caution, the City of Boston has decided to cancel the in-person application distribution period. If you cannot complete the application online, please call us at **617-307-5951** to request that we mail you one and to ask us for any support or guidance you might need to complete the application.

We will be holding two (2) virtual informational meetings on **April 12, 2021 at 6:00 pm** and **April 15, 2021 at 6:00 pm** through the following links: bit.ly/ncslottery1 and bit.ly/ncslottery2

DEADLINE: Applications must be submitted online or postmarked no later than **Thursday, May 20, 2021**
Mailed to: 599 Columbus Ave, Boston, MA 02118

- Selection by Lottery.
- Asset & Use Restrictions apply.
- Preferences Apply.

For more information, language assistance, or to make a request reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, please call **617-307-5951** or email lottery@schochet.com



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Please include the publication in the email or text

Or mail to: The Independent Newspaper Group, 385 Broadway, Ste 105, Revere

Deadline for entries will be Friday, April 30th.

Entries will be published in the May 5th, & 6th issues of the Revere Journal, Chelsea Record, Everett

Independent, East Boston Times, Winthrop Sun Transcript, The Lynn Journal &

The Charlestown Patriot Bridge

Spillane announces candidacy for City Councilor at-Large

By Dan Murphy

A Beacon Hill resident and lifelong Bostonian with firsthand experience at City Hall and a proven commitment to affordable housing, Jon Spillane has announced his candidacy for City Councilor at-Large.

Spillane, a 29-year-old Irving Street resident, has taken a leave of absence from his role as City Councilor Kenzie Bok's Director of Budget and Constituent Services to focus on his campaign. He grew up in Hyde Park as the son of two civil servants – his father was a police officer and his mother the city's deputy commissioner of elderly affairs – so, he said, community organizing and civic engagement, such as taking part in neighborhood cleanups or helping to turn out voters on Election Day, were “part of his family's everyday life,” as well as something that has left an “indelible impression” on him.

A graduate of Boston Latin School and Boston College, Spillane spent several years working in multi-residential real estate sales and financing, which, he said, made him aware of the city's housing crisis and subsequently compelled him to find employment that would combine his experience in the private sector with his lifelong commitment to public service.

“After a couple of years in the private sector, I started taking account of what direction my life was going,” Spillane said. “My parents were both civil servants so I had an inclination towards the public sector and being publically

engaged.”

In September of 2017, Spillane joined the city's Department of Neighborhood Development (DND) as part of a team, he said, that “leveraged city resources – NHT grants, HUD funding, city-owned parcels, and inclusionary zoning requirements” – to build more than 1,000 affordable housing units citywide.

In January of 2020, Kenzie Bok began her first term as District 8 City Councilor, and Spillane became the Director of Budget and Constituent Services for her office.

“I saw it as an opportunity to contribute and participate in the policy-making process that impacts the city on a wide scale and also as an excellent opportunity to get experience at City Hall and practically apply a lot of the things I learned at DND,” said Spillane, who had previously known Councilor Bok through community engagement and local politics.

In his new role, Spillane has had regular contact with the city's Office of Housing Stability on Court Street, which is part of DND and located just a few floors away from where he previously worked, so he was already well acquainted with the staff there.

“I can't say enough good things about the Office of Housing Stability and the amazing job they've done,” Spillane said.

Meanwhile, Spillane “helped manage one of the toughest city budgets in recent memory,” he said, as Director of Budget for Councilor Bok, who serves as Chair of Ways and Means. He also said he has “contributed to new

policy discussions that resulted in new ordinances.”

Moreover, Spillane has worked as an advocate for Bostonians affected by COVID-19 by helping tenants access rent relief and by connecting struggling small businesses with the city's Office of Economic Development.

Outside of work, Spillane previously served on Mayor Martin Walsh's Spark Boston Council, which partners with City Hall to represent and advocate for young Bostonians, ages 20 to 34. He is currently a member of the Boston Ward 5 Democratic Committee, as well as a founder and current Young Professional Board Member of the Genesis Foundation for Children, a nonprofit that helps children with rare diseases and rare genetic disorders.

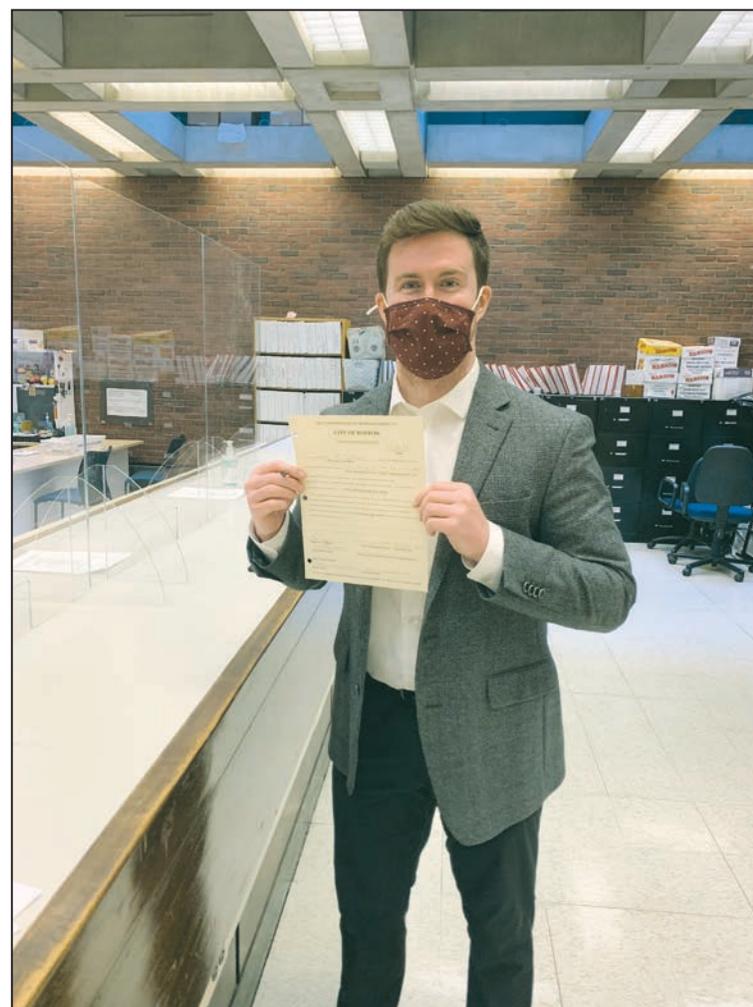
With his campaign now underway, Spillane said affordable housing is one of the biggest issues now facing the city, and in the spring, he said he would soon release his plan for policy ideas that can be implemented at the local level.

“I'm utilizing things I learned through my work at DND and at City Hall,” he said of the plan.

Spillane also describes his knowledge of constituent services, such as being able to connect someone seeking assistance at the with the appropriate city department as he has done throughout his time in Councilor Bok's office, as being “vitally important” to the role of City Councilor.

“We need someone at City Hall who understands budgeting and has a background in finance,” Spillane added, “and can advocate for countercyclical fiscal policy” – an approach that increases capital spending and the debt level during an economic downturn.

As City Councilor at-Large, Spillane would also advocate for small businesses, he said, and seek



City Council at-Large hopeful Jon Spillane.

to improve the sometimes-strained communication between small businesses and city and state government.

“One thing I heard from a lot of small business during the peak of COVID was the lack of communication on getting information from the state-level down,” he said.

“Having a councilor who saw their frustration firsthand and can use their office as a microphone [could promote] transparency.”

Another asset that Spillane would bring to the role of City Councilor at-Large is his legal background.

He attended Suffolk Universi-

ty's Evening Program while working at the DND and Councilor Bok, graduating in May of 2020, and as he looks forward to seeking Bar Admission this spring, Spillane said he has been inspired by City Councilor Lydia Edwards, who, as an attorney, he said, “has been able to do some amazing things at City Hall.”

And for Spillane, that's something to aspire to.

To learn more about Jon Spillane's campaign for City Councilor at-Large, visit <http://jonforboston.com>, or follow him on

Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.



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Researchers concerned, studying nearsightedness in children

By Seth Daniel

Prior to the advent of remote schooling on electronic devices ushered in by COVID-19, doctors and researchers at the Children's Vision Lab in the New England College of Optometry (NECO) were concerned about how those devices might be contributing to nearsightedness (known as myopia) in young people.

Now, with vastly greater amounts of time spent looking at a device without breaks, the concern has grown even greater, and the researchers are conducting informational sessions around the city – including one at the Warren Prescott School recently – and also looking for volunteers to help them further study the issue.

“Myopia is caused by the eyeball getting too long,” said Dr. Fuensanta Vera-Diaz, of NECO. “It causes you to see blurry but it’s because the eye is too long. When it’s too long, you can’t change that. At the moment, the only treatment is to slow it down from growing longer. Once it starts, we cannot reverse it. The majority of myopia is caused by the environment. There is a genetic component, but that accounts for only about 10 percent...Our ultimate goal is to prevent myopia and to do that we need to find out more.”

That’s exactly what Dr. Vera-Diaz, Cecilia Idman-Rait and Kristin Kerber have been doing at the Children's Vision Lab, as well as in presentations to local schools and parent groups in Boston.

One of the keys is that they know myopia is caused by environmental concerns – particularly spending more time inside and more time looking closely at things like computers for long periods of time. They believe if that can be slowed down or changed, the growing numbers of young people with myopia can also be slowed down.

“It’s a fact we’re using our eyes to look closely long periods of time,” said Dr. Vera-Diaz. “It has the effect of bringing on myopia for younger people. We know that. We have to reduce the time spent looking up close. That’s very important. If we reduce the overall time we spend looking up close, it’s very positive. What’s also very important is taking breaks when we are looking up close.”

That was difficult before COVID-19 as children and young people were more and more drawn to video games, phones and other

devices that are used up close – and much less likely to go outside to play or exercise. Now, with COVID-19 in play, the situation has gotten much more concerning much faster. Prior to COVID, kids could go outside, they could have recess and they took breaks at certain times of the day. Now, with remote schooling all or part of the week, it’s much harder to find that kind of schedule.

Dr. Vera-Diaz and her researchers recommend for children and adults to take a device break every 20 minutes. That can be a challenge, but even looking out the window for a bit into the distance can change things if done regularly.

“Taking these breaks is hard to do, especially with electronic devices because you get immersed in them and lose track of time,” she said. “That is especially true with games and developers are good at keeping you from getting up.”

In addition, she said there are numerous studies and evidence they’ve uncovered that spending at least two hours outdoors every day reduces the ability to develop myopia.

“Sunlight is important,” she said. “We don’t know why for sure. We do know there is a benefit of having sunlight...We just know light plays a role and sunlight is very different than indoor lighting, but we don’t know exactly the mechanism.”

The problem with myopia, she said, is a modern problem that developed over the last 150 years as people started spending more time indoors and less time outside. Myopia started to show up in young people 150 to 200 years ago when children started to go to school and started having to look close up at books. That has gotten worse with electric lighting and now, with technology. As more time is spent inside, and less time

outside – as well as the demand of having to spend long periods of time looking closely – the numbers have only increased.

Over the last 25 years, she said, there has been a 50 percent increase, and now 43 percent of older kids and adults have it.

“The numbers are rising rapidly and that one reason it’s so important to us,” she said.

Additionally, they are concerned because myopia is associated with a number of other eye problems, including retinal detachment and glaucoma.

Dr. Vera-Diaz and Idman-Rait and Kerber said they have great concerns about what the last 18 months has done for kids in relation to myopia. She said the studies are not done yet, and they are just now starting to see some early studies, but her gut feeling is that it’s not going to be good news.

“Looking up close is detrimental,” she said. “Looking up close at the screen all day for school is a problem.”

For those in remote schooling, and even adults working online remotely, she said it’s important to make sure free time is spent doing things that don’t involve a screen or looking up closely.

“It will be very important that when screen time is over for school, kids don’t spend their free time on a device as well,” she said.

The reason they have gone on a virtual tour to the various schools is to educate teachers and parents about the threat myopia is causing and will cause. Education is a primary purpose of the visits, to sound the alarm and let everyone know this is a growing problem they may not have heard a lot about.

“Our main purpose is to educate,” she said. “Education is being in the know about what’s good and not good for kids’ eyes.”

The other part of the visits are to recruit kids to study treat-



Dr. Fuensanta Vera-Diaz with children at NECO's Myopia Control Clinic in the Back Bay, where the researchers are educating and studying the growing numbers of children with nearsightedness – or myopia.

ments within their PICNIC study at the Children's Vision Lab. That study is funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to do a long-term study with kids on myopia. For three years, the kids visit the clinic and the researchers measure their eyesight for the study.

That all falls within the purpose of slowing down the advance of myopia in kids – and thus more severe sight issues as an adult.

For more information on the study or on myopia in kids, go to the study's website at www.neco.edu/PICNIC.

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- Surgery



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Historic Houses of the Month

The Samuel Dexter Mansion

By Nancy Hayford Kueny

Samuel Dexter (1761-1816), born in Boston, was a distinguished politician who served in the Massachusetts Senate and House of Representatives before his appointment as U.S. Secretary of War (1800-1801) by President John Adams. Subsequently he briefly served both Adams and Thomas Jefferson as Secretary of the Treasury. His father was a prominent politician as well and his grandfather, also Samuel Dexter, was the minister of the First Church and Parish in Dedham (1724-1755), the 14th church to be established in Massachusetts. He was descended from Richard Dexter (1606-1679), the immigrant ancestor who was born in Slane, County Meath, Ireland, arriving in Charlestown in 1644.

His home in Charlestown at 14 Green Street was built in 1791 and was an imposing late Georgian/early Federal mansion. Currently it is known as Memorial Hall. Dexter did not own the home very long, probably because he had become a member of Adam's cabinet. In 1800 he sold it to Giles Alexander who lived there until 1814. Subsequently, it was acquired by Matthew Bridge, an early developer of Charlestown during the reconstruction period. Matthew's son Nathan lived on the estate from 1814 until 1830. Initially, the estate extended from High Street down to Main Street and eastward as far as the Federal homes on Cordis Street. Sawyer notes that the grounds were "the very best kept and most interesting in the State." Several owners were interested in horticulture, hence the grounds possessed fine gardens with rare plants, a vegetable garden, a vineyard, and shade and fruit trees. There was a brick wall on High Street where espeliared apricot, nectarine and peach trees were grown. There was a small greenhouse in the upper part of the garden and a stable at the corner of Green and High. The area between the stable and the man-



Memorial Hall 1930.

sion was paved with cobblestones. At the Main Street boundary of the estate was a buckthorn hedge, and later a wooden fence.

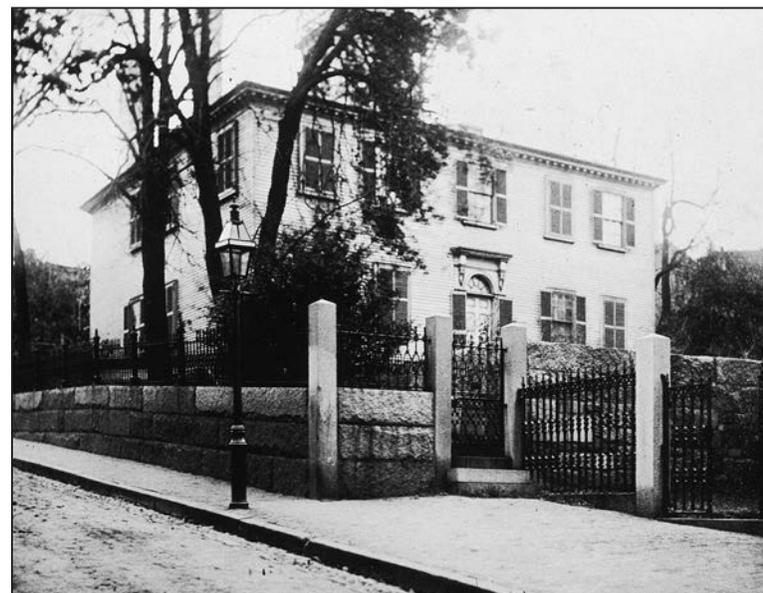
In 1831, the estate was sold at auction to Hamilton Davidson, a grain merchant who owned a shop on Long Wharf and a gristmill in Roxbury. Under Davidson's ownership the estate was divided into 12 lots which were sold to the Winthrop Church and to Shadrack Varney among others. Varney developed 1-6 Dexter Row, a block of Greek Revival brick townhouses constructed in 1836. Numbers 1, 5, and 6 are no longer extant. Davidson sold 14 Green Street to his son-in-law Rhodes Lockwood in 1850, who in turn sold the mansion to his son. In 1887 the remaining lots were sold, some of which were on High Street. The mansion house itself was sold to Abraham Lincoln Post 11 of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR). Founded in 1866, the GAR was originally a fraternal organization comprised of Union veterans of the Civil War. Post 11 was founded by Major Austen S. Cushman, April 23, 1867. Today Post 11 continues to serve veterans from more recent American conflicts.

The initial development of the Dexter estate is an example of

how a large estate built after the Revolution was divided to facilitate the further development of Charlestown in the 19th century. When 14 Green Street was built it would have been at the edge of the recently reconstructed part of Charlestown, and would have had the feel of a country house. Keep in mind that at that time Charlestown was still comprised of many fields and pastures, including Breed's Hill where the battle took place.

Originally, 14 Green was a 2-story 5-bay/4-bay 50' x 45' block shaped hipped roofed late Georgian/early Federal mansion that featured a beautiful center entry surmounted by a semi-circular fanlight and a carved door hood supported by ornate console brackets. There were four rooms per floor and there would have been a fireplace in every room. It was of post and beam construction with a clapboarded exterior. Centered atop the hipped roof is a large square cupola with corner columns that is thought to be original to 1791. The foundation is hammered granite and there is brick nogging between the studs of the exterior walls. The modillioned cornice survives at the reworked roofline. Only one of the four original chimneys remains.

After GAR Post 11 acquired the property in 1887, the group paid George Morrill \$14,575.75 to modify the mansion. The original staircase in the central hall was removed. Some detail remains on the first floor including original door surrounds, casement shut-



Dexter Mansion 19th Century.

ters, and a modillioned cornice in the hall. The southwest parlor retains an ornately carved classical doorhead as well as acanthus modillions at the cornice. The rear two rooms on the first floor have been combined. The second floor was opened up and reinforced to construct a large meeting hall with a sprung maple floor. At the time of the conversion, the hipped roof with its original framing and the cupola were raised 6' 3" to create a high ceiling in the meeting hall. A number of the symmetrical placed original windows were removed. An el with a staircase was added to the right of the main block. This wonderful house is now embarking on an amazing restoration journey that will take it back to the 1888 iteration of the building.

Memorial Hall has been home to many groups and organizations. It continues to be Post 11 of the GAR, but it has also been used as a community center, a church, and as the home of Charlestown Lacrosse and the Charlestown Preservation Society. Fifteen years ago, veterans Joe Zuffante and Stan Leonard, president and vice president respectively of Memorial Hall, banded together to restore the building. More recently these two began collaborating with the Charlestown Preservation Society, the Friends of Memorial Hall, the architect Lynn Spencer of Spencer, Sullivan and Vogt, and the City of Boston with the common goal of restoring the building. Additionally, there have been generous donations and a CPA grant.

Seth Daniel wrote about the current state of the project in the April 1 Patriot Bridge, noting the commencement of the exterior restoration work that has been taken on by the preservation carpentry class at the North Bennet Street School in the North End. Structurally, the building is in surprisingly good condition. According to Zuffante, the hope is that as much of the building that can be restored will eventually be restored. North Bennet Street hopes to restore the original scarfed clapboarding which remains on the front facade and the northeast wall of the building. Windows will be fabricated and missing windows will be replaced. The magnificent entry will be restored as will interior details where feasible. This is one of the most important historic buildings in Charlestown, not only because of its provenance but also because it such fine example of a highly styled mansion of this era. It will be thrilling to watch this ambitious and meaningful restoration unfold. Take a stroll down Green Street and check out the progress.

Sources: Boston Landmarks Commission (MACRIS), Old Charlestown by Timothy Sawyer, BPL: Charlestown Lantern Slides, Archipedia of New England: Memorial Hall by Brian Pfeiffer, Wikipedia, Historic Boston Inc, Charlestown Patriot Bridge/Seth Daniel, ancestry.com, Charlestown Enterprise 1917, Digital Commonwealth.



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BWSC offers property owners credit to replace lead pipes

Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC) announced that it is doubling to \$4,000 the credit for replacing lead pipes through its Lead Replacement Incentive Program. A recent review conducted by the Commission estimates that as many as 4,800 property owners may be eligible for the program. For most customers, this credit will cover the total cost of the lead pipe replacement.

Lead water pipes can significantly increase a person's exposure to lead, a toxic metal that can be harmful to human health. The water provided by BWSC and

Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) is lead-free when it leaves the reservoirs because distribution pipes are made mostly of iron and steel. However, lead can leach into tap water through home service lines and internal plumbing, especially if water sits for long periods of time before use. People in homes and businesses built before 1950 should run their drinking water for two to three minutes if it has been stagnant for several hours, before drinking or cooking, to flush out any lead that might have leached into the system.

Under the Lead Replacement Incentive Program, properties owners who may have lead pipes will receive a letter outlining the program and urging them to reach out to the Commission to schedule an evaluation and estimate. Owners are responsible for all pipes on their property. The Commission is giving property owners 60 months interest-free to pay for replacement costs beyond the amount of the incentive. To be eligible for the program, property owners must be current in their payments and agree to have the work performed by the Commission. Lead pipe

replacement is subject to availability and is offered on a first-come, first-served basis.

For additional information regarding the program and other lead resources, property owners are encouraged to visit the Commission's website at: www.bwsc.org, or call the LEAD HOTLINE at (617) 989-7888.

About the Boston Water and Sewer Commission: The BWSC manages the largest and oldest system of its kind in New England, providing drinking water and sewer services to more than one million people daily. The BWSC's

goal is to provide residents and businesses in the city of Boston with the best water quality and sewer services available in a way that is both protective of the environment and financially prudent. BWSC was created by the Massachusetts Legislature in 1977, replacing separate water and sewer divisions of the city's Public Works Department. BWSC is overseen by a three-member Board of Commissioners that is appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council.

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.

Motor Vehicle Accident - Leaving the Scene

04/09/21 - Upon arrival at High and Green streets at about 12:39 p.m., police met with the caller, who stated a witness informed her that her vehicle was struck by a box truck, and that the truck had left the scene without leaving any information.

The officer observed damage to the rear driver's side taillight, bumper, and fender, and a witness provided the officer with a cell phone picture of the box truck that struck her motor vehicle. The incident will be investigated by Area A-1 Auto Investigator.

Disturbing the Peace/Disorderly Conduct /Noisy Party with Arrest

04/09/21 - Upon arrival at 170 Medford St. at around 2:23 a.m., police spoke with resident of the apartment, who stated that he wanted his nephew and his girlfriend to leave the resident's apartment.

Officers could smell the odor of alcohol emanating from the apartment and as one guest was walking down the stairs, she fell on her face and began to bleed from her mouth and facial area. Boston EMS responded to the

scene for an evaluation.

The victim's boyfriend acted increasingly aggressively towards officers and refused to give the victim's phone back to her. Officers attempted to prevent the suspect from walking away with the phone, at which time, the suspect charged at the officers and pushed them violently with his body.

After a violent struggle that lasted several minutes, officers were able to place suspect into handcuffs before transporting him to Area A-1 headquarters for booking.

Motor Vehicle Accident Involving Bicycle-Injury

04/08/21 - A victim walked into District A-15 headquarters to report while operating her bicycle on Maffa Way near Cambridge Street at about 7 p.m. and entering into the Sullivan Square rotary, she was struck by a white Ford Escape. After a brief conversation, the operator of the motor vehicle fled the scene.

The victim, who was experiencing pain, said she intends to seek medical attention at a later date. The incident will be investigated by Area A-1 detectives.

Real Estate Transfers

BUYER 1	SELLER	ADDRESS	PRICE
Fiore RT	Perlmutter, Maureen C	197 8th St #418	\$884,000
Cheverie, Meghan	Sullivan, Amy	42 8th St #5103	\$517,500
Mccullough, Katherine	Sawyer, Kate L	10 Albion Pl #3	\$845,000
Bertelli, Pia K	Hoeger, Dean E	10-12 Bartlett St	\$1,835,000
Fox, Mark E	Langhorst, Brian	207 Bunker Hill St #2	\$920,000
Osborne, Elizabeth M	Kelley, Glen J	423 Bunker Hill St #4	\$550,000
Wiss, Serena M	Vroulianis, Joanna	86 Bunker Hill St #2	\$685,000
Desmet, Timothy W	Paciorek, Joseph W	59 Chelsea St #59	\$1,275,000
Langdon, Martina A	Samuel, Teron	29 Goldsmith St #3	\$615,000
Langhorst, Brian R	Dalle, Gregory	40 Green St	\$1,605,000
Parolin, Jill	Kopek, Matthew	136 High St #2	\$601,000
Hodge, Emily	Glazer, David N	3 Hilary St	\$1,940,000
Murphy, Kasey	Gilligan, Thomas	108 Main St #4	\$999,000
Edwards, Edward W	Parsons, Eric	262 Medford St #262	\$950,000
Coughlin, Kathleen	11 Prospect Street LLC	11 Prospect St #2	\$938,000
Cipollo, Nicholas J	Rubio FT LLC	15 Prospect St #2	\$810,000
Karamourtopoulos, James	Bay Flow LLC	34 Prospect St	\$1,245,000
Furfaro, David M	Atwood, Aaron	66 School St	\$1,030,000
Reilly, Daniel J	Kirsch-Keegan RT	37 Shipway Pl #37	\$1,078,000
Basile, Kaitlyn	Petkanans, Amy	67 Sullivan St #1	\$700,000
Washington Street RT	Hassell, Robert M	37 Washington St	\$2,850,000
Hoey, Brian W	Bingham, Christopher	46 Washington St #2	\$814,000
Schweers, Dylan E	Onorato, Salvatore	42 Winthrop St #2	\$1,100,000

The City of Boston reminds you:

The legal drinking age is 21.



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SURPRISING DONATION



The TCB, through Tom Coots, sent the Artists Group of Charlestown a very surprising donation of \$500 recently. Coots is shown here presenting the check to Dara Panabaker of AGC recently in the bank. AGC is asking local businesses and corporations to support their mission of providing the community of Charlestown with art related events and maintaining the StoveFactory Gallery. Every contribution will be recognized during one or more of our events.

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PATRIOT-BRIDGE

CITY PAWS

Choosing toys

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

For a few weeks this year, we had to put our dog Poppy's toys in storage. She had bumped her face into a wall on a walk and loosened a tooth. After examining her, the vet recommended waiting to see if the tooth stabilized when the area around it healed.

This meant no use of that tooth for Poppy's favorite activities – chew stick sessions and nightly games of fetch, keep away, and tug. It also caused us to think carefully about the toys we would reintroduce to her when it was over.

Appropriate Toys

We've always had terriers who have been hard chewers and selected toys designed to take abuse. Some brands, like Kong, offer degrees of hardness for different dogs. We opt for the strongest of the strong to be sure we don't find pieces of the toy removed and possibly swallowed after a chewing session.

More than Play

Some dogs love puzzle toys that challenge their minds. Many of these dispense treats. Some can even be used to feed a dog who eats too fast.

Other dogs turn a toy into a comfort blanket of sorts. We fostered a puppy mill mama who treated all soft toys as if they were her puppies. She would bring them

to her bed, protect, and snuggle them.

Originally bred to be hunters, our Westies have all loved squeaky toys and would happily make them squeak until the human family members beg for mercy. Experts say this sound satisfies their prey instinct.

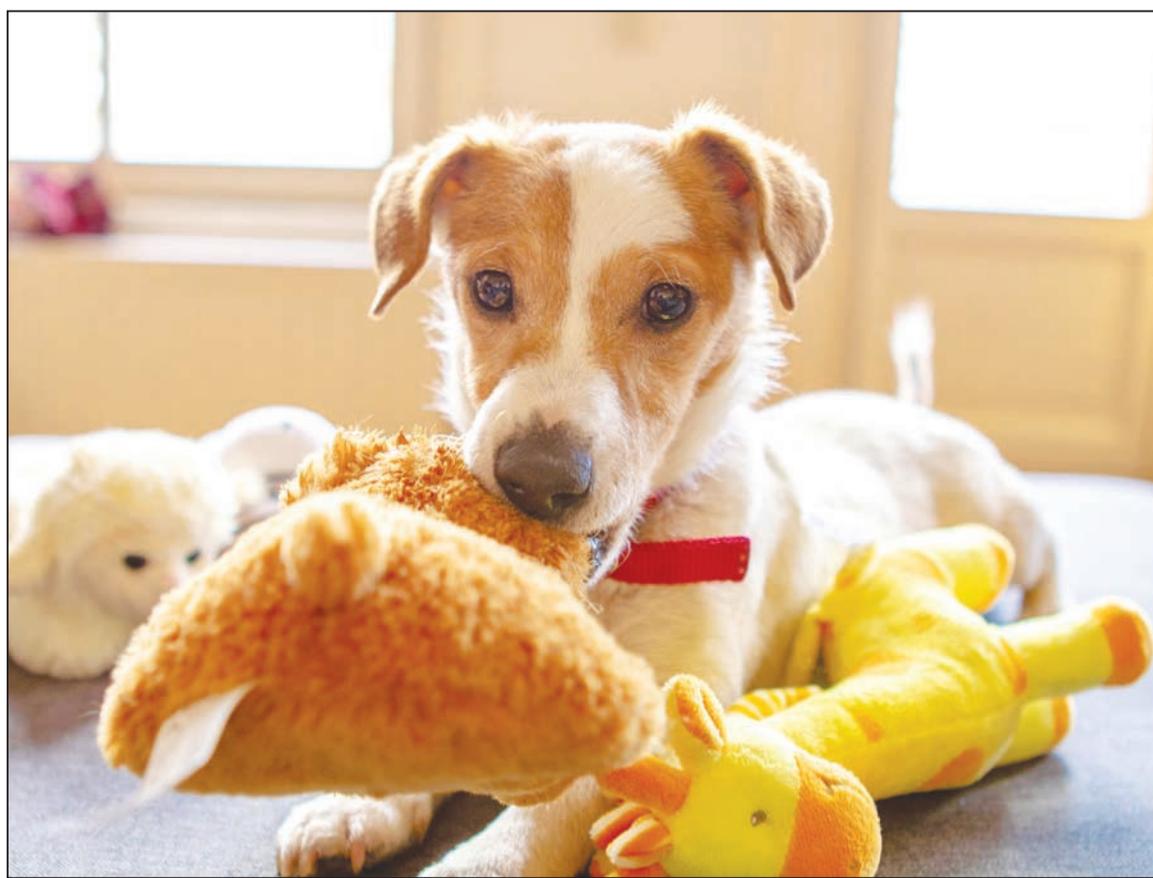
Other toys, like floating fetch toys for waterdogs can encourage exercise. Dog ball launchers, that enable people to throw a ball much farther than usual for a dog to fetch, add to how fast and far a dog will run. What's more, they let people pick up wet, slimy balls without touching them.

Rotate Toys

Changing up the toys available to your dog is a good way to keep them interested. Every so often spread out all the toys and examine them for condition. Then you can discard those with damage, leave out a few, and pack away some to reappear the next time you do a rotation.

Dangerous Toys

Tennis balls and sticks top the lists of dangerous toys for dogs. A dog can easily turn a tennis ball into a choking hazard. Tennis balls can also cause dental problems. The AKC quoted Dr. Thomas Chamberlain, a board-certified veterinary dental specialist who warned that "... the fuzz is actually quite abrasive, and accumu-



Small terriers, often bred to hunt rodents, love to make toys squeak. The sound satisfies their prey instinct. (Photo by Marieke Koenders)

lated dirt and sand increases the abrasive quality of the ball. As your dog chomps on a tennis ball, the fuzz acts like sandpaper, gradually wearing down her teeth in a process called 'blunting.' This can eventually lead to dental problems such as exposed tooth pulp and difficulty chewing."

Many dogs love sticks but sadly, sticks can be dangerous. AKC Chief Veterinary Officer Dr.

Jerry Klein wrote, "Many times people would bring their dogs into the emergency clinic because they were at the park and a stick literally impaled the dog at the back of its mouth ... While the stick was long gone, a huge laceration remained, and most times the owners were unaware of what was making their dog behave so out of sorts."

The lesson here is to choose your dog's toys with care. Consid-

er toys that your dog likes and that are appropriate for their size, age, and needs. Rotate the ones you have to keep things interesting and offer safer replacements for tennis balls and sticks.

Do you have a question or topic for City Paws? Send an email to Penny@BostonZest.com with your request.

\$3.8 million awarded to youth substance-use prevention programs

The Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) and the Department of Public Health (DPH) announced \$3.8 million in annual grants to 31 youth substance use prevention programs serving communities across the Commonwealth – including programs in Boston and Chelsea.

This is the third Massachusetts Collaborative for Action, Leadership, and Learning (MassCALL3) award under the Substance Misuse Prevention Grant Programs. The grants will be distributed over eight years to support local substance use prevention efforts in communities across the Commonwealth. The program outlines three goals:

•Community engagement and capacity building: To be deployed for communities with limited or no existing capacity and infrastructure to implement a systematic public health planning process

and a comprehensive set of evidence-based prevention programs, policies, and practices to prevent youth substance misuse.

•Comprehensive strategy implementation: Communities with existing prevention program capacity and experience will receive additional support to implement a comprehensive set of prevention services directed at youth and focused on substances of first use, such as alcohol, nicotine, and cannabis.

•Innovation and promising practices implementation: Communities that have already implemented a detailed substance misuse plan or adapted an existing approach that has not been formally described in prevention literature will receive expert assistance in examining and disseminating new and emerging practices that have the potential to fill gaps in current prevention scientific evidence.

"The Commonwealth continues to invest in and support evidence-based initiatives that address the very serious issue of substance use among our young people," said Governor Charlie Baker. "These awards build on the Administration's commitment to expand pathways to substance use prevention programs at all levels in every area of the state."

The grant award begins in FY22 and continues through FY29. The program is funded through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) block grant.

Award recipients are:

- Boston Public Health Commission
- City of Chelsea
- Project R.I.G.H.T., Inc. (Boston)

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Acting Mayor Janey proposes to eliminate library fines at BPL

Staff Report

Mayor Kim Janey announced that, once approved by its Board of Trustees, the Boston Public Library (BPL) will permanently eliminate late fines for patrons of all ages. This removal of late fines is supported by \$125,000 of 'revenue relief' in Mayor Janey's 2021 budget and will go into effect on July 1, 2021. The policy change will remove barriers and increase access to BPL resources

for patrons across the City of Boston.

"With the BPL Board of Trustees' approval, we look forward to eliminating library late fines and the equity imbalance they can create," said Mayor Janey. "The Boston Public Library provides important resources, programs, and services to our communities. By removing this barrier to access, we are ensuring that these resources are actually accessible to everyone."

In the wake of COVID-19, with mayoral approval, the BPL implemented a moratorium on assessing late fines in March 2020. To cover the span of time until fines can permanently be eliminated, the BPL announced today that this moratorium will be extended through June 30, as the Mayor and the library's permanent elimination of fines goes into effect on July 1. BPL had already eliminated late fines for patrons under 18, a policy implemented in October

2019.

Under this policy change, BPL will also remove all pending overdue fines from patrons' accounts. Moving forward, patrons will not face monetary penalties for returning books late, although they will still be required to return any overdue books in order to check out additional materials. While card holders will no longer incur fines for late returns, they will still be responsible for replacement costs if a book is lost or not

returned.

"The BPL is proud to join the growing number of public libraries who are abolishing late fines and ensuring maximum accessibility, especially at this time of greatest need among those who rely on our resources most," said BPL president David Leonard. "With this announcement, patrons can continue to access our collections, as well as our physical and digi-

(FINES Pg. 15)

For the Record

WARREN PRESCOTT SCHOOL

April 19-22 - Spring Recess : No School

April 26 - Students return to school

April 26 - 5 Day In Person School Starts

May 12 - Site Council Meeting @ 5:30pm

CITY COUNCIL BUDGET HEARINGS FOR THE WEEK:

•From the April 26, 10 a.m., City Council Committee On Ways And Means Hearing: One of a series of hearings to review the FY22 Budget. The focus of this hearing is an overview of the FY22 Budget. Orders for the FY22 Operating Budget, including annual appropriations for departmental operations, for the School Department, and for other post-employment benefits (OPEB).

*4 p.m. - A community working session to prepare for FY22 Budget hearings. The focus of this working session is to hear from the public regarding their questions on the FY22 budget.

•From the April 27, 10 a.m., CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS HEARING: One of a series of hearings to review the FY22 Budget. The focus of this hearing is the FY22 budget for the Boston Public Schools, including their Return, Recover, Imagine Plan and plan for City, CARES, ESSER and ARP funding.

*2 p.m. - The focus of this hearing is the FY22 budget for the Boston Public Schools. This hearing will cover topics including weighted student funding, enrollment projections, schools with declining budgets, opportunity index, new investments, transformation schools, and Hub schools, as well as BPS

use of federal funds for their Return and Recovery plans.

•From the April 28, 6 p.m., City Council Committee On Ways And Means Hearing: The focus of this hearing is public testimony, specifically regarding priorities for an equitable recovery.

•From the April 29, 10 a.m., City Council Committee On Ways And Means Hearing: The focus of this hearing is the FY22 budgets for the Law Department, Office of Arts & Culture, and Office of Tourism, Sports & Entertainment. This hearing will also cover the revolving funds overseen by these departments.

*2 p.m. - The focus of this hearing is an overview of the Capital Budget, as well as the FY22 budget for the Public Facilities Department.

From the April 21, 10 a.m., City Council Committee On Government Operations Hearing: Order for a Hearing Regarding Biannual Review of the Boston Employment Commission and Boston Residents Jobs Policy.

This matter was sponsored by Councilor Lydia Edwards and was referred to the Committee on April 14, 2021.

From the April 21, Conservation Commission meeting, online:

Notice of Intent for DEP from GEI Consultants on behalf of Diversified Automotive, Inc. for the proposed maintenance dredging of the berthing area fronting the north side of the pier located at 100 Terminal St, Charlestown, MA (LUO, DPA, Fish Run) * Continued from the April 7, 2021 hearing

The City of Boston launched its latest project to protect neigh-

borhoods from future coastal flooding as a result of climate change. The project is focused on the flooding vulnerabilities in the Charlestown neighborhoods. The first online meeting will be later this month.

When: Thursday, April 29, from 6-8 p.m. Feel free to drop in at any point.

RSVP: Strongly encouraged but not required.

At this virtual event, attendees will learn about various aspects of the project and provide their input. Community feedback and support of the project is important to ensure meaningful impact.

PLAN Charlestown upcoming meetings and workshops:

•Monday, May 26, 2021 on the Rutherford Avenue and Sullivan Square subareas.

•Wednesday, June 23, 2021 on the Original Peninsula and Lost Village sub-areas.

At these workshops, we will dive deeper in conversations about the future priorities and needs for these areas, as well as shaping future investments in these areas. In the coming weeks, you will be able to sign up and find more information about these workshops.

NO EXAM SCHOOL WAIT LIST

Attention all 6th grade Charlestown families. If you have applied to an exam school and know that your child will be attending school elsewhere... PLEASE contact BPS and pull your exam school application. There is NO waitlist so if your child receives an invitation and declines it, it will NOT go to another Charlestown student.

Email address: exam@bostonpublicschools.org

Include your child's name, birthdate, school, and zip code. Phone: 617-635-9512

CMA SCHOLARSHIP

The Charlestown Mothers Association is pleased to offer up to \$13,000 in college scholarships, to men and women who 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, CMA awarded eight scholarships. Copies of the application are available at the "Scholarship" tab on the CMA website, www.charlestown-mothersassociation.org. The completed application is due by April 23, 2021.

OLD SCHOOLBOYS SCHOLARSHIP

The Old Charlestown Schoolboys Association isn't able to have its annual banquet this year, but it is going ahead with a plan to distribute up to \$26,000 in scholarships to students in the Town.

The deadline for the Old Charlestown Schoolboys scholarships has been extended to April 28 and the scholarships are open to any Charlestown resident who:

- is a senior in high school.
 - has been a resident of Charlestown.
 - will be entering college or preparatory school or technical school this year
 - is a senior in high school or freshman, sophomore or junior in college or preparatory school.
- Applications can be obtained at the Boston Public Library, the Charlestown Boys and Girls Club, St. Mary-St. Catherine

of Sienna office, St. Francis de Sales office, St. John's Office, and the First Church of Charlestown Office.

Applications are due April 28, 2021.

This year no transcripts are required.

For more information, please contact Jim O'Brien (617-543-5384).

•REPORTING WORKPLACE SAFETY CONCERNS

Workers in any size organization have options if they feel they are being pressured into an unsafe situation. Attorney General Maura Healey has created resources for workers to report safety concerns during reopening. They include an online form at the Attorney General's website and a dedicated Fair Labor hotline at 617-727-3465. People can also find those resources by calling 311.

•HOW TO REPORT A PROBLEM PROPERTY

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

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

North Washington Street Bridge construction look-ahead through May 1

This is a brief overview of construction operations and impacts for the North Washington Street Bridge Replacement Project. MassDOT will provide additional notices as needed for high-impact work and changes to traffic configurations beyond those described below.

installation, and concrete placement

*Pier 2: Footing formwork, rebar installation, and concrete placement

*Pier 3: Column formwork, rebar installation, and concrete placement

*Pier 4: V arms formwork, rebar installation, and concrete placement

*Pier 5 (closest to Charlestown): V arm formwork installation, rebar installation, and concrete placement

•Installing, moving, and maintaining silt curtains in the water

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 4/18/21, completed work includes:

*Pier 1 (closest to the North End): sealing and dewatering cofferdam

*Pier 2: sealing and dewatering cofferdam

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.

For more information and project background please visit the project website.

COMMERCIAL STREET LANE REDUCTION

•On Wednesday, 4/28, there will be a lane closure on Commercial Street to make room for a work zone near the Keany Square section of the project site. The lane closure will occur to prepare for concrete work on piers. Closure begins at 4:00 a.m. and will end at 2:00 p.m.

DESCRIPTION OF SCHEDULED WORK

•Building the piers:

*Pier 1 (closest to the North End): Footing formwork, rebar

FINES (from pg. 14)

tal resources, without the financial barrier of late fines. We have always believed that as a public library, our services should be 'Free to All,' and as the current global health crisis continues and we move into recovery, policy changes such as this are more important than ever. Thank you to Mayor Janey for authorizing the removal of late fines. Patrons who have the means to further support our work will also be invited to make a donation in lieu of fines."

In FY19 the Library collected a total of \$176,512 in overdue fines from BPL cardholders, representing a fraction of the total overdue fine balance on record. Currently, about 42,000 BPL cardholders are facing fines, and therefore barriers to continued use of the Library. A

scan of our system indicates that a large portion of those Boston residents live in neighborhoods which map to the most economically challenged parts of the city. With approval from the Trustees, these fines will be removed from their accounts on July 1, 2021.

The Library has more than 391,300 card holders, and even more Massachusetts residents benefit from the BPL's offerings. During the pandemic, the library has provided free programming, resources, and services, with a focus on civic discourse, COVID recovery, economic recovery, racial equity, workforce development, and youth engagement through the Repairing America initiative. The BPL also rolled out the BPL To Go program in June, 2020,

allowing patrons across the city to place holds, check out, and return books, CDs, and DVDs, despite the pandemic. Additionally, the library has been dedicated to advancing digital equity for its patrons, and the Boston community. This is being achieved through its Connectivity Kits, which allow patrons to check out a Chromebook and a hotspot; its Public Computer Access program, which provides safe computer access at the Central Library in Copley Square; and its Outdoor Wi-Fi program, which extends Wi-Fi to the areas surrounding 14 BPL branches.

To learn more about the BPL's current initiatives, visit bpl.org/news, and bpl.org/RepairingAmerica.

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MGH Institute to host climate change symposium April 24

MGH Institute of Health Professions is hosting the day-long virtual symposium "Climate Change & Health 2021: The Intersection of Climate Change, COVID-19, and Structural Racism" on Saturday, April 24, beginning at 9 a.m.

Climate change a growing public health concern that

has implications for safety and well-being; nutrition and food security; food, water, and vector-borne diseases; and mental health. Climate change and the social determinants of health are closely aligned, contributing to disparate environmental exposures and health inequalities, as a disproportionate number of

low-income individuals, some communities of color, and those with higher vulnerability to disease and chronic health conditions are at risk.

National experts such as Senator Edward Markey (D-MA), meteorologist Pete Bouchard of NBC10 Boston, and keynote speaker Dr. Renee

Salas from the Harvard School of Public Health Center for Climate, Health and the Global Environment and Massachusetts General Hospital, along with faculty from the MGH Institute's Center for Climate Change, Climate Justice and Health, will address the climate-related health consequences on vulnerable com-

munities and systemic racism with a lens on how COVID-19 disproportionately impacts Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC).

The public is invited to attend. To register or learn more, please go to <http://info.mghihp.edu/climate>.

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