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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2025



FREE

# CHARLESTOWN

PATRIOT-BRIDGE

# Community leaders, officials express support for plans to redevelop Pier 5 in Charlestown

By Cary Shumar

Charlestown community leaders and public officials are expressing their support for Courageous Sailing's plans for the redevelopment of Pier 5 in the Charlestown Naval Yard.

In separate interviews with the Charlestown Patriot-Bridge, Rep. Dan Ryan, City Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata, and CNC Chairperson Tom Cunha each expressed support of the project. Sen. Sal DiDomenico and Council President Ruthzee Louijeune have submitted letters of support to the Boston Planning & Development Agency.

The outpouring of endorsements and favorable comments for Courageous Sailing's plans follow a Dec. 11 vote by the BPDA in favor of the plans that include the construction of a new two-story



Dave DiLorenzo, executive director of Courageous Sailing Center For Youth Inc.

waterfront community center that will feature classrooms, community sailing programs and space for events. Dave DiLorenzo, executive director of the non-profit Courageous Sailing For Youth Center Inc. which is currently located in Pier 4 in the Charlestown Naval Yard, said in a well-articulated presentation to the BPDA, "The vision, in a nutshell, is to develop a world-class waterfront community center. One that, above all, facilitates direct access to, enjoyment of, and activation of our city's precious waterfront for everyone. With this in mind, the design prioritizes open space, nesting indoor classrooms and gathering spaces under a sloping green roof, fully accessible to the public, with magnificent views of the harbor and city skyline. And from there visitors could walk down directly to the water's edge, to what we're calling a learning lagoon — a floating tide pool and water-side outdoor classroom."

The new center would also include a function space for events such as weddings.

"Like many non-profits with

facilities, we're envisioning a way to generate some earned revenue from the facilities to support operations and maintenance," said DiLorenzo. "And of course, we would work very closely with the city and the community to make sure that any events wouldn't be a disruption to the neighbors. We've proven that we can do that at Pier 4. Currently, we host weddings under our big tent on Pier 4."

According to DiLorenzo, Community Sailing serves approximately 1,000 youths (ages 8-18) and 2,000 adults each year and employs 80 people under the age of 21.

"We're a big part of Boston's workplace development effort for kids, and yet, we have had a waitlist forever. There's far more demand than we've been able to

(Redevelop, Pg. 11)

# From petition to plan

# Charlestown's first historic district is taking shape

By Boston Office of Historic Preservation staff

Charlestown is one step closer to establishing its very first local Landmark District—and the community is at the center of the process.

#### How we got here

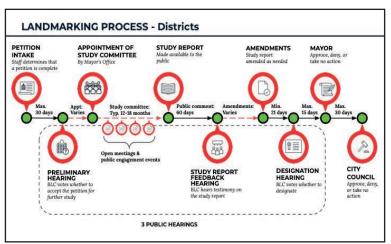
On July 6, 2022, 26 registered voters submitted a petition to the

Boston Landmarks Commission to recognize the historic planning and development of the Monument Square area, the neighborhood surrounding the Bunker Hill Monument. The Commission agreed the area merited further study and launched the Monument Square Landmark District Study Committee—composed of Charlestown residents and Boston

Landmarks Commissioners.

The Study Committee is tasked with understanding and documenting the historic, architectural, and archaeological significance of the neighborhood, proposing the district's boundaries, and crafting recommendations for long-term management of the district that

(HISTORIC DISTRICT, Pg. 4)



COURTESY OF BOSTON OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

A map showing the Landmark Districts.



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# EDITORIAL

#### **MERRY CHRISTMAS**

This is the most wonderful time of the year, to paraphrase the popular song, with holiday music playing in the malls and on our car radios, resurrecting our earliest childhood memories of Christmases-past.

We choose just the right tree, decorate it carefully with our family-heirloom ornaments, and when we first turn on the lights, it brings a smile to the faces of even the most-jaded among us.

Despite our hectic rushing to and fro', everybody, it seems, is in a good mood. We endure the traffic and the long lines in stores because we know that what we are doing will bring joy and happiness to others.

For those of us with young children, we get to see Christmas through their eyes, giving us a second chance to experience the wonder and joy that we felt when we were their age.

Although all of us celebrate the holiday season in our own way, the common thread is one of peace, joy, and happiness, regardless of religious or secular beliefs. Whether it be Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or a Seinfeldian Festivus, the spirit of the season imbues us with a sense of togetherness that transcends whatever negativity may exist both in our own lives and in the world around us.

We wish all of our readers a Merry Christmas and a happy holiday season.

# THERE'S STILL TIME TO HELP THOSE IN NEED

It's hard to believe that Christmas is just a week away. We realize that the compressed holiday shopping season has put even more pressure than usual on all of us, but we hope that all of our readers can find the time to remember those in need this holiday season.

The stock market may be booming and unemployment is still near an all-time low, but there was the depressing news this past week that homelessness among Americans once again has increased in the past year and millions of American children (1 in 8) face food insecurity on a regular basis.

The cold, harsh reality for many Americans in 2025 is that the promise of benefitting from a booming economy still is only a dream, where even those who are lucky enough to work full-time are barely getting by thanks to the crushingly-high cost of living, especially housing.

And for those who cannot find a job, or who are unable to work -- and especially for their children -- the holiday joy that most of us take for granted is just an illusion.

We recognize that in our hurry-hurry world where we barely have time to think, the Christmas season brings with it the onslaught of last-minute shopping and holiday preparations. But we urge all of our readers who have the means to do so to take a brief "time-out" in order to consider doing something to make the holiday season a bit brighter for those who are less fortunate.

We can assure our readers that any gift of charity that we make, whether it be to a Toys for Tots program or to a Salvation Army Santa (the Salvation Army provided services to 27 million Americans last year) or a food bank donation, will be the most meaningful — and most satisfying — act that we can make this holiday season.

#### ENJOY THE HOLIDAYS SAFELY

The upcoming long holiday weekend means that most of us will be partaking in traditional gatherings with our families, friends, and co-workers to share the joy of the holiday season.

Unfortunately, this also means that many among us will be overindulging in holiday "spirits."

It is the responsibility of each of us to ensure that where alcohol is present, it is used responsibly, not only by ourselves, but by those around us at our holiday gatherings. None of us wants to wake up the next morning with the regret, "If only I had taken their car keys."

We wish all of our readers a happy, and safe, holiday week.

#### REIMBURSEMENT RATE FOR HUMAN

**SERVICES AGENCIES** 

To the Editor.

I'm writing to express my concern that the state's fiscal challenges could cause the Healey-Driscoll Administration to make the unfortunate decision to decrease the reimbursement rate to human services agencies, which funds the work done by direct care professionals

Such a move would negatively impact vital resources that human services programs provide to their clients so they can live independent and fulfilling lives. As a legally blind person, I can attest to the fact that state services – including orientation and mobility – helped

me confidently navigate my new surroundings after moving to the city for college.

Letter to the Editor

The current funding for direct care professionals is 53% of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, median pay benchmark, around \$21 an hour or \$43,000 a year. These workers do extraordinarily demanding work. Many work double shifts just to pay their bills and lowering the current pay below \$21 would be unmanageable.

People aspire to work in this profession because they're passionate about making a difference and helping others. The turnover caused by a rate cut will have detrimental effects on human services programs, including the provid-

er that has supported a friend of mine to live an enriching and independent life.

These professionals support individuals with meal preparation, employment opportunities, financial management, transportation, and housing, among other services. The opportunities individuals can access will be further restricted if human services professionals are forced to leave the field

I urge the Healey-Driscoll administration to keep the existing benchmark so that my friend – and others – can continue receiving excellent resources from passionate professionals.

Owen Devlin

# State Fire Marshal reminds residents beware of Christmas tree fire hazards

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

As the holiday season gets underway, State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine is reminding residents to select Christmas trees carefully, water them every day, and decorate them safely to reduce the risk of a fire.

"A dry Christmas tree can burn like a forest fire in your home," said State Fire Marshal Davine. "Water it every day, or firefighters might have to do it for you."

The Department of Fire Services recommends the following Christmas tree safety tips to help you have a Silent Night:

Choosing a Tree

- Select a fresh tree with needles that bend and stay fixed to the branches. If a tree's needles crack when you bend them, or if they fall off when you run your hand along a branch, the tree is already drying out and you should choose a different tree.
- Have about two inches cut from the bottom of the trunk before you put it up. Sap can clog an older cut and prevent it from absorbing water in the stand.

## Picking the Right Spot at Home

- Place your tree in a sturdy stand away from doors and windows. These are your escape routes in the event of an emergency, and firefighters may need to use them to enter.
- Keep the tree at least three feet from any heat source, including fireplaces, wood stoves, heating

vents, radiators, and space heaters.

Water the Tree Every Day

- A fresh tree will drink a lot of water. It may need to be watered more than once a day at first, so keep the water level high. If the bottom of the trunk is exposed to air, sap could seal it off and cause it to dry out premature-
- Even the freshest tree will start to dry out after a few days. Dispose of it promptly after the holiday.

#### **Decorate Safely**

- Choose lights that are listed by an independent testing laboratory like UL or Intertek/ETL and follow the manufacturer's instructions and safety information.
- Before plugging in a string of lights or hanging it on the tree,

check the wiring for cracks, pinches, and wear. Discard any damaged strings.

- When decorating outdoors, be sure the lights and extension cords are rated for outdoor use and plug them into an outlet with a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter.
- Almost half of home decoration fires start with candles and other heat sources too close to decorations: Keep lit candles on a sturdy saucer or candleholder at least three feet from the tree. Even better, switch to battery-powered "flameless" candles, which flicker just like real thing.

For a video clip showing a Christmas tree fire under controlled conditions, visit the Department of Fire Services You-Tube channel.



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PRESIDENT - STEPHEN QUIGLEY - EDITOR@CHARLESTOWNBRIDGE.COM
MARKETING DIRECTOR - DEBRA DIGREGORIO - DEB®REVEREJOURNAL.COM

# Lydian opens 25,000 SF R&D center of excellence at Hood Park

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

Lydian, a Massachusetts-based company pioneering a novel, lowcost approach to produce synthetic fuels, announced today they've opened a 25,000-square-foot facility at Hood Park, a 20-acre, mixed-use development in the heart of Boston's Charlestown neighborhood. The rapidly growing clean tech company has established this facility as their R&D Center of Excellence, allowing Lydian to further grow and scale operations.

Founded in Cambridge in 2021, Lydian is developing novel technology that converts waste CO2 into low-cost and scalable drop-in sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) that reduces lifecycle emissions by up to 95%. Since its inception, the company has executed at an accelerated pace, successfully scaling out of the lab to a large-scale pilot demonstration at RTI International in North Carolina in 2024.

Hood Park offers the ideal environment for Lydian, enabling pilot operations, wet lab space, and office space all within one facility to rapidly scale the company's CO2-to-fuels technology - a unique accommodation which attracted the company to the campus. The company has established this facility as their R&D Center of Excellence, which has been successfully operating for several months. The R&D Center of Excellence will support Lydian's progress toward launching its first commercial-scale demonstration plant, expected to be operational in 2027. Lydian is also considering further investment in the facility to centralize advanced manufacturing for key components. Including those upgrades, Lydian may add as many as 40 additional team members over the next three years.

Hood Park's lease with Lydian underscores the campus' reputation as a premier hub for clean tech, life sciences, and R&D companies seeking best-in-class lab and office space in Greater Boston. The newest campus tenant joins cutting-edge tough tech companies already on-site at Hood Park, including ArkeaBio, Solid BioSciences, and Indigo Ag.

"Lydian is relentlessly focused on bringing affordable and scalable SAF to market, and this move is a pivotal step in accelerating that mission," said Joe Rodden, CEO of Lydian. "Our new facility gives us the infrastructure to rapidly advance our flexible, integrated process as we scale production, expand our team, and drive the next phase of commercialization."

"Lydian is a trailblazer in the climate tech industry - advancing innovative models to lower the cost of fuel," said Governor

Maura Healey. "We have been proud to support their growth, and it's great that they have chosen Massachusetts as the home of their R&D Center of Excellence. In Hood Park, they will join the ranks of other climate tech companies that are creating new jobs and helping to grow our econo-

"Massachusetts is home to some of the most innovative companies in the world, and Lydian represents the type of climate leadership and technological ambition that will define our economic future," said Massachusetts Economic Development Secretary Eric Paley. "Their growth in Charlestown underscores our state's commitment to supporting next-generation solutions. We're proud to see Lydian expanding here as they scale technology that will transform aviation and advance our climate goals."

"With Boston's leadership in innovation and climate action, I am confident that Lydian will thrive in our local climate tech economy and excited that they have chosen Charlestown for their headquarters," said Brian Swett, Chief Climate Officer for the City of Boston. "Developing synthetic aviation fuels not only aligns with our city's climate agenda, but also advances progress on the need to reduce emissions from our

vital travel and tourism industry, ensuring more people can visit Boston more sustainably."

In addition to the campus' key R&D design elements and necessary power requirements that aligned with Lydian's needs for a Boston-area headquarters, the company was drawn to Hood Park's dynamic, mixed-use campus and community. Hood Park's slate of retailers, restaurants, and community offerings further enhances the tenant and employee experience, making the Charlestown campus ideal for Lydian to expand their footprint and Boston

"We're excited to welcome Lydian to the Hood Park campus, where they will continue to develop, grow and scale their cutting-edge technology that will change the aviation industry for the better," said Chris Kaneb, Manager of Hood Park LLC. "Our vision for Hood Park has always been to support forward-thinking companies that drive innovation in Greater Boston and beyond. Lydian is a natural fit for our campus."

More information about Lydian is available at lydianlabs. com, and more information about Hood Park and all of its retailers and tenants is available at hoodpark.com.

Lydian is a Boston technology

bonize the aviation industry. Founded in 2021, Lydian is developing novel technology to produce sustainable fuels and chemicals from CO2. The company is headquartered in Charlestown, Massachusetts. For more information, visit www.lydianlabs.com.

Hood Park is a dynamic, mixed-use urban campus in the heart of Boston's vibrant and historic Charlestown neighborhood. Originally home to the New England dairy company H.P. Hood and Sons, the 20-acre site has been completely reimagined as an innovation district and community destination for residents, employees and visitors to live, work, play and gather. Hood Park includes first-class lab and office space, a dynamic mix of activated retail, luxury apartment living and publicly accessible open spaces including Hood Green, a oneacre lawn and focal point of the development. Pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented, Hood Park is conveniently located steps away from the MBTA Orange Line and Interstate 93 and is quickly accessible from Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville. For more information, including development updates and the latest events and activations at Hood Park, visit hoodpark.com or follow us on Instagram @HoodParkCharlestown.

#### STANDINGS FOR THE WEEK OF 12/13/2025

	V V	ᆫ	
Massport's Finest	9	2	3
Duce 2	8	4	2
A-1 Convenience	6	5	3
McCarty Bros.	4	7	3
YMCA	4	8	2
Halligan Club	3	7	4

#### PLAYERS OF THE WEEK FOR 12/13/2025

A-1 Convenience - Callum Reed, Robert Doucette Duce 2 - Jacob Miller, William Wright Halligan Club - Nathaniel Haydock, Isla Demas. Massport's Finest - Charlotte Bagshaw McCarthy Bros. - Rowan Rooney, Remi Rooney YMCA - Brynn Hurley, Quentin Jones

Early Registration for our 2026/2027 season at:

Charlestown Boys & Girls Club, 60 High St. On Saturdays - December 20, and January 3, 2026 9 am to 11:30 am. Our ages are: 3 to 10 years old. Anyone who turns 11 years old before 1/1/2027 is too old to play. You do not have to live in Charlestown to play. We welcome kids from all communities!



## SIGN UP FOR OUR MAILING LIST!

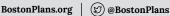
The City of Boston's Planning Department will be sharing updates and engagement opportunities with the public online and via email beginning in 2026.

Please subscribe to our mailing list following the QR code or link included here if you would like to receive regular updates about planning and development in Boston.

Website:

bosplans.org/GetInvolved





Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary

#### HISTORIC DISTRICT (from pg. 1)

preserve the area's unique character while allowing thoughtful, context-sensitive growth.

# How the district landmarking process works

Designating a historic district is a multi-step public journey. After the petition to landmark the neighborhood is accepted for further study by the Boston Landmarks Commission, the real work starts:

A Study Committee is Appointed: Guided by Chapter 772 of Massachusetts General Laws, the Mayor of Boston appoints a combination of local residents and select members of the Boston Landmarks Commission to recommend whether to establish a district and to identify the character-defining features of the district that should be subject to preservation reviews.

A Draft Study Report is Created: The Study Committee and Boston Landmarks Commission staff draft a report that establishes the significance of the historic district and the justification for its preservation through specific preservation guidelines. The Study Committee discusses its findings and drafts the report in a series of public meetings. A draft of the study report is then shared with the public with an invitation to submit feedback on any aspect of the report.

Revisions are Made Based on Community Input: After the draft study report is posted for public review, written comments are collected for 60 days. At the end of the 60-day comment period, a public hearing of the Boston Landmarks Commission is held for verbal community feedback. The Study Committee then reconvenes



IMAGE COURTESY MCINTYRE, H. MAP OF THE CITY OF BOSTON AND IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORHOOD: FROM ORIGINAL SURVEYS. BOSTON: H. MCINTYRE, 1852; BOSTON: NORMAN B. LEVENTHAL MAP & EDUCATION CENTER, BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY. HTTPS://COLLECTIONS.LEVEN-THALMAP.ORG/SEARCH/COMMONWEALTH:3F4632536.

1852 map of Charlestown with the boundary as proposed in the petition.

NE\W HEAL\TH

North End • Charlestown

Happy Holidays!
Wishing our community
joy, peace, and good health.



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to make any necessary amendments to the report.

The Landmarks Commission Votes: After the final study report is posted, there is a second public hearing at which the Boston Landmarks Commission takes a roll call vote to decide whether to approve the district.

Mayoral and City Council Review: If the Boston Landmarks Commission approves the designation of the district, the measure is presented to the Mayor, who has 15 days to approve, reject, or take no action on the measure. If approved, the City Council then has 30 days in which to approve, reject, or take no action on the

Commission's vote.

At each step, there are clear opportunities for residents to ask questions, share ideas, and shape the future of their neighborhood.

#### Where things stand now

The Study Committee for the Monument Square Landmark District held its first meeting on April 1, 2025, and has been meeting regularly, both in person and virtually, to review the petition, evaluate the proposed boundary, and draft potential standards for the district.

One major topic currently under consideration is whether to expand the boundary proposed in the original petition. The existing proposal includes only the buildings directly around Monument Square, but the committee is exploring whether additional nearby streets and properties with similar histories should be included. They are also weighing the benefits of creating a "protection area," which would surround the district and provide light oversight focused on preventing demolitions, landscape or topography changes, or major height/massing increases that could compromise the core historic district.

#### Stay involved

Public participation is essential to the Study Committee's work. All materials, agendas, approved minutes, presentations, and meeting recordings are available at boston.gov/monumentsquare. Physical binders of all documents can also be reviewed at the Charlestown Branch Library.

## Learn more about the landmarking process

Any 10 registered Boston voters can petition the Boston Landmarks Commission to landmark a building, object, neighborhood, or landscape to be a protected landmark in any Boston neighborhood. To learn more, visit Boston. gov/landmarks.

This piece was previously published in the City of Boston Office of Historic Preservation Monthly Newsletter. You can read more news from the Office of Historic Preservation and sign up for the newsletter at Boston.gov/land-marks.

# Wishing All Happy Holidays!

#### JOHN L. TOBIN, ESQUIRE

One Thompson Square, Suite 105, Charlestown

617-242-7881

Attorney & Real Estate Broker johnltobin@gmail.com







FRIENDS OF THE CHARLESTOWN NAVY YARD

FCNY is working to improve the quality of life for Charlestown residents & visitors





A MI

Visit our website to renew membership or join us as a new member.

# Happy Helidays!

# Christmas At Saint John's

#### December 21

Sunday Service with Children's Christmas Pageant 10am

#### December 24

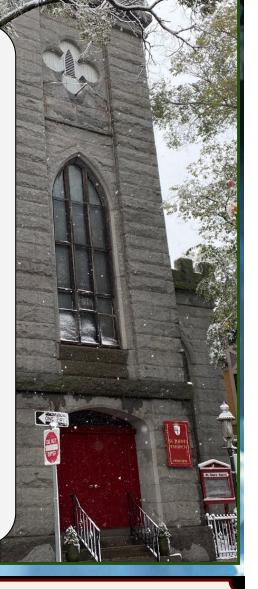
Festival Eucharist for Christmas Eve 4pm

#### December 25

Holy Eucharist for Christmas Day 10am

Saint John's Episcopal Church

27 Devens Street, Charlestown www.stjohns02129.org



# We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

# Repeat the sounding joy

# Christmas In Charlestown Join us as we celebrate our Savior's birth

#### **Christmas Eve**

4 pm @ St. Mary & St. Francis

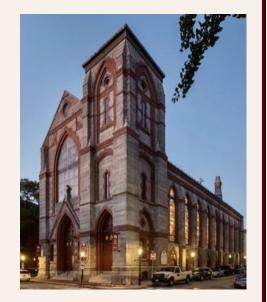
## **Christmas Day**

8 am @ St. Mary's 9:30 am @ St. Francis 11 am @ St. Mary's

## January 1 Solemnity of Mary

A holy day of obligation

9:30 am @ St. Francis ll am @ St. Mary's



### The Charlestown Catholic Collaborative

St. Francis de Sales Parish - 303 Bunker Hill St. St. Mary - St. Catherine Parish - 55 Warren St. Harvest on Vine Food Pantry - 49 Vine St. (617) 580-8305

#### **Collaborative Offices**

46 Winthrop St. Charlestown, MA 02129 617-242-4664 charlestowncatholic.org

Learn more about our Collaborative!

Find us on Facebook and Instagram!



# Route 55 service won't be extended due to ongoing bus repairs

Bv Dan Murphy

The desired implementation of extended service on the MBTA's Route 55 won't come to pass this month as buses are now being taken out of service for maintenance.

The T suspended service on the 55 bus route after the pandemic struck, and when service on the line was later restored in June of 2021, its daily hours were reduced to 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., from the previous hours of 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. The last stop on the line was also changed then to Copley Square from Park Street.

As a component of the T's ongoing Bus Network Redesign program, the 55 line has been under consideration to have seen its hours of operation and service expanded, including during week-

day peak hours, while also connecting the West Fenway neighborhood to Copley Station.

The first phase of the Bus Network Redesign changes began in December 2024, with work in Chelsea, Everett, Revere, Malden, Somerville, Cambridge, and East Boston. A fall rollout of the program was then implemented on Aug. 24, which again didn't include changes to the Route 55 service.

Meanwhile, buses are being removed from service for ongoing maintenance at the garage at the MBTA's Cabot Yard on Dorchester Avenue. When this extensive work has been completed and its bus fleet returns to capacity, the T will then consider making further changes to service via its Bus Network Redesign program in '26.

"Improving bus service and

connectivity continues to be a major priority for the MBTA," wrote MBTA spokesperson Lisa Battiston in an email. "Ample evaluation of ridership data and considerations, such as equity, play a role in bus route changes. Keeping the entire system in mind, we aim to create an even more robust network and are consistently looking at ways to increase service."

Battiston added: "We do expect to have more fleet capacity when vehicle overhauls are completed. Future bus improvements continue to be planned and will be implemented during the MBTA's quarterly seasonal schedule adjustments as bus operators and supporting infrastructure are available and ready."

On Oct. 2, the 55 Bus Route Coalition, which the nonprof-

it Fenway Forward coordinates, spearheaded a well-attended community demonstration to lobby for extended hours on the Route 55 line.

Nearly 30 participants joined the rally, which started with a 55 bus ride along from Queensberry Street at Jersey Street to St. James Avenue at Arlington Street and concluded at the MBTA headquarters at 10 Park Plaza. Along with Fenway residents and bus riders, others in attendance included Fenway Forward organizers; Sen. Lydia Edwards and Rep. Jay Livingstone; and representatives from the offices of other elected officials, including District 8 City Councilor Sharon Durkan and City Councilor at-Large Henry Santana.

Moreover, the coalition's petition in support of getting longer

hours implemented immediately on the 55 bus line has garnered nearly 70 signatures to date. Visit https://c.org/GfhRns8bNJ to sign the petition.

Regarding the present uncertainty surrounding future expansion of hours and service on the Route 55 line, Jamie Culbertson, a Fenway Forward community organizer who facilitates the 55 Bus Route Coalition, wrote: "It's frustrating to hear about this additional delay after Fenway residents have been waiting so long for the promised 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. hours. I hope the MBTA will prioritize extending the hours of this vital cross-neighborhood transportation link as soon as possible."

To learn more about the 55 Bus Route Coalition, email Jamie Culbertson at jculbertson@fenwayforward.org.

## City Council hearings identify operational issues within Boston Police Department

By Kiran Rajamani

An analysis of 10 months of Boston City Council hearings reveals that city councilors have repeatedly and consistently raised concerns about overtime spending, staffing levels, crime lab operations and a discriminatory promotion system at the city's police department.

An investigation by Boston Uni-

versity's student newspaper, The Daily Free Press, revealed more than 200 instances of BPD-related concerns expressed during public meetings between Jan. 1, 2024, and Oct. 1, 2025. Nearly 1,000 hours of city council hearings and committee meetings were reviewed using artificial intelligence. Each instance was manually verified.

BPD did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

Overtime spending exceeds budgeted levels

City Councilor Benjamin Weber said BPD overtime spending has exceeded its budget allocation for multiple fiscal years. In 2024, the department blew through its roughly \$40 million overtime budget by about \$50 million, according to council hearings.

Weber said the city council has oversight of BPD's budget but does not impose a firm cap on overtime hours because of public safety needs, court requirements and security needs during special events.

Some overtime policies contribute to higher costs, Weber said, including a rule that provides a four-hour minimum overtime payment for certain court appearances, even if officers spend only a short time before a judge.

"Some officers make \$300,000 to \$400,000 a year primarily from overtime," Weber said.

Weber added that overtime rules are governed by collective bargaining agreements negotiated between police unions and the mayor's office, which limit the council's power to rein in spending.

Staffing levels contribute to overtime use

City Councilor Ed Flynn said staffing shortages drive overtime spending. At a May 2024 council meeting, police officials said an average of 131 officers leave the force each year and only 108 are hired, resulting in a net decline.

"Because of the significant staff shortages," Flynn said, "we are forcing police officers to work mandatory overtime, consistently 16-hour days."

He said he has raised the issue

during multiple budget cycles, citing concerns about officer fatigue and safety. The staffing shortfall requires the department to rely on overtime to maintain patrol coverage, according to statements made during hearings.

Crime lab leadership and processing delays discussed

Councilors also raised concerns about the operational capacity of Boston Police Crime Laboratory during hearings in 2024 and 2025.

The crime lab conducts DNA testing, rape kit analysis, firearms examinations and other forensic work used in criminal investigations.

During an April 2024 committee meeting, Flynn said the lab failed to test approximately half of all rape kits within the state-mandated 30-day timeframe during fiscal year 2023.

Flynn proposed a \$1 million budget increase for fiscal year 2025 to fund staffing, fill the director position and purchase updated equipment. While the city council approved the funding, Flynn said at a September 2025 hearing that he had not yet seen measurable improvements.

"I'm not confident in the Boston Police Crime Lab and their leadership," Flynn said during the hearing, citing the prolonged vacancy and delayed adoption of newer DNA testing methods used by other jurisdictions.

Federal court ruled promotional exams discriminatory

Testimony during a January 2025 Government Accountability, Transparency and Accessibility Committee hearing addressed the history of police promotional exams used statewide, including by BPD.

Retired BPD Detective Larry Ellison referenced a 2023 federal court decision that awarded more than \$40 million to officers of color across Massachusetts. The court ruled that the exam used to grant promotions systemically penalized Black and Latino officers in violation of state anti-discrimination laws.

The court found that the exams relied heavily on multiple-choice testing that did not adequately measure supervisory skills, which produced statistically significant racial disparities. Judges also ruled the state had been aware of the disparities for years and failed to adopt available alternatives.

Ellison testified that concerns about retaliation discouraged some officers from reporting inequities or pursuing leadership positions, describing his own experience after becoming president of the Massachusetts Association of Minority Law Enforcement Officers.

City Councilor Henry Santana, chair of the Public Safety and Criminal Justice Committee, said the hearings underscore the importance of council oversight.

"Oversight isn't about criticism, it's about ensuring that policies, investigations and practices reflect fairness and integrity," Santana said in a written statement. "We strengthen public safety when we address issues openly and work toward solutions that protect all residents."

Kiran Rajamani is a student in the Boston University Journalism program. This story is a partnership between the Beacon Hill Times and the Boston University Journalism program.



## Annual holiday event connects hundreds of Boston older adults with safety training

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

On December 12, hundreds of older adults visited Boston City Hall for the annual Holiday Connections event, hosted by Boston's AgeStrong Commission and AT&T. This long-standing collaboration has been held for more than 30 years and provides Boston's older adults with one-on-one technology help, scam and fraud prevention workshops, safety presentations, free domestic and international calling and a day of fun holiday activities.

"Age Strong is so grateful to partner with AT&T on our Holiday Connections event," said Emily K. Shea, Boston's Age Strong Commissioner. "Hundreds of Boston's older residents will have the opportunity to connect with loved ones across the world, learn new tips for their technolo-



Boston's AgeStrong Commission and AT&T hosted their annual Holiday Connections event.

gy, and enjoy the day together.

The festive event provided breakfast, lunch, holiday-themed activities, hot cocoa bar, music,

information booths, and artisan crafts made by members of Boston's older adult community.

In addition to providing a

phone bank allowing free domestic and international calls, AT&T and the Boston Police Department presented a Digital Safety workshop about scam/fraud prevention, cyber-safety and general technology training. AT&T technicians also worked one-on-one with guests to help with their phones, tablets and other connected technology and troubleshooting.

"We are grateful for partnerships like this one that create an opportunity for our officers to connect with Boston's older adults about ways to protect themselves from scammers and other dangers," said Commissioner Michael Cox, Boston Police Department. "Community policing is about building trust and connecting with people and we are happy to be part of this great event."

Since the start of 2024, AT&T and the Boston Police Department have collaborated on a citywide

effort to educate older adults about digital safety and scam/fraud prevention, hosting 25 workshops in nearly every city neighborhood.

The Boston Fire Department and the Boston Police Department Crime Stoppers also gave safety presentations to attendees.

'Technology allows adults freedom, convenience, and communication, and it is important that they have the resources to enjoy the digital world safely and securely," said John Emra, President, AT&T Northeast Region. "We are grateful to Mayor Wu, Commissioner Shea and Age-Strong, Boston Police and Boston Fire for their collaboration and commitment to keeping Boston's older adults safely connected. We hope this event provides the warmth of connection with loved ones, the confidence to harness the power of technology, and a lot of holiday joy."

## Healey-Driscoll administration awards over \$750,000 in grants to support greater food access

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

The Healey-Driscoll Administration announced \$779,458 in funding to improve food access in underserved communities throughout Massachusetts by increasing local food production. The funding will directly support the growth of urban farms, community gardens, and food business operations, targeting areas that struggle with food insecurity.

Among the recipients are: \$20,979 to Trustees of Reservations for Improving pathways for senior and mobility-challenged garden implements and \$85,000 to Commonwealth Kitchen, for their Large-scale specialized food processing equipment.

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) is awarding grants through the state's Urban Agriculture Program and the Massachusetts Food Ventures Program to 17 organizations. The funds will help strengthen the local food system, increase local food production, and expand retail and distribution channels to distribute more healthy, fresh food across the state.

"With President Trump repeatedly attacking the programs that help Massachusetts families afford food, programs like these

will increase the supply of locally grown healthy, affordable food," said Governor Maura Healey. "These awards are supporting local jobs, farmers and small food businesses that keep money circulating in our local economy and provide essential food for the people of Massachusetts."

"Investing in community gardens and urban farms gives neighborhoods more control over their own food supply" said Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll. "These projects increase consistent access to fresh and local produce, create real opportunities for skill-building, and help communities build reliable distribution systems."

The Urban Agriculture Program will provide resources to urban farms and community gardens to increase their production capacity. This means more local food for low-to-moderate income residents who often face challenges accessing fresh, affordable, nutritious food.

The Massachusetts Food Ventures Program helps increase food access by funding infrastructure to support processing, distribution channels, and retail outlets that are located primarily in or near communities of low or moderate income, including Gateway Cities and rural communities. Completed projects will enhance access to

Massachusetts-grown, harvested, or caught food products through the development of collaborations with local agricultural enterprises and public/private entities.

"Fresh, affordable food is a basic need for our communities across Massachusetts," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rebecca Tepper. "Programs like Urban Agriculture and Food Ventures strengthen our local food system by increasing production and distribution capacity as demand for local food continues to grow."

"Our food access programs have been transformative in helping to create a stronger local food system," said MDAR Commissioner Ashley Randle. "The Food Ventures Program provides opportunities for mid-range businesses, creating greater access to Massachusetts grown food, and increasing post-harvest opportunities for farmers. Through the Urban Agriculture Program, more food will be grown in urban neighborhoods, helping to ensure that residents in these communities have greater access to local fresh produce, improving their health outcomes and enhancing their quality of life."

"I am glad to see the release of this grant funding, particularly to two organizations in Springfield, Wellspring Harvest and Nordica St. Community Farm, who do such great work uniting our communities and providing healthy food and nutritional education to their members," said Senator Adam Gómez (D – Hampden). "We must continue to invest in community centered food resources throughout the commonwealth, shortening the distance that our food travels and mitigating gaps in supply chains that only drive up prices, and I am proud of this administration for prioritizing these efforts."

"I'm thrilled to see much needed help during these troubling economic times," said Representative Steven Ouellette (D – Westport). "This funding will provide opportunities that are critical components to communities in my district and beyond."

# Boston Parks and Recreation to host winter ultimate disc clinics

Boston Parks and Recreation Department is teaming up with coaches from the Boston Ultimate Disc Alliance (BUDA) this winter to offer free co-ed youth Ultimate disc clinics at the Carter Playground Bubble, 709 Columbus Avenue.

Program Dates: Sundays, January 4 to January 25

Session 1: Grades 3-8 Times: 8:00 - 8:50 a.m. Session 2: Grades 9-12 Times: 8:55 - 9:50 a.m.

This new program is for kids in grades 3 to 12, regardless of pre-

vious experience. The goal of the program is to help players develop their basic skills so they can play a safe, fun, and fair self-officiated game of Ultimate.

Ultimate, originally known as Ultimate Frisbee, is a non-contact team sport played with a disc flung by hand. Points are scored by passing the disc to a teammate in the opposing end zone. Ultimate is played across the world in pickup games and by recreational, school, club, professional, and national teams at various age levels and with open, women's, and mixed

divisions. BUDA fosters the sport by providing opportunities to learn, play, and teach spirited Ultimate in the greater Boston area.

Registration is free and open now at boston.gov/parks-sports. Space is limited, so early sign-up is encouraged.

To stay up to date on news, events, and improvements in Boston parks visit boston.gov/parks, call (617) 635-4505, join our email list, and follow our social channels @bostonparksdept on X, Facebook, Instagram, and @ parks.boston.gov on Bluesky.

To place a memoriam please call 781-485-0588

## Advent School holds Coat Drive

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

Each December, The Advent School's students and families join together for its annual Coat Drive, supporting an elementary school in Boston. This year, the school's reach expanded to also include a new program, Kickoff for Kids, to provide winter jackets for children in need.

Advent's goal was a challeng-

ing 100 coats. Thanks to the hard-working students and their families, on December 3, the school contributed more than 130 new winter coats for local kids.

Students in Grade 4–6 students took the lead — transforming this effort into a true student-led initiative in service and community care. After reading The Mitten Tree and reflecting on the importance of giving, students brain-

stormed how they could inspire others to get involved. Working in their advisory groups, they took on a range of leadership roles:

- Grade 4: Designed and hung signs around the school to promote the Coat Drive
- Grades 5–6: Created digital flyers in Canva to share with families
  - All students:
  - Wrote three emails to family,

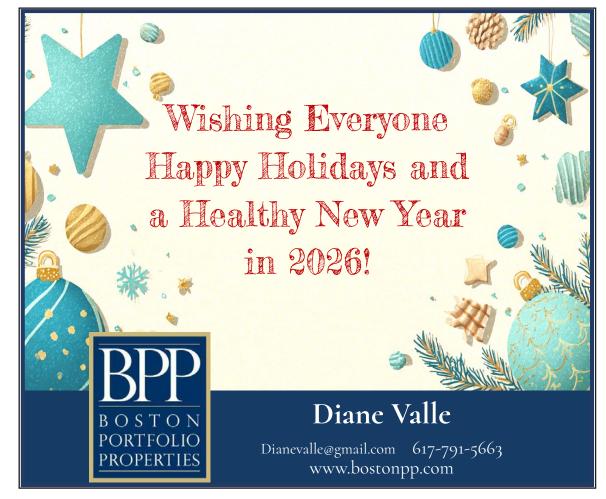


Advent School students hold signs advertising their Coat Drive. The school delivered more than 130 new coats to local children.

friends, or neighbors encouraging donations dis

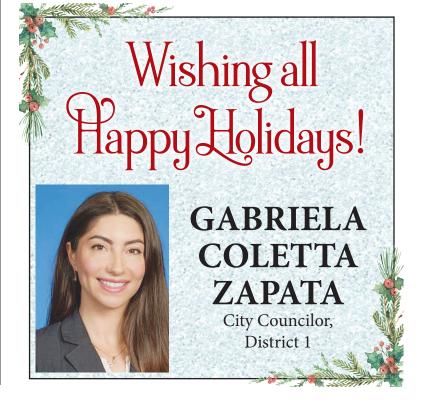
- Presented the Coat Drive at The Community Share on November 13
- Helped promote the drive during morning drop-off
- Sorted and prepared collected jackets for delivery

Through this project, students discovered the power of collective action and community leadership. By organizing, communicating, and following through, they're not only keeping others warm this winter — they're also learning what it means to lead with empathy and purpose.









# Happy Helidays!

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# Now on Sale!

When this spirited puppy wanders too far from home in Charlestown, she finds herself on a big journey along the historic Freedom Trail. From the tall shadow of the Bunker Hill Monument to the masts of the U.S.S Constitution in the Navy Yard, Bea sniffs out surprises as she tries to find her best friend, Tom.

Find it m Amazo



All proceeds from this book support Harvest on Vine Food Pantry in Charlestown







# Uber drivers worried about lack of safety protocols

By Arielle Appleby

After a passenger looped a wire around an Uber driver's neck and cinched it tight last month, police say the woman broke free and bolted from her car, screaming as she burst into the closest store in sight, pleading for someone to call 911.

While sitting at a red light at the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Columbus Avenue in Boston's South End, police say Christopher Dawkins, 24, of Dorchester, looped a wire around an Uber driver's neck and strangled her, and then stole her car after she escaped.

Dawkins pleaded not guilty during his arraignment on carjacking, strangulation, assault and battery with a dangerous weapon, and larceny of a motor vehicle charges in Boston Municipal Court on Nov. 27. He was ordered to be held without bail.

For rideshare drivers – especially women and people of color – attacks are an occupational hazard they live with every shift. Car accidents, unruly passengers, and verbal harassment are ever-present threats, but many vulnerable drivers say they feel like they are risking their lives each time they slide behind the wheel.

According to an April 2023 Strategic Organizing Center report, which was working with the rideshare drivers union about the safety concerns of rideshare drivers, "sixty-seven percent of rideshare driver respondents reported having experienced some kind of violence, harassment or threatening behavior in the last year."

The attack in Boston is one of many cautionary tales for ride-

share drivers, especially those who are women or people of color.

Attackers typically target those they believe are the most vulnerable. Seventy-nine percent of app-based drivers have felt unsafe, and female drivers experience higher rates of sexual harassment, according to researchers at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Many Lyft and Uber drivers depend on their jobs to provide for their families, and researchers say they often fear that intervening and speaking up may lower their ratings and endanger their jobs.

"When I walk into a Union meeting, it's like walking onto the pages of a giant John Steinbeck novel," said Duane Mitchell, curator of the Massachusetts Drivers United website. "They're really vulnerable and extremely exploited people, especially since a lot of them don't speak English."

Mitchell's prior experience as a Boston cab driver versus an Uber driver illustrates what he says is a stark difference in safety standards.

"I had to take safety classes with training by the Boston police before I could get my cab driver's license," said Mitchell. "There is a bulletproof partition separating you from the driver in cabs, but Uber doesn't care; there's none of that."

Beyond the issue of Uber's lack of safety protocols, Mitchell said there is simultaneously a lack of community within rideshare drivers. As a cabbie, he said there was a sense of togetherness, and drivers would alert each other about potential dangers.

"Many of us had an extra radio in our cab just to speak with other drivers. We had two radios going, one for the cab company and the other to speak with each other," he said. "We heard stories all the time and were always aware of the potential danger."

Uber doesn't make space for that camaraderie, according to Mitchell, which leads to isolation and fear of self-reporting incidents by drivers.

Attacks on rideshare drivers are rare in Boston, he said, but one wrong ride can change people's perception of the risk.

"People are nice all over Boston," Mitchell said, "but all it takes is one lunatic."

Arielle Appleby is a student in the Boston University Journalism program. This story is a partnership between the Times-Free Press and the Boston University Journalism program.

# Grazioso joins Massachusetts' leading anti-hunger organization

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

Project Bread welcomes Barrett Grazioso as Chef Educator. For Grazioso, food has always been more than a meal - it's been a way to bring people together, nourish communities, and spark meaningful change. Now, after more than 30 years spent cooking, leading school nutrition programs, and strengthening local food systems, Grazioso is bringing that passion to Project Bread as the organization's newest Chef Educator.

Rooted in a childhood spent between California and Massachusetts, Grazioso grew up in a family of gardeners and learned early what it meant to respect food and the labor behind it. Inspired by her grandmother's homegrown cooking and a kitchen that always welcomed visitors, she knew by age seven she wanted to be a chef. After formal culinary training in Los Angeles, she built a diverse career apprenticing under chefs across the country and abroad, and working as a pastry chef, private chef, executive chef, and school nutrition director.

Most recently, Grazioso led the self-operated K-12 meal program for Belchertown Public Schools, where she first partnered with Project Bread through a Summer Eats Grant to bring free summer meals to local families. Now, she will support schools statewide in elevating meal quality, strengthening food education, and advancing sustainable practices like composting, recycling, and food donation.

"I wanted to share my experience with a wider audience," says Grazioso. "Everyone should have access to healthy food, and helping schools create nutritious, welcoming meal programs is incredibly meaningful work."

Outside the kitchen, Grazioso enjoys swimming, gardening, and spending time with her family and pets. She previously served on the Massachusetts Farm to School Advisory Committee and continues to support local food donation efforts.

"Barrett's culinary skill, creativity, and dedication to feeding communities with dignity make her an incredible asset," says Sam Icklan, Project Bread's Director of Community Nutrition Services. "Her leadership brings us closer to ensuring every child in Massachusetts has access to healthy, delicious meals each day."

People experiencing food insecurity should call Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline (1-800-645-8333), which provides con-



PHOTO COURTESY OF PROJECT BREAD
Barrett Grazioso.

fidential, free assistance getting connected to a variety of food resources in 180 languages and for the hearing impaired. Counselors can pre-screen families and help them to apply for SNAP. Learn more at www.projectbread.org/get-help.

Project Bread is the leading statewide food security organization in Massachusetts. Beginning in 1969 with the first Walk for Hunger, the nonprofit focuses on driving systemic change to ensure people of all ages have reliable access to healthy food. Project Bread works collaboratively across sectors to create innovative solutions to end hunger and improve lives across the Commonwealth. For more information, visit: www.projectbread.org.



# MBTA celebrates 25th annual Fill-A-Bus with Gifts program

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

The MBTA and Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) celebrated the 25th Annual Fill-A-Bus with Gifts program. Employees from both state transportation agencies donated a total of 2,746 toys this year, which will be donated to the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the Boys and Girls Club of Boston, and Heading Home.

"Fill-A-Bus is entirely employee-led and represents the spirit of what we stand for as public servants, making people's lives better," said Interim Secretary and MBTA General Manager Phillip Eng. "I want to thank the MBTA employees who organized this program, which is in its 25th year, as well as my colleagues at the T and MassDOT who showed generosity by donating gifts that filled our bus. I'm also grateful to our partners at the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the Boys and Girls Club of Boston, and Heading Home for distributing these gifts to families every year.'

"The MBTA's Fill-A-Bus with Gifts event is a special chance for employees to give back to the communities we work with yearround. Each holiday season, the Fill-A-Bus visits MBTA garages, RMV locations, MassDOT offices, and other sites to engage as many people as possible," said MBTA Graphics Manager David Wood, who has organized the Fill-A-Bus with Gifts event for the past eight years. "Each year, I'm proud to see so many of my transportation colleagues get involved. The generosity shown by my peers brings a lot of joy to countless families during the holidays."

This year, MBTA and Mass-DOT employees donated a record-breaking 2,746 gifts (up from 2,651 in 2024) to their Fill-A-Bus partners at the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (MSPCC), the Boys and Girls Club of Boston, and Heading Home.

"Last year, MSPCC provided gifts to almost 1,000 children," said MSPCC Director of Development Melanie S. Lima. "The presents donated through the MBTA and MassDOT Fill-A-Bus program are far more than toys—they offer moments of joy, and help children feel valued and included. Because most MSPCC families live in poverty, parents often tell us they want to create a happy holiday for their children, but financial strain makes that difficult and stressful. The generosity of the Fill-A-Bus programs helps



COURTESY PHOTOS

MBTA Graphics Manager David Wood (front left), who has organized the Fill-A-Bus with Gifts event for the eighth year, kneels with MBTA Bus Operator Dionna Johnson (front right), who drove the holiday bus route for the first time this year. They stand with representatives from Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the Boys and Girls Club of Boston, and Heading Home.

MSPCC ease some of that burden and ensure that hundreds of children experience a brighter, more joyful holiday season."

"The Yawkey Club of Roxbury is proud to partner with the MBTA once again for the Fill-A-Bus toy drive," said Corey Manning, Executive Director, Yawkey Boys & Girls Club of Roxbury. "As we celebrate our 115th anniversary, this effort reflects exactly who we are at our core, a com-

munity that shows up for young people and families. The MBTA's support helps us bring joy to hundreds of children, ages 6 to 12, during the holidays, and we are grateful to stand together in service of our neighborhoods as we continue saving the world one smile at a time."

"Partnering with the MBTA and MassDOT via the Fill-a-Bus initiative, has helped us bring a little joy, laughter, and fun to many

of our families. What seems like a simple toy, means so much more to our families—it represents a moment of normalcy, happiness, and hope," said Heading Home Chief Development Officer Karen Grant. "Nothing beats seeing the smiles on the faces of the kids, adults, and volunteers when the toys are dropped off at our shelters. Thank you to the MBTA and MassDOT and everyone who makes this possible."

#### REDEVELOP (from pg. 1)

serve, and one of the goals of this proposal is to be able to eliminate our waitlist, so that any young person, any family that wants to participate in Courageous programs can do that," said DiLorenzo.

Acknowledging neighbors' concerns about the project, DiLorenzo said, "Many of our neighbors have very reasonable questions and concerns about traffic and parking, and we are really looking forward to continuing to talk to them and work with the community to find solutions that work for everyone."

DiLorenzo suggested that neighbors view the FAQ section of the Courageous Sailing web page (www.courageoussailing.org/pier5 that addresses many questions about the project.

DiLorenzo said he is grateful to former Boston city councilor Paul Scapiccio, president and CEO of The Novus Group, for his assistance with the project.

"He's been a big help," said DiLorenzo.

Rep. Ryan offers his support of project Rep. Ryan has given his strong support to Courageous Sailing Center's redevelopment proposal for Pier 5.

"Congratulations to Courageous Sailing Center on being designated to replace Pier 5 with a state-of-the-art maritime center," offered Ryan. "This long-dilapidated vestige of a bygone era served our country well during the last century. It is now time to chart a new future for this space. Courageous Sailing has an ambitious plan to expand our community's access to the waterfront while teaching maritime skills and history. I look forward to watching this plan unfold."

## Councilor Coletta Zapata says 'Project is good for Charlestown'

Boston City Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata, who represents Charlestown and reportedly has the votes to become the next president of the City Council in January, has expressed her support of Courageous Sailing's plans, stating, "I know that it's going to be good for Charlestown."

"When I went to their [Pier 5 Association] candidates' forum in 2022, they were asking for three things: climate resiliency, acces-

sibility, and inclusivity. And this project meets that criteria, in my opinion."

Coletta Zapata said she supports Courageous Sailing's goals and its programs that serve the community.

"They provide accessibility to the waterfront, and they subsidize some of their programs so that everybody can have access to the water. They do swim-sail science classes so youths can learn about the impacts of climate change at the local level, even down to pH (potential of hydrogen) level in Boston Harbor, so it [Courageous Sailing] is a great organization and I support them."

## Neighborhood Council on board, according to Chairperson Cunha

Tom Cunha, chairperson of the Charlestown Neighborhood Council (CNC), said the board voted by a substantial margin to endorse the project.

"We had two meetings (October and November) to discuss the redevelopment plans for Pier 5 in the Charlestown Naval Yard and Courageous Sailing's proposal, and after a lengthy discussion and much public comment, we voted

by a wide majority in support of the proposal," said Cunha.

In a letter of support sent by Cunha on behalf of the board to the Boston Planning Department, he wrote: "Courageous Sailing's plan delivers approximately 60,000 square feet of new public open space, an expanded Harbor Walk, an ocean pool, public saunas, and other amenities fully accessible to the community. The Council views this as a bold, forward-looking vision transform-

ing a long-neglected pier into a vibrant, community-serving waterfront destination.

"In recognition of the proposal's alignment with community priorities, emphasis on public access and youth programming, and Courageous Sailing's demonstrated history of transparency and responsiveness, the Charlestown Neighborhood Council is pleased to formally endorse this project."



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# Save the Harbor is giving out \$300,000 for free beach events

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

Through the Better Beaches Program, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay and the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) are looking for input from community organizations, local groups, and artists to bring diverse and interesting events to DCR beaches in Nahant, Lynn, Revere, Winthrop, East Boston, South Boston, Dorchester, Quincy, and Hull.

Events will be free for community members to attend and should reflect the many interests and iden-

tities of the community. Anyone can apply to this grant program, whether they are part of an organization, collective, or a creative individual with a vision for a more diverse and activated waterfront. This grant program is not just about securing funds; it is a way to get involved, bring community to the Boston Harbor beaches, and help shape the future of the waterfront.

Grants from \$2,500 – \$8,500 will be awarded based on a tiered system depending on the number of people the proposed event will



NamaStay Sober Beach Yoga.

serve and the amount of different components involved.

The Better Beaches Program has funded different types of events including wellness/recreational programs, children's programming, performances, to music and cultural events, as long as they involve the community and any one of our region's many beaches. Some examples of previous events Save the Harbor has funded are:

"Community Care and Wellness Fair" with Mutual Aid Eastie where 200 people, mostly Spanish-speaking East Boston community members, participated in various health and wellness activities, like Reiki, massages, and arts and crafts on Constitution Beach, East Boston.

Abilities Dance Boston's Dance Performance featured performances from dancers and musicians with disabilities who created beach inspired choreography and an original score that wowed over 100 attendees on Constitution Beach, East Boston.

NamaStay Sober Beach Yoga, where over 400 attendees participated in free weekly beach yoga on Revere Beach, especially created with those who are sober and are in recovery in mind.

To apply for a grant or ask any questions about the Better Beaches Program, please contact Maya Smith at smith@savetheharbor.org and Isabella Carrion at carrion@savetheharbor.org. Applications are due by January 31, 2025, 11:59 pm, after which Save the Harbor's Better Beaches Grants Committee will review the proposals and reach out to selected grantees by March 11, 2026.

For more information and a full list of the 2025 grantees, go to https://www.savetheharbor.org/better-beaches/grant-information or attend one of the information

We look forward to receiving your ideas on how to make our public beaches accessible and enjoyable spaces for all of our communities!

Save the Harbor/Save the Bay is the region's leading voice for clean water and continued public investment in Boston Harbor, the region's public beaches, and the Boston Harbor Islands. Since 1986, our mission has been to restore and protect Boston Harbor, Massachusetts Bay, and the marine environment, and share them with the public for everyone to enjoy.

Save the Harbor is committed to making Boston Harbor, the Islands, our beaches, and our programs inclusive, equitable, diverse, and accessible to everyone and anyone. We provide free programs, events and create opportunities for people to experience Boston Harbor and our spectacular urban natural resources first-hand, with an emphasis on breaking down barriers of race, language, income and ability.



# Happy Holidays to our Charlestown neighbors!



It's been another wonderful year. Thank you to our clients for putting your trust in us!

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# MENORAH ON THE COMMON COMES ALIGHT



Mayor Michelle Wu attends the 42nd annual Menorah Lighting held Dec. 14 on the Boston Common.



MAYOR'S OFFICE PHOTOS BY JOHN WILCOX





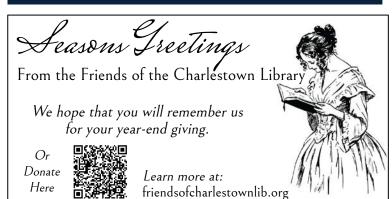
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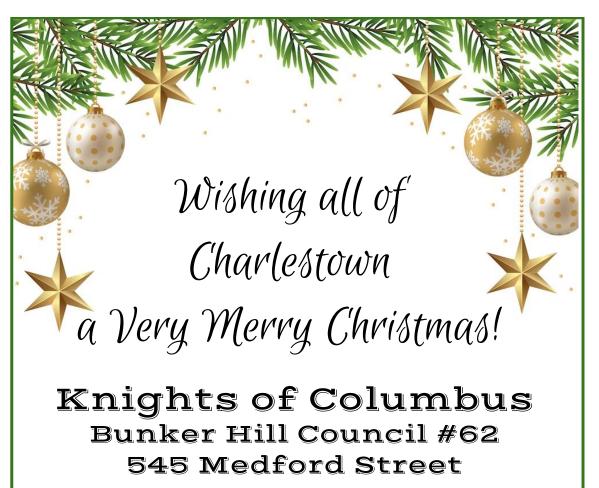
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# Charlestown Patriot-Bridge Pick-Up Locations

Tiek op i	
Newtowne Market	87 Medford St.
Community Center	255 Medford St.
365 Convenience Store	275 Medford St.
Annas Café	275 Medford St.
Jenny's Pizza	320 Medford St.
Waverly Café	229 Bunker Hill St.
Bunker Hill Liquors	200 Bunker Hill St.
Kennedy Center	55 Bunker Hill St.
McCarthy's Liquors	9 Moulton St.
Bunker Hill Cleaners	Moulton St.
Police Station	20 Vine St. Hayes Sq.
Santander Bank	437 Rutherford Ave.
7/11 Store	269 Main St.
Zelma Lacey House	9 W School St.
Gatehouse Apartment	
Ace Hardware	Bunker Hill Mall
CVS	Bunker Hill Mall
Citizens Bank	Bunker Hill Mall
Whole Food Market	Bunker Hill Mall
MGH Health Care Center	
7/11 Store	Thompson Sq.
Charlestown Liquors	Thompson Sq.
Starbucks	Thompson Sq.
Cambridge Savings	Thompson Sq.
Warren Tavern	2 Pleasant St. & Main St.
Constellation Wharf Cond	los 1 Constellation Wharf
Harborview	250 First Ave.
Basilica	106 13th St.
Anchorage Apartment	103 13th Ave.
Parris Landing	42 Eighth St.
Tuttles Clevergreen Cleane	ers197 Eighth St.
Flagship Wharf	197 Eighth St.
Style Café	197 Eighth St.
Building 104	104 First Ave.
Building 110	110 First Ave.
MGH Institute	26 First Ave.
7/11 Store	1 First Ave.

# DFS adds new interior drone resources to support fire/rescue Special to the Record

The Department of Fire Services has added three new drones to its Special Operations fleet that will allow fire/rescue personnel to stream footage from hazardous indoor environments, State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine said.

"Drones were a giant step forward for situational awareness in the fire service," said State Fire Marshal Davine. "Up until now, we've used them primarily to provide aerial footage from outside a structure or above a large wildfire or search area. These new drones can operate reliably inside a building, which will be especially valuable for Hazmat, structural collapse, and other dangerous calls."

DFS tested the drones over the course of 2025 and procured three of them during the fall. The Special Operations team demonstrated the drones for DFS Hazmat technicians, State Police fire investigators and bomb technicians assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office, and the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy's senior leadership

for input before announcing the new program publicly. The drones were also put into use onboard the USS Massachusetts during the Massachusetts Association of Technical Rescue Specialists' 2025 Tech Rescue Challenge.

"We try to gather as much information on the hot zone environment as we can before sending a Hazmat technician downrange," said Timothy Gallagher, deputy director of the DFS Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Division. "The real-time footage from these drones could help us identify hazards or threats, allowing us to form an entry plan that's safer for our personnel."

"Fire investigators are often called to structures that are badly damaged and unsafe for entry," said Lt. Marc Reidy, commander of the State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office. "Our bomb technicians frequently have to assess suspicious devices and energetic materials in homes,

businesses, and other buildings. Streaming a live feed from these environments to a safe location is a smart use of technology to keep first responders and the public out of harm's way."

The DFS Special Operations team provided direct operational support to local fire departments with assets that many departments need occasionally but few can afford to purchase. Its resources include four Rehab units to keep firefighters healthy, hydrated, and fed at large-scale incidents; three Incident Support Units to provide on-scene communications, conferencing, and mapping capabilities; all-terrain vehicles to shuttler personnel and equipment in remote or off-road environments; and a variety of trailer-based resources to make a tough job a little easier. It has delivered drones and certified pilots for about 10 years, consistently upgrading to reflect the latest advances. About a dozen are staged across Massachusetts for rapid response when requested.

#### LEGAL NOTICE - legals@charlestownbirdge.com

#### **LEGAL NOTICE**

ZONING HEARING The Zoning Commission of the City of Boston hereby gives notice, in accordance with Chapter 665 of the Acts of 1956, as amended, that a virtual public hearing will be held on January 7, 2026, at 9:00 A.M., in connection with petitions for approval of 1) the Second Amendment to the Amended and Restated Master Plan for Planned Development Area No. 51, Hood Park, Charlestown ("Master Plan Amendment"); 2) the Development Plan for 15 Supertest Street within Planned Development Area No. 51, Hood Park, Charlestown ("15 Supertest Street Development Plan"); and 3) the Development Plan for 25 Supertest Street within Planned Development Area No. 51, Hood Park, Charlestown ("25 Supertest Street Development The Master Plan Amendment

The Master Plan Amendment proposes to increase the area of the 15 Supertest Street project from the originally proposed

12,000 square feet of area to approximately 49,800 square feet as defined by the target retail market requirements and the proposed 32-unit residential program on the upper floors. Additionally, the Master Plan Amendment proposes to increase the proposed gross floor area of the 25 Supertest project, from a gross floor area of 128,800 square feet to a gross floor area of 224,400 square feet, and to add multifamily rental residential housing to the hotel described in the Master Plan.

The 15 Supertest Street Devel-

opment Plan consists of the construction of a new approximately 49,800 square foot building not exceeding a height of 57 feet for approximately 24,000 square feet of retail space fronting on Rutherford Avenue and Supertest Street, with approximately 32 residential units above to be used for market rate and income restricted rental housing, with underground parking facilities in a parking garage structure that will be shared with the future 25 Supertest Street proj-

ect. The 15 Supertest street project includes between twenty-four (24) and thirty-two (32) total residential units including between eighteen (18) and twenty-six (26) affordable units. The 25 Supertest Street Development Plan consists of the construction of a new eighteen-story building, including the mechanical penthouse, plus rooftop mechanical equipment. rooftop solar panels, penthouses, and screen walls for a total maximum height of 235 feet. The gross floor area of the project will be approximately 224,400 square feet, for hotel, residential, and accessory uses with approximately 150 underground parking spaces that will be determined by the project's final program of uses and in compliance with the City's Maximum Parking Ratios. The 25 Supertest project will result in an off-site affordable housing creation project per the requirements of Article 79, based on twenty (20) percent of the proposed 87,000 Useable Square Feet of the

residential area. This meeting will only be held virtually and not in person. You can participate in this meeting by going to https://bosplans.org/BZC-Jan72026. Copies of the Master Plan Amendment and Development Plans may be obtained from the Zoning Commission electronically, and you may also submit written comments or questions to zoningcommission@boston.gov.

Interpreting services are available to communicate information at this hearing. If you require interpreting services, please contact the following: zoningcommission@ boston.gov or 617-918-4308. The meeting is scheduled for January 7, 2026. Please request interpreting services no later than January 2, 2026. For the Commission Jeffrey M. Hampton Executive Secretary

12/19/25 CT

# DO YOU NEED TO PLACE A LEGAL NOTICE?

Don't Forget to check with the Courts to see if you qualify for a FEE WAIVER

#### Fresh and Local

# Top It Off

sions will guide your choices. If

you're a spice head, you probably

want to increase the spice level

in your foods with a selection of

peppers, chili, and hot sauces on

If you love a particular cuisine,

your pantry should reflect that

with the seeds, liquids, crunchy

bits, and sauces used as toppings

for that foodway. Olive oil and

grated cheese for Italian food,

Feta, yogurt, and olives for Greek

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

Last month, during a hectic week, Penny turned to our freezer stash to make a quick lunch. Right in front was a bag of frozen chicken chow mein that she knew was a fast and easy answer. Unfortunately, it is also rather bland.

While the packaged meal simmered, Penny gathered a few additions to add a bit of crunch and spice. We love adding toppings to personalize food. This one called for Asian flair, so we each added our desired amount of peanuts, crispy garlic, fried shallots, and chili to our portions. This group of toppings has become so ubiquitous that our supply was from Trader Joe's rather than Chinatown.

#### Choices Over Time and Cultures

In Victorian times, formal dinner tables required a variety of items for guests to use to personalize their food. These ranged from individual salt cellars with spoons to cruet sets holding condiments such as vinegar, mustard, sugar, and paprika. Today, many homes and restaurants might have salt and pepper shakers, but even those are becoming scarce.

If you visit a pub, you may find a supply of salt, pepper, vinegar, and ketchup within hand's reach. When we enjoy Lanzhou handpulled noodles, they come with chili oil, soy sauce, and vinegar to adjust the meal to our taste. Your bowl of pho will come with a plate of herbs, lime, bean sprouts, chilies, onions, and sriracha and hoisin sauces. Middle Eastern tables might offer abundant platters of herbs to top the dishes.

Your Topping Pantry dishes, ketchup, mustard, and As with all pantry items, your own tastes, allergies, and aver-

Fermented and pickled foods from around the world add a sharp note to a menu item. Eastern Europe has its sauerkraut; Korea has kimchi; India has pickles called achar, made from

Nuts, crushed or whole, make excellent toppings and can be used for every course from appetiser to dessert. Seeds, especially when toasted and sometimes mixed, add both crunch and nutrition.

pickles for many American sand-

mango, lime, chilis, and garlic.

products, including cheeses, creams, yogurts, and sauces made from them, such as raita or tzatziki, add texture and richness. A dollop of crème fraîche or sour cream can be the perfect accompaniment to a bowl of soup. Mexican crema completes a taco and balances the spice in other dishes. American Thanksgiving is not complete without cranberry sauce or chutney since it is one of the few tangy items on the plate.

We have a collection of small dishes we use to add toppings to our table. Most Asian Markets have a household section offering a variety of condiment plates. If you prefer a matched set, you can purchase those from many retail-

Or you can return to the past by visiting second-hand shops or antique stores. There you may find cruet sets or lovely cut-glass divided dishes, perfect for this purpose. Finally, be sure to ask the people in your family and friends group who are trying to downsize if they have some fantastic items that could serve your needs.

Do you have a question or topic for Fresh & Local? Email Penny@BostonZest.com your suggestion.



# (hristmas Remembrance

# Ruth M. Lori Napolitano

December 5, 1927 – June 9, 2007

#### Missing you at Christmas...

Here it is another Christmas...presents we can't exchange. Remembering over the years, all the best times we had. We're thinking of you every day –

Our gifts will always be the love and memories you provided that will never fade.

We know you are looking down upon us with your mom, dad, and your sons JP and Al.

Remembering Ruthie during Christmastime and every day. Always in our hearts, thoughts, and prayers.

> With Love, Your husband, family and loved ones.

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#### HOLIDAY DRONE SHOW COMES TO THE COMMON

MAYOR'S OFFICE PHOTOS BY JEREMIAH ROBINSON





Scenes from the MeetBoston 2025 Holiday Drone Show held Dec. 12 on the Boston Common.







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