



# CHARLESTOWN

PATRIOT-BRIDGE

## Cannabis shop hopes for hearing in Dec.

By Seth Daniel

To date, most of the marijuana drama has come up on Cambridge Street with the Heritage Club, but the competing proposal

by Charlestown's Jack Kelly in Sullivan Square has quietly been moving forward and is hoping for a hearing next week at the Boston Cannabis Board (BCB).

Resilient Remedies (R2) filed

its paperwork at about the same time as The Heritage Club, but being a non-equity applicant in Boston (Heritage was a Boston Equity applicant), R2 had to wait in a longer line for their day at the Board, and said this week they are #7 on the list and hope that might equal a trip to the BCB on Dec. 9. The agenda for that meeting hadn't been published by press time.

"We're very excited now to be part of the City process and if we're given an opportunity to have a license – and then get through the state process – we're ready to go," said Kelly on Monday. "I'm excited to get the store occupied and the build-out completed and the vision I have rolled out."

Dot Joyce, who is an investor in the company and holds a five-year lease on the space at the old R.Wesley's Bistro, said the BCB has informed them this week that R2 is #7 on the list of non-equity applicants ready for a hearing. The process for equity vs. non-equity is a little confusing, and follows a one-to-one process. Equity applicants are permitted to have their application expedited so they don't have to wait in line

(HEARING Pg. 6)

## GINGERBREAD HOUSES



The Charlestown Branch of the Boston Public Library and the Essem Art Studio invite the community to a Cardboard Gingerbread House project. This virtual program will go live on the Facebook page of the Charlestown Branch Boston Public Library on December 9th at 10am and will also publish on Essem Art Studio via Instagram. The community is invited to pick a Gingerbread House kit at the Kennedy Center or the Library, which includes candy, stickers and the cardboard milk box structure of the Gingerbread House. To pick up at the library please contact Eileen Whittle at ewhittle@bpl.org. To pick up at the Kennedy Center contact cgalvin@kennedycenter.org. The Boys and Girls Club will also participate. If you can't pick up materials, you can also opt in to upcycle a milk carton and use any crafting materials you have at home for this open ended project.

## Warren Tavern 'Toys for Tots' goes virtual

By Seth Daniel

Like everything, the annual Toys for Tots fundraiser at the Warren Tavern is being done a little differently this year, said Organizer Kim Mahoney.

In what is the 29<sup>th</sup> or 30<sup>th</sup> year for collecting toys for kids in the neighborhood – with the effort directly benefitting the Kennedy Center and the Charlestown Residents Alliance (CRA) – the Tavern has moved the celebration mostly to a week-long online format – though the Tavern will still be open to guests and they hope people would do take-out to celebrate.

"We are doing a week-long event which kicked off last Sunday and will continue through Sunday, Dec. 6," said Mahoney. "We ask everyone to bring in an unwrapped

toy and drop it off at the Tavern during business hours. For each new, unwrapped toy, people will get a raffle ticket and there will be a virtual event live on Facebook Dec. 6 to announce the winners."

The event is featuring videos from local politicians and celebrities, including Attorney General Maura Healey, State Rep. Dan Ryan, Councilor Lydia Edwards, Mayor Martin Walsh, Bruins Defenseman Matt Grzelcyk, Comedian Tony V and Actor Jonathan Tucker. – among others.

One of the raffle items, incidentally, is a signed jersey from Grzelcyk – among many other items.

Mahoney said the Tavern has had a great year despite the pandemic, and said the expansion to the patio and on the street was a "game-changer."

However, for many in the community, this will be the toughest Christmas in years – and for others every Christmas is tough. That's why she said they have been resolute in keeping the tradition going and making a bigger call than ever for toys to help the kids of the Town.

"We've been on the corner of Main and Pleasant Streets since 1780 and so no pandemic will stop us," she said. "This year more than ever our families need help. The well is a little deeper. Families have lost jobs and kids are out there and they need a pick-me-up because of this year where they're not able to see their friends or go to school. It's a nice thing if we can bring a smile to a little kid that's had a tough year."



Parents from Charlestown have organized two protests in the last month as part of the new Voices for BPS Families. Here, they are shown protesting at City Hall last month to get kids back in school. They staged another protest Wednesday, Dec. 2, as well.

## Parents, students seek better plan than remote learning

By Seth Daniel

The loosely formed group of parents of school-age children who are calling for a better educational plan in Charlestown has tightened up, grown substantially and sent a message that remote schooling is no longer viable.

The group, now known as Voices for BPS Families has begun to join with other neighborhoods, like South Boston, who have similar concerns about remote schooling and the vague plan by the Boston Public Schools leadership for getting kids back in the classroom. That has been buttressed by a petition that is nearly 500 signatures this week, and a growing sense of frustration after a letter from Supt. Brenda Cassellius last week failed to spell out anything innovative that's being done to go back to in-person learning for those that want, or need, it.

"First of all, we don't think any family or teacher who doesn't want to return should be forced to do so," said Corey Zehngbot, a parent of a K1 student in the Harvard Kent School and a former Boston Planning and Devel-

opment Agency (BPDA) planner. "The City has done a great job on so many fronts with COVID-19, but when it comes to getting back in school, I'm throwing my hands up and doing so with a lot of other parents across the city...I think we should get back to what is the business of the day. I don't care who is fighting with whom; let's focus on just getting the kids back in school. The children and families have sacrificed and been patient, but no more."

The group formed in late October when sharing stories at the playground during an outdoor break for their kids. So many shared the same problems that the group formed fast and grew exponentially as parents found remote learning to be impossible to manage whether working from home or having to go to a workplace. This week, they have staged their second protest in-person at City Hall with their children to let those making plans know that their plans aren't working for a lot of people. They've also met with several City Councilors and held

(REMOTE LEARNING Pg. 6)

# EDITORIAL

## 'TIS THE SEASON FOR GIVING -- AND NEVER HAS THE NEED BEEN MORE URGENT

"It was the best of times; it was the worst of times." -- Charles Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities.

With Christmas fast approaching, most of us will be rushing about -- either to the stores and malls or on-line --- to do our holiday shopping in hopes of finding that "perfect" gift for our family members and loved ones.

Despite the pandemic that has ravaged our nation in so many ways, most Americans actually are doing okay, if not extremely well. Sure, the pandemic has made life inconvenient and not as enjoyable as usual for everybody, but most of us are getting along just fine.

Those who are able to work from home have not suffered a loss of income. And for those among us who have any sort of investments, from real estate to the stock market to certain types of small businesses, the pandemic has been a boon.

However, the good economic news for the majority of Americans has not been shared by all. For a sizable minority of our fellow citizens, the effects of the pandemic represent an existential disaster.

Millions of Americans of all ages, in a percentage greater than at any time since the Great Depression, are struggling financially.

To put it in stark terms, more Americans, including families in our own communities, are going hungry than at any time in our history. The lines of cars that stretch for miles and miles in cities all across the country are the equivalent of the iconic photos of the bread lines and soup kitchens of the 1930s..

Far too many of our fellow citizens, including children, live either in shelters or in similar temporary housing arrangements -- or on the streets -- because the reality of our economy has left them out in the cold -- literally -- thanks to the pandemic.

The homeless always have been among us, but the scope and depth of the problem is far beyond anything that has been experienced in our lifetime. The vast discrepancy between the enormous wealth enjoyed by some Americans and the abject poverty being endured by others is similar to what has existed in major urban centers in South America and India -- but it now is happening right here in the U.S.A.

For these millions of Americans, the holiday season brings no joy.

Psychologists tell us that the Biblical directive, that we should give to those who are less fortunate, actually is the best gift that we can give to ourselves. Helping others activates regions of the brain associated with pleasure, social connection, and trust, creating the so-called "warm glow" effect.

Never in the lifetime of anybody reading this editorial has the need for donations to local food banks been more urgent. There will be ample opportunity to do so in the coming weeks to make the holidays brighter for those who are less fortunate -- and there is no excuse for failing to do so.



'TIS THE SEASON, IF YOU PLEASE, CHOOSE YOUR FAVORITE CHARITIES

GUEST OP-ED

## Together, we must stop MBTA service cuts

By Senator Sal DiDomenico

The MBTA Fiscal Management and Control Board recently released their "Forging Ahead Initiative," a series of ill-conceived cuts to MBTA services that will have devastating (and likely long-lasting) impacts on those who rely on public transit to get to and from work. Our district in particular will be uniquely impacted by these cuts, as we are one of the most transit-dependent in the state. Not to mention, we have been some of the hardest hit by COVID, while also having one of the highest percentages of essential workers.

According to the MBTA's Forging Ahead website, some of the main "proposals" impacting our community include:

- Subway: 20% Frequency Reductions Across All Lines; Service Stops after Midnight.

- Bus: 5% Frequency Reduction on Essential Routes & 20% Reduction on Non-Essential Routes; Service Stops after Midnight.

- Commuter Rail: Service Stops after 9 PM; Weekend Service Ends (as early as Jan. 2021); Decreased

Peak and Midday Service.

- Ferry: All Ferry Service Will End; Charlestown Ferry Diverted to the Rt.93 Bus.

- The Ride: Some trips may become premium and be able to be booked 40 minutes in advance, instead of the current 30 minutes.

Without question, components of the MBTA's plan, such as stopping bus service at midnight, will disproportionately impact essential employees who don't work regular hours and need to travel late at night. It especially hurts my Chelsea and Everett constituents who already don't even have access to subway or commuter rail, and solely rely on the bus to connect them with their jobs and their community. Every part of my district will be impacted by these cuts, and we should all be concerned that these "temporary" changes could become permanent, impacting our transportation system for years or even decades to come.

Our region cannot recover from this pandemic and get moving again until, and unless, we redouble our efforts to build a transportation system that facilitates the movement of people, not

just cars. Reducing public transit will severely limit access to these services for communities and residents that need it most, further exacerbating inequities that the pandemic has already brought to light. If we want to heal from this, we must invest more in our transit system, not take services away. We all recognize these are difficult fiscal times, particularly for the underfunded MBTA, but these unprecedented times underscore the need for further investment in our economic drivers, not less.

As for next steps and what we can do about this, please know I am already in talks with my Senate colleagues and leadership in the Legislature regarding action we can take in response to these cuts. I have also addressed my concerns and opposition to the "Forging Ahead Initiative" directly with the MBTA's leadership team. Additionally, the MBTA has hosted several regional meetings regarding these proposals, where I have testified against these cuts.

While the public meetings for our district have already passed, you can still submit your

(Op-Ed Pg. 3)



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PRESIDENT - STEPHEN QUIGLEY - EDITOR@CHARLESTOWNBRIDGE.COM

MARKETING DIRECTOR - DEBRA DIGREGORIO - DEB@REVEREJOURNAL.COM

REPORTER - SETH DANIEL - SETH@REVEREJOURNAL.COM

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Still a lot of questions need to be answered

Dear Editor:

Next week the Bunker Hill Housing Redevelopment IAG will meet for what the developer has described as a wrap up meeting. With so many questions still open, including among others, design recommendations from the Boston Civic Design Commission and a robust discussion about mitigation and community benefits, I'd say it's wishful thinking on developers' part.

But it is indicative of how the process has been going so far. I see the troops marching down the field, plowing down the perceived opposition. Once again it's divide and conquer. If you ask too many questions, you want to kill the project. If you try to save more trees, you don't care about the BHA residents' living conditions.

I had hopes at the beginning of this process that the community would work with the developers as partners, raising concerns and finding mutually agreeable solutions. But what I've come to realize is that it's the developers' way or the highway. Yes, they listen, then toss us a few crumbs to say they've responded.

Several times I have heard the developers say that this project practically mitigates itself. What was left unsaid but was implied, is that we, the Charlestown community, should be saying thank you rather than challenging them to make the project better, and risk them walking.

So the mitigation and community benefit package shared at the last IAG meeting was a disappointment but not a surprise. We were presented with a list of 'community benefits' that one would expect to be standard for any project this size, such as security, street lights, a community center, retail, etc. Most of these directly benefit the developers and their ability to attract market rate renters and lower operating costs, not the broader community.

I have asked numerous times for

a breakdown of the City and State investment in this project. While I assume the developers have calculated it for their own financials, we have yet to receive anything other than a confusing graph showing how much in LIHTC they're saving the State by not financing all 1010 BHA units that way. I am still waiting and expect a detailed response before this phase is approved.

Nonetheless I roughly calculate the value of the free land, waiver of taxes and fees, LIHTC and infrastructure investment to be worth hundreds of millions of dollars. These are our tax dollars, our financial stake in this project, and for the developers to act as if they are doing us a favor by building out this project with its many cut corners is to play us for fools.

While my list is not exhaustive, I have outlined some of my concerns and recommendations regarding the mitigation and community benefits proposed by the developer.

Transportation: The proposed mitigation measures appear woefully inadequate to address the impact on public transportation and the streets surrounding the project. Even the proposed traffic signal at intersection of Bunker Hill, Medford and Main Streets mentioned in the DPIR has disappeared. The developers need to provide a detailed contribution schedule for this \$500,000 fund and the assumptions they used to arrive at the budgeted amount. If after studies and pilots this fund is depleted, the developers must be required to commit to mitigate the actual impacts regardless of the cost and it must be so written into the regulatory agreement.

Subsidized retail space: The developers' commitment of subsidizing 10% of the retail space should be increased to 20% or 10,000 sq. ft.

Community benefit fund: \$500,000 contributed in dribs and drabs over 10-15 years is a non-starter. This should be

doubled to \$1 million for the first phase, with additional payments of \$500,000 (adjusted for inflation) for each subsequent phase. Since many residents of this development will likely have to travel beyond the premises for recreational activities, this pot of funding should be wholly dedicated to off-site recreational, sports and wellness facilities.

Workforce housing: At some point in just about every meeting regarding development in Charlestown, someone brings up the need for housing for folks who want to stay in town but can't afford to. It's about time that we find ways to create housing for families that make between 80-120% area median income. I propose the developers seed a development fund for workforce housing for Charlestown residents with \$10 million for the first phase and a contribution of an additional \$1 million (adjusted for inflation), for each subsequent phase.

Mitigation and community benefits at each phase: Since this project has proposed 11 phases over 10-15 years, it's unrealistic to think we can anticipate its impacts over that length of time. As part of the community process for each phase, whether it's Article 80 or design review, negotiations regarding mitigation and community benefits must be reopened to allow for adjustments and additions.

Regulatory agreement: The IAG must have the opportunity to review and comment on any and all regulatory or other legal agreements between the developers and the City before they are approved or voted on.

I will submit these points in my comments to the BPDA. I encourage you to also send comments, even if the deadline has passed. Our voices must and should be heard.

Joanne Massaro  
Bunker Hill IAG Member

## Seeks to extend comment period

Dear Editor:

As of today, 317 Charlestown residents have signed a petition requesting that the comment period for Bunker Hill Housing Redevelopment (BHHR) project be extended through 1/15/21. This petition has been sent to Mayor Walsh and we are awaiting his response. Those of us who support this request recognize that there is an urgent need to provide safe housing for Bunker Hill BHA residents and we ask that the development team present a plan that provides for the short term needs of the residents, to be established as a provision prior to Phase 1 approval. The residents of the Bunker Hill housing development are being poorly served by their landlords. One look at overflowing dumpsters with no covers and it's no wonder that rats are a constant and harrowing nuisance. Basic building repairs take too long if they get done at all. This is unacceptable and must be resolved immediately regardless of what the City's long term goals for redevelopment involve. The development team claims that its top priority is to provide better homes for the BHA residents, and have presented a long term plan as a means of doing so. A long term plan is simply not enough when there are serious problems that need to be dealt with today. We must demand, in no uncertain terms, that a short term plan, one

which provides safe and livable conditions for the residents/families that are trying to survive, like the rest of us, during a pandemic, be developed and implemented immediately. The BHA's claim that it would be an unsound investment to put money into buildings that may eventually be demolished, misses the point: There are children, parents, and grandparents, living in deplorable conditions within our one square mile neighborhood TODAY and they deserve a short term plan/solution that will allow them to live in safe, clean homes while the larger/long term plan takes shape. Any investment that has the potential to improve the lives of the residents, in this moment, is worthy and wise.

As members of the Charlestown community we must demand better for our neighbors while the various phases of a years-long process unfolds. Many of these residents whose buildings are part of later phases won't be able to move into new buildings for years to come. Are we really going to stand by silently while the BHA refuses to spend money on the short term because they plan to spend money in the future? Treating people with dignity means getting rid of the rats now, not later. It means making a plan that takes care of residents in the short term as well as the long term.

Johanna Hynes

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## OP-ED (from pg. 2)

feedback to the MBTA by emailing them at publicengagement@mbta.com. I encourage everyone to do so; stopping these cuts will be a collective effort, one that requires advocacy from legislators like myself, but also grassroots opposition. The deadline for feedback is coming up soon on December 4th, so please do not delay in contacting the MBTA if you wish to regis-

ter your concerns.

I have already heard from so many of my constituents on this, and many have indicated they will be contacting the MBTA as well. I am truly grateful for everyone's advocacy on this issue. It is my sincere hope that, working together, we can stop these cuts from taking place and protect public transportation for generations to come.

*Sal N. DiDomenico is an Massachusetts State Senator legislator who has served in the Massachusetts Senate since May 2010 and as Assistant Majority Leader since 2018. He is a Democrat representing the Middlesex and Suffolk district, which includes his hometown of Everett as well as Chelsea, Allston, Brighton, Charlestown, and parts of Cambridge and Boston.*

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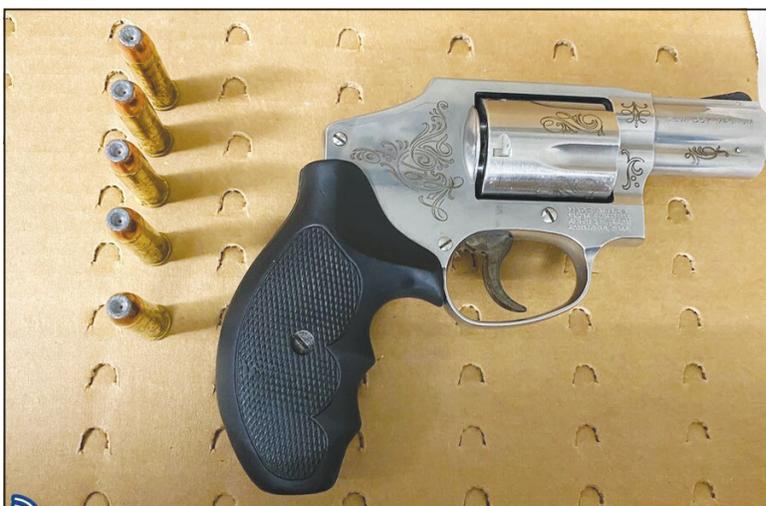
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One of the firearms recovered in the Bunker Hill Development on Nov. 20 during an intense situation between police and a large crowd. Three loaded firearms were recovered and two were arrested.

## Loaded firearms recovered in Bunker Hill Development

Staff Report

About 7:30pm on Friday, November 20, members of the Youth Violence Strike Force made an on-site firearm arrest and recovered two additional firearms in the area of 18 O'Meara Court, Charlestown.

Officers were on patrol in the Bunker Hill Housing Development when they observed a group of individuals congregating in the parking lot area of 18 O'Meara Court. As the officers pulled into the lot their attention was drawn to an individual, later identified as Arthur Flood, 18, of Dorchester, that was standing in between two parked cars. Upon seeing the officers, Flood quickly moved to the passenger side window of a parked motor vehicle, leaned inside and looked as though he was retrieving or concealing something while speaking with an individual who was seated in the driver's seat. As the officers approached, Flood turned his body away from the officers, shielding his right side from the officers view. As the officers conversed with him, he continued to shield his right side and attempted to walk past the officers. The officer conducted a pat

frisk to his right side, and immediately felt a hard object in the shape of a firearm. Officers attempted to secure Flood's hands, but he kept moving them towards the front of his waistband area. Officers were eventually able to gain control and safely secure him in handcuffs. Officers recovered a firearm from his left pant leg as it slid down and was sticking out his ripped jeans. The firearm, a black Taurus 9mm G2C was loaded with (1) round in the chamber and (12) rounds in a high capacity feeding device.

As the officers were affecting the arrest of Flood, the large group in the parking lot began to converge on them as they tried to secure the firearm. As the group became aggressive, they were instructed to leave the area, and made aware of multiple posted No Trespassing signs. A second individual, identified as Keon Alston, 24, of South Boston, was placed under arrest for Trespassing after he was instructed to leave the area multiple times and continued to be uncooperative. As the officers placed Alston under arrest, he violently resisted, swung his elbows and tensed his arms refusing to place them behind his back. The group once again converged on the

officers, and with the assistance of several other officers, Alston was finally placed in the rear of a patrol wagon.

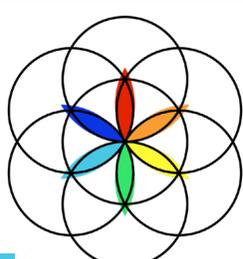
As the crowd began to disperse, the officers recovered a second firearm located underneath a gray motor vehicle. The firearm, a silver Smith & Wesson .357 Magnum revolver was loaded with 5 rounds of ammunition. Further investigation into this firearm revealed that it was reported stolen. Officers then located a third firearm from underneath a red motor vehicle. This firearm, a black Lorcin .380 L380 was loaded with (1) round in the chamber and (6) rounds of assorted ammunition in the magazine.

Arthur Flood was placed under arrest and charged with Unlawful Possession of a Firearm, Unlawful Possession of Ammunition, Carrying a Loaded Firearm on a Public Way, and Possession of a Large Capacity Feeding Device.

Keon Alston was placed under arrest and charged with Trespassing, Resisting Arrest, Interfering with a Police Officer, and Assault and Battery on a Police Officer.

Both suspects were arraigned in Charlestown Court.

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with **Jim Aloisi**  
Former Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation  
**Tuesday, December 8th at 7:00 PM**

Jim is a Lecturer of Public Policy and Planning at MIT. He played a central role in the creation of Boston's Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway. Jim's public service includes the Boston Human Rights Commission, the Massachusetts Transportation Finance Commission, and the Massachusetts Port Authority Board.

Jim is the author of four books, including The Big Dig, The Vidal Lecture, and Massport at 60, and is a regular contributor to Commonwealth Magazine. He serves on the Board of TransitMatters, a Boston based transit advocacy group.

You can purchase *The Big Dig* here <https://www.amazon.com/>

Big-Dig-Remembers-Robert-Allison/dp/1889833827.

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## Former Heritage Club owner won't pursue cannabis license here

By Seth Daniel

A highly-charged rumor floated around the Town over the Thanksgiving holiday about the new intentions of former Heritage Club owners Maggie Suprey appear to be untrue.

Suprey had been in partnership with Heritage Club owner Nike John throughout the fall for a cannabis license, but that partnership fizzled out after a highly-charged meeting with Councilor Lydia

Edwards at the Boston Cannabis Board, and then a rejection vote from the Board in the following week.

After that, John announced that Suprey would pursue other opportunities, and Suprey confirmed that.

Then came a flood of rumors that indicated Suprey would pursue that other opportunity at a restaurant in Charlestown – notably the former Tangierino's. That, in fact, is completely inaccurate,

Suprey and others said.

"I have moved on to another project outside of the city and have no intent on pursuing a license anywhere in Charlestown," said Suprey this week.

Others indicated a very preliminary plan for the restaurant was spoken about early last summer prior to the application on Cambridge Street, but it was quickly abandoned and never pursued seriously.

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## REMOTE LEARNING *(from pg. 1)*

a Zoom meeting where they were surprised to have Mayor Martin Walsh and Teacher's Union President Jessica Tang.

The group is made up mostly of parents from across the spectrum in Charlestown, but has grown citywide for all grades and all types of needs – whether special needs, vulnerable learners, young learners or general education students. The message no matter what group or what neighborhood is that remote learning isn't cutting it, and there needs to be something innovative that can be done so that students don't fall behind while their suburban peers head off to in-person learning and they don't.

Zehngebot has a K1 daughter, and she has never set foot in a school – having started school

this fall in the pandemic and not being able to ever “go” to school. The other day, Zehngebot said, her daughter asked her if she could just go to the school building– a good question that the mother of two couldn't answer.

“My daughter can't do Zoom at her age; she's too wiggly,” said Zehngebot. “She's not set foot in a school building yet, but that isn't a hardship comparatively. What is deeply troubling to not just myself, but also to everyone across the city is that the City has had 10 months to design something better than this and hasn't done it. In that same time we've built a field hospital, put in eviction protections, started a small business loan program, expedited permitting for outdoor dining, elected a president and

now have three vaccines in the works, but there is still no good plan to get kids back in school. In a city like Boston, where we have the best and brightest, it's a shame we can't come up with a better plan.

“We realize we're a bunch of white families in Charlestown, but we want to lean on that white privilege to get attention and action for the whole city,” she continued.

Some of the ideas being floated are looking into pool testing, which has been effective in other places to create a type of bubble environment to protect healthy students and staff and prevent spread. The group has also been encouraging the City to look at what other places are doing. Both New York City and Somerville have opened their public schools and consider them essential, though parents point out in Boston there is indoor dining permitted and considered essential, while students are kept at home. The parents also point to the large amounts of data that tend to show schools, particularly elementary schools, are not dangerous places for spreading the virus. Meanwhile, they also point to the large numbers of “Learning Pods” popping up at after-school providers and non-profits around the city – such as the Boys & Girls Club in Charlestown – that somehow have kids in-person learning remotely, and it's all been done safely since September with no large outbreaks reported.

She said one “out of the box” solution they've pointed to recently is to use facilities that might be outside the footprint of BPS. With so many hotel function rooms empty, office buildings going vacant and other properties not in use right now, a temporary solution could be to use those spaces to spread more kids out and keep them in “pods” for

contact tracing purposes.

“There are so many spaces outside their footprint that could possibly be utilized in this time,” she said. “That's true especially downtown where there is single-digit occupancy in some buildings as of December.”

Zehngebot said the message that she hopes the School Committee and BPS leaders hear from

them is that their patience has run out, and their influence is spreading across the city.

“It is really, really shameful and I've had it,” she said. “We need action for 2021. The Boston I know and worked for was a leader in pioneering solutions and it feels like we've been a laggard on this now.”

## HEARING *(from pg. 1)*

once the application is complete and the community process has played out. The BCB takes one equity applicant for every one non-equity applicant at its meetings. “We are #7 and awaiting an appointment from the Board,” said Joyce. “We're hoping on getting that for the December meeting. That will depend on how many equity applicants that will be there.”

Joyce said they have taken some queues from the previous application on Cambridge Street and are looking carefully at the traffic in their area, which is down from the Lost Village neighborhood. They are using a traffic consultant to look at the situation and have committed to paying for anything required of them.

Kelly said their proposal is quite different from the Heritage in that it's much smaller. There store is 1,000 sq. ft. and has four points of sale – what he said was more of a boutique operation. Heritage was a much larger store in square footage, he said, and had 15 points of sale.

“I think people tend to like our location because of the size of it,” said Kelly. “It's the right scale and size for the neighborhood and the right fit for the area.”

That will be part of the pitch they give to the BCB, but there will also need to be more of the nitty gritty of their proposal. Like all potential cannabis operators, Kelly has sought out investors for his proposal. While that includes Joyce, it also includes their main investor, Sean Power. Power would hold a 38 percent stake in the company, with Kelly at 51 percent and Joyce at 11 percent.

Power owns karmadata, a technology health care company he has been the CEO of for 10 years, and has been involved in other health care data companies. Joyce said he suffers from Parkinson's Disease and, thus, finds the emerging marijuana industry interesting for business and personal reasons. He has also been involved as an advisor to the campaigns of former Dorchester State Sen. Linda Dorcena Forry.

Those are the only investors,

though, Kelly said, and that was intentional. He said he wanted to have only one investor to look to and he wanted to know that person very well so something doesn't happen along the way he – and the community – doesn't approve of. “I wanted to be able to look only one person in the eye,” he said.

According to Kelly and Joyce, there is still a question about how Kelly went from being an equity applicant due to his being incarcerated for drug offenses, and then suddenly not being an equity applicant. Right now, he has a social equity license from the state, but not an economic empowerment designation by the state – which puts him as a non-equity applicant in Boston.

“We still don't understand that,” he said. “I was equity and then it was rescinded. The premise behind that was it was to be for the War on Drugs and I'm not sure why my convictions don't count towards that...I don't understand how you can exclude people from this community. All the pain that drugs and alcohol caused this community and somehow we didn't get put into that category...Charlestown qualified with the state at one time. I'd still like to know when that happened.” Kelly said that is particularly hurtful to him because he wanted to be an equity applicant because he believes in the concept. He said he still plans to operate his business as an equity company even if there's no official designation for him in Boston.

“I'm still structuring our company like an equity company,” he said. “I really believe in this stuff. If I didn't want to be an equity applicant, why wouldn't I have come in here two years ago? I'm from Charlestown. I came in now because I believe in equity and want to be an equity owner.”

The agenda for the BCB is expected out any day, and that will tell whether or not R2 will be on board for a hearing – or whether they will have to wait for the January meeting. In any case, Kelly said they are ready to go forward.



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# Support needed for NEW Health's Food Insecurity Program

As the holiday season rolls around and the COVID testing lines continue to fill with eager travelers, we are again reminded of the severity of this pandemic's lasting effects. For some, this may be the first time they see their family since the pandemic began, for others, this may be the first time without a roof over their head on Christmas day.

There's no doubt that COVID-19 has affected us all harshly; some worse than others. Food insecurity remains a major issue plaguing our friends and neighbors. NEW Health has been combatting that issue since 2016 but has ramped up their efforts since the start of this pandemic. With the help of the community, NEW Health has been serving over 100 families per month, including children from the Harvard-Kent and Eliot Schools.

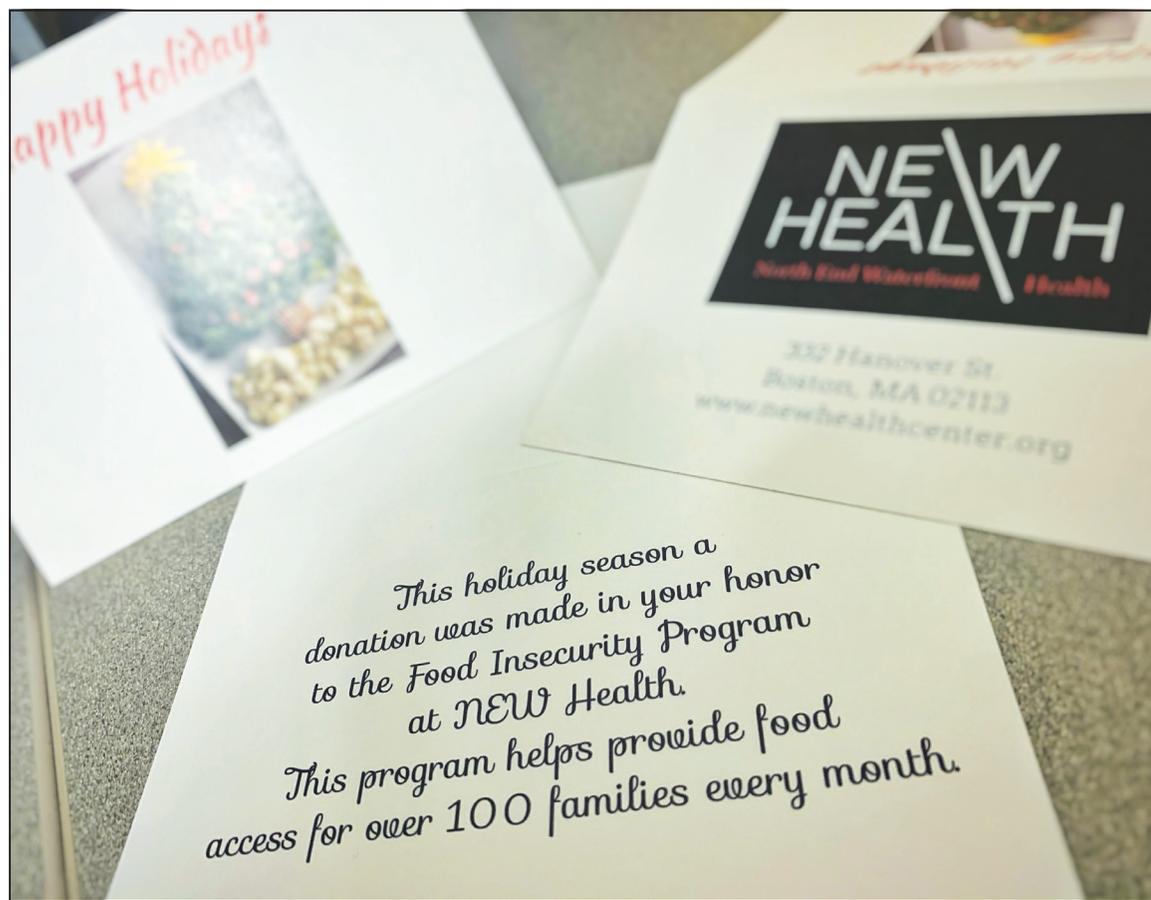
There's no better time than the season of giving to continue this fight against food insecurity. This holiday season consider a donation to the Food Insecurity Program at NEW Health. For every \$25 donated to the program, you

will receive a holiday greeting card with the following message: This holiday season a donation was made in your honor to the Food Insecurity Program at NEW Health. This program helps provide food access for over 100 families every month.

If you are unable to donate \$25 any amount helps, however, it is important to note that only donations of \$25 dollars and over will receive a greeting card. You can buy as many greeting cards as you'd like. For a donation of \$100 you will receive 5 greeting cards.

Every dollar donated is used to support NEW Health's food insecurity services. With continued support from the community NEW Health hopes to expand their food insecurity efforts throughout the holiday season.

To make a donation and receive your holiday greeting card please visit <https://bit.ly/NEWHealth-Holiday-Giving> or scan the QR Code included below. For questions concerning NEW Health Holiday Greeting Cards please contact Luisa Siniscalchi at 857-238-1176.



The card pictured above will be included in the gifts of food.

## Green Line Extension Virtual Public Meeting set for Dec. 9

The Green Line Extension (GLX) project team will provide the public with a general project update on Wednesday, December 9, beginning at 6:30 p.m. This presentation will feature a visual tour of the project showing the latest progress on construction activities.

The meeting will be held via a

Zoom webinar. Members of the public may register here. After registering, a confirmation email will be sent that contains information about joining the webinar.

These meetings are accessible to people with disabilities and those with limited English proficiency. Accessibility accommodations and language services will be provided

free of charge, upon request, as available. Such services include documents in alternate formats, translated materials, assistive listening devices, and interpreters (including American Sign Language). For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone

(857-368-8580), fax (857-368-0602), TTD/TTY (857-368-0603) or by email at MASSDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us.

For more information on the GLX project, please visit [www.mass.gov/GLX](http://www.mass.gov/GLX).

## Edwards announces return of Snow Angels

Boston City Councilor Lydia Edwards has announced the launch of the third

year of the Snow Angels program. Councilor Edwards started the program in the winter of 2018-2019 to connect elderly and disabled residents with volunteers to help them clear their sidewalks after snowstorms.

"The Snow Angels program is about neighbors helping neighbors and coming together as a community," said Councilor Edwards.

"Each year so far the program has grown and my hope is that it continues to grow this year. I'm proud that this will be our third year running the program. The pandemic has isolated a lot of our seniors. Helping them by shoveling snow is a small but meaningful and impactful way for us to help them."

Sign ups for a Snow Angel volunteer are available to District One residents that are either disabled or aged 65 or older. The registration period will be open until Decem-

ber 31st. People interested in either signing up for a volunteer or to be a volunteer can do so by filling out the form posted on Councilor Edwards' Facebook page. The program will attempt to match those that sign up for help with nearby volunteers to shovel snow.

Residents with any questions can call Councilor Edwards' office at 617-635-3200 or send an email to [gabriela.coletta@boston.gov](mailto:gabriela.coletta@boston.gov).

### *Birthday Remembrance*



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# Many Charlestown students not returning to Boston Public Schools

By Seth Daniel

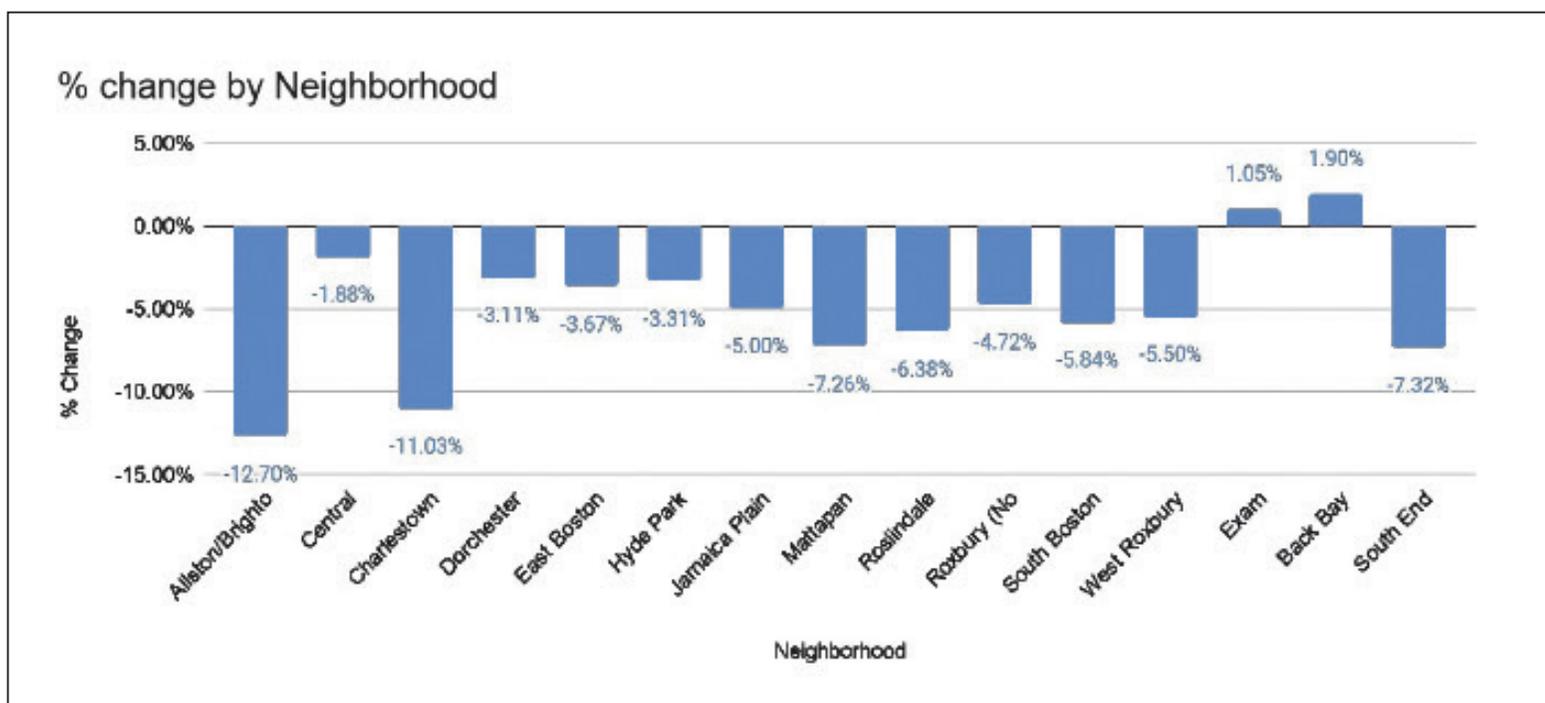
A new study by The Boston Schools Fund shows that enrollment declines have been steep in the Boston Public Schools (BPS) this year – following a statewide trend of COVID-19 withdrawals – but Charlestown has shown one of the largest declines by percentage in the city.

The study looked at enrollment data provided by the annual October 1 Enrollment Report provided to the State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), which annually serve as the official enrollment statistics for each district in the state.

Overall, the study found that Boston had 2,368 fewer students this year than last school year, which was a 4.7 percent decline in total enrollment. Much of that decline in Boston came at the entry grades of K1 (13% decline), K2 (11.7% decline) and 9th grade (15% decline). For context, the report indicated that BPS did much better than the state decline for K1/K2 decreases, but did far worse than the state for 9th grade.

Enrollment was down across every neighborhood in Boston, and for varying reasons. However, Charlestown by percentage showed the second largest decrease, right behind Allston-Brighton.

By percentage, Charlestown enrollments were down 11.03 percent this year, while Allston-Brighton was down 12.7 percent. The



Change in enrollment of Boston Public Schools by neighborhood.

next closest was the South End with a 7.3 percent decline, and Mattapan with 7.26 percent decline.

Oddly enough, across the city exam school enrollment was up by 1.05 percent, and the Back Bay actually increased its enrollment number by 1.9 percent, but that only amounted to nine students in total.

Enrollment declines by neighborhood were looked at only by the location of the schools in the neighborhood, and not by the zip code or home of the actual students in the school. In Charlestown,

the decline amounted to 239 students in total that were not in the Town's schools. Those numbers do not reflect enrollment of students from Charlestown in The Eliot School, which is in the North End and serves a large number of the Town's students.

Allston-Brighton's decline amounted to 353 students, and Roxbury actually had the most student decrease at 380 students – though that was only a 4.7 percent decline in the total numbers there.

Overall, the study showed that BPS enrollment projections city-wide were off by more than 9,500

students, or 17.4 percent, due to the pandemic. Those numbers were projected in BuildBPS studies done in 2016. The largest number off the mark came in grades K2-5, where 26,149 students were expected this year, and 20,913 enrolled.

There are any number of reasons for the exodus, though the study did not track where those students have gone. Some have simply not shown up for school, while many also anecdotally report that students are leaving public schools – which are all remote – to attend in-person private and Cath-

olic schools.

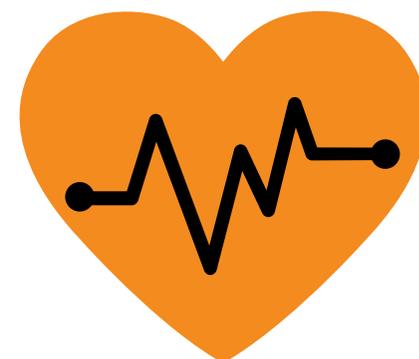
“Data presented in the above slides give us a snapshot of BPS enrollment, but do not provide explanations for enrollment drop among different groups, grades, and neighborhoods,” read the report. “There are further questions that must be asked.”

Among those questions are those about why certain groups are leaving the district and are there different reasons, and another key question is finding out which students are likely to return to the district post-COVID.

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# School Committee apologizes for inaction on anti-Asian remarks

By Seth Daniel

The Boston School Committee took the first hour of its meeting on Nov. 18 to apologize for remarks made by its former Chair Michael Loonto that were termed offensive to Asians, but that time of reflection also had a strong message to the community to show more tolerance and not to judge Loonto solely on that one remark.

“My discomfort with your resignation is growing,” said Member Hardin Coleman, who read from a letter he sent Loonto after the incident. “I remain discomforted by the resignation of the Boston community to lead with anger and distrust instead of fairness and reasoning...What leads me to discomfort with our community is that demanding your expulsion from your civic role is in direct contradiction to our principle of restorative justice – a concept that is supported by many of those that called for your expulsion.”

The remarks by Loonto came during a marathon meeting on Oct. 21 that lasted into the wee hours of Oct. 22 and featured a highly-charged debate and vote on changing the admissions criteria for the City’s three exam schools. At around 11:30 p.m. in that online meeting, Loonto was heard mocking the names – apparently – of some Asian parents who wanted to speak against changing the criteria. It was immediately called out, and seemed like he hadn’t realized his microphone was on. He resigned the next day and apologized for his comments. However, the matter was exacerbated by a report in the Boston Globe showing that members privately texted one another about the comments during the meeting, including telling Loonto how he might be able to explain them away.

But the session at the School Committee meeting on Nov. 18 wasn’t just about bashing the former chair’s comments – which most everyone agrees were not characteristic of his typical conduct. In fact, he seemed to have several allies on the Board who were disappointed that the overall community didn’t give him a second chance before calling for his resignation.

One of the strongest voices in that call was from the Committee’s

only Asian American member – that being Member Quoc Tran.

Tran’s comments were quite powerful, and he said he was speaking from the heart and had prayed and meditated on the matter prior to the meeting so he could choose the right words. Many would have expected him – a long-time Civil Rights activist in the Vietnamese community – to condemn and dispatch Loonto to the history books. In fact, though, his words suggested the exact opposite and he said he was “personally resentful” that Loonto was pushed to resign.

Tran said he has been an activist for 30 years and, while he condemns Loonto’s comments on that night, he doesn’t think it should define all of the work he had done for all the BPS communities – including the Asian community.

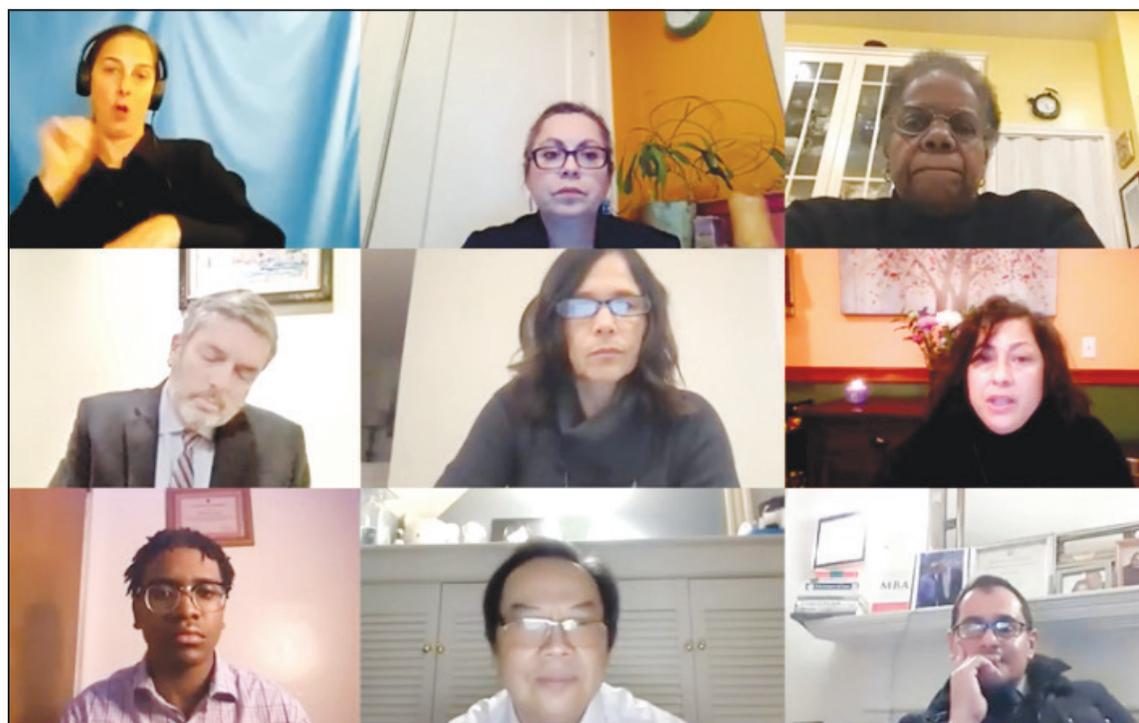
“Throughout more than 30 years of working in Civil Rights, I’ve learned a few things,” he said. “I used to be a very ardent fighter against anything discriminatory, but now I’m over 60 and looking at everything I’ve fought for and there’s one thing we haven’t been practicing as we should and that’s tolerance and tolerance has been missing since this incident.”

He said that lacking the tolerance to forgive Loonto of his words on that night, and allowing him to move forward on the Committee, will only perpetuate racism and not ease it. He called on the Asian community to teach the City how to be tolerant in the face of terribly hurtful comments.

“To my Asian community, the one thing we grow up with – the first thing instilled in us from the cultures in China, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia is tolerance and patience,” he said. “Let’s practice that and teacher American people what tolerance is.”

New Chair Alexandra Oliver-Davila said the comments were unacceptable, and she also apologized for her inaction in not condemning them on the spot. She said his words were not okay, but that moment should not define him.

“Words matter and names matter and I appreciate that Mr. Loonto was quick to apologize and resign,” she said. “He recognized his words were hurtful to our Asian community members.



The Boston School Committee apologized at its Nov. 18 meeting for its former chairman’s comment that were derogatory to Asian community members, but also many Committee members asked for people not to define the former chairman by that one moment.

However, his lapse of judgement in that moment cannot and should not erase all his years of supporting equitable education access for all Boston students and shouldn’t define his tenure with that challenging moment.”

New Vice Chair Michael O’Neill – a long-time Charlestown resident – apologized for his lack of action, the texts he sent, and on behalf of the entire Committee. He said he hopes the incident can make them all a better board and understand those they serve better.

“I do want to say to our Asian community in particular and our overall BPS community as well...I believe I will commit to leaning into and all of us will commit to leaning into the moment and striving to help build a board that our communities value and feel heard by...I feel we need to lean into the moment and commit together to being a better board. I apologize as a fellow board member...for what happened that evening and the pain it caused our communities.”

Supt. Brenda Cassellius also apologized for the actions, and praised the work of Councilor Ed Flynn for bringing the BPS leaders and the Asian community in his district together to create more of an understanding. She said they plan to have a workshop on Dec. 9 to train with Dr. Ibram Kindi of the Boston University Center for Antiracist Research. The Committee will also hold a day-long retreat on Dec. 12 to discuss the matter more, and to also talk about logistics for returning students to in-person learning.

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## USS Constitution Museum temporarily closes

The USS Constitution Museum has closed until further notice to minimize spread of the coronavirus. The Virtual Museum experience, launched in March 2020, will continue to offer robust and engaging content for all digital visitors.

"The USS Constitution Museum proudly continues to ful-

fill its mission to engage all ages in the stories of 'Old Ironsides' through its Virtual Museum," said Museum President & CEO Anne Grimes Rand. "Whether you're a curious student or an armchair sailor, we offer compelling content that's sure to educate and entertain."

Virtual Museum visitors can

explore its social media channels, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, and website usscm.org. The content includes programs, activities, videos, and blog posts. The online Museum Store is open and currently offering special holiday discounts.

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Bulva, Yana	Griffiths, Matthew	14 Soley St #14	\$882,500
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## CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

### North Washington Street Bridge construction look-ahead through Dec. 12

#### VIBRATORY HAMMER NOISE IMPACTS

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

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

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

#### DESCRIPTION OF SCHEDULED WORK

•Chip out warehouse joints, installation and maintenance of silt curtain, installation of north and south abutment bridge seat, and cleaning of demolition site. In addition, sheeting and bracing of cofferdams will continue.

#### WORK HOURS

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

•Some work will be done over night (4:30 p.m. - 2:30 a.m.)

#### WORK THAT HAS BEEN COMPLETED

•Prior to 11/29, crews continued to demolish the existing bridge. The bridge is 95% demolished and work on the cofferdams is 50% complete.

#### TRAVEL TIPS

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.

### State receives funding to hire prosecutor to combat unemployment insurance fraud

Staff report

United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling announced last week that the District of Massachusetts has been allocated funding to hire an Assistant U.S. Attorney (AUSA) to focus on prosecuting cases involving fraudulent schemes to unlawfully obtain unemployment insurance (UI) benefits and related offenses through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020.

The CARES Act allocated \$270 billion for supplemental federal UI benefits. Additionally, President Donald J. Trump directed that \$44 billion in federal Disaster Relief Funds be used to provide supplemental UI benefits to eligible claimants. The substantial increase in funding for UI benefits spurred a dramatic spike in UI fraud across the country, resulting in the theft of federal funds intended to help those struggling with unemployment during the current pandemic and economic crisis.

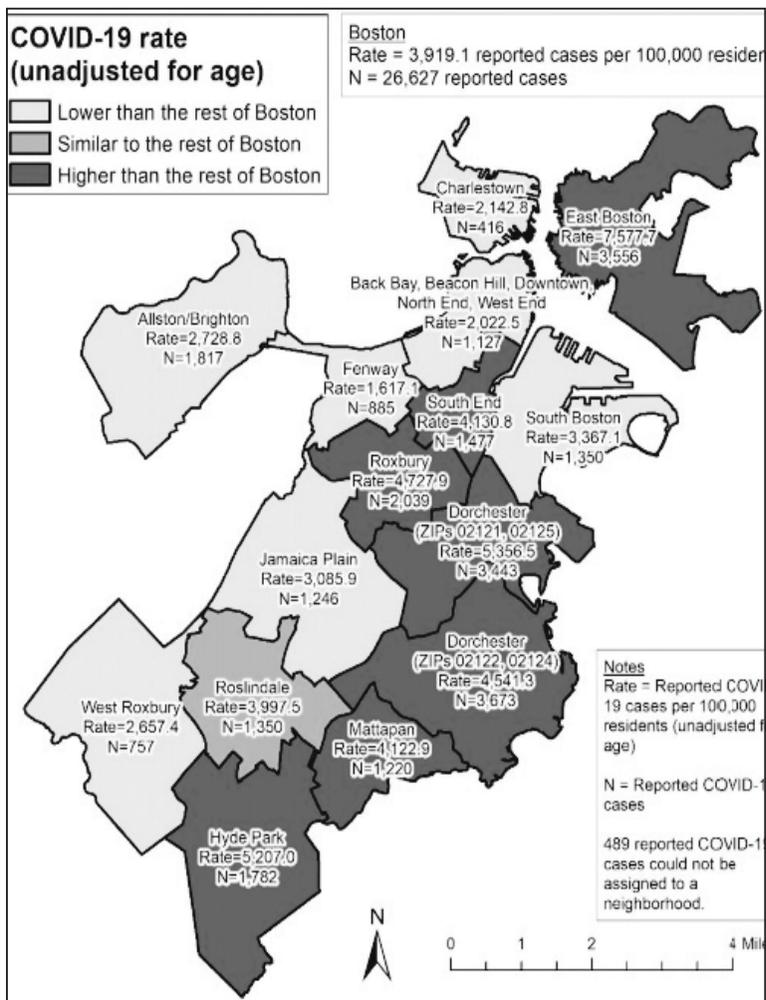
As part of its ongoing effort to investigate and prosecute fraud stemming from the Coronavirus pandemic, the District of Massachusetts will hire an AUSA for a one-year term, with the possibility of a one-year extension.

"Unfortunately, there are those who take advantage of national crises to enrich themselves at the expense of American taxpayers,"

said U.S. Attorney Lelling. "From the onset of the pandemic, my office has aggressively investigated and prosecuted scams and fraud related to this national crisis, including efforts to steal funds intended for the millions of Americans who suddenly find themselves out of work and without an income. I look forward to doubling down on our prosecutions of unemployment insurance fraud with the welcomed addition of a prosecutor focused solely on these cases."

The U.S. Department of Justice, in close coordination with the U.S. Department of Labor and other federal agencies, created the U.S. Department of Justice National Unemployment Insurance Fraud Task Force. This task force is charged with investigating numerous CARES Act fraud schemes targeting the unemployment insurance programs of state workforce agencies and will work closely with United States Attorneys' Offices to prosecute those individuals who have fraudulently diverted these funds from those struggling with unemployment.

The Department encourages the public to report suspected fraud schemes related to COVID-19 to the National Center for Disaster Fraud (NCFDF) hotline by phone at (1-866-720-5721) or via an online reporting form available at [www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud/webform/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form](http://www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud/webform/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form).



On Friday the BPHC released its weekly COVID-19 stats by neighborhood that tracks infection rates and COVID testing results in Boston neighborhoods.

# COVID positive test rate drops once again here

By John Lynds

The COVID-19 positive test rate in Charlestown decreased for a second week in a row according to the latest data released by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC).

Of the 9,554 Charlestown residents tested for the virus 4 percent were found to be positive by last Friday. This was a decrease of 39 percent from the 6.6 percent that tested positive two Fridays ago. The citywide positive test rate average was 5 percent a decrease of 50 percent from the 10.2 percent that tested positive two weeks ago.

The data shows that overall since the pandemic began 4.4 percent of Charlestown residents tested were found to be COVID positive.

At his daily press briefing Tuesday, Mayor Martin Walsh said that in the two weeks leading up to Thanksgiving, Boston's numbers went in the right direction.

"But, we expect to see an increase when the impact of Thanksgiving activity makes it into the testing data," said Walsh.

He said the City will be monitoring that data closely as it comes in.

"In the meantime, we all have to do everything we can to prevent the virus from spreading, by taking our collective and individual precautions as seriously as ever," said Walsh.

The infection rate in Charlestown increased 8.9 percent in one week according to the latest city statistics.

The BPHC data released last Friday showed Charlestown had an infection rate of 214.2 cases per 10,000 residents, up from 196.7 cases per 10,000 residents.

Thirty-four additional residents became infected with the virus last week bringing the total number of cases to 416 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 10 percent last week and went from 25,105 cases to 27,635 confirmed cases. Twenty more Boston residents died from the virus and there are now 919 total deaths in the city from COVID.

# Police, Bunker Hill Associates rally to memorialize George Collier

By Seth Daniel

Several friends of the late George Collier have rallied over the holiday season – and quickly we might add – to create a legacy for the former Boston Police Officer that would serve to help families with food over the holidays.

Cecil Jones, a police officer and member of the Bunker Hill Associates, said he had been discussing the idea with some friends in the Town and they felt that now would be the time to do something for Collier.

"There were a few of us that got a couple of people together from Charlestown and we thought this would be a good way to promote George's legacy," said Jones. "I grew up in the projects in Charlestown and George always told me to focus on sports and athletics to keep focused. Because of him, I listened and I made some good choices and have lived a good life because of it. When we lost George, this was something I always wanted to do to give back."

Jones recalled that the family, the Colliers, had a store on Bunker Hill Street and they were more

than generous to needy families in those days – especially for those that were in need of food. That's where the idea came in to give away gift cards to help families with food – and they set a goal of providing 52 cards as Collier passed at the age of 52.

"My family was one that was on the receiving end so many times, and this was a chance to be on the giving side," he said. "We're not going to solve all the problems for these families, but we can solve their problems for a week at least during the holidays."

A highlight of the effort is that they set a goal of \$15,000 to raise, posted the need out to the community last Friday, and now have pretty much received all of their donations. Jones said the City of Boston Credit Union was instrumental in giving \$10,000 toward the effort, and Kevin McGoff has been able to raise quite a bit as well through his work. Meanwhile, many donations have come in through social media and the Venmo app that is being used to encourage social distancing during COVID.

Maureen Collier, president of the Associates and the wife of the late George Collier, said those

receiving the cards will be chosen by the Boys & Girls Club of Charlestown. She said George was not a Club kid, but her family was and the Club was very important to him – particularly the College Club there that he donated to annually and for which she continues to donate to in his name.

She said the gift cards are a great legacy for her husband, and she is grateful to the Boston Police and the Associates for helping her family during the tough times after George passed, and also in organizing this legacy.

Our family is very happy and very humbled that someone like Cecil and these other guys decided to do this," she said. "Holidays can be tough for people when you lost loved ones, but this is making it better for us and helping George's legacy live on."

Jones said he hopes this is something that will continue in George's name every year at this time.

"It's my goal to repeat this every year," he said. "I think it's a great time of the year to help those who are in need. I grew up in the projects in Charlestown and I know what it is to see a week come and go and hope for something."



## Virtual Community Workshop

PLAN: Charlestown

### Climate Resilience & Open Space Workshop

Wednesday, December 16  
6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Zoom Link: [bit.ly/33xjuDU](https://bit.ly/33xjuDU)

Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864

Meeting ID: 161 392 5067

**Event Description**

Dear Neighbor,

Please join us for the next PLAN: Charlestown public meeting. Building on discussions at previous PLAN: Charlestown community events, the initiative will host a workshop on December 16th (6:00-7:30 pm) on the topics of climate resilience and open space. Staff from the BPDA and the City of Boston Environment Department will present on past and upcoming phases of Climate Ready Charlestown. Additionally, BPDA and Boston Parks and Recreation staff will expand on October's Parcel Priority Plan exercise with a discussion of Charlestown's current parks, and planning for future open space.

To view all PLAN: Charlestown project materials, please visit: <http://bostonplans.org/plancharlestown>

**Contact:**

Jason Ruggiero  
Boston Planning & Development Agency  
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor Boston, MA 02201  
617.918.4383 | [jason.ruggiero@boston.gov](mailto:jason.ruggiero@boston.gov)

[bostonplans.org](http://bostonplans.org) | [@bostonplans](https://twitter.com/bostonplans)

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# TOWNIE SPORTS

### CYHA UPDATE

The season is running smoothly since the return of hockey last month following the shutdown ordered by Gov. Charlie Baker for two weeks. Though the season started late in September, the shutdown took place, and practices are a little more limited than in the past, the teams are in fine form and competing well against the best competition in the region.

### BOYS HOCKEY

•MIDGETS: Coach Harry Sullivan's Charlestown midget team went 5-0-1 in league play to win the VHL Tier 1 AAA American Division. Coach Sullivan wanted to thank the seniors for the great season, including Eoin Donovan, Sonny Fazio, Braden Fitzpatrick, Brady McKinley and Colm Vraibel. The midgets will now move on to their high school seasons - if they in fact take place.

•PEE WEE AA: The Pee Wee AA team has had a number of close games recently, losing a 1-3 contest on home ice Nov. 29 to Dedham. Previously, they lost 4-2 to the Valley Warriors in Revere. They are 4-4 on the season.

•PEE WEE A: The Townie team has taken November by storm, going without a loss in the entire month with a record of 4-0-2. They have tied their last two contests, including a game in Malden on Nov. 29 with Winchester 4.

•SQUIRT AAA: The team pulled out a nice win on Nov. 28 in Revere against the Dorchester 1 team, 5-3. The team sits at 3-1-1 on the season and will face Brookline 1 in Cambridge on Dec. 5., 4:10 p.m.

•SQUIRT A1: Yet another team on the move in November, the Squirt A1's haven't lost this month. They hit a high with a 2-0 win over Dorchester 3 on Nov. 29 in Cambridge. That was a big win as they had tied the same team on Nov. 14. They'll face the Arlington 3 team in Malden on Dec. 5. The team is 5-0-1.

•SQUIRT A2: The A2 Townies took a tough loss to Waltham, 2-10, last weekend, but came off of a great win against Framingham 3 the previous weekend, 4-1, in Cambridge. They'll host Wellesley 4 on home ice this weekend, Dec. 5, at 4:20 p.m.

•THE MITES!...The Mite AAA

team is 3-1 on the season, losing a close one to Westwood last weekend, 2-3. They face Dedham 1 in Malden this weekend...The Mite AA team is 2-1-1 on the season and will face Newton 2 this Sunday in Malden. It will be the first meeting of the teams this year...The Mite A1 team has had a rough go at 0-3-1, but looks to rebound against Medfield 2 this Sunday...The Mite A2 team will face Framingham 5 on Sunday, 9:20 a.m.

### GIRLS HOCKEY

•The U14 girls pulled out an exciting win last weekend to notch a great victory against and always-good Natick program. The Townies got a goal from Regan Sullivan and the winner from Maevie Hurley with 14 seconds left to beat Natick 2-1. The win improves their record to 4-1-2 on the season.

•U12 Townies' tough 2-1 win over a disciplined Waltham Hawks on November 29 leaves them with a 6-1-1 record. They are in first place in the North division of the MYC girls league and in a tight race with several teams for overall first place.

•The U10 team is being coached this year by Steve Ness and Jack Sindoris. So far, they are 1-1 in League play and 3-2 overall. That puts them in a tie for third place with Melrose. Plenty of talented players on this squad. They face Waltham U10 on Sunday in Waltham.

## Thinking about retirement?

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# Sen. DiDomenico reflects on 10 years in the Legislature

By Seth Daniel

The journey over the past decade for Sen. Sal DiDomenico has been a whirlwind of starting out, moving up and being a helper for his community.

However, as he celebrates 10 years in the State Senate this year, he said he is always taken back to his late father's flower shop in Cambridge, where DiDomenico's professional mission statement of 'I want to help people' was formed as he watched his dad pull levers and work connections in the area to help people that needed it most.

"A lot of people used to come into his flower shop and ask for help for any number of things," said DiDomenico. "He had friends in politics and he would call them and try to get help for people. I saw that and I wanted to be that person too – the person who could call and get help for people. When I first got elected to the State Senate he was so proud. I can still see his face the night I got elected and he was so happy. I'm very lucky to have had such great support networks from my family, my wife, my kids, my friends and my mom and dad."

It was from that point that the fire to fight for communities was instilled in DiDomenico – and though he worked for some time successfully in the hotel and hospitality business – his fire for politics didn't cease. After a time as the Ward 3 Everett City Councilor, he decided to run for the open seat in the State Senate for the district representing Everett, Chelsea, Charlestown, and parts of Cambridge and Allston. It was a risky move, but it resulted in a win. Now, after a decade of advocacy at the highest levels as he has risen to the upper leadership of the State Senate as Assistant Majority Leader, he finds himself at the table for almost all big decisions in state policy.

"Being at the table where decisions are made in the Senate is a great place to be for my district," he said.

But DiDomenico was adamant to stress that he doesn't just bring himself and his own opinions to that decision-making table. He said he has made a point out of getting to know the heart-and-soul of the communities he represents and to understand what each needs – taking that to the table to make sure it's heard by

those in power.

"A lot of what I do is not rocket science," he said. "I actually go into the communities and talk to people and know their names. I feel what we do in the State House comes from what is happening in the communities I represent. A lot of what we do comes from advocates in my district.

"The louder voices get access, but the people who don't feel they have a voice don't push it when they hit a barrier," he continued. "Those are the people I want to speak for – those people who feel like government isn't working for them. I want to show them our toles is to help people and their voices are heard by me. It all goes back to that simple phrase I've always carried with me, that being 'I want to help people.'"

Relying on a dedicated support network from each of his communities – a network that has always included his family close by his side – he has marched towards that goal in pursuing important legislation that he has always felt was the right thing to do. That is especially true of education funding, early childhood education and school lunch options.

Some of his landmark legislative achievements in the last 10 years include: Breakfast After the Bell, Community Investment Tax Credit and Extension, Social Worker Safety, Pre-Registration for Youth, Early Ed & Out of School Time Capital Fund, Safe and Supportive Schools, E-bike Regulations, SNAP Gap Common Application, Language Opportunities for Our Kids, Life the Cap on Kids, Youth Tobacco Prevention, Health Care Equity for Foster Children, and Children with Medical Complexities.

Nothing has been as close to his heart though as education and the battle for more educational funding equity – an issue that was hopefully resolved last year with the signing of the Student Opportunity Act. DiDomenico said his advocacy and role in getting that multi-year bill passed was one of his crowning achievements in the past 10 years.

"I fought for our students to not just get their fair share, but more than their fair share because of the inequities our students face," he said. "They need more than other students need...We all know it's a great bill for kids and teachers, but over time we'll see a huge



*State Sen. Sal DiDomenico has helped the communities in his district navigate COVID-19 over the last 10 months, but this year he has also marked the milestone of 10 years in office as state senator. He said he has found success by getting to know the people in his communities first-hand and then advocating for what they say they need.*

change in how we educate our kids because we have the resources to do it. In Everett, Chelsea and Charlestown, we have a lot of obstacles. There are a lot of things we need in our communities that other communities don't have to deal with. To me, to change funding formulas without taking into account these challenges wasn't right, but we finally fixed that."

The education piece has also filtered into pre-school and early childhood education, where DiDomenico has been a leader on the issue for some time. That has been recognized by many advocacy groups who have awarded him for his efforts – something that can seem casual but in fact is very unique.

His drive to expand Head Start and get pre-school for every three-year-old in the state is an effort – along with expanded child health care – he calls his "baby" in terms of issues.

Those efforts have many times crossed over with advocacy for senior citizens – working on both issues with community-based organizations to get proper funding so those groups are care for.

"A big part of my job is working within my communities with community-based organizations that are on the front lines every day and supporting them by making sure funding gets to them to do their work," he said. "Having

these long-standing relationships even before I was in the Senate has helped me advocate for them in putting policies they want in place and getting resources for them."

Those relationships transitioned well to provide COVID-19 relief through those organizations directly to the residents – something DiDomenico said has been the primary focus of his office for the last 10 months. He said he and his staff have been in close contact with leaders in Everett, Chelsea and Charlestown to assist them in COVID-19 responses. That has included advocating for the use of the EnVision Hotel in Everett as a COVID isolation center paid for by the state and utilized by all three communities. It's also included close collaboration with Gov. Charlie Baker in mobilizing resources like food and, in the case of Chelsea, deploying the National Guard. It's also included Facebook telethons to raise money to help all three communities with essential needs during the pandemic.

Much of this work, however, he said could not be done without the help of his staff at the State House. He said his staff is unique in that there is very little turnover and those that come to work for him rarely leave. In fact, two of his staffers have been with him since he walked through the doors of the State House 10 years ago.

"We haven't had a lot of turnover in 10 years," he said. "I've had 10 staff members in 10 years. That's pretty remarkable...That's incredible and plays well to my constituents because they are

experienced and know what our communities need and who to call to get things done. They get things done because of relationships we've built over time both inside and outside the State House."

Some of those senator-plus-staff achievements show up in small issues that are resolved behind the scenes, but others show up in the State Budget. Those recent accomplishments include:

- Education: \$9.725 million
- Environment, Parks and Substance Abuse Prevention: \$280,000
- City Upgrades: \$2.5 million
- Transportation Infrastructure: \$12.2 million
- Public Safety: \$1.15 million
- Children, Families, Veterans and Seniors: \$1.5 million
- Housing and Small Business Relief: \$2.5 million

All told, that equals out to more than \$82 million in recent months, DiDomenico said, and is a credit to his time in the Legislature and the advocacy of his dedicated staff – not to mention the strong relationships he enjoys with key members of the communities in his district.

In the end, the 10-year journey has changed so much about DiDomenico and he said it boils down to just loving his job.

"I love hotel work and I love that industry, but I can tell you by far the State Senate is the best job I've had in my life," he said. "It's a privilege to serve. I love being a state senator and hope to do it a long, long time."

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# NEW Health continues to offer COVID-19 testing in Charlestown

By John Lynds

With the COVID-19 positive test rate coming down a bit here and across the city, Mayor Martin Walsh said this week he's expecting another surge in cases following the Thanksgiving holiday.

Walsh and public health experts are still urging residents to get tested in order to know their COVID status and properly isolate to

decrease the spread of the virus.

There are over 30 testing sites across the city and North End Waterfront Health (NEW Health), an affiliate of Massachusetts General Hospital and Boston Medical Center, announced its site in Charlestown will remain open to all residents and patients of the health center throughout the holiday and winter season.

According to Megan Ohlson,

NEW Health testing site opened this past summer to all NEW Health patients and all residents of Charlestown regardless of symptoms or insurance.

The Charlestown site is open Monday through Friday, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., and has been moved indoors to the Crossroads Resource Center at 15 Tufts Street. Both drive-up and walk-up options remain available.

Appointments are required and can be made by calling 857-238-1100 for the Charlestown testing site.

Ohlson said the site will remain open as long as needed in order to ensure NEW Health is doing its part to combat COVID spread in the community.

"In the City of Boston, we are committed to providing equitable access to COVID-19 testing in our neighborhoods, and I'm pleased to build on that work with this new resource," said Mayor Walsh. "It's especially important now for anyone who spent the Thanksgiving holiday with people outside their household to get tested and limit the further spread of COVID-19."

The COVID-19 test site initiative was announced by Walsh in May as a way to help fill any gaps in testing availability, prioritizing neighborhoods and populations that need dedicated testing efforts

to create equitable access to testing.

In addition to the City's two mobile testing sites, testing is available at over 30 locations across the city. Individuals can call the Mayor's Health Line with any questions using 617-534-5050.

A full list of testing sites across Boston can be found at <https://www.boston.gov/departments/public-health-commission/covid-19-testing-sites>.

Walsh recently announced the City of Boston launched "Get The Test, Boston," a pledge designed to encourage residents to get a COVID-19 test. Additionally, businesses who sign the pledge will share testing resources and information with their employees.

The City has also been partnering with community health centers to increase access to testing, particularly in neighborhoods experiencing higher rates of COVID-19.



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## For the Record

### •SUPER SITES FOR BPS MEALS

Beginning October 26, BPS Super Sites open for Mondays through Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. BPS families can pick up free breakfasts and lunches. Some locations also provide free toiletries and free groceries on select days.

\*Edwards Middle School – 28 Walker St.

\*Harvard/Kent Elementary – 50 Bunker Hill St.

From the Dec. 3 Zoning Advisory Board of Appeal meeting, 5 p.m., online:

•102 High St. Applicant: Tucker Levy. Purpose: Renovate kitchen /garden level and add 145sqft addition to rear garden level of home to create additional living space. No change in occupancy.

•6 Mount Vernon Ave. Applicant: Timothy Burke. Purpose: Amend permit to construct a new dormer on rear of house with a roof deck above. Access to roof deck from new stair and hatch. Work includes new framing, cladding, windows, decking, roof hatch and railings. Work includes associated electrical, plumbing and mechanical work.

**BPDA Community Meeting - Building 108 RFP**

Join the BPDA for a presentation of the proposals in response to the RFP for redevelopment of Building 108 in the Charlestown Navy Yard. A minor modification to the Charlestown Urban Renewal Plan is being considered in regards to the project to allow Research and Development Uses.

When: Thursday, December 3, 6 p.m.  
Where: This meeting will be held virtually.

From the Dec. 8 Zoning Board hearing, 9 a.m., online:

•41 Mt. Vernon St.

BPDA IAG Meeting - Bunker Hill Housing Redevelopment

•The 6th Impact Advisory Group meeting in connection with the Bunker Hill Housing Redevelopment. When: Wednesday, December 9, 6 p.m. Where: This meeting will be held virtually.

**CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON CITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES HEARING:**

A Dec. 4, 11:30 a.m., hearing to discuss safety of construction sites in the City of Boston. This matter was sponsored by Councilor Ed Flynn, and referred to the Committee on January 15, 2020.

**CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS WORKING SESSION:**

A Dec. 7, 10 a.m., working session regarding an ordinance on surveillance oversight and information sharing. This matter was sponsored by Councilors Ricardo Arroyo, Kim Janey, and Michelle Wu. It was referred to the Committee on May 6, 2020.

**CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON ARTS, CULTURE, AND SPECIAL EVENTS HEARING:**

A Dec. 7, 2 p.m., hearing regarding the creation of a Boston Sestercentennial Commission to mark the 250th anniversary of 1776. This matter was sponsored by Kenzie Bok, and referred to the Committee on September 23, 2020.

**Comments to MBTA Proposal to Eliminate the Water Ferry and Other Service Cuts Due December 4th!**

Among the service cuts proposed by the MBTA is the water ferry between the Navy Yard and Long Wharf. Navy Yard residents are urged to provide comments regarding the ferry's elimination. For reference, you can find the letter Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard sent to the MBTA on our website at [www.friendscny.org/news](http://www.friendscny.org/news).

Comments should be sent to [publicengagement@mbta.com](mailto:publicengagement@mbta.com), copying our elected state officials, [Sal.DiDomenico@masenate.gov](mailto:Sal.DiDomenico@masenate.gov) and [Dan.Ryan@mahouse.gov](mailto:Dan.Ryan@mahouse.gov). You can also provide comments at <https://www.mbta.com/forging-ahead>. The reporting by the Patriot Bridge on the water ferry elimination can be found at [https://www.friendscny.org/https://charlestownbridge.com/2020/11/18/water-transport-could-be-challenged-with-ferry-cuts/](http://www.friendscny.org/https://charlestownbridge.com/2020/11/18/water-transport-could-be-challenged-with-ferry-cuts/). Comments to the MBTA are due by 5:00 p.m. on December 4th.

**CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS HEARING:** The Committee will hold a Dec. 3, 10 a.m., hearing for a special law re: Preference for Boston High School Graduates for the Position of Police Officers in the City of Boston. The Chair of the Committee is Councilor Lydia Edwards. The sponsor of the docket is Mayor Martin J. Walsh.

•The Mayor announced an extension of the Outdoor Dining Program beyond its original end date of October 31. Restaurants using private outdoor space can continue to do so for the duration of the public health emergency. And

restaurants using public space on streets and sidewalks can continue until December 1. The City will also waive application fees for the use of outdoor propane heaters in dining areas. Restaurants will still need a permit from the Fire Department, and safety regulations around their use will remain in place. Restaurants can use electric heaters without a permit, as long as no cords are crossing sidewalks.

### •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](http://AttorneyGeneral'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.

# NEIGHBORHOOD ROUND UP

## FREE KIDS SNOWMAN ORNAMENT PROJECT

Do you wanna build a snowman? Mockingbird and Essem Art Studio are collaborating to spread joy in our community with a free snowman ornament making art lab. Free kits are available for pickup at Mockingbird Baby & Kids (219 Main Street). The event will be held LIVE on Instagram at @EssemArtStudio on Saturday morning, Dec 5th at 10 AM. This is a family/sibling friendly activity and everyone is welcome so pick up your kits and follow Mockingbird and Essem Art Studio on Instagram to be prompted to join the live event.

## KIDS GINGERBREAD HOUSE PROJECT

The Charlestown Branch of the Boston Public Library and the Essem Art Studio invite the community to a Cardboard Gingerbread House project. This virtual program will be live on the Facebook page of the Charlestown Branch Boston Public Library on December 9th at 10am and will also publish on Essem Art Studio via Instagram. The community is invited to pick a Gingerbread House kit at the Kennedy Center or the Library, which includes candy, stickers and the cardboard milk box structure of the Gingerbread House. To pick up at the library please contact Eileen Whittle at ewhittle@bpl.org. To pick up at the Kennedy Center contact cgalvin@kennedycenter.org. The Boys and Girls Club will also participate. If you can't pick up materials, you can also opt in to upcycle a milk carton and use any crafting materials you have at home for this open ended project.

## FRIENDS OF THE NAVY YARD HOST VIRTUAL DISCUSSION

Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard invites you join us on Tuesday, December 8th at 7:00 for a virtual talk with Jim Aloisi, former Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation, to discuss the current state of the MBTA, its proposed reduction in service, and thoughts on how the T can move forward beyond the pandemic. Jim is a Lecturer of Public Policy and Planning at MIT and a writer, transit advocate and strategic consultant. He played a central role in the creation of Boston's Rose

Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway. In addition to serving as Secretary of Transportation in the Administration of Governor Deval Patrick, Jim's public service includes service on the Boston Human Rights Commission, the Massachusetts Transportation Finance Commission, and the Massachusetts Port Authority Board. Jim is the author of four books, including The Big Dig, The Vidal Lecture, and Massport at 60, and is a regular contributor to Commonwealth Magazine. He serves on the Board of TransitMatters, a Boston based transit advocacy group. You can purchase The Big Dig here <https://www.amazon.com/Big-Dig-Remembers-Robert-Allison/dp/1889833827>. For details on how to join the talk, email [friendscny1@gmail.com](mailto:friendscny1@gmail.com).

## "E" INC EMPORIUM - TAKE OUT ON FRIDAYS

"e" inc. EMPORIUM has fantastic holiday merchandise that includes many great new purveyors and a slew of hands-on activities, games, kits, etc. Order online by midnight Thursday for "Take

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At our website you can also learn about our Secret Santa program that lets our community friends share their largesse by adding a toy to their order for our younger neighbors in need. All the funds "e" inc. collects at the Emporium are used for its mission to teach children and youth the science driving the planet and the skills to make a difference. "e" inc. students have been helping the planet for over 15-years. Click on the Science Emporium on the "e" inc. home page: [www.einc-action.org](http://www.einc-action.org) and you're there!

## FREE FALL STORY + ART FOR CHILDREN

The Charlestown Branch of the Boston Public Library and Essem Art Studio are happy to present a FREE Fall Story + Art series. Children's Librarian, Mrs. Eileen Whittle will read a selected book and local artist, Sophia Moon, will present a family/sibling friendly art project that can be modified for little artists as young as 2 years old (with adult guidance). Every Wednesday at 10am, the installation will launch on the Facebook

page of the Charlestown BPL, and on Essem Art Studio's virtual Art Studio ([tv.essemartstudio.com](http://tv.essemartstudio.com)).

## FREE VIRTUAL ART STUDIO TRIAL

Essem Art Studio launches a virtual art studio with monthly subscriptions to continue sparking joy and cultivating creative power in little artists (age 2-10) and families with young children. The virtual art studio provides engaging virtual art labs and resources for parents and families who are looking for ways to introduce more art and creative practices at home. Every week, new art labs and creative prompts are added to the growing online catalog. You can enjoy a free 7 day trial of the virtual art program now. Visit [essemartstudio.com](http://essemartstudio.com) for more information!

## HARVEST ON VINE FOOD PANTRY APPEAL

The Food Pantry has had a great need at this time as it has been very busy serving many more

residents in town and providing more frequent distributions. Donations of all non-perishable foods are greatly appreciated. Donations drop are: Food Pantry, 49 Vine St. (Hayes Square), The

Cooperative Bank - 201 Main St. or the Parish Center - 46 Winthrop St. (by the Training Field). Donate by sending checks to: Harvest on Vine, Parish Center, 46 Winthrop St., Charlestown, MA 02129. They are also looking for volunteers to assist with distribution. For more information, call Tom MacDonald 617-990-7314.

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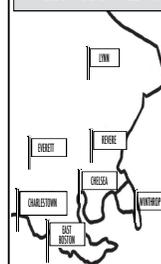
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