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CHARLESTOWN

PATRIOT-BRIDGE

Wu highlights initiatives in State of the City address

By Adam Swift



MAYOR'S OFFICE PHOTO BY JOHN WILCOX

Boston Mayor Michelle Wu delivers her State of the City address at the MGM Music Hall Tuesday night.

The future of Franklin Park, one of Boston's open space and recreational jewels, took center stage at Mayor Michelle Wu's State of the City address at MGM Music Hall on Tuesday night.

Wu also highlighted new initiatives to house families, expand homeownership, and plan for a green and growing city during her second annual address. She outlined partnerships with employers, higher education, and cultural institutions she said will transform public schools and BPS athletics and expand opportunities for students and families from pre-K to college, including summer jobs and unprecedented access to spaces for learning and curiosity.

"Last summer, Boston scored a huge goal: landing the National Women's Soccer League's newest franchise in 2026," said Wu.

With the city's partners at Boston Unity Soccer Group, Wu said the city is excited to renovate the

historic White Stadium at Franklin Park into the first sports venue in the country that will co-house a pro sports team and a public school athletics program.

"Our students will have a world-class grass field, eight-lane track, brand new locker rooms, and conditioning and study spaces to call home," said Wu. "We'll also create a new booster fund for

BPS athletics to cover expenses for uniforms, extra equipment, and dedicated transportation."

Wu noted that the plans for a revitalized Franklin Park extend beyond bringing a professional soccer team to a renovated White Stadium.

"For my family and many others, there is no more magical place in the city, with its historic

stone bridges; wooded trails; and beloved community spaces," said Wu. "But our biggest park has suffered from decades of disinvestment."

This year, the mayor said the city will act on recommendations of the Franklin Park Coalition and community members to begin restoring Franklin Park to its full-potential.

The city will hire a park administrator and six new maintenance staff, bringing dedicated park staffing to its highest level in over 50 years, Wu said. In addition, she said the city will begin the community process to reimagine and invest in a home of the Elma Lewis Playhouse.

"Every young person deserves to grow up in a city with wide open spaces that coax our legs into running – that remind us to breathe deep and look up at the sky," said Wu.

Rickie Thompson, the President of the Franklin Park Coalition, said her organization is thrilled to

celebrate the mayor's significant new investments in Franklin Park.

"The Coalition has been advocating for renovations and additional staffing for a significant time," said Thompson. "We're very grateful that Mayor Wu is responsive to these requests and will work to update this critical resource that has been neglected for too long."

Jennifer Epstein, the controlling partner of Boston Unity Soccer, applauded Wu's vision and the partnership to revitalize White Stadium.

"The transformation of the stadium into a world-class sports facility presents an incredible opportunity for BPS student-athletes, the communities around the park, and our soccer club," said Epstein. "We are building our team for Boston and the diverse communities represented here, and we thank the City for its leadership. Working together with the

(STATE OF THE CITY Pg. 7)

Residents fighting against Constitution Inn project

By Michael Coughlin Jr.

With the help of Charlestown residents, the Neighborhood Voice Alliance (NVA), a local civic group, is leading the charge in opposition to the Independence, a permanent supportive and affordable housing project from the Planning Office for Urban Affairs (POUA) and St. Francis House at the site of the old Constitution Inn.

During a meeting last month, the Boston Planning and Development Agency's (BPDA) Board approved the project that contains 100 affordable rental units — 48 of which are permanent supportive housing (PSH) units — 32 for women and 16 for veterans.

A BPDA Memorandum describes the PSH model, saying

it "combines providing deeply affordable, permanent, leased housing for individuals experiencing homelessness with tailored individualized services to assist people with disabilities to live successfully in the community long term."

It should be noted that those in the PSH units will be subject to CORI and SORI checks in-person interviews and will need to be "certified persons on the City's Coordinated Entry System for housing or the Veterans Administration list for housing," according to a "Response to Public Comments" document on the project's webpage on the BPDA's website.

Moreover, regarding other aspects of the project, the staff-

ing is said to "exceed best practice standards," according to Bill Grogan, the President of POUA. It will also include a "robust, belt-and-suspenders approach to the care, comfort and safety of our residents, staff and larger community," with KROLL Security according to the aforementioned "Response to Public Comments" document.

Additionally, 24/7 private concierge-style security and on-site wellness staff are slated for the project.

With all this being said, this project has been frustrating for many Charlestown residents who have opposed it since the proponents first proposed it in 2022.

(CONSTITUTION INN Pg. 5)

CNC GENERAL MEETING SET FOR JAN. 2

CNC Development Committee Meeting, Wednesday, January 17, 2024 7 PM. The CNC Development Committee will hold an in-person, public meeting on Wednesday, January 17, at 7 PM, at the Mary Colbert Apartments, 20 Devens Street, Charlestown. The sole agenda item will be the 10 Thompson Square redevelopment. A presentation by the project proponents will be followed by an opportunity for the committee and community to ask questions about the proposed project.

CNC Meeting, Thursday, January 18, 2024, 7 PM. The Charlestown Neighborhood Council will hold an in-person, public meeting on Thursday, January 18, 2024, 7-9 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus, 545 Medford Street, Charlestown. The sole agenda item is the Sullivan Square Underpass. A presentation by the Boston Transportation and the Boston Public Works Departments will be followed by an opportunity for the committee and community to ask questions about the project.

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EDITORIAL

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. NEVER GAVE UP

For those of a certain age, it is hard to imagine that 2024 will mark 56 years since the assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Memphis while he was standing on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel on April 4, 1968. Recalling how we felt when he first heard the news of Dr. King's murder still brings chills and a deep sense of sadness that never has subsided.

For those who are too young to have been alive in that era of American history, there are a few things that everyone should know about Dr. King that should provide inspiration to all of us.

First, Dr. King was fearless. He knew from the inception of his rise to prominence of the Civil Rights movement that he would become a target for those who opposed change. Yet, even though he often told others that he believed his death would be imminent, he did not relent in his fight to continue his work in the civil rights movement.

Second, Dr. King stood for the rights of all Americans, not merely those of color. He was in Memphis working with striking sanitation workers, whose pay and working conditions he was seeking to help improve. He was an outspoken critic of the Vietnam War because he knew it to be an unjust war, not only for poor Americans who could not get a college deferment for the draft, but also for the people of Vietnam, whose homeland was being bombed into oblivion at great profit for the American military-industrial complex.

If Dr. King were alive in the present era, there is no doubt that he would have been in the forefront of the Black Lives Matter movement that has highlighted the ongoing racism and economic inequality that oppresses Americans of all races today.

Dr. King's words ring as true today as they did two generations ago; his "I Have A Dream" and "I've Been to the Mountaintop" speeches are among the most powerful not only in American history, but in all of Western civilization.

All of us should learn from the example set by Dr. King that in each of us is the power to change the world -- that each of us has the capacity to inspire others, whether through our words or deeds, whether on a small or large scale, to make the world a better place.

Many of our fellow citizens have followed the path set by Dr. King and many more will do so in the years ahead. So as we celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day this Monday, let us recall not only his memory and the many things that he accomplished, but let us also resolve never to give in to the forces of intolerance, prejudice, and hate that continue to plague our country and the world today.

REPLACE BELICHICK? GOOD LUCK WITH THAT!

As we are writing this at the beginning of the week, there is rampant speculation that the Patriots are going to fire Bill Belichick, who undeniably is the greatest football coach of all time.

Yes, he had a great quarterback in Tom Brady, but Belichick's genius was in taking players such as Brady (who, after all, was the 200th pick in the draft) and turning them into pros who could fill a niche (Teddy Bruschi, Julian Edelman, and Kevin Faulk being prime examples) on his teams. Belichick's Patriots were a classic case of the sum of the whole being greater than the sum of the parts in much the same way that Red Auerbach, another coaching genius, did for the Celtics.

Belichick's attention to detail was unparalleled, which explains why he routinely could allow great players to leave -- think Lawyer Milloy, Ty Law, Richard Seymour, Vince Wilfork, etc. -- and still be able to turn unheralded replacements into top-notch players.

To be sure, Bill Belichick wasn't perfect -- we still have never heard a logical explanation for why he did not play Malcolm Butler in that Super Bowl with Philly -- but when you look around at all of the so-called "new wave" of football coaches, there is a lot of mediocrity, and even the best are not in his league. (The only current coach who comes close to Belichick is an old school guy, Andy Reid of Kansas City.)

The Patriots need to rebuild and if there's anyone who knows how to do that, it is Bill Belichick (although even he will have a hard time unless the Pats can draft a quarterback who can compete with Ryan Allen, Mahomes, Tua, Joe Burrow, Lamar Jackson, Justin Herbert, and C.J. Stroud).

Our prediction is this: If Belichick goes, whoever is his replacement will last about three years -- and the Pats and their fans will realize that there was only one Bill Belichick, the G.O.A.T.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LOOK AT THE BIG PICTURE

To the Editor,

The BPDA Board voted to fast-track the Constitution Inn's conversion to the Independence, bypassing an Impact Advisory Committee and the article 80 process. Since the building exists, and in response to Mayor Wu's urgent call for housing, the Board determined that additional review was unnecessary. Granting a change of use permit does not absolve anyone from the responsibility to cultivate a healthy neighborhood--free of crime, nuisance, and disturbances-- to the best of everyone's ability.

It is important to assess Independence's impact on the public realm as part of the review process. Collectively, the BPDA and the proponents remain responsible for addressing these impacts, even though the public process has been eliminated for expediency. The publicly available data for police calls from existing permanent supportive housing forecasts future potential problems for Charlestown.

In 2023 our satellite Vine Street police department reduced crime despite their limited resources. During two public safety meetings, the police provided statistics showing reductions year over year in violent crime, drug trafficking and usage. This progress is especially meaningful given Charlestown's history of drug overdoses, which are remembered in Peace Park.

Steve Thompson, in a 12/12/23 Washington Post article about the challenges of supportive housing identified "the gap between a program's ideals versus what is happening on the ground." In reviewing the status quo in the Navy Yard, one needs only examine the two existing highest occupancy residential buildings--Flagship Wharf and Harborview. The former are condominiums; the latter are rental units. With over 400 residences combined, there were a total of 69 calls in 58 weeks (about 1 year 1 and a half months) to the police. This call volume is infrequent, with rare serious causality. People who live here know that this is a quiet neighborhood even with significant tourism in the summer and fall.

In contrast, Permanent Sup-

portive Housing (PSH) apartments at 48 Boylston Street, delivered 1.5 times the number of incident calls to the police; with over 80% fewer residences. This is a wakeup call.

The proponents--the Saint Francis House, and the Planning Office of Urban Affairs (POUA)-- have stated repeatedly that the shelter population is the instigation for the Boylston Street police calls--at a pace described by our Vine Street police as "CONSTANT" A careful review of the public police calls reveals apartment numbers and some designations for shelter activity separately. Nonetheless, the Saint Francis House administration of the two Boylston residences is responsible for effectively managing the shelter and the PSH apartments so as not to adversely affect the surrounding neighborhood. Running a shelter is an enormous challenge, and negative impacts must be proactively prevented. This is a lapse between intent and results.

One "proven model of success" in the proponents' 10/19/23 Constitution Inn public meeting presentation, is the Huntington YMCA. These 89 affordable residences, for individuals and families in transition, had over 280 calls to the police during that same 58-week period. Like all properties that were reviewed, the call content includes nuisances, hang-ups, but also serious disturbances, medical emergencies, and crimes. Currently, success is measured exclusively by putting a roof over someone's head. While this is the proponent's primary purpose, it is important to add a neighborhood impact metric and accountability if any entity is to be in the housing business. Without it, salvation for some unhoused people will never pro-

duce better solutions for all.

In the same public presentation, the staffing plan of a 1:4 staff to client ratio raises questions. If there are 60 people in PSH designated apartments, there should be 15 people on staff. The wording of "qualified households headed by women," and "qualified households headed by veterans" is confusing. Since the total stated population is between 150 and 160 residents, it is unclear if the PSH designated studios are for an individual or a household. And, if this staffing model is optimal, then should not it be employed at 48 Boylston Street--also cited as a success. Using the amount of police calls as a baseline; Independence would double call frequency to 220 calls in the 58-week timeline. This mathematical projection is a logical, and predictable forecast.

In the same Washington Post article, Steve Thompson states: "Some people in supportive housing behave dangerously." Many in Charlestown doubt that the required expertise will become reality. The "measure of success" cannot be so one-sided as to ignore any data-driven negative impact on our neighborhood. This is the big picture.

Councilor Coletta was gentle in her assessment of the BPDA's failures, the broken process, and the need for accountability to Charlestown. We look forward to seeing the Councilor's request for a codified agreement fast-tracked, as it is urgently needed.

The above letter was sent to the BPDA, Saint Francis House, the POUA, and our elected officials, it was signed by 45 Charlestown residents.

Tracy Iannelli
Connie Gutierrez
Alex Poliakov



CHARLESTOWN

PATRIOT-BRIDGE

THE CHARLESTOWN PATRIOT-BRIDGE,

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DiDomenico and Senate pass “Blue Envelope” bill supporting people with autism

Senator Sal DiDomenico joined all Massachusetts Senators in unanimously passing An Act facilitating better interactions between police officers and persons with autism spectrum disorder—also known as the “Blue Envelope” bill—to improve communication during traffic stops involving a person with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

The bill would create a voluntary program that would make available blue envelopes that people with autism could carry with them while driving and hand over to a police officer in the event that they are pulled over. A driver could place their license, registration, and insurance cards inside the envelope, and the outside of the envelope would note that the driver has Autism Spectrum Disorder and provide guidance on best practices on how to interact with the individual.

The envelope’s guidance—which would be created by a coalition of advocates, Chiefs of Police, and the RMV—would help law enforcement officers to better understand the actions of individuals with autism, who are more likely to have increased sensitivities and communication challenges in stressful situations.

“This legislation will improve communication and interactions between law enforcement officers

and our neighbors with autism which will improve public safety for everyone,” said Sal DiDomenico, Assistant Majority Leader of the Massachusetts Senate. “I am proud to support this commonsense measure that has garnered support from a wide range of groups, including advocates and our law enforcement community, and will continue to make our state safer for our residents. Thank you, Senate President Spilka and Senator Comerford for getting this legislation the attention and urgency it deserves.”

“In Massachusetts, we stand firmly in our belief that every person is entitled to equal treatment in their lives, regardless of their background or life experience. For our neuro-diverse friends and neighbors with Autism Spectrum Disorder, that means empowering each other to reach our full potential,” said Senate President Karen E. Spilka (D-Ashland). “Today’s action in the Senate would make a common-sense, meaningful, and positive change to how people with Autism Spectrum Disorder interact with members of our law enforcement community, bringing us closer to the ideals we strive for. I am grateful to Senator Comerford for bringing this bill to the floor, as well as Chair Rodrigues and Chair Crighton for their support in the committee process.”

Many people with autism display no physical markers to alert others to their disability. Without adequate training, it is possible that law enforcement could misread the actions of an individual with autism. Every year, numerous people with Autism Spectrum Disorder suffer psychological trauma and physical injury as a result of such misunderstandings.

The bill has wide support from Autism Spectrum Disorder advocates and law enforcement organizations around the state.

“The Arc of Massachusetts and Advocates for Autism of Massachusetts (AFAM) are grateful to Senator Comerford, Senate President Spilka and Chairman Rodrigues for passing the Blue Envelope bill, a priority bill for our advocacy organizations,” said Maura Sullivan, Director of Government Affairs for The Arc of Massachusetts. “This bill will ease interactions between police and autistic drivers. We know these situations can escalate and become traumatic or even dangerous. The Arc and AFAM applaud the Senate for taking action to be inclusive of the needs of the drivers with autism in Massachusetts.”

“The Blue Envelope Bill would be a game changer for our family and for so many Massachusetts residents. Like many people with autism, my 25-year-old son Sam

does not have any physical characteristics that indicate he has autism,” said Ilyse Levine-Kanji, an Executive Committee member of Advocates for Autism of Massachusetts (AFAM). “In a stressful situation, where split second decisions must be made, I’m relieved that a police officer could see a blue envelope in Sam’s car and immediately understand that any unusual behavior or speech pattern is a result of autism. Thus, this bill could dramatically decrease the possibility of a tragic misunderstanding. Advocates for Autism of Massachusetts is extremely grateful for Senator Comerford’s leadership in introducing and championing this common-sense initiative, and to the Senate for moving so quickly to pass the bill.”

During the bill’s hearing before the Transportation Committee, the Massachusetts State Police Association and a representative of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association testified in favor of the bill.

“Massachusetts police officers conduct thousands of traffic stops each year. While most of these interactions are relatively ‘routine,’ officers do not know who they are interacting with before the traffic stop, so they proceed with caution,” said Tyrone Parham, Assistant Vice Chancellor and Chief of Police at the University of Massa-

chusetts Amherst. “There are many potential communication conflicts with police officers during traffic stops and perspectives offered by those on the autism spectrum. The introduction of the blue envelope under stressful interactions will provide immediate information and context to the officer as they begin to communicate. Traffic stops are some of the most dangerous citizen interactions by police and this additional information gleaned by the Blue Envelope will be extremely helpful. I am extremely enthusiastic and grateful for the passing of this imperative legislation. Our Commonwealth drivers on the autism spectrum will be able to quickly and confidently present the blue envelope the next time they are pulled over during a routine traffic stop. This will be instrumental to help bridge the communication gap for both motorists and police officers.”

Similar legislation has been adopted in other states, including Connecticut, and has been shown to reduce stress, facilitate better communication, and improve safety.

Having been passed by the Senate, the legislation now moves to the Massachusetts House of Representatives for consideration.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING FOR THE KENNEDY CENTER
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425 Medford Street

JANUARY

23

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

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Project Proponent:

The Flatley Company

Project Description:

The BPDA will be hosting a virtual Public Meeting in connection with the Planned Development Area (PDA) Master Plan associated with the 425 Medford Street project. The information at this meeting is crucial to you as a Boston resident, and stakeholder. Language Access services are available at no cost to you. If you require these services, please contact (Sarah.Peck@boston.gov) no later than: January 16, 2024.

对于您作为波士顿的居民和利益相关者, 本次会议的信息至关重要。与会的语言服务免费。如果您需要这些语言翻译服务, 请在下方的日期时间之前联系 (Sarah.Peck@boston.gov): 1/16/2024.

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Website:
bit.ly/425MedfordMasterPlan-PDA

BostonPlans.org

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Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary

DiDomenico and Senate colleagues pass wheelchair warranty reform

Senator Sal DiDomenico and his colleagues in the Massachusetts Senate voted unanimously to strengthen consumer protections for wheelchair users.

An Act expanding wheelchair warranty protections for consumers with disabilities—S.2541—requires all wheelchairs to come with warranties, extends the minimum warranty period to two years, sets standards for wheelchair repairs and replacements, and eliminates the cumbersome prior authorization process for all wheelchair repairs under \$1,000.

“I was proud to take action on this critical legislation in order to protect and empower wheelchair users throughout our state,” said Senator Sal DiDomenico, Assistant Majority Leader of the Massachusetts Senate. “Passing this bill puts us one step closer to supporting

the countless Massachusetts residents who rely on wheelchairs and have suffered with unaffordable wheelchair repairs for far too long. I want to thank Senate President Karen Spilka, and Senator John Cronin for focusing on this important and neglected issue.”

The legislation requires all wheelchairs sold or leased in the Commonwealth to come with express warranties—a change from the current law, which only requires customized wheelchairs to come with express warranties. The legislation also extends express warranties for wheelchairs from one year to two years, bringing Massachusetts in line with states like Rhode Island and Connecticut. To alleviate wait times for repairs, the bill mandates that wheelchair service providers diagnose repair issues remotely within three busi-

ness days following notice from a consumer and provide an in-person assessment no more than four business days after that.

If a wheelchair user cannot operate their in-warranty chair during the repair process, the bill mandates that manufacturers or dealers reimburse them for or provide a loaner wheelchair within four business days for most wheelchairs, or within eight business days for highly customized wheelchairs.

The bill also requires manufacturers and dealers to cover any collateral costs incurred during the repair process for in-warranty wheelchairs. For out-of-warranty wheelchairs, the legislation prohibits insurers for requiring consumers to go through a cumbersome prior authorization process for any repairs totaling less than

\$1,000. Finally, the bill allows the Attorney General’s office to take legal action against service providers who violate these provisions with unfair or deceptive business practices.

The legislation has received strong support from disability advocates across Massachusetts.

“S.2541 reflects an understanding of the challenges faced by wheelchair users and sets a new standard for consumer protection that will improve the quality of life for wheelchair users across the Commonwealth,” said Barbara L’Italien, Executive Director of the Disability Law Center. “We are grateful to Senate President Spilka, Senator Cronin, and the Massachusetts Senate for recognizing the profound impact this legislation will have on individuals with disabilities who utilize wheelchairs.”

“When a wheelchair, providing mobility so people can integrate into the community, too often breaks down, with waits as long as a year for repairs—we can fix cars and bikes in a day! —we have a serious problem,” Kay Schoucair, Senior Organizer, Boston Center for Independent Living (BCIL). “The time is overdue for manufacturers to simply stand behind their products. BCIL applauds the senate for pushing this much needed bill forward.”

A similar version of the legislation was passed by the Senate in 2022, however that legislation did not further advance in the Legislature.

Having been passed by the Senate, the legislation now heads to the Massachusetts House of Representatives for consideration.

boston logan 

2022 ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS & PLANNING REPORT (ESPR) INFORMATION SESSION

Massport will host a hybrid information session (in-person & virtually) to provide an update on the 2022 Logan ESPR. The topics that will be discussed include: ground transportation, activity levels/forecasting, aircraft noise, air quality, regional transportation, sustainability and resiliency, and airport planning. This information session will be streamed in English and Spanish.

The hybrid information session will take place:

Wednesday, January 17, 2024 at 6:00 P.M.
Cathy Leonard-McLean Community Room
Logan Airport Rental Car Center*
15 Transportation Way
East Boston, MA 02128

To access the meeting link and for more information, please visit:
<https://www.massport.com/logan-airport/about-logan/environmental-reports/>

Additional languages for the Public Information Session on the 2022 Boston Logan International Airport Environmental Status and Planning Report will be available upon request. Requests for additional languages are due by Friday, January 12, 2024. For more information or to request translation services please contact community@massport.com.

*The Rental Car Center is accessible via the MBTA Blue Line Airport Station by way of Massport’s On-Airport Shuttle (Route 22, 33 and 55).

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CONSTITUTION INN *(from pg. 1)*

Specifically, residents have voiced concerns about safety, the merits of the PSH model, and the idea that the project would work, considering aspects such as neighborhood services needed to fully support the individuals who might live in the PSH units and much more.

“There’s really a mountain of evidence that shows that permanent supportive housing has failed in California all up and down the West Coast basically,” said Mark Gallagher, a Member of Charlestown Voice, a group that has dedicated a website — <https://charlestownvoice.com/> to the project.

“If you look at the research, you can go to <https://charlestownvoice.com/> look at the research there that provides information on permanent supportive housing; you can see that there’s not a lot of success, if any, over a long-term period for this type of project,” said Bob O’Leary, another Member of Charlestown Voice.

Rosemary Macero, an NVA Board Member, questioned the internal security plan for the project and the safety of folks, some of whom might have children who could live in the development, whether it be those in the PSH units or the remaining 52 units not set aside for PSH.

Not only have the merits of the project been challenged by its opponents, but an equally frustrating aspect for residents has been the process the project went through to get its approval last month.

Specifically, for a substantial period, folks were calling for in-person meetings, writing letters with concerns, and more. However, these calls — according to residents — fell on deaf ears. “We tried all the right channels that we thought were appropriate. We tried reaching out to our representatives, our politicians; we even reached out to BPDA — the voices went unheard,” said Nancy Mara-Aldrich, an NVA Board Member.

One point of contention in the process was the decision to waive the creation of an impact advisory group (IAG) despite urges from residents and elected officials such as City Councilors Gabriela Coletta and Erin Murphy to have a full project review process.

Last month, a BPDA spokesperson told the Patriot-Bridge that an IAG was waived by the agency and the Mayor’s Office to “align with the Mayor’s Executive Order related to Speeding the Production of Affordable Housing.”

The spokesperson also indi-

cated that an IAG was waived “because IAGs are responsible for determining necessary mitigation and community benefits, which are not relevant in this project.”

Adding, that “Constitution Inn is an interior retrofit to accommodate a change of use from hotel to housing units, so the project would not generate significant impacts to the built environment, wind, shadow or traffic, and therefore would not require mitigation, and the community benefit from the project is predetermined as affordable housing.”

The IAG issue and the project review process as a whole have left residents, such as Mara-Aldrich and Macero, frustrated.

Mara-Aldrich was very critical of the BPDA, stating that the agency “has this environment of basically inequality.”

“There is no oversight of the BPDA to ensure that voices — local resident voices — are heard,” she added.

Macero was equally critical of the agency, saying, “The BPDA is basically an owner and disowner, and they have these things, and they do exactly what they please... we’re just getting stuff shoved down our throat with no regard for our quality of life.”

“It is just infuriating for us to have no voice in the process,” she also said.

The process, which has left residents fed up, and the recent approval of the project has led to what an email from the NVA to its donors calls “initial legal action signaling further proceedings.”

With the help of donations from the community, the NVA has retained the law firm Mirrione, Shaughnessy & Uitti, LLC, to help fight the project.

Mirrione, Shaughnessy & Uitti, LLC has sent a letter to the BPDA’s Director Arthur Jemison, which, according to the document, serves as “a formal complaint under G.L. c. 30A, § 23(b).”

The “formal complaint” against the BPDA is for “continued violations of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §§ 18-25, at the BPDA’s public meetings held via Zoom on October 19, 2023, and December 14, 2023,” according to the letter.

The letter alleges that the BPDA “conducted the October 19th Meeting via Zoom in a manner such that only the panelists presenting the Project were shown on screen.”

It also alleges that the agency “hand-selected certain public participants (whom only the BPDA could see) to speak publicly on

the Zoom platform and did not require those participants to identify themselves by name or address prior to speaking.”

The allegations mentioned above were actually concerns that were raised the day prior in an October 18th letter sent from a member of Mirrione, Shaughnessy & Uitti, LLC to Sarah Black, a Senior Project Manager with the BPDA, according to the “formal complaint.”

“Despite our clients’ concerns and requests in the October 18th Letter, the BPDA failed and refused to comply with the Open Meeting Law at the so-called “public meeting” that the BPDA held via Zoom on October 19, 2023,” reads the letter.

Regarding the December 14th meeting — the meeting where the BPDA Board approved the project — the letter alleges that the agency “failed to comply with the public notice provisions in advance of the December 14th Meeting.”

The letter also alleges that the agency “took the Project out of order from its place on the agenda, and conducted the meeting in such a manner that there was no deliberation by the BPDA, clearly indicating that a decision had been made outside of the public meeting process, in violation of the Open Meeting Law.”

Specifically, the letter claims that the public notice for the Board meeting posted on the BPDA website on December 12th said the public could “participate” in the meeting before it was allegedly changed the next day to say the public could “attend” the meeting.

The letter states, “The December 13, 2023, public notice was not provided within at least forty-eight (48) hours of the December 14th Meeting as required under the Open Meeting Law.”

“The public, including my clients, had been led to believe that the public would be able to participate in the December 14th Meeting, relying on the December 12, 2023, public notice of the BPDA’s agenda.”

It should be noted that during the December 14th Board meeting, the public was not invited to provide testimony on the project. However, Coletta was able to give testimony for her constituents.

Coletta’s testimony was cited in the letter, describing Charlestown residents’ frustration with the BPDA approval process, the desire for an IAG to be involved in the project review — which did not happen — and more.

The letter also used Coletta’s testimony when she stated that

there were residents who felt like the project was “a done deal.”

“Clearly, the BPDA’s December 14th Meeting revealed a merely “ceremonial acceptance” of public commentary and a “perfunctory ratification of secret decisions.” *McCrea v. Flaherty*, 71 Mass.App. Ct. 637 (2008),” reads the letter.

Lastly, the letter requests that the BPDA “set aside all actions” from the October and December meetings and “cure” the alleged Open Meeting Law violations through other requests.

Those requests are to have a newly scheduled public meeting where “the BPDA may take independent deliberative action and discuss on the record the public’s numerous objections to the Project” and that the project goes through full Article 80 Large Proj-

ect Review.

In an email response to a request for comment regarding the situation, the BPDA’s Assistant Director of Communications Britany Comak wrote, “The agency did not violate the law, as will be explained in greater detail in our formal response.”

Ultimately, it is clear that the community’s fight against the Independence is not only unfinished but has perhaps started a new chapter.

“I can make these arguments left and right, but these are the reasons that people said you know what, we wrote enough letters, we went through this, we’ve done everything by the book. The BPDA didn’t, and it only takes so much to make people say I’ve had enough,” said Gallagher.



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KENNEDY CENTER HOLDS SUCCESSFUL HOLIDAY DRIVE

Another successful Kennedy Center Holiday Drive is in the books! Thanks to the generosity of our neighbors who sponsored children, our local business partners, and special helpers, we served 288 families and 670 Charlestown children! Special thanks to our friends at the Warren Tavern, DiDomenico Foundation, Amazon, MyStryde, the Charlestown YMCA, and Mimi's Angels. If you played any part, no part is too small. On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff, and clients we serve, thank you for your generosity, trust, and commitment to our mission.

The holiday drive is a popular event, but it's only one of the many ways the Kennedy Center impacts our community daily. I encourage you to spread the word about the wonderful programs and services that the Center provides, including Early Education Services, Charlestown Family Engagement Network (CFEN), JFK Home Care, food insecurity initiatives,

and senior social and wellness programs.

To learn more or get involved, please contact Crystal Galvin at

(617) 241-8866 ext. 1352 or email cgalvin@kennedycenter.org or visit www.kennedycenter.org.



People and businesses were generous with donations for the Holiday Drive.



Rep. Dan Ryan (second from right) was on hand to help the Holiday Drive.



Volunteers from the Warren Tavern helped to organize the donations.



City Councillor Gabriela Coletta (right) volunteered her time for the drive.

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STATE OF THE CITY (from pg. 1)

City and members of the community, we look forward to delivering a reimagined White Stadium that enhances our city and contributes positively to the vibrancy and activation of beloved Franklin Park."

Throughout Wu's address, there was a focus on housing, education, and the future for young people in the city.

"Time and again, we have proven the future is ours to shape," said Wu. "And day by day, we're following through on Boston's promise to be a green and growing City for everyone. As a mom—and a BPS parent—I know that to truly be the best City for every family, we have to give our young people the world: in the classroom, in community, in every corner of our City."

Wu announced that the City will eliminate barriers to building accessory dwelling units (ADUs) this year by changing zoning to make these small homes as-of-right citywide. The ADU program allows owner occupants to create smaller, independent units inside their homes or in their yards.

The mayor also announced plans to identify locations for nearly 3,000 new, modern, energy-efficient public housing units that will be built over the next decade, which she said will be the first new net public housing units built in Boston in more than 40 years.

"From Chinatown to West Roxbury, public housing makes it possible for so many of our seniors, and veterans, and residents with



MAYOR'S OFFICE PHOTO BY JOHN WILCOX

Members of the Boston EMS attended the State of the City address at the MGM Music Hall.

disabilities to stay in our city, and for so many of our young people to grow up here – including two of our newest city councilors," said Wu.

Across the city, Wu said too many families are getting displaced when their apartment buildings are scooped up by private investors.

"We're launching a fund to make these buildings permanently affordable – doubling down on our success last year keeping 114 families in their homes in East Boston," said Wu. "This year, we will deploy the fund to protect 400 more families citywide."

For students, Wu said several new partnerships with higher education institutions will ensure that BPS high school students have access to early college and career

pathways.

Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC) will broaden its partnership with Charlestown High School by offering every student the opportunity to take college courses either through dual enrollment or early college pathways in business, technology, and health.

In September, BHCC and Charlestown High School will launch the City's second Year 13 program, which provides a full year of free college courses to Charlestown graduates. Roxbury Community College will partner with Boston International Newcomers Academy (BINCA), the Margarita Muñiz Academy, and English High School to launch

the first early college incubator designed specifically for multilingual students.

Mass General Brigham will deepen its partnership with the Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers to ensure Boston's healthcare professions reflect the community, Wu said.

Wu also announced that Boston Public Schools has signed an agreement with UMass Boston and Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco to transform the BCLA-McCormack High School into the district's first University-Assisted Community Hub School.

The mayor also introduced a new program to help students and their families continue their education outside the walls of the school

and some of the city's most famous institutions.

Starting in February 2024, on the first and second Sundays of each month, every BPS student and up to three family members will get free admission to the Boston Children's Museum, the Franklin Park Zoo, the Institute of Contemporary Art, the Museum of Fine Arts, the Museum of Science, and the New England Aquarium. Families will show a BPS school ID or an electronic pass to gain admission.

The mayor also hit upon the city's continuing commitment to being a green city.

"Last year, I promised to ban fossil fuels in new city buildings, and we did: Already, two new community centers and two libraries in progress will be fossil fuel free," said Wu. "And this year, we will introduce zero net carbon zoning to make Boston the greenest city in the country."

In her speech, Wu also highlighted several public safety issues.

The mayor said the city is collaborating on a public health-led approach at Mass & Cass that has removed encampments and helped hundreds of people find housing and begin a path to recovery; and partnering on a community-driven safety plan that has achieved the lowest levels of gun violence on record. Wu also noted that a new police contract sets a national precedent for community policing, including discipline reform, detail reform, and investing in officer education.



MAYOR'S OFFICE PHOTO BY JOHN WILCOX

Boston City Councilor Gabriela Coletta, along with other officials, attended the Mayor's State of the City address at the MGM Music Hall on Tuesday night.

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HAPPY NEW YEAR! from Friends of the John Harvard Mall Initiative



DO YOU LOVE THE JOHN HARVARD MALL?

Do you want to help with Phase 3 of this beautiful historic park's renovation? Please become a member of the Friends of John Harvard Mall Initiative for \$50 which supports park upkeep, programs and maintenance.

To help with the much needed masonry project, please consider being a donor. Donors who pledge \$500 or more will be remembered on a bronze plaque. Donors who pledge \$1,000 will be acknowledged. We will be holding a meeting in 2024 to discuss Phase 3 renovations.

There are two easy ways to donate:

- 1. By check: Payable to Friends of the John Harvard Mall Initiative. Send to PO Box 290432, Charlestown, MA 02129
2. Via PayPal to @johnharvardmall



Healey-Driscoll Administration advances tuition equity

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

The Healey-Driscoll Administration took a significant step forward in expanding access to higher education for all Massachusetts residents by launching the new Massachusetts Application for State Financial Aid (MASFA). The Department of Higher Education released the form on their website today, which will allow currently-enrolled undocumented college students in Massachusetts to apply for state need-based financial aid for the first time. Students can access the application at mass.edu/MASFA.

The MASFA is an alternative form that provides students who cannot complete the Free Application for State Financial Aid (FAFSA) due to their immigration status a way to apply for state need-based financial aid. The application launch follows the August 2023 passage of Massachusetts' Tuition Equity Law, which allows students who have

completed at least three years of high school in Massachusetts and received a high school diploma or its equivalent in the Commonwealth to access in-state tuition and be eligible for financial aid, regardless of immigration status.

Eligible students began receiving the in-state tuition rate in Fall 2023. The MASFA released today is for additional need-based financial aid opportunities. It is based on the FAFSA for the 2023-2024 academic year and should be completed by students who are beginning college in Spring 2024 or were enrolled in the Fall 2023 semester and may qualify for financial aid. To receive financial aid for the 2023-2024 school year, students are encouraged to apply by May 1, and no later than June 30, 2024.

Students who apply for need-based state financial aid under the new "High School Completer" pathway created by the Tuition Equity Law must meet the existing eligibility criteria for each financial

aid program for which they are seeking access.

"Quality higher education should be accessible to all Massachusetts high school graduates," said Governor Healey. "Students who have long been part of our communities in Massachusetts should be eligible for the historic financial aid programs we have launched this year, and they should have every opportunity to grow their careers and be part of building our state's workforce. We're grateful for the Legislature for their partnership in passing this historic policy, and we're proud to be launching this application so that students can start accessing financial aid."

"This has been a banner year for educational access in Massachusetts, following the passage of MassReconnect, MASSGrant Plus Expansion, and Tuition Equity," said Lieutenant Governor Driscoll. "The MASFA will open doors to need based financial aid for students looking to attend any public or private Massachusetts college or university."

"Tuition equity is about giving students who have long called Massachusetts home equal access to higher education," said Secretary of Education Patrick Tutwiler. "With the MASFA form providing access to millions of dollars in need-based financial aid, we will be able to give the greatest number of students access to the life changing opportunities that our institutions of higher education offer here in the Commonwealth."

"The Department of Higher Education is committed to increasing socioeconomic mobility for all residents of Massachusetts, particularly those who have historically been underserved and underrepresented in higher education," said Commissioner of Higher Education Noe Ortega. "The MASFA is a key tool for advancing equitable access to the Commonwealth's many great colleges and universities."

"Ensuring that all Massachusetts residents, regardless of immigration status, have access to the

Commonwealth's higher education system is critical not just for those students, but for the betterment of Massachusetts," said House Speaker Ronald J. Mariano (D-Quincy). "I want to thank my colleagues in the House and our partners in the Senate for making this initiative possible, as well as the Healey-Driscoll Administration for working to implement it and for their support."

"Tuition equity is about giving every high schooler in Massachusetts who wants to go to college the same ability to do so, regardless of who they are or where they are from," said Senate President Karen E. Spilka (D-Ashland). "I'm thrilled to see the Executive Office of Education take this important step in implementing what the Legislature included in the budget, and break down a major barrier for young people whose families have settled in our state."

"The Healey-Driscoll Administration's launch of the MASFA is groundbreaking, helping to provide state need-based financial aid for undocumented immigrants who aspire to higher education," said Representative David Rogers (D-Cambridge), House Chair of the Joint Committee on Higher Education. "This initiative will continue the Commonwealth's commitment to increased access to the life-changing opportunities within our higher education system."

"Every student should have the same access to higher education in Massachusetts," said Senator Brendan Crighton (D-Lynn). "The launch of this tool is another significant step forward, ensuring that our commitment to equal access is transformed into actionable opportunities. By breaking down barriers and extending financial aid to these students, we are not only shaping individual futures but also contributing to the collective prosperity of Massachusetts."

"As a first-generation, Cabo-Verdean American whose parents immigrated to Boston with nothing but hope in their hearts and a pair of working hands, I too come from a mixed status family, and

access to state financial aid for all eligible students in the Commonwealth, regardless of immigration status, will be a lever of opportunity that shapes a generation," said Senator Liz Miranda (D-Boston). "This opportunity will enable thousands of talented, hard-working individuals to build a life of meaning and purpose here in the Commonwealth, embracing the very best of who we are as a state."

"On behalf of the state's 15 community colleges, we are excited to celebrate the launch of the MASFA," said Jim Vander Hooven, president of Mount Wachusett Community College and chair of the Community College Council of Presidents. "The new tuition equity law is already making a significant positive impact on our students, and we're thrilled that the MASFA will streamline access to state aid for eligible undocumented students."

"On behalf of the Commonwealth's State Universities, I am thrilled that the Governor continues to increase access to a college education for all people that reside in Massachusetts," said Salem State University President and Chair of the Council of Presidents for the Massachusetts State Universities John D. Keenan. "The Governor's leadership continues to make college more affordable than ever before to Massachusetts students. The MASFA provides students who are not eligible to apply for Federal Financial Aid access to state financial aid. This, along with in-state tuition for Massachusetts high school graduates, is another important financial aid tool to help them reach their goal of earning a college degree."

"The creation of a state financial aid application is another smart, common sense step by the Healey-Driscoll administration to break down existing financial barriers to higher education," UMass President Marty Meehan said. "The MASFA will make college more affordable for numerous Massachusetts students, empowering them to support their families and contribute to the state's economy."

"The MASFA is a crucial tool for advancing tuition equity in Massachusetts," said Rob McCarron, President and CEO of the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in Massachusetts. "Our private colleges and universities in Massachusetts are committed to serving all students who wish to attend college, as well as ensure that all students who are eligible can access need-based state

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TUITION (from pg. 8)

financial aid, which for many students is essential to their goal of achieving a higher education."

"MIRA Coalition extends heartfelt appreciation to the Department of Higher Education for their inclusive and collaborative efforts in implementing monumental tuition equity reform," said Jonathan Paz, Policy Advocate for the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy (MIRA) Coalition. "Tuition equity offers substantial benefits to students from all socioeconomic backgrounds, as well as to our state's economy, which desperately needs more workers. We thank the Healey-Driscoll administration and the legislature for making this policy a reality and look forward to watch-

ing students from across the Commonwealth achieve their dreams."

Filling out the MASFA does not commit any student to enrolling in a college or university, but it is the essential first step to applying for the financial assistance for which they may qualify to make college a reality.

To be eligible, Massachusetts residents must meet the following criteria:

- Was admitted to a public or private institution of higher education within the Massachusetts system of public higher education.
- Have attended at least three academic years at a high school in Massachusetts.
- Have graduated from high school in Massachusetts or have

received the equivalent of a high school diploma (for example, a GED) in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

- Have applied for military selective service, if eligible.
- If the individual is not a citizen or legal permanent resident of the United States, that person must provide a completed the DHE Affidavit stating that the individual will file an application to become a citizen or legal permanent resident within 120 days after the individual becomes eligible to do so.

An updated MASFA for the 2024-2025 academic year will be available in late winter/early spring and will be based on the 2024-2025 FAFSA, which is due to be released by the federal gov-

ernment on December 31, 2023.

The MASFA ensures that all students who qualify can access the significant investments made into higher education by the Healey-Driscoll administration this year, including MassReconnect, which made community college free for

Commonwealth residents ages 25 and older regardless of income, and MASSGrant Plus Expansion, which covers the cost of tuition and fees for low-income students and reduces out-of-pocket costs for middle income students.

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Plastic Free Mass urges legislators to fix recycling system

Conservation Law Foundation (CLF), Just Zero, Be the Solution to Pollution, and other members of Plastic Free Mass are calling on legislators to update the state's beverage container deposit return system (aka Bottle Bill), which remains unchanged from when it was passed in 1982. Under the Bottle Bill, consumers make a deposit of 5 cents on some beverages, which they can redeem when they return the empty containers for recycling. If the program were updated to include all beverage containers and the deposit were increased to 10 cents, litter would

be reduced in Massachusetts by as much as 85%.

"Massachusetts beaches and waterways are choking with trash," said CLF attorney Mara Shulman. "Across the state, volunteers are spending countless hours picking up litter. This is unsustainable. Updating the Bottle Bill will not only slash litter, but it will also reduce the state's greenhouse gas emissions. It's time for legislators to meet this moment and stop relying on volunteers to clean up litter when a legislative solution is at our fingertips."

"The data is clear," said Kirst-

ie Pecci, Executive Director of Just Zero. "Modernizing Massachusetts' Bottle Bill will drastically reduce litter, curb pollution, improve recycling, and create local green jobs at no cost to taxpayers. But even better than that, Bottle Bills set us up to transition to refillable beverage systems. In Europe, countries are collecting, washing, and refilling glass bottles because they know that this is where we get the most climate impact. Massachusetts can be a regional leader and blaze the way right now towards a future where single-use beverage containers are a thing of

the past."

"Month after month, our volunteers return to the same beaches and rivers," said Mary Lou Nicholson, coordinator for Be the Solution to Pollution. "In 2023, my group cleaned up over 3,000 pounds of litter on just 6 Massachusetts beaches. It's a Sisyphean task, coming back again and again to clean up the same spots. But it doesn't have to be this way. With a better Bottle Bill, we would see litter in Massachusetts reduced by leaps and bounds."

Single-use beverage containers, a common source of litter,

comprised a large proportion of the trash that resident volunteers cleaned up in Massachusetts in 2023. Massachusetts is one of 10 states in the U.S. with a Bottle Bill. But our Bottle Bill is sorely outdated. Not only does the deposit program include only 40% of the beverage containers sold in our state, but the deposit hasn't changed from when it was established at 5 cents in 1982.

Legislators can stop this problem at its root by expanding the program to include all beverage containers and raising the deposit to 10 cents.



Celebrate Catholic Schools Week 2024

January 28 - February 3

#CSW24

Catholic Schools
United in Faith and Community

The Catholic Schools Week (CSW) 2023 – 2026 theme is "Catholic Schools: United in Faith and Community." Catholic schools have an irreplaceable role in the Church's evangelizing mission. Building on the central goal of Catholic schools to form saints, Catholic schools teach and embrace the whole person, body, mind and spirit. The fact that all members of a Catholic school community share the Christian vision of faith that Christ is the foundation of Catholic education is what unites the school as a faith-filled community.

While faith is the binding element in Catholic schools, the Church reiterates that parents are the first teachers of their children. Holding this tenet, Catholic school communities expand beyond the walls of school buildings to envelop the family as an integral part of the school community. Together teachers, administrators, staff, students and parents fuel the light of faith by integrating culture with faith and faith with living.

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Deadline: Thursday, January 18th

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OBITUARIES

David Martell

A lifelong Bostonian, AKA "Super Dave" known for this athletic prowess, community service and for his kindness and love of family and friends

David J. Martell, 64, passed away peacefully, surrounded by his devoted family, on December 31, 2023, after a courageous two-year battle with melanoma.

A 1977 graduate of Christopher Columbus High in Boston's North End, David was an outstanding athlete and student, receiving a baseball scholarship to attend Salem State College. His athletic prowess gave him the nickname of "Super Dave" which stuck with him later in life on the softball fields.

David was a treasured friend and mentor to many across his decades of public service in Charlestown and West Roxbury, working for the Boston Center for Youth and Families for 28 years. After leaving the community centers, David joined the New England Golf Corporation, working at the Lost Brook and Pine Meadows golf courses. For anyone who knew him, it was clear that David had found his "dream job" and was never heard once referring to his job as work. A passionate golfer, David had a warm smile and composed demeanor, and loved the colleagues

and friends he worked and played with every day.

A lifelong Bostonian known for his kindness, and love of his family and friends, David is survived by his loving wife of 27 years Mary (Haskell) Martell and devoted son, John (Jack) Martell of Brookline. Raised in Charlestown, David was one of six boys of the late John L. and Margaret M. (Doherty)



Martell. He was predeceased by his brothers, Kevin J. and Paul M. Martell of Charlestown. David leaves his brother, John L. Martell and his wife, Cheryl of Billerica, Steven F. Martell, and Daniel G. Martell and his wife, Kerri of Reading; his nieces, nephews and grandniece, Shannon, Annie, Owen, Emily, Sadie, Annabelle, Ronan, Orla, Emma, Connor,

Melissa, Jennifer and Paige will remember him for his kindness, compassion, wit and love for fishing and his annual holiday trivia.

Visiting hours at Saint John Chrysostom Parish, 4750 Washington Street, West

Roxbury on Friday, January 5 were followed by a Funeral Mass beginning at Noon. A private burial followed at the Forest Hills Cemetery, Jamaica Plain.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Charlestown Boys and Girls Club of Charlestown, Mass.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

The Construction Look-Ahead for the North Washington St. project through January 20 is posted.

Scheduled Work

- Removal of temporary vehicle bridge and pile supports
- Demolition of old bridge structure

Work Hours

- Most work will be done during weekday daytime hours (6:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.).

Travel Tips

For everyone using the east sidewalk of the new bridge, please help share the space: walk to the

right, walk bikes, and be mindful of people coming from both directions, if walking in a large group.

Drivers should take care to pay attention to all signage and move carefully through the work zone. Police details, lane markings, temporary barriers, traffic cones, signage, and other tools will be used to control traffic and create safe work zones.

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. The Boston Harborwalk under the bridge and eastern/harborside bridge sidewalk remain closed until rebuilt.

The contractor is coordinating with the TD Garden and local police to provide awareness and manage traffic impacts during events. For your awareness, the following TD Garden events are scheduled during this look-ahead period:

• BRUINS: January 15 at 1 p.m., January 18 at 7 p.m., and January 20 at 7 p.m.

• CELTICS: January 10 at 7 p.m., January 13 at 7 p.m., January 17 at 7:30 p.m., and 1/19 at 7:30 p.m.

• OTHER EVENTS: January 12 at 8 p.m., and January 14 at 8 a.m.

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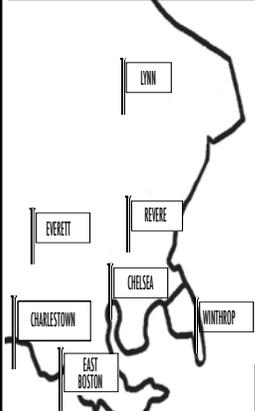
by following @MassDOT on X, formerly known as Twitter, and Mass 511 for real-time updates, visiting the project website, or emailing us with any questions.

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Notice of Petition Filed in the General Court pursuant to MGL. c.3, § 5 LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to MGL c. 3, §5, that Senator Sal N. DiDomenico has filed a petition in the General Court, entitled "An Act relative to economic development on the Mystic River". A copy of this petition appears below.

SENATE DOCKET, NO. 2908 FILED ON: 12/21/2023
SENATE.....No.

By Mr. DiDomenico, a petition (accompanied by bill) (subject to Joint Rule 9 and Joint Rule 12) of Sal N. DiDomenico for legislation relative to the development of a professional soccer stadium and a waterfront park on part of the Mystic River designated port area. Economic Development and Emerging Technologies.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court (2023-2024)

An Act relative to economic development on the Mystic River.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. (a) Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, a certain parcel of land located at 173 Alford street situated partly in the city of Everett and partly in the city of Boston shall be removed from and not be considered to be within the boundaries or a part of the Mystic River designated port area pursuant to 310 C.M.R. 25 and 310 C.M.R. 9 or any other applicable law, rule or regulation; provided, however, that such removal shall only be for the purpose of converting the parcel into a professional soccer stadium and a waterfront park. The parcel consists of approximately 43.11 acres and is located on the southeasterly side of Alford street, on the southwesterly side of Dexter street and bounded southerly by the Mystic river and is more particularly described in a deed recorded in the land court department of the Middlesex southern district registry district as document No. 1554521 and recorded with the Middlesex southern district registry of deeds in book 56211, page 350 and also recorded in the land court department in the Suffolk county registry deeds as document No. 786425 and recorded in the Suffolk county registry of deeds in book 47428, page 145. Site redevelopment on the parcel shall be subject to licensing in accordance with 310 C.M.R. 9 as a nonwater-dependent use.

(b) If the professional soccer stadium and waterfront park fail to be permitted and constructed within a reasonable time after the effective date of this act, as determined by the secretary of energy and environmental affairs, then subsection (a) shall be void and the port area designation and corresponding use restrictions under 310 C.M.R. 25 and 310 C.M.R. 9 shall be restored to the parcel; provided, however, that such determination of a reasonable time period shall not be made sooner than 5 years after the effective date of this act.

Nothing in this section shall be construed to exempt or alter the site's obligations under chapter 91 of the General Laws or 310 C.M.R. 9 beyond designated port area-related use restrictions.

(c) The department of environmental protection, in consultation with the office of coastal zone management, shall: (i) complete a review of existing designated port area criteria and use restrictions; and (ii) update relevant regulations based on the results of the review; provided, however, that updates to regulations shall include, but not be limited to: (A) the protection of traditional maritime industrial activities; (B) the addition of allowable uses consistent with future maritime industrial uses and clean energy activities; (C) the reevaluation of compatible uses within designated port areas; (D) a requirement, to the extent feasible, that all traditional and new allowed uses be resilient to coastal flood damage; (E) examining the feasibility of creating working port easements to purchase development rights from landowners in designated port areas; (F) opportunities to create grants and revolving loan funds to update port infrastructure, including conversion from 1 designated port area use to another designated port area use; (G) consideration of coastal flood resilience for inland neighborhoods; and (H) an assessment of new and adjacent areas that could be added to designated port areas to reduce net loss of acreage.

(d) Except for the boundary adjustment provided for in subsection (a), there shall be no boundary adjustments to designated port areas until the review required in subsection (c) is completed; provided, however, that the department and the office may continue to conduct boundary reviews.

(e) The commonwealth, having previously transferred control to, and taken on the behalf of the city of Boston a certain parcel of land situated in the city of Boston, being a part of a state highway location, Layout No. 5242 dated September 11, 1962, and shown as Parcel No. 8 in an Order of Taking recorded with said Layout No. 5242 in the Suffolk county registry of deeds in book 7681, page 307, and as shown on the plan filed therewith, and also shown as parcel 0201831001 on the city of Boston assessors' maps, shall transfer, remise, and release to the city of Boston any interest the commonwealth may have in such parcel.

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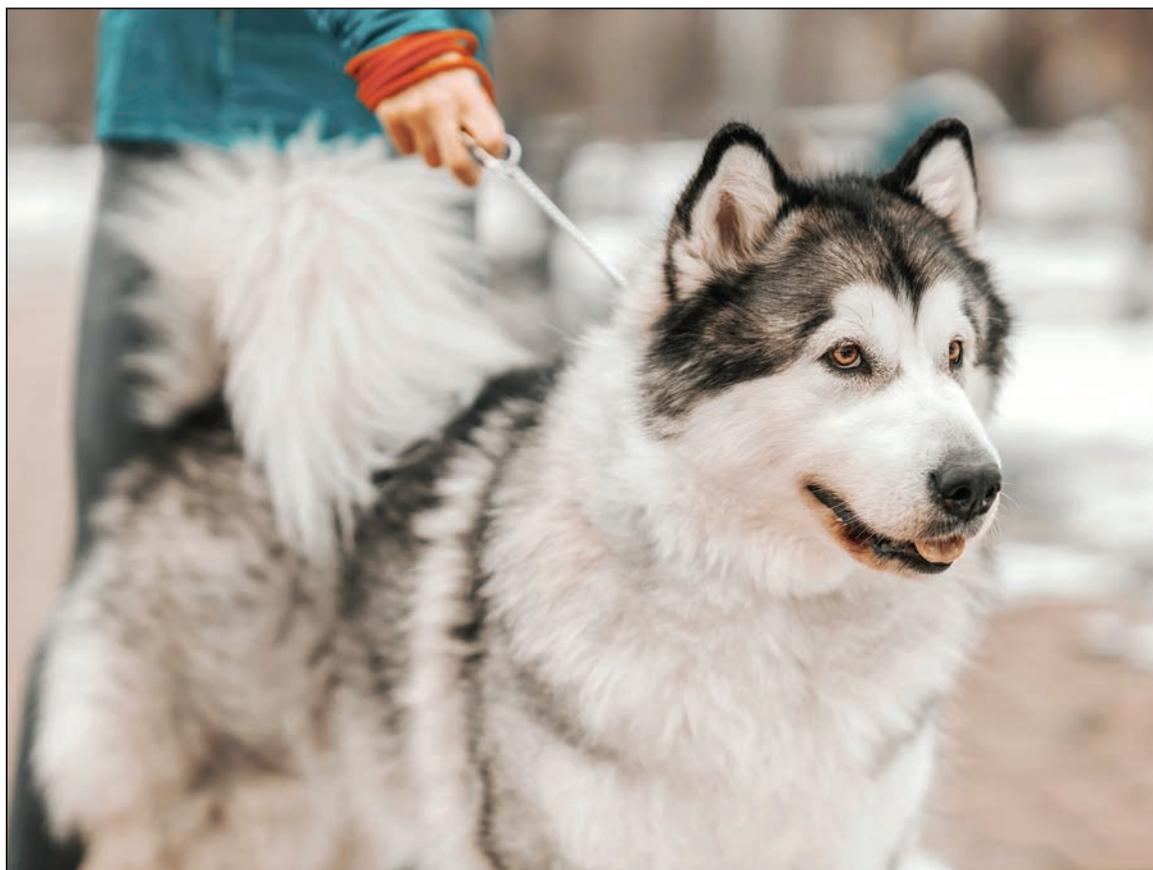
Some dogs enjoy our changeable New England weather. They are adaptable and happy to go out and explore as long as they are with you. Others are happier basking in the warm sun on a beach or frolicking in the snow in winter.

Did you ever consider that your relationship with weather conditions should influence your choice of dog? If you hate the cold, ice, and snow, a high-energy dog who needs a lot of exercise any time of

the year might be difficult. On the other hand, if you love the summer and want to take long dog walks on sunny days, a flat-faced dog like a Bulldog might have breathing problems trying to keep up with you.

Origins Make a Difference

The seasonality of a dog depends, in part, on genetics and breeding. A dog's body, tail, coat, and personality depend on the work humans refined the breed to perform. Among the best exam-



AKC says for a sleddog, "A healthy coat with a thick undercoat helps keep a dog warm and protected from the elements and preserves those essential calories." (Photo: Getty Images.)

ples of this are sled dogs. A clue to the weather adaptation of the Alaskan Malamute and Siberian Husky is in their name and their work. They originated in cold places to pull sleds.

The American Kennel Club (AKC) points out the necessary qualities of a sled dog. "One of the most important is good feet. Long-distance races are tough on a dog's body, and the feet bear the brunt of the work." AKC continues, "A healthy appetite and a thick coat are also important. Picky eaters might not take in the necessary calories on the trail, which reduces their performance ability. A healthy coat with a thick undercoat helps keep a dog warm and protected from the elements and preserves those essential calories."

However, while genes are one factor, within breeds, you'll find

dogs who adapt to seasons in far different ways. Our first Westie, Sassy, loved basking in the sun. Number two, Maggie Mae, adapted to any season as long as she could be outside socializing, whereas Poppy loves playing in the snow.

Adaptations Can Help

We can help a dog adapt to our seasonal conditions. In winter, if you have a short-haired dog who needs a lot of exercise, like a greyhound, you must protect her from the cold and wet. Friends with a former racing dog use a layered coat system for winter walks. It has a thin layer for cool days, a thicker layer with a snood to keep her ears and neck warm on cold days, and a rain jacket that fits over either or both for wet days.

Aside from adaptive clothing, you can vary the time of your

exercise walks. Take that husky out anytime in winter but in the coolest hours in summer.

Age and Health

Other adaptations are for age and health. You may have specific exercise directions from your veterinarian for a dog with a specific medical condition. Ask about this on your next vet visit, especially if you and your dog have moved here from an area with very different weather.

Carriers and strollers can make longer walks possible for dogs with injuries, health conditions, and as they age. Years ago, friends with an aging Airdale bought her a little red wagon to transport her to a favorite park. Recently, we spotted a gentleman pushing his Bulldog in a low-to-ground stroller. It enabled the big boy to step in and out by himself, a perfect adaptation for both the dog and the guardian.

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

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