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Senator Sal DiDomenico standing with Senate colleagues, law enforcement, District Attorney Marian Ryan, and gun safety advocates during Gun Safety press conference.

## DiDomenico supports comprehensive gun safety reform

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

Last week, Senator Sal DiDomenico joined his Senate colleagues as they introduced Senate bill S.2572, An act to sensibly address firearm violence through effective reform—the SAFER Act—comprehensive gun safety legislation to reform and modernize the state's firearm laws, support the state's public safety and public health infrastructure in mitigating gun violence, and strengthen accountability and oversight mechanisms for illegal gun activity.

The omnibus legislation would help make residents safer—and ultimately save lives—by building on the Commonwealth's already strong record on gun safety and updating laws to prevent those who wish to do harm from being able to access and use deadly weapons.

This proposed legislation focuses on common sense policies that

will reduce gun crime and gun injuries in the Commonwealth, without infringing on the legal rights of responsible gun owners. It updates the state's laws to provide law enforcement agencies with the necessary support to tackle today's concerns relating to gun violence prevention and keep Massachusetts at the forefront of gun safety.

"Gun violence has wreaked havoc in communities across our state and I am always proud to support reform measures like this one that promotes public safety and responsible gun ownership," said Sal DiDomenico, Assistant Majority Leader of the Massachusetts Senate. "This commonsense proposal has secured support from gun safety advocates, law enforcement, the attorney general, and district attorneys across our state. This expansive coalition is a testament to the collaborative process we used while crafting this legisla-

tion and I look forward to voting for its passage so we can continue to lead the country in gun safety."

"There is no appropriate measure of the pain and heartbreak that gun violence has caused in our Commonwealth and across the nation," said Senate President Karen E. Spilka (D-Ashland). "Today the Senate has blazed a trail forward on gun safety. By bringing together stakeholders with a variety of viewpoints, the Senate has shown that it is possible to make changes to our gun laws that will save lives while respecting the rights of law-abiding gun owners in the state. Words cannot capture my gratitude to Majority Leader Creem for her steadfast leadership over the past several months, and to each and every stakeholder who took the time to engage with us on this important issue."

(REFORM Pg. 2)

## The Chain Forge project is no more

By Michael Coughlin Jr.

A project at the Chain Forge building at 105 First Avenue that would have brought several public amenities, including a hotel, to the Navy Yard is no longer happening after the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) revealed in a letter to the community late last week that the redeveloper is in default of its ground lease.

According to a Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) memorandum dated March 12, 2015, Kavanagh Advisory Group, LLC was designated as the interim developer of the building in 2009.

The group had its interim developer designation extended three times between 2010 and 2012 before it was granted tentative designation in September 2013, a designation that was also extended in November 2014.

Then, in March 2015, a project was approved, proposing a 230-key hotel and restaurant space according to the above memorandum and the BPDA letter.

"This plan would have revitalized a blighted and deteriorating building into a thriving asset for the community and beyond," reads the BPDA's letter released last week.

Following the March 2015 approval, in May 2016, the BRA authorized its Director to award final designation to Kavanagh Advisory Group, LLC as the redeveloper.

A couple of months later, in July, the final designation was clarified to be for First Avenue Hotel LLC, an entity "within which Kavanagh Advisory Group, LLC, currently controls at least 51% of First Avenue Hotel's beneficial interests," according to a December 14, 2017, BPDA memorandum.

That same December 14, 2017 memorandum outlines a joint venture approved by the BPDA between First Avenue Hotel, LLC and CV Properties, LLC or an "affiliate thereof" to redevelop the building.

Furthermore, a December 2022 BPDA memorandum revealed that just weeks after the joint venture was approved in 2017, the BPDA entered into a long-term ground lease for the redevelopment of the building with CVPA Chain Forge, LLC on December 29, 2017.

Moreover, it should be noted that the BPDA letter released last week indicated that the ground lease was entered "prior to com-

(CHAIN FORGE Pg. 11)

### CNC MEETING DATES

CNC General Meeting, Tuesday, February 6, 2024, The Charlestown Neighborhood Council will hold an in-person, public meeting on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, 7-9 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus, 545 Medford Street, Charlestown. Please bring your questions and neighborhood concerns to the meeting or email us at cnc02129@gmail.com. Check CNC02129.org for calendar and updates.



# EDITORIAL

## ENVIRONMENTALISTS: PUTIN'S 'USEFUL IDIOTS'

Vladimir Lenin used the term “useful idiots” to refer to journalists, labor leaders, and politicians in the West who extolled the virtues of Lenin’s new Communist regime in Russia as a “worker’s paradise.” They were in the vanguard of the world-wide Communist movement who tried to import Lenin’s brand of Communism into their own countries.

The reason Lenin referred to them as “useful idiots” is because they were oblivious to what actually was going on in Russia during Lenin’s (and later, Stalin’s) transformation of that nation into a Communist regime: mass starvation, authoritarianism, political executions, and use of the Siberian gulag.

In short, the “useful idiots” for Lenin and Stalin were those in the West whose fervent belief in the ideology of Communism blinded them to the reality of what actually was happening in Russia in the 1920s and 1930s.

A century later, democracy and freedom are being challenged by another Vladimir, Vladimir Putin, whose invasion of Ukraine and genocidal campaign of executions, rape, bombings of civilians, and deportation of children poses a substantial threat to Western Europe and ultimately, the United States.

Western European nations stopped purchasing natural gas from Russia -- which had a pipeline directly into Western Europe -- shortly after the invasion began in order not to finance Putin’s war machine. These countries were able to do so thanks to a combination of sacrifice (lowering their thermostats and reducing industrial energy use), switching to dirtier forms of energy (coal and oil) for their power plants, and the ramping-up of the importation of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from the United States, with the promise that even more LNG will be forthcoming from the U.S. in the future.

However, President Biden, bowing to pressure from environmental groups, last week issued a directive that imposes new environmental rules on future LNG terminals that essentially has brought to a halt the construction of new LNG export facilities in the U.S. The move has alarmed our Western European allies, who have been able to withstand their embargo on Russian natural gas because of the promise of additional LNG from America.

There is no question that climate change, fueled by the burning of fossil fuels, represents a huge risk to the future of our planet. However, the threat posed by Putin and other dictatorial regimes, such as China and Iran, pose an immediate threat to our way of life today. An article in yesterday’s New York Times highlighted the fear of Western European leaders that they will be next in line if Putin succeeds in Ukraine.

In addition, the irony of Biden’s new environmental rules for future LNG plants in the U.S. is that Europe will continue to use oil and coal, which are far worse for the environment than natural gas. In addition, if the U.S. is unable to supply natural gas to Western Europe, those countries simply will turn elsewhere.

In short, the action by Biden at the behest of environmentalists accomplishes nothing (and even is a negative) in our battle against climate change in both the short and long terms. However, what it does accomplish is this: It encourages sociopathic dictators like Putin, who want to see the Western nations divided, to continue their campaign against democracies across the globe. The “inconvenient truth” for environmentalists is that the fight against Putin and his ilk requires that America must be united with our allies, no less than we were in World War II, when the free world similarly fought against the Axis of Evil at that time. The environmentalists whose rigid ideology regarding climate change blinds them to the reality of the immediate, existential threat posed by today’s Axis of Evil are the “useful idiots” of the dictators of the 21st century.

## REFORM *(from pg. 1)*

The SAFER Act was shaped and informed by extensive testimony at a November hearing of the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security, where the public provided over four hours of testimony on more than 50 gun safety bills before the committee. It also follows months of discussions, led by Majority Leader Cynthia Stone Creem, with stakeholders and advocates with diverse perspectives on the issue.

The bill has garnered support from stakeholders around the state.

“I am thrilled to see the Senate introduce legislation that will combat the scourge of gun violence in our communities, including new tools to address ghost guns and selector switches. I appreciate the Legislature’s commitment to strengthening the Commonwealth’s gun laws to protect the public’s safety, and we look forward to working with both the House and Senate as the process moves forward,” said Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell.

“This comprehensive bill is a much needed step to ensure that we can appropriately hold accountable those who violate our gun laws and seek to escape responsibility by exploiting loopholes,” said Middlesex County District Attorney Marian Ryan. “There is no question that the time to act is now. We must have gun laws that reflect the changes in technology, the personal tragedies caused by gun violence and its shattering impact on communities. I am committed to working with my legislative partners as this bill moves forward through the legislative process.”

“The filing of the Senate’s gun safety bill today is an important step toward addressing the gun violence epidemic with the long-overdue urgency that it deserves,” said Joe Platte, State Legislative Manager for Giffords. “We look forward to continuing to work with Senate President Spilka and Senator Creem to save lives, promote responsible gun ownership, hold the corporate gun lobby accountable, and keep the people of Massachusetts safe.”

“The Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association, which represents city, town and university police chiefs across the Commonwealth, supports the concise firearms reform bill put forth by the Senate,” said Chief Eric P. Gillis,

President of Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association.

“Massachusetts has been a national leader in gun violence prevention and we’re grateful to Senate President Karen Spilka, Majority Leader Cynthia Creem and our gun sense legislators who continue to modernize our laws so that they remain some of the strongest in the country,” said Bobbie Dressel, a volunteer with the Massachusetts chapter of Moms Demand Action. “We know that every death caused by gun violence is preventable, and it takes forward-thinking measures and the participation of all of us to keep our communities safe. Now is the time for our lawmakers to work together and ensure that lifesaving legislation gets to Governor Healey’s desk.”

“This gun safety legislation is a significant step forward in protecting the public without infringing on the rights of lawful gun owners,” said David Sullivan, Northwestern District Attorney. “The prohibition against ghost guns, enhancement of the red flag law, and strengthening of our assault weapons ban are critical changes necessary in keeping everyone safe. I applaud the Senate for their thoughtful gun safety legislation.”

The bill includes the following gun safety policies:

- **Ghost Guns.** Updates the state’s laws to bring Massachusetts in line with national standards and to ensure accountability and oversight for those who own and possess unserialized and untraceable firearms.

- **Assault Weapons.** Codifies Massachusetts’ existing prohibition on assault weapons and copies or duplicates of those weapons, to ensure that our residents are kept safe from weapons of war.

- **Glock Switches and Trigger Activators.** Makes it illegal to possess devices that convert semi-automatic firearms into fully automatic machine guns.

- **Inspections of Gun Dealers.** Ensures that gun dealers are inspected annually and allows the Massachusetts State Police to conduct those inspections if a local licensing agency does not or cannot do so.

- **Red Flag Law and Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPO).** Allows health care professionals to petition courts to remove firearms and licenses from patients who pose a risk to themselves or others.

The bill also allows preemptive orders to prevent a dangerous individual from obtaining a license to carry a firearm.

- **Harassment Prevention Orders.** Protects survivors of harassment by requiring courts to compel the surrender of firearms by individuals who are subject to harassment protection orders who pose an immediate threat.

- **Sensitive Places.** Prohibits the carry of firearms in government administrative buildings, with exceptions for law enforcement officers and municipalities that choose to opt out.

- **Mental Health and Gun Licensing.** Ensures that firearm licensing authorities have access to certain information about an applicant’s history of involuntary mental health hospitalizations due to posing a serious harm—with appropriate safeguards to guarantee privacy and due process.

- **Data Collection.** Creates a more robust data reporting and analysis mechanism for guns used in crimes, suicides, and attempted suicides to ensure that the Commonwealth can better target training and enforcement efforts.

- **Gun Industry Accountability in Advertising.** Prohibits the marketing of unlawful firearm sales to minors and allows industry actors to be held civilly liable if such marketing practices lead to an individual being harmed.

- **Firing at a Dwelling.** Creates a criminal charge for intentionally firing a firearm at a dwelling or other building in use.

- **Community Violence Prevention.** Creates a commission to analyze the allocation of state violence prevention funding and recommend changes to reduce gun violence in disproportionately impacted communities; develops a pilot program to promote gun safety awareness and firearms licensing education; and establishes a task force to make recommendations for maximizing federal funding for gun violence prevention in the most equitable way.

- **Emerging Firearm Technology.** Establishes a commission to study emerging firearm technology, with a particular focus on products and features that could increase safety.

The SAFER Act will be brought to the Senate floor for debate on Thursday, February 1, 2024.



**CHARLESTOWN**  
PATRIOT-BRIDGE

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## Historic Houses of the Month

# William F. Schrafft & Son Confectionery Building

By Nancy Hayford Kueny

The Charlestown Mystic River Industrial Area runs along the northeastern end of the Charlestown peninsula contiguous to the river. Developed between the mid-19th century and 1960, it is and was comprised of industries that depended on rail, ship, and truck transportation. The area, approximately 236 acres, is separated from residential Charlestown by Medford Street. It stretches from the mouth of the river in Boston Harbor, continuing along the shoreline and extending north towards the Everett side of the river. The various industries historically included cement, sugar (Revere Sugar Refinery 1918), lumber, tanning (Whittemore-Wright Company 1880-90), warehousing, baking (U.S. Baking Company 1890) and confectionary, which leads us to the Schrafft Building.

The landmark industrial building located at 529 Main Street, and anchoring Sullivan Square, was built between 1925 and 1928 as the William F. Schrafft & Son Confectionery Building. When completed, it was the largest candy factory in the country. The building is a large rectangular, 900,000 square foot Art Deco style building, constructed of reinforced concrete and clad additionally with brick, tile and limestone. The most notable feature is the 10-story crenelated clocktower with its three large red neon Schrafft's signs at the apex (visible from I-93 and Somerville). There are also two crenelated elevator towers located on the north side of the building. Additionally, there are two attached one-story brick and concrete ells and the brick and concrete Powerhouse Building.

Functionally, the first floor was used for shipping and receiving, the second floor was used for storage and a dining room, and floors three, four, five were where the candy and Schrafft's boxes were manufactured. The top floor housed the office space.

William Frederick Schrafft (1823-1906) was born in Stutt-



William and Wilhelmina Schrafft.

gart, Baden-Wurttemberg, Germany, arriving in the United States in 1851. He became a citizen in 1857, applying for naturalization in Boston. Schrafft founded the candy company in 1861 after inventing the jellybean and promoting its use as a non-perishable food for soldiers during the Civil War. He was married to Wilhelmine Beltz with whom he had five children. At the time of his death he was living in Somerville.

In the 1880s, a gentleman who would go on to become a larger part of Schrafft's history entered the story. His name was Frank G. Shattuck (1861-1937), born on a farm in Durhamville, NY. As a young man, after pursuing several occupations in central New York State, he moved to Manhattan where he briefly studied law. In 1886, he gave up his studies and became a candy sales representative at E. Greenfield and Sons in Brooklyn. His various sales routes led him to Boston, where he became part of the Schrafft's candy sales force. Beginning in 1898, he opened several of his own candy stores in New York while continuing to be the chief sales representative for Schrafft's. In 1906, the same year that William F. Schrafft died, Shattuck took on a larger role at Schrafft's, while operating as the Frank G. Shattuck Company. Eventually, in 1928 the two companies merged under the Schrafft's trade name.

Shattuck was responsible for



Schrafft's Factory at Sullivan Square.

the expansion of the company. By 1915 Schrafft's had established eleven stores in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Syracuse. By 1934 they operated twenty-two stores, which grew to fifty-five stores by 1968. During the 1950s and 60s, many of the candy stores were converted to restaurants which were located up and down the Eastern Seaboard, many in New York. His sister Jane was instrumentally involved in the restaurant segment of the business. Schrafft's was known for its moderately priced, good, quickly prepared food, as well as for its upscale atmosphere. It appealed to an upper-middle class female clientele.

Originally making jellybeans, gumballs, and candy canes, Schrafft's went on to produce boxed chocolates, cakes and other candies. At its height in the Charlestown factory, 1500 workers many of whom lived in Charlestown, produced these con-

fections. In 1968 PET Milk purchased Schrafft's and divided the various operations into separate companies. Six years later in 1974, Schrafft's was purchased by Gulf and Western Industries, Inc. The burgeoning recession of that year contributed to financial woes that eventually led to the closing of the Charlestown factory in 1984, 123 years after Schrafft's was established, leaving 600 manufacturing employees abruptly out of a job.

The Schrafft's factory at 529 Main Street was subsequently repurposed and renovated by the Flatley Company to become the Schrafft's Center that we know today. For additional images, visit [www.nancykueny.com/blog](http://www.nancykueny.com/blog).

Sources: Macris, SAH Archipedia, New York Times, Find a Grave, Ancestry.com, Wikipedia, The Boston Phoenix, UPI Archives



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# \$4M in grants awarded to combat human trafficking and other gender-based offenses

During Human Trafficking Awareness Month, the Healey-Driscoll Administration announced awards through two grant programs that will enhance enforcement and victim services for survivors of human trafficking, domestic and sexual violence, and stalking. The awards were announced today during a meeting of the Governor’s Council to Address Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking.

Suffolk County received two grants. One grant was for \$98,242 for training and \$146,915 for Prosecution Award.

Grants totaling \$472,428.50 were awarded to six District Attorney’s Offices through the FY24 Human Trafficking Enforcement and Training Grant Program. Now in its second year, this state grant program was designed to support prosecutors’ efforts to combat human trafficking and enhance their capacity to identify, assist, and provide referral services to those most impacted.

In addition, \$3,311,842.74 in federal funding was awarded to 43 state, local, and nonprofit agencies through the FFY23 Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) grant program. Agencies selected through a competitive application process to receive awards in 2022 were invited to apply for continued funding. The recipients are eligible for up to two additional years of funding, which is provided through the Department of Justice (DOJ) Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA).

The Office of Grants and Research (OGR) manages and administers both grant programs in Massachusetts. OGR program coordinators will work with grant recipients to provide reporting and programmatic assistance throughout the grant period.

“In recognition of Human Trafficking Awareness Month, we reaffirm our deep commitment to ensuring that every person can live with dignity, respect and free from fear and abuse,” said Governor Maura Healey. “This grant funding will support survivors of domestic and sexual violence, human trafficking, and stalking by investing in programs that promote healing and justice. These grants allow professionals from diverse sectors to provide survivors with access to culturally appropriate and trauma-informed services.”

“These grants represent our ongoing commitment to ending exploitation, intimate partner violence, sexual assault, and stalking,” said Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll, chair of the Governor’s Council to Address Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking. “The grant recipients have a proven record of delivering quality services to prevent, reduce, and address these crimes and to provide victims with the services they need and deserve as they move toward healing.”

“Everyone deserves to feel safe. These grant programs support the vital efforts of community service providers to help survivors as they recover and rebuild their lives. This funding also supports law enforcement and their ability to send a clear message to the perpetrators that they will be held accountable for these heinous crimes,” said Secretary of Public Safety and Security Terrence Reidy.

“The VAWA program is a long-standing initiative allowing us to build partnerships with service providers and law enforcement to support effective approaches to reducing sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking, and human trafficking. The Human Trafficking Enforcement and Training Grant Program is a new, innovative program assisting in investigations, prosecutions, outreach, and delivery of services,” said OGR Executive Director Kevin Stanton. “We are committed to working with program partners to strengthen responses to these crimes from courts, law enforcement, and prosecutors while enhancing the services available to survivors.”

# MBTA completes expedited critical track work on Green Line, removing 16 speed restrictions

Special to the Patriot-Bridge


The MBTA announced on Monday its successful and on-time completion of critical track work on the Green Line, which removed 16 safety-related speed restrictions – one more than planned.

Moreover, a 17th speed restriction on the Green Line between Haymarket and Government Center stations was significantly shortened by over 500 feet. Crews accomplished this critical work due to unencumbered access to track areas while Green Line train service was suspended on the B branch from Babcock Street to Kenmore, on the E branch between Heath Street and Copley, and in the downtown area between Kenmore and North Station for 10 days from Jan. 3-12 and for 13 days from Jan. 16-28, according to the MBTA.

During scheduled weekend and evening service diversions over the last several weeks between North Station and Union Square as well as Medford/Tufts, crews from GLXC, the design-build contractor, have also completed critical track work that has alleviated all current tight gauge conditions along both Green Line Extension branches.

“I’m proud of the work our crews were able to accomplish during this most recent Green Line shutdown – the Green Line tunnel in the downtown area received tremendous maintenance and attention that will have a generational impact on current and future riders, and we were able to tackle this critical work thanks to the unencumbered access to the track area,” MBTA General Manager and CEO Phillip Eng said in a press release. “Importantly, our team was able to lift even more speed restrictions than were planned and significantly shorten another. This continues to be indicative of the new way the MBTA is doing business.”

Regarding the recently completed Green Line improvements, Rep. Jay Livingstone said, “I am pleased that the MBTA has fixed so many of its long-standing issues. While it has been disruptive to lose green line service in the area for almost a month, I am pleased that the result of the work is that it is completed between Kenmore Square and North Station. I look forward to the rest of the MBTA line work finishing this year so that we will have the safe, reliable system that we deserve.”



COURTESY MBTA

Crews accomplished track work and other upgrades along the Green Line.

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# D.A.'s office creates animal cruelty task force

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

The Suffolk County District Attorney's office has taken a major step in addressing the escalating issue of animal cruelty.

Last week, Suffolk County DA announced the creation of the county's first Animal Cruelty Task Force.

Hayden, a dog owner, said the task force will improve the quality of information and methods used among the participating agencies in investigations of crimes against animals.

"Anyone who has ever loved or owned a pet knows the joy and happiness they bring to our lives," Hayden said. "All these pets ask in return is to be sheltered, fed and cared for when they're sick or hurt. Sadly, too many animals and pets end up getting hurt through malicious intent or conscious neglect."

"This task force will improve our ability to investigate, charge and prosecute these cases and, hopefully, reduce them."

The task force will centralize the various agencies involved in animal abuse cases into a group of designated individuals with animal law knowledge. This streamlined approach will improve information flow, create a more proficient understanding of animal cruelty investigations and prosecutions, and identify necessary legislative improvements to the state's animal protection laws.



Area police, officials gather for the Suffolk County DA announcement of the creation of the county's first Animal Cruelty Task Force.

The task force will be chaired by Assistant District Attorney Amelia Singh, chief of the DA's office in Chelsea District Court, and will include members of the Boston, Chelsea, Winthrop and Revere police departments, the Massachusetts State Police, the Massachusetts Environmental Police, the Animal Rescue League of Boston, the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture and the animal control departments in Boston, Chelsea, Winthrop and Revere.

The Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (MSPCA) handled 684 investigations involving animal abuse in 2023.

Last year, 17 individuals were charged in Suffolk County with at least one animal cruelty related offense. Sixteen of the defendants were adults and one was a juvenile.

The owner of a dog training and boarding facility in South Boston was charged last May following an investigation by the Animal Rescue League after three dogs lost significant amounts of weight

and/or were injured during their stay at the facility.

A Revere man was charged with assaulting his roommate and killing his dog in August. First responders entering the man's apartment found a dog covered in blood, suffering from at least five stab wounds.

According to the Domestic Violence Awareness Project, up to 70% of domestic violence victims have pets and of those with pets, 48% to 71% report that their pets have been abused or killed.

A Boston man was charged after a neighbor noticed a strong

odor emanating from his Chelsea apartment. A well-being check led to the discovery of a feces-covered apartment and a decomposing dog.

In November, a Boston woman was charged after multiple witnesses reported seeing her punch, kick, and strike her dog with a glass bottle in the Boston Common area.

Animal cruelty cases are increasing in Suffolk County and statewide. According to the Massachusetts Trial Court, animal cruelty cases have increased more than 70% from 2019-2022.

## Celebrate Presidents' Day week at the JFK Library with family-friendly activities

The John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum offers several family-oriented activities and programs throughout Presidents' Day week, including its signature Presidents' Day Festival on February 19, featuring presidential storytelling, activities and performances, and a Celebrate! family performing arts program. The Celebrate! performance of Stories of Hope and Joy with Len Cabral features folktales, myths, and personal accounts brought to life with humor, wisdom, and compassion by international renowned storyteller Len Cabral. Audiences of all ages will be inspired by stories of the power of hopeful actions in honor of Black History Month.

\$2 Off Museum Admission with Special Buzzword In celebration of Presidents' Day week, the JFK Library will reveal a special buzzword on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Visitors who provide the buzzword during admission during the week of February 17-25, 2024 will receive \$2 off adult admission prices and youth ages 17 and under will be free.

Additional student, military, senior and EBT discounts are available.

Presidents' Day Festival Monday, February 19, 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

The 13th Annual Presidents' Day Festival's main activities will kick off at 11:00 a.m. Actors portraying Presidents John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and Theodore Roosevelt, and First Lady Abigail Adams will share stories and engage visitors in conversation.

Festival-goers can enjoy Museum tours and activities that bring history to life for all ages. This year, the Festival will feature special election-themed activities – visitors of all ages can make their own Kennedy hats, design campaign buttons, and test their presidential trivia knowledge – to complement election day 2024. The Festival will close with a special free concert by the Harvard Din & Tonics, who will perform Kennedy campaign songs and popular music from the 1960s and today.

Visit [www.jfklibrary.org/PresidentsDay](http://www.jfklibrary.org/PresidentsDay) for a detailed schedule of the Presidents' Day Festival offerings. Registration is recommended.

Special Festival activities are free with paid adult admission. The Harvard Din & Tonics closing concert is free for all. The Festival is especially appropriate for ages 7 and up.

Celebrate with Len Cabral – Stories of Hope and Joy Thursday, February 22, 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

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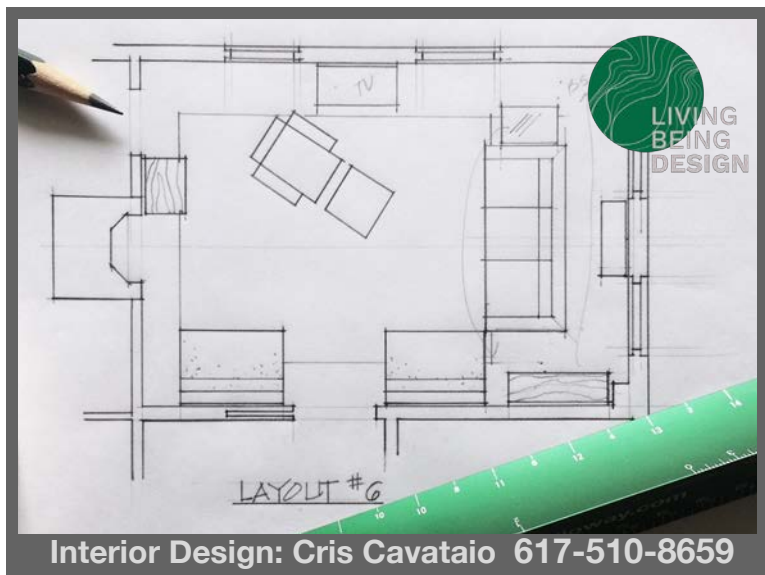
(ACTIVITIES Pg. 11)

## Harvest on Vine

Emergency Food Pantry

Monthly Food Distributions take place on the second Saturday at 10a.m. and the last Tuesday at 2p.m.

**Volunteer** to help at the Food Pantry  
Contact Director, Tom MacDonald at 617-990-7314



Interior Design: Cris Cavataio 617-510-8659



# Raqib Shaw's work on display at Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum

Fantastical paintings encompassing an eclectic fusion of the natural world, global artistic influences and memory are the core of Raqib Shaw: Ballads of East and West, on view at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum from February 15 – May 12, 2024. The exhibition features the puzzle-like paintings of London-based Kashmiri artist, Raqib Shaw, who blends Eastern and Western cultures to conjure a paradise in the wake of violence and displacement. To create his intricate compositions – populated with vibrant flowers, hybrid beasts and snow-capped mountains – Shaw uses porcupine quills and fine needles to manipulate glossy enamel and metallic paint outlined in embossed gold, usually onto birch wood panels. Shaw incorporates a range of literary, art historical, and spiritual references in his work.

“Raqib Shaw’s love of Asian art and European Old Masters, his fascination with textiles and patterning, his interest in horticulture and natural detail, even his pro-

found relationship to his dog, all find a kinship in Isabella Stewart Gardner’s life and passions. It is thrilling to show Raqib’s work in the context of the Gardner Museum and to discover the utopias and dystopias that he so artfully envisions. Every visitor will find their own personal meaning in his work, just as they do in the Museum’s wide-ranging collection,” says Peggy Fogelman, Norma Jean Calderwood Director of the Gardner Museum.

Raqib Shaw was born in Calcutta (now Kolkata), India, in 1974, and grew up in the valley of Kashmir, surrounded by gardens, lakes and the Himalayan mountains – a place that he remembers as paradise on earth. Due to growing religious tensions and violent insurgencies, Shaw’s family relocated to New Delhi in 1992, before moving to London in 1997. Shaw’s paintings are deeply self-reflective, filled with associations to the beauty and trauma of his childhood.

Raqib Shaw: Ballads of East and West brings together more than

twenty works from private and museum collections worldwide. The exhibition was co-organized by the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and the Frist Art Museum in Nashville, TN, and co-curated with Dr. Zehra Jumabhoy. The Gardner Museum is the second stop for the exhibition, following the Frist Art Museum (where it was on view September 15 – December 31). The exhibition will travel from Boston to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston in Texas (June 9 – September 2, 2024) and The Huntington Library, Art Museum and Botanical Gardens in San Marino, California (November 16, 2024 – March 3, 2025).

For the Gardner presentation, Shaw’s works unfold across the entire Museum –predominantly in the Hostetter Gallery (second floor of the new building), but also in the Fenway Gallery (first floor of the palace), which will focus on the artist’s process. A new work, commissioned by the Gardner, will be on view on the new building’s façade.



COURTESY PHOTO

One of Raqib Shaw paintings on display.

## DOC announces plan to conclude operations at MCI-Concord in the summer of 2024

The Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC) announced its intention to conclude operations at MCI-Concord, a medium-security men’s prison. Amid the state’s lowest prison population in 35 years, the announcement reflects the Department’s ongoing efforts to enhance operational efficiency, advance cost-saving solutions, and deepen investments in programming and services.

The strategic decision to end operations at MCI-Concord and relocate its staff and population is based on a thorough assessment of decreased housing needs and the aging facility’s high maintenance costs. Furthermore, this proposal allows the Department to dispose

of the property, making it available for non-correctional purposes and potential redevelopment to the benefit of the surrounding community.

Opened in 1878, MCI-Concord is the oldest men’s correctional facility in Massachusetts. Its aging infrastructure has become too costly to maintain and requires significant investments.

The Healey-Driscoll Administration’s Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) Budget proposes closing MCI-Concord which will result in substantial savings, including nearly \$16 million in operating costs and negating the need for \$190 million in capital projects for decarbonization, cooling, and deferred main-

tenance at the nearly 150-year-old facility.

“During its first year, the Healey-Driscoll Administration has worked closely with the Legislature, community partners, and advocates to invest in justice initiatives that have contributed to the lowest rates of incarceration and recidivism in decades,” said Public Safety and Security Secretary Terrence Reidy. “Strategically consolidating DOC resources makes financial sense and enables the Department to build upon the proven, evidence-based rehabilitative programs that support successful reentry and improve outcomes. I commend Commissioner Mici and her leadership team for their

continued commitment to enhancing operations while delivering effective services to those in their care.”

“This proposal underscores the Department’s commitment to responsible stewardship of taxpayer resources while ensuring the fulfillment of our rehabilitative mission,” said DOC Commissioner Carol Mici. “The strategic consolidation of resources eliminates redundancies and empowers us to enhance efficiency and ensure a more effective and impactful correctional system for our incarcerated population, the people who work there, and the community.”

MCI-Concord currently operates at 50% capacity with an incarcerated population of approximately 300. Individuals living at MCI-Concord will complete a reclassification process in the coming months and be transferred to an appropriate facility.

In recent years, MCI-Concord has offered several unique programs focused on rehabilitation. These include the nationally recognized Building Responsible Adults Through Validation and Education (B.R.A.V.E) Unit for emerging adults and educational opportunities to complete advanced studies at Tufts University. These programs will continue to be operational. The Department is developing plans to transition these programs

to other comparable facilities in the system.

The DOC will begin the process of transferring correctional officers and incarcerated individuals throughout this fiscal year with the expectation that this process will be complete by the summer of 2024. Once the safe transfer and closure is complete, the property will be made available for potential redevelopment.

Massachusetts has long been a leader in reducing incarceration. The most recent state-level incarceration trends from the Vera Institute show that the rate of incarceration in Massachusetts is 122% lower than the national rate. Reports from the Vera Institute for Justice found that Massachusetts’ incarceration rate is consistently the lowest in the nation, decreasing nearly 5,000 over the past decade, resulting in a record low of nearly 6,000 incarcerated people.

Under Massachusetts law, closing a correctional facility and disposing of the property requires the approval of the state legislature. The Administration’s FY25 Budget proposes language to address this requirement.

The Department has published an FAQ to provide families and loved ones with more information about the decision to conclude operations at MCI-Concord.

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# Wu appoints Tania Del Rio as Commissioner of the Inspectional Services Department

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

Mayor Michelle Wu appointed Tania Del Rio as Commissioner of the Inspectional Services Department (ISD) starting February 26, 2024. ISD administers and enforces building, housing, health, sanitation and safety regulations mandated by city and state governments. Inspectional Services is made up of five regulatory divisions charged with serving the public by protecting the health, safety, and environmental stability of Boston's business and residential communities. Del Rio currently serves as the Director of the Coordinated Response Team for the City of Boston, leading the cross-departmental effort to address the intersecting crises of homelessness and substance use disorder. Del Rio will be the first woman to be ISD's Commissioner.

"I am so grateful to Tania for her effective and compassionate leadership coordinating our efforts to address the urgent needs of the crises of homelessness and substance use disorder," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "With her ability to strategically lead multiple teams and deliver continuous improvement for our residents and City workers, I am excited to see her lead the agencies that deliver essential services impacting so many residents, businesses, and workers. I am grateful for Sean Lydon's service leading the department to ensure our residential buildings and businesses are healthy and safe places for our communities."

As the head of the Coordinated Response Team, she brought together over a dozen City departments and partner agencies to transform how the City cares for unsheltered constituents impacted by substance use disorder, homelessness, and untreated mental illness, with a focus on the 'Mass and Cass' / Newmarket neighborhood. In 2023, she coordinated the work that helped over 100 unsheltered people transition from a large encampment into safe and supportive settings.

Mayor Wu also announced that Brian Foran and Michaela Nee of the Coordinated Response Team will be named Acting Co-Directors. Both have extensive experience managing the City's work on unsheltered homelessness and working with City Departments and external partners. Foran and Nee helped lead the recent phase change that ended the permanent encampment on Atkinson Street under Del Rio's leadership.

"The responsibility of the Inspectional Services Department is to deliver core, essential City services to our residents, guar-



Tania Del Rio.

anteeing that the places they eat, shop, and stay are healthy and safe," said Tania Del Rio, incoming Commissioner of the Inspectional Services Department. "I am so thrilled for this opportunity, and grateful for the honor of having worked with the many selfless teams serving our residents in need of substance use, mental health, and housing support. Together, they have helped countless residents embark on a path to stability and recovery. I have great confidence that Michaela and Brian can continue to move this work forward and I'm excited to get to work at ISD."

Del Rio will be responsible for carrying out several of the Mayor's

priorities including expanding the Additional Dwelling Unit (ADU) program, executing the conversion of commercial buildings to residential buildings, streamlining and fast tracking permitting for small businesses and homeowners, and improving quality of life for residents by enhancing basic City services.

She has a B.A. from New York University and a Master in Public Policy from the Harvard Kennedy School. Del Rio is a BPS mother, a Latina immigrant, and a proven leader.

As the former Executive Director of Boston's Office of Women's Advancement and YWCA Cambridge, she has a track record of providing transformative leadership by fostering innovation, promoting strong organizational culture, responsible financial stewardship, and sharp strategic planning. Her work includes launching Boston's Childcare Entrepreneur Fund, which continues to provide crucial support to the city's childcare workers.

Del Rio is a proud resident of East Boston and an involved community leader. She enjoys spending time with her family, especially her two children, and staying active by surfing, swimming, and running.

Sean Lydon will remain with the

City as Senior Advisor For Construction. In this role, he will assist in managing high priority projects under construction, including White Stadium, the stabilization of the buildings a part of the Long Island recovery campus, coastal resilience, and emergency projects. He will also provide guidance on permitting, particularly assisting with navigating the permit process for high priority projects under construction. This includes pre-construction, construction, and construction close out phases, with guidance on permitting strategy and execution to ensure timely delivery and cost effectiveness.

"I am so grateful to both Tania and Sean for their leadership in taking on these new roles to carry out Mayor Wu's vision for a Boston with exceptional basic city services that residents can rely on," said Chief of Operations Dion

Irish. "With Tania's experience effectively coordinating a cross-departmental team, I am confident in her ability to lead ISD, enhancing the core services our residents' need and deserve. And I am so thankful to Sean for continuing to serve our residents in this new role, ensuring we deliver on major projects efficiently and thoroughly across our city."

The mission of the Inspectional Services Department is to serve the public by protecting the health and safety of Boston's businesses and residential communities. The Department consistently aims to fairly administer public health, safety, land use and environmental regulations throughout the City of Boston. The Department will continue to utilize resources to promote the quality of life in Boston through education, enforcement and providing emergency services.



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**Published February 14 & 15**






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# Wu announces agreement to develop networked geothermal heating at Franklin Field Apartments

Mayor Michelle Wu joined the Boston Housing Authority (BHA) and National Grid to announce that Franklin Field Apartments has been selected for National Grid's Networked Geothermal Demonstration Program. The project will be the first networked geothermal pilot project in the City of Boston and the second in National Grid's Massachusetts program. Switching energy sources from gas to electric is an important step to create green, healthy communities for residents. This is important in accelerating the Mayor's goal for BHA to be fossil fuel free by 2030. At the project's conclusion, the seven buildings in the pilot will be fossil-free.

Networked geothermal is a highly efficient renewable heating technology and source of energy that uses the ground temperature to provide heating and cooling to buildings through an underground piping network. The underground temperature serves as a heat source during winter and transfers indoor heat to the ground for cooling during the summer.

"Being the greenest city in America means that we will be best able to take care of not only

the places we live, but the people we love," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "We want to be a city where the benefits we are bringing when it comes to energy efficiency and green energy are not just around being able to check off boxes and hit goals, but that we are able to empower and support the people in our community who make it possible for Boston to do everything that we do. Every Boston family deserves a home that is affordable, safe and healthy."

"As Boston tackles the challenge of climate change, it is vital that our public housing communities come first," said Kenzie Bok, Administrator of the Boston Housing Authority. "Our partnership with National Grid is an exciting opportunity to showcase geothermal technology as a fossil-fuel-free alternative for multifamily housing, while also improving resident quality of life by providing 129 BHA families with efficient, state-of-the-art heating and cooling."

"We are excited to partner with the Boston Housing Authority and the City of Boston to meet our collective climate change, clean energy and equity goals by pursuing this networked geothermal project

at Franklin Field, bringing efficient and clean heating and cooling to its residents" said Lisa Wieland, President of National Grid New England. "We are taking the initial learnings from our first project in Lowell and applying them here, which has been extremely valuable. Key to transitioning away from fossil fuels is to develop and expand reliable alternatives. Networked geothermal has significant potential to be a solution, especially for larger buildings and campuses, and this partnership will allow us to demonstrate that and bring the benefits of the clean energy future to the Franklin Field community, today."

The geothermal pilot will replace an aging gas boiler loop currently serving 129 units at seven federal public housing buildings at the BHA's Franklin Field community in Dorchester. The Boston Housing Authority will invest federal Capital Fund Program resources to support electrification of the heating and domestic hot water equipment within the buildings. National Grid will develop the geothermal network leading to the building's exterior, and both parties will collaborate

on complementary energy efficiency investments funded by the state's energy efficiency programs.

In addition to replacing the boiler loop for heat, the ground source heat pumps and geothermal network will give residents in-unit cooling, a feature that is only accessible at present through inefficient window air conditioners purchased by residents. The project will begin design in early 2024, with construction activity to take place in 2025. BHA will lead resident engagement concerning the project in 2024 with National Grid's support.

As part of the pilot, National Grid will connect Buildings 7-13, located on Ames Way, Ames Street, and Stratton Street in Dorchester, with a horizontal distribution loop and a thermal bore field. Geothermal bore holes will allow the system to extract and deposit heat from the ground. National Grid will also install a pumphouse on BHA property to operate the geothermal network serving the designated Franklin Field buildings. BHA will be responsible for all work within the envelope of the connected buildings necessary to convert these buildings from gas heating to networked geothermal heating and cooling, including retrofits, electrical upgrades, and appliance and heating equipment replacement. Construction will cause minimal disruption for residents, and require no more than a few days of temporary relocation.

Mayor Wu also announced that the City of Boston has received \$1 million in federal funding to retrofit 80 gas stoves to electric, including induction stoves. This grant was received through the Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Justice Government-to-Government Program (EJG2G), which funds state, local, territorial, and tribal-level government activities that will have measurable environmental or public health impacts in communities disproportionately burdened by environmental harms. The City has partnered with the Boston Housing Authority (BHA) and Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation (CSNDC) to identify units to retrofit, replace gas appliances with electric, and train residents on induction stove usage. The City is also partnering with Boston University (BU) to study the indoor air quality impact of the retrofitting project to estimate implications of future similar projects.

The funds, which will be used to retrofit 40 stoves each at the CSNDC's Talbot Bernard Homes and the BHA's Franklin Field Apartments, aim to bring health, environmental, and green workforce benefits to Dorchester residents. After conducting building and unit assessments, each stove replacement will come complete with the proper electric infrastructure to best support it, which may potentially include adding 240 V outlets; adding 50 amp breakers to electric panels; and upgrading electric panels. This component of the project will upgrade the electrical capacities of buildings, leading to opportunities to electrify other appliances, such as clothes dryers and heating systems.

"For many residents, new home appliances that make life better and healthier can be the starting point to decarbonization. This project will result in invaluable findings on air quality benefits, as well as a template for how we can scale up delivery of electrical upgrades and fossil fuel-free equipment for residents who live in affordable and public housing," said Oliver Sellers-Garcia, Director of Boston's Green New Deal. "I am especially excited that this grant represents such a well-coordinated partnership on Boston's Green New Deal among city agencies, academia, and a neighborhood non-profit—and of course the Federal government."

Building on the Mayor's Green New Deal to improve public health and quality of life for communities, the City plans to implement indoor air quality monitors and utilize resident surveys to estimate health and financial implications associated with reduced pediatric asthma exacerbations in a future rollout of stove replacements. Studies show that the elimination of gas stoves reduce incidence of childhood asthma and may yield health and healthcare cost improvements.

In the City's continued efforts in investing in climate, socioeconomic, and health injustices across the neighborhood of Dorchester, the project plans to collaborate and engage with the community as it implements the pilot. To educate and train residents, the City will be utilizing completed unit installations, such as stoves that were replaced in community rooms or vacant rooms, to conduct a series of community wide

(AGREEMENT, Pg. 9)

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# Alarming new survey reveals how high MBTA fares are harming riders

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

On the heels of Governor Healey pledging to fund a permanent low-income fare for the MBTA in her FY25 budget, a groundbreaking survey of riders finds that they forgo meals, medicines, and other necessities as a direct result of the high cost of fares. The MBTA Board kicked off a formal process to adopt a low-income fare at their meeting on last week and riders and workers were there to make their voices heard on how a low-income fare would be life changing. Here's what riders are saying:

"Transportation costs, rent, groceries, medical costs, and other costs are all rising rapidly and that puts a lot of pressure on us," said Jie Zhen Li, MBTA rider and Chinese Progressive Association member. "There are often service disruptions or delays for the Orange Line, which would make us get to work late and impact our

wages, further causing us stress. Low-income workers should receive a low-income fare that is affordable and allows us to enjoy high-quality public transit services."

The rider survey underscores how unaffordable fares are having a harmful effect on where Massachusetts residents can live and work, and on the quality of their day-to-day lives. A survey of over 300 MBTA riders across the state from November 22 to December 8, 2023 found the following:

- More than 50 percent of respondents found the cost of fares too high to afford.
- 68 percent of respondents said they would use the MBTA more if the fare was half the current cost.

Governor Healey's bold commitment to funding a low-income fare program would transform the lives of tens of more than 60,000 Massachusetts residents who count on the MBTA. For more

than three years, MBTA riders and workers have united to demand a low-income fare and with the MBTA Board meeting, transit justice and affordability are within reach. As the report shows:

- A low-income fare would benefit up to 63,000 riders by the end of a five-year implementation period.
- Riders would save about 50% on fares.
- For a daily rider on the bus and subway, this would save \$720 a year, while a Zone 5 Commuter Rail rider would save almost \$2,000 a year.

Survey participants said they use the MBTA to get to a range of destinations and MBTA riders continue to make daily sacrifices and face financial hardships due to the regular cost of riding the MBTA. Survey responses included:

- Not paying rent to afford bus costs
- Skipping meals or cutting

back on groceries

- Not paying phone bills and basic necessities
- Not filling prescriptions
- Skipping medical appointments
- Walking or biking instead of taking the bus or train

"It's clear that transportation is one of the biggest needs for those in our community seeking to take advantage of employment opportunities or accessing services," said Mike Vartabedian, co-Chair of the Public Transit Public Good coalition and Assistant Directing Business Representative of the International Association of Machinists District 15.

"This report shows that people are skipping meals, medicines, and appointments, just because they cannot afford the MBTA fare. These stories underscore the urgent need for a low-income fare program that takes into account the heavy financial burden borne by riders. We are so gratified to see the Healey administration and the MBTA taking real action to make the low-income fare a reality."

Public Transit Public Good is a partnership of transit workers and riders throughout Massachusetts fighting for the future of public transit. Community Labor United convenes PTPG. Visit [PublicTransitPublicGood.org](http://PublicTransitPublicGood.org) to learn more.

## AGREEMENT (from pg. 8)

cooking demonstrations that promote healthy eating and explain the harmful impacts of gas stoves. Through the demonstrations, the City seeks to help residents understand both changes to cooking and cleaning that electric stoves may introduce, as well as the science behind induction cooking.

Geothermal heat pumps have a coefficient of performance (COP) of 4, meaning that they are four times more efficient than standard electric resistance heating. Due to their efficiency, a recent report by

the Department of Energy's Oak Ridge National Laboratory found that widespread deployment of geothermal heat pumps in the United States could result in up to \$1 trillion in cumulative savings, reducing the wholesale price of electricity by up to 12%.

In January 2023, Mayor Michelle Wu called on the Boston Housing Authority (BHA) to pursue complete decarbonization of its portfolio and retire its gas heating assets. At Franklin Field, the BHA has redirected more than

\$2 million of previously proposed fossil fuel heating investments to support space heating electrification and will add additional resources to electrify domestic hot water systems. Outside of the Geothermal Pilot, the City of Boston has separately invested \$32 million of American Rescue Plan Act funds in Boston Housing Authority projects to improve energy efficiency and indoor air quality at public housing, including at Franklin Field, Alice Taylor, Roslyn and Rockland apartments.

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4	3-Bedroom	1,140 - 1,270	\$390,000	100%	2
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Applications are available during the application period for 60 days, from Friday, December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023 — Thursday, February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024

To request an online application or to have one sent by email, visit [www.OlmstedGreenLottery.com](http://www.OlmstedGreenLottery.com)

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Day	Date	Time	Location
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Saturday	January 6, 2024	10 AM - 2 PM	Gateway Center 2 Hummingbird Lane Boston, MA 02126
Thursday	January 25, 2024	2 PM - 6 PM	Lena Park Community Center 150 American Legion Hwy Dorchester, MA 02124
Saturday	February 3, 2024	11 AM - 3 PM	Lena Park Community Center 150 American Legion Hwy Dorchester, MA 02124

**DEADLINE:** Applications must be submitted online or postmarked no later than **Thursday, February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024** Mailed to: Maloney Properties, Inc., 27 Mica Lane, ATTN: Olmsted Green Lottery, Wellesley, MA 02481

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## CHAIN FORGE (from pg. 1)

pletion of permitting and financing of the project to enable the proponents to unlock tax credits for the property.”

As part of the original long-term ground lease, the redeveloper was supposed to obtain the required permits and financing by June 29, 2018. However, that did not occur, and the redeveloper had the ground lease amended to increase its deadline according to the December 2022 BPDA memorandum.

The exact memorandum details that the redeveloper had its ground lease amended an additional 11 times between October 2018 and December 2021 following the initial June 2018 extension.

It also explains that at one point, the redeveloper considered a program change from hotel use to a “compact living” use due to the hit the hotel industry took from COVID. However, that programmatic change was never officially pursued.

The aforementioned lease amendments eventually began to cost the redeveloper, as the December 2022 memorandum states that the redeveloper committed to paying the BPDA \$3,428,333 in extension

fees incurred from July 2019 to December 2021 — \$2,441,290 of which had been paid as of the release of the December 2022 memorandum.

The lease was amended for the final time in December of 2022, according to last week’s BPDA letter. The redeveloper was given until October 31, 2023, to “obtain all required building permits, close on equity and construction financing, and complete the Article 80 development review process” and until December 1, 2023, to start construction.

It should be noted that the December 2022 memorandum indicates that the remaining balance of \$987,043 in extension fees was increased to \$1,500,000, and the redeveloper was required to pay \$125,000 a month to the BPDA plus \$7,500 a month in rent as a condition of the final lease amendment.

Fast forward to 2024, last week’s BPDA letter states, “As of January 1, 2024, the Chain Forge redeveloper has failed to make all required payments to BPDA and secure all necessary permits and financing to enable construction.”

Adding, “Therefore, the BPDA

has notified the Chain Forge redeveloper that it is in default of its lease obligations and that the BPDA is taking all legal actions required to recapture the Chain Forge building.”

Lacey Rose, the BPDA’s Chief Communications Officer, told the Patriot-Bridge via email on Tuesday that the redeveloper “failed to pay the BPDA \$75,000 in Fixed Rent and \$1,282,500 in Extension Payment, totaling \$1,357,500.”

It should be noted that attempts from the Patriot-Bridge to get comments from representatives at Kavanagh Advisory Group, LLC and CV Properties, LLC before this story was published were unsuccessful.

With the redeveloper of the Chain Forge building in default, a whole new process will have to begin to determine its future.

Mark Gallagher, a resident of Charlestown, acknowledged he just moved to the area three years ago but was still looking forward to the now-canceled project.

“I knew that it was going to be a luxury hotel with a restaurant, and I was looking forward to it,” said Gallagher, later explaining how cut-off the Navy Yard is from

the rest of the neighborhood and the limited dining and grocery options.

“Having that here was something I and others were looking forward to,” he added.

Moving toward the future, Gallagher underscored concerns about the building becoming permanent supportive housing, the same type of development approved at the old Constitution Inn by the BPDA’s Board in December amidst significant opposition.

“There’s a lot of people that are concerned that the mayor or BPDA is going to keep pushing this type of thing through,” he said.

In corresponding with others about the Chain Forge situation, Rosemary Macero, a resident, suggested that the extension fees incurred by the redeveloper should go back into the neighborhood.

“Now on Pier 5 with some of the fees/fines from the Chain Forge ‘de-designation’ or forfeiture and fees/fines owed. These fees/fines could be used to restore Pier 5 to 100 psf (which is what is needed for walking traffic) and make it an open public park,” wrote Macero in an email.

As for the next steps in this pro-

cess, the BPDA’s letter from last week indicates that community outreach concerning a new redevelopment process for the building will begin in the spring.

Rose provided more clarity on the upcoming redevelopment process, comparing it to the recent Austin Street parking lots process.

“The BPDA will host a series of community meetings to discuss community development objectives for the site and work to collaboratively identify goals to inform a future RFP. BPDA staff will use information from those meetings to draft and publish a RFP for the site,” wrote Rose in an email.

Although residents of Charlestown will have to wait even longer for the Chain Forge building to be redeveloped, the BPDA seems committed to eventually finishing the process.

“We acknowledge that the process to bring this project to life has been a long and frustrating experience for residents, and we are committed to taking actions to ensure that this site delivers on benefits to the Charlestown community,” reads last week’s letter.

## THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION NOTICE OF A PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING

### Project File No. 607981

A Live Virtual Public Informational Meeting will be hosted on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed Roadway Reconstruction project on McGrath Hwy in Somerville, MA.

**WHEN:** Tuesday, February 13th, 2024  
– 6:30pm

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this meeting is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed roadway reconstruction project. All views and comments submitted in response to the meeting will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

**PROPOSAL:** The proposed project consists of reconstruction of McGrath Hwy (Route 28) between Broadway in Somerville and Rufo Rd/3rd St in Cambridge. The current design proposes to

remove the McCarthy Overpass and replace it with at-grade signalized intersections. The project focuses on improving community connectivity between different neighborhoods and accommodation for all roadway users through provision, expansion, and enhancement of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities. The project also includes safety improvements, increased green space, physical separation of bicycles and pedestrians from motor vehicles wherever feasible, and the removal of a physical and visual barrier (the overpass) within the community.

This meeting is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (e.g interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, live captioning, videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material

formats), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT’s Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible and prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the meeting.

This meeting will be hosted, or a cancellation announcement posted, on the internet at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>

**JONATHAN GULLIVER  
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR  
CARRIE E. LAVALLEE, P.E.  
CHIEF ENGINEER**

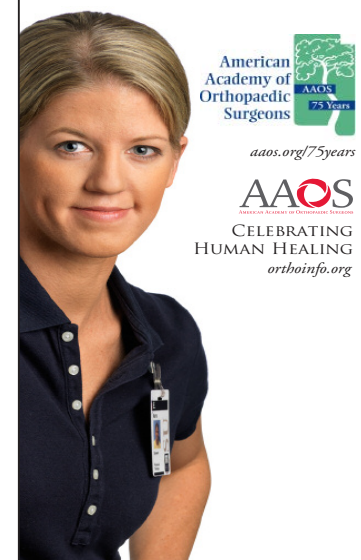
Project inquiries may also be emailed to [massdotmajorprojects@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:massdotmajorprojects@dot.state.ma.us). Please submit any written statements regarding the proposed undertaking to: Carrie A. Lavallee, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116,  
Attention: MAJOR PROJECTS, PROJECT FILE NO. 607981

### A SHORT STORY ABOUT A MOTORCYCLE. AND A SUDDEN TURN.

When she was a young college student, Elisabeth Marra had a serious motorcycle accident that ultimately changed her life. Two years after the crash, her painful open fractures had failed to heal. Then she heard about a new and complex surgery pioneered by a surgeon who used a patient’s own stem cells to concentrate the healing process. This time, her surgery and subsequent therapy were successful.

Elisabeth’s experience caused her to redirect her own career aspirations. Inspired by the medical professionals who helped her reclaim her active lifestyle, she changed her major to study physical therapy—a profession where her own experience could help other patients prevail through difficult recoveries.

We tell Elisabeth Marra’s story here to illustrate two of the most profound messages we know. Don’t give up, and remember to give back. If reading it inspires just one more person to achieve something special, then its telling here has been well worth while.





# Wu and the Boston Public Health Commission announce the 'Family Overdose Support Fund'

Special to the Patriot-Bridge

Mayor Michelle Wu and the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) announced the creation of the "Family Overdose Support Fund," a new fund that will provide financial support to Boston families who have lost a loved one to opioid overdose. The fund is the first use of the City's payments from multistate settlements with opioid manufacturers and distributors, and was established after an extensive community engagement process that invited residents to inform how the money should be spent.

"The grief and trauma of losing a loved one to overdose has a lasting impact on our communities," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "This fund will help support our families and our communities by easing the financial burdens that undermine a healthy grieving process. I want to thank everyone who participated in our public engagement process and our many state and city colleagues who worked for years to secure these funds and bring a measure of justice to families in Boston and across the country."

"The opioid epidemic has taken the lives of many loved ones throughout Boston's communities. Children have lost parents. Parents have lost sons and daughters. Families have

suffered an enormous emotional toll and are also shouldering a significant financial burden," said Dr. Bisola Ojikutu, Commissioner of Public Health and Executive Director of the Boston Public Health Commission. "The Family Overdose Support Fund will alleviate some of that burden by providing direct financial assistance to support childcare, funeral expenses, and other services to those who have been impacted by this ongoing tragedy."

The Family Overdose Support Fund will launch later this year with \$250,000 to distribute to Boston families who have experienced the loss of a family member due to opioid overdose. Families can use the funds to cover funeral expenses, therapy, legal services, childcare, and other financial burdens.

This will be one of several investments from Boston's share of the State's opioid settlements. Boston will incrementally receive at least \$22 million through 2038.

This announcement marks a new chapter in years of litigation, including a suit brought by the City of Boston against drug makers and opioid distributors for fueling the opioid epidemic. From July 2021 through December 2022, then-Attorney General Maura Healey announced four settlements that

will provide almost a billion dollars to Massachusetts over 18 years. A portion of those funds gets distributed across the Commonwealth to cities and towns for prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery.

In Boston, BPHC conducted an extensive and equitable community engagement process, asking those impacted by overdose to inform how the funds should be spent. Throughout the summer of 2023, more than 600 people participated through community and provider listening sessions, surveys, and long-form responses. A majority of respondents wanted to prioritize the needs of grieving families by providing direct financial support. Respondents also expressed strong interest in housing support and low threshold housing for people with substance use disorder, community-based equity initiatives to address substance use, overdose prevention and prevention centers, and youth prevention. The full report is now released and can be found here.

BPHC is hiring an opioid settlement project director to implement and oversee the Family Overdose Support Fund and other settlement investments. Additional investments will include low threshold housing and community grants, and ongoing community engagement

will continue to inform the funding process over the settlement period.

For more information on the city's opioid remediation settlement funds, visit [boston.gov/opioid-settlements](https://boston.gov/opioid-settlements).

Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) is the country's oldest health department. We envision a thriving Boston

where all residents live healthy and fulfilling lives. To accomplish this, BPHC works in partnership with communities to protect and promote the health and well-being of all Boston residents, especially those impacted by racism and systemic inequities. Learn more about our work at [boston.gov/bphc](https://boston.gov/bphc).

## ACTIVITIES (from pg. 5)

ryteller Len Cabral shares stories of the power of hopeful actions and shared joy in honor of Black History Month. Folktales, myths, and personal accounts come to life with humor, wisdom, and compassion that will inspire listeners of all ages.

The Celebrate series, appropriate for family audiences and children ages 5 and up, highlights America's rich cultural diversity through the arts. This program reflects President and Mrs. Kennedy's concern for and support of the arts and culture as import-

ant components of a democratic society. In order to optimize your comfort and enjoyment, reservations are recommended for all visitors to this free program. Make reservations by visiting [www.jfklibrary.org/celebrate](https://www.jfklibrary.org/celebrate) or calling 617-514-1644 and leaving a message. Children are seated on the floor with their caretakers and space is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Limited seats are available for people with disabilities, seniors, and others unable to sit on the floor. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

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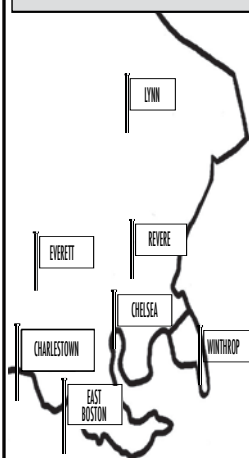
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