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MAYOR WU'S LOVE YOUR BLOCK CLEANUP



DEREK KOUYOUNJIAN PHOTO

Chrystalis Soto helps clean the grounds of Curtis Hall during the annual Love Your Block neighborhood cleanup. See Pages 4 and 5 for more photos.

ZBA approves new 72 Hyde Park Ave. plans also saving tree

BY MICHAEL COUGHLIN JR.

In what looks to be a happy ending for the community, the Zoning Board of Appeal (ZBA) approved new plans for a project at 72 Hyde Park Avenue that save a nearly century-old oak tree from being taken down at the property.

Attorney Mike Ross of Prince Lobel, legal counsel for the project, which would bring six units to the property, outlined some background on the proposal.

Ross indicated that the project was previously approved by the ZBA in 2022. However, Ross

said, "The applicant [Vladimir Sirotin], in preparing for construction — the applicant ran into an issue with a large tree in the back of the building... where it appeared impossible to save the tree."

He continued, stating that Sirotin agreed to revise the project with entities such as the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA), the Mayor's office, and others.

The Gazette covered this situation in depth in the last edition. For more information, visit [https://jamaicaplainingazette.com/2024/04/26/72-hyde-park-](https://jamaicaplainingazette.com/2024/04/26/72-hyde-park-avenue-oak-tree-looks-set-to-be-saved/)

[avenue-oak-tree-looks-set-to-be-saved/](https://jamaicaplainingazette.com/2024/04/26/72-hyde-park-avenue-oak-tree-looks-set-to-be-saved/).

"Essentially, what the applicant wound up doing is taking the rear portion of the building and taking that portion and putting it on the top of the building," said Ross.

As the presentation progressed, Ross outlined slides that showed differences in the project from the new plans to those approved in 2022.

For example, he explained that the new rear setback for

Continued on page 2

Quality-of-life issues are topics at JPA meeting

BY GAZETTE STAFF

The Jamaica Pond Association (JPA) held its regular monthly meeting this past Monday via Zoom. Chair Kay Mathew and fellow members Jasmine Crafts, Martin Thomson, Tony Dreyfus, Peter Steiger, Peter Elmutz, Michael Reiskind, Nancy Mazonson, Franklyn Salimbene, and Barry Schwartz, were in attendance, as were a number of residents of the Jamaica Plain community.

Also on hand for the session were Jordan Frias and Melissa

Beltran from District 6 Councilor Ben Weber's office and Caroline Peters, the liaison to JP from Mayor Wu's office.

The members addressed a number of matters that broadly centered around the common theme of quality-of-life issues that residents face every day in the community.

An officer from District 13 presented the Community Safety Report. He reported that the recent rash of breaking-and-entering incidents into vehicles has

Continued on page 6

Boomerangs thrift shop to close in June

BY GAZETTE STAFF

Boomerangs, a small chain of nonprofit thrift stores that has raised money to fight AIDS and for HIV services since the mid-90s, will close all three locations in June, including its store at 716 Centre St. in Jamaica Plan.

Its operator, Fenway Health, cited declining revenue as the reason for the imminent closure of the Boomerangs stores.

"For nearly 20 years, Boomerangs was an amazing success story, but for the last six years,

Continued on page 2



COURTESY PHOTO

A look inside the showroom of the soon-to-close location of Boomerangs nonprofit thrift store on Centre Street.

Roslindale Neighbors Special Pages 8-12

Police address dirt-bike issues at ESNA meeting

BY ADAM SWIFT

Police are preparing for the waves of ATV, dirt bike, and other nuisance motorists that typically hit the streets during the summer.

During the regular police presentation during this month's Egleston Square Neighborhood Association (ESNA), member Dan Newman asked what residents should do if they see the dirt bikes or ATVs driving through Franklin Park or other parts of the neighborhood.

Officer Omar Cepeda from District E-13 said that last summer, the department began putting extra effort into the issue of illegal vehicles and bikes on the streets and established a special task force. Cepeda urged anyone who saw the vehicles to immediately contact the police.

Officer David Murray, the traffic officer for E-13, said the new squad has had some success, with a sting last August that resulted in \$20,000 in citations being issued and about 15 vehicles being impounded.

"We are obviously not allowed to chase, we can't do that if they are on a moped and take off from us we are not going to chase them through the city," said Murray. "It would cause a lot of issues safety-wise."

Murray said the department is always keeping an eye on where the vehicles originate from, and that it is important for residents to report that information if they have it.

Capt. Rich Driscoll of E-13 agreed.

"One of the things that you want to put out to people is if they see where these bikes

or ATVS are emanating from, whether a residence or some sort of trailer, that information is huge, because then we can be proactive," said Driscoll.

Driscoll said the department is also taking some other preventative measures to address the issue, including using some money in the budget to put gates in certain areas of the city to limit access for the nuisance vehicles.

Cepeda noted that during the summer, certain smaller streets in the neighborhood, including South, Walk Hill, and Morton streets, are shut down during the overnight hours.

"It is part of the plan so that they are not going through them and they have to use the main roads, which they don't want to because they are exposed to us," said Cepeda.

ZBA

Continued from page 1

the project is 39.9 feet, whereas the 2022 proposal had a setback of 28.3 feet.

Ross noted that all of the units are three-bedroom, two-bath units and that units five and six have been converted to duplexes as part of the new proposal.

After outlining the zoning relief needed for the project, the floor was opened for questions from the board.

ZBA Member Hansy Better Barraza asked about a ramp that will be included in the proposal and what unit it would serve. Ross indicated that the ramp would be used to create access to unit two but could theoretically create access to unit one as well.

Following questions from the board, Conor Newman from the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services provided testimony.

Newman indicated that the mayor's office would defer to the judgment of the ZBA. "Previously, the applicant received support from the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council in August of 2022. In 2023, concerns about the preservation of a mature tree on the property emerged," said Newman.

"The applicant has worked with the BPDA to alter designs to save the tree for the past few months. After a month of design review, the applicant submitted plans that preserve the tree and maintain the unit count. The BPDA is now comfortable with the design as it maintains accessibility and preserves the tree,"

he added.

Jordan Frias from City Councilor Ben Weber's office also provided testimony. Frias indicated that Weber's office is under the impression that someone has been hired to oversee the preservation of the tree and has gotten assurances that the tree's health is a priority.

"Because of this consideration, we're in full support of this proposal, and the councilor wants to go on record in support," said Frias.

In addition to the testimony from city officials, a few residents expressed their thoughts.

Caterina Scaramelli, a resident who has been heavily involved in the movement to preserve the tree, said, "I'm really happy with the new project. It's great that we get to keep the tree and the housing."

She also asked for the name of the arborist who will be keeping tabs on the tree. Ross provided the name of the arborist in the chat — Carl Taylor.

Another resident, Faith Girler, supported the new plans, saying, "I am really happy that we are going to preserve the tree because we need it." She also spoke about the benefits of trees, such as their cooling effects.

It should also be noted that no attendees spoke in opposition to the project.

Better Barraza then motioned to approve the plans with a proviso. The proviso, in part, was "that the plans be reviewed by BPDA to ensure that tree roots are protected from all site excavation," and the motion was unanimously approved.

Boomerangs

Continued from page 1

it has seen significant financial losses," according to a statement from Fenway Health. "Fenway [Health] simply cannot continue to absorb those losses year after

year, so we have made the difficult decision to close Boomerangs. This decision is part of a series of changes being made to ensure Fenway Health continues to care for our community for years to come. AIDS Action as Fenway's Public Health Division remains a central part of Fenway Health's services."

Boomerangs' other two locations, also set to close next month, are located in the South End and Cambridge's Central Square, respectively.

All three locations have stopped accepting donations in anticipation of their imminent closures.

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Stone House proposing emergency transitional housing on Westminster Terrace

By ADAM SWIFT

Domestic violence nonprofit Stone House presented its plans for a new three-story residential building on Westminster Terrace that will provide six units of emergency and transitional housing to the Egleston Square Neighborhood Association (ESNA) on Monday night.

The new building will be around the corner from the new Stone House residential and agency building at the corner of Westminster and Washington.

“The still new-to-us building has 32 units of permanent, affordable housing, a licensed childcare center, and we also have our agency headquarters,” said Stone House CEO and COO Kathy Fagan said of the Westminster Avenue building.

Fagan noted that Stone House has been in the community and the Jamaica Plain and Roxbury neighborhoods for 50 years this year.

Once again, Fagan said Stone House will be partnering with the Planning Office of Urban Affairs on the six-unit emergency shelter and transitional residence.

The Planning Office of Urban Affairs oversees the residential units at 1 Westminster while Stone House handles the childcare center and the agency office. The childcare center currently has 43 children from infants through preschool who have experienced domestic violence, Fagan said.

The new facility will be at 7-9 Westminster Terrace, a location that will provide a number of

benefits for the community, the organization, and victims of domestic violence, Fagan said.

“The purpose of having it right next to our agency would be to allow individual clients to receive the resources from 1 Westminster, to be able to have case management there and to be able to travel safely to receive resources,” said Fagan.

Currently, Stone House rents emergency shelter space in Dorchester, and Fagan said it can be difficult for clients to travel from that location to the agency headquarters.

The property at 7-9 Westminster Terrace was owned by the city of Boston, and the BPDA approved naming Stone House the tenants of designee for the property, Fagan said.

“That is when we made the de-

cision to work with the Planning Office of Urban Affairs to provide this transitional housing and emergency housing,” she said.

The goal of the new emergency housing, as well as all Stone House programs, is to provide resources that will allow residents and clients to integrate into the broader community, Fagan said.

“Having something right in our backyard would allow us control and make sure we have eyes on the space at all times,” said Fagan. “The goal is to have support 24/7 and to have staff members at the site at all times.”

The proposed building is three-stories tall and would be a similar height to other buildings in the neighborhood, according to the project architect Michelle Weidler.

“We very much took inspi-

ration from the neighborhood around and the community and really trying to mimic other residential buildings in the area,” she said.

Construction on the building is expected to get underway in the spring of 2025 if all permits are in place.

Fagan said the goal is to have award money from state and federal sources for the build, and Stone House would be responsible for the operational costs.

“We currently receive funds from the Department of Public Health for our current transitional emergency shelter and those contracts extend for the next several years,” said Fagan. “So we would be transferring the funds, we would no longer have the rented space, we would be using those funds for our current space.”

BPDA hosts 3458 Washington Street Public Meeting

Michael Coughlin Jr.

Last week, several residents participated in a public meeting hosted by the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA), which outlined the plans for a proposed development at 3458 Washington Street.

Boston Pinnacle Properties LLC has proposed the project, which involves a five-story building with 37 units.

“We’ve been building and managing safe, comfortable apartment housing in and around the Boston area for the better half of the last decade and a half,” said Adam Burns, Principal of Boston Pinnacle Properties LLC.

While Burns indicated they do not have properties in Jamaica Plain currently, he said, “We’re very excited to be entering this market on Washington Street, being part of the PLAN: JP/Rox initiative for the area, and we’re very excited to bring these housing units to the neighborhood.”

Attorney George Morancy of Adams & Morancy, P.C., serving as legal counsel for the project, indicated that compliance with PLAN: JP/Rox was paramount.

He also mentioned that compliance with current zoning was another crucial part of the proposal.

“We are mostly in compliance even with existing zoning and, of course, fully in compliance with PLAN: JP/Rox,” said Morancy.

As it relates to PLAN: JP/Rox, Morancy claimed that the project site is in density bonus area (DBA) 65 but would not approach the 65-foot height and stated he thought the building was 58 feet.

Additionally, Morancy indicated plans for eight IDP (inclusionary development policy) units and seven parking spaces.

Regarding parking, Morancy acknowledged it could be a point of contention but said, “It is compliant with the plan, and it is sort of in the spirit of transit-oriented development in light of the site’s proximity to public transit options.”

In terms of the base zoning violations, variances are being sought from the Zoning Board of Appeal (ZBA) for excessive floor area ratio (FAR) and building height, as well as for insufficient off-street parking and off-street loading.

After Morancy outlined aspects of the proposal, Philip Sima of Balance Architects reviewed the project plans, renderings, and more.


First, Sima provided a detailed rendering of the proposed building and plans for the materials that will be used. Sima indicated that a dark brick masonry base will be used on the ground floor, which will have commercial space.

On floors two through four, which will have the residential

units, there are plans to have a red brick facade, and the fifth floor will have a material change and be stepped back.

Other architectural aspects of the project to note are a designated drop-off area for services like DoorDash off of Washington Street, parking entry off of Kenton Road, and space for an

Continued on page 7




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The proposed project contemplates the demolition of an existing single-family building and construction of four (4) new two and a half story townhouses each containing two (2) single-family dwelling units, for a total of eight (8) home ownership condominiums on the northerly portion of the lot. Each condo unit will contain 3 bedrooms and a garage, which will allow parking for two (2) motor vehicles per unit. The southerly portion of the lot will be protected from future development with the recording of a deed restriction.

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JP PARTICIPATES IN MAYOR WU'S LOVE YOUR BLOCK CLEANUP

PHOTOS BY DEREK KOUYOUMJIAN

Love Your Block is an initiative from Boston City Hall to equip neighborhood groups with cleaning supplies and support for getting residents together

and help clean up their city. This year the day was dedicated to the memory of Karen Wepsic who passed away in 2022.



Neighborhood Liason Caroline Peters, City Of Boston Digital And Project Manager Nathalia Ferreira, and JP Centre South Main Streets Executive Director Michael Reiskind.



Cesar Depaz and Jose Montalvo.



Dorothy Clark and Elizabeth Merica get some cleaning in the Civil War Monument.



Monika Bach and her son Grey Schroeder with Neighborhood Liason Caroline Peters.

Gazette Pet of the Week

by Sarah Carroll



BRAD

Brad is an adorable pup who loves the company of his favorite people (but not everyone is his favorite!) He enjoys being carried around and cuddling on the couch. He's fine around other dogs for walks but doesn't like to share a home. Brad is about 2 years old and weighs 17 lbs.

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Yaretzi Martinez and Pedro Garcia work hard to clean the streets

JP PARTICIPATES IN MAYOR WU'S LOVE YOUR BLOCK CLEANUP

PHOTOS BY DEREK KOUYOUMJIAN



Gabby Amore helps clean up the grounds of the Civil War Monument.



BPW employees Said Haowi and Chad McDonough lend a helping hand to the civilian cleanup crews.



Emily Lowenberg on her two wheeled steed is ready to joust with the rubbish of the streets.



Steve Dudley collects some supplies for Street cleaning.

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JPA

Continued from page 1

ceased and B&E police reports in the JP community have been at a minimum since the peak of about 100 per month two months ago. He said this past month saw only one motor vehicle break-in on Eliot St. in which the suspect was inside the vehicle when the officers arrived and he was arrested.

After the officer noted that there were two reports of shoplifting in the past month, he took questions from those in attendance.

Schwartz said that there have been a number of vehicles coming down Perkins St. and making a left onto the Jamaicaaway where a left turn is prohibited. The officer said the police will

address the issue.

Dreyfus said he observed an arrest on the Jamaica Pond pathway by Boston and Brookline police a week ago and wondered what it was for, but the officer did not have personal knowledge of the incident.

Dreyfus raised the issue of the arrest to lead into his observation that traffic has increased on the Jamaicaaway in recent years with a concomitant increase in vehicles that are speeding, going through red lights, making illegal turns, and otherwise not driving in a safe manner.

The officer assured Dreyfus that traffic enforcement will be a priority with the coming warmer weather, especially with police construction details increasing. He also noted that the State Police also enforce the traffic laws on the J-way and suggested that the State Police be invited to a future meeting of the JPA to hear the concerns of the community.

Steiger added that motorists make illegal left turns from Moraine St. onto the J-way. "It happens all the time," he said, while also pointing out that the J-way has become popular for street racing at 2:00 AM with cars speeding and burning rubber that leaves marks in the asphalt.

Another resident, who said he

walks frequently in the community, also mentioned the dangerous driving habits of motorists which, he said, "is terrifying when you're walking."

Sarah Freeman asked why there were a number of police cars with sirens at 4:30 Monday afternoon when she was near the Forbes building. The officer explained that there had been a call for a person with a gun on Center St. However, the suspect did not have a gun, but did have an outstanding warrant for which he was arrested.

A resident said that motorcycles have been operating almost daily on the sidewalk in the early morning around 8:00 along Jamaica Pond while she has been taking a morning walk. The resident also reported there has been the illegal dumping of mattresses and furniture on the sidewalk along Lakeville Rd. at the corner of Center St. on a daily basis.

The officer mentioned that he'll check with the owner of the adjacent property to see whether they have security cameras.

The next item was a discussion led by Salimbene on two topics, the problem of bicycles on the pedestrian paths on Jamaica Pond and the potential impact of the forthcoming Squares + Streets project on the JP busi-

ness district.

Salimbene said he recently mentioned to two cyclists on the pathway that cycling was not allowed and they told him that they were unaware that bicycling on the path was not permitted.

"That's not surprising because the signage on the pond is abysmally not visible and the city needs to put up better signage," Salimbene said. Even worse, Salimbene noted that the confusing new sign at the entry to the pond at Eliot St. suggests that bicycling is permitted along the walking path.

"This is an easy problem to solve with better signage," said Crafts, who reinforced the peril of the present situation to pedestrians. "It is really dangerous for people with children and small dogs on a narrow path with bicyclists zooming all around."

Dreyfus, who is an avid biker, said that for bicyclists coming from Brookline there is no signage coming from Perkins St.

Salimbene, who also is a cyclist, added that the bike lane on the roadway needs to be stenciled to indicate that this is where bicyclists should go.

This same issue also has arisen at recent meetings of the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council (JPNC), whose members likewise have expressed their frustration with the large number of bicyclists on the pedestrian-only walkway.

Frias said that Councillor Weber's office will be happy to assist with getting the city to improve the signage.

Regarding the city's Squares + Streets project, a new planning and zoning initiative by the BPDA that will focus on housing, public space, small businesses, arts and culture, and transportation in neighborhood centers and along main streets, Salimbene asked about the issue of the height of buildings in business districts and queried what the limit will be for Center St.

However, Peters said that Center St. presently is not among the neighborhoods presently in line for a designation by the Squares + Streets program and Frias assured the JPA members that nothing will move forward without notice and input from the community.

Dreyfus presented the report of the Parks, Parkways, and Open Spaces Committee. He noted that JP's legislators are hoping to have about \$300,000

included in the state budget to plant 100 new trees along the Jamaicaaway.

Dreyfus indicated that the Emerald Necklace Conservancy offered to take charge of the project, with the funds earmarked for them, because the conservancy will be able to spend the money more effectively than the city or state. Dreyfus also has words of praise for Jack Schleifer, the conservancy's Field Operations Manager, who is a Yale graduate, who is working with him on the issue.

However, Dreyfus cautioned against getting hopes up too high, noting that the state budget is "very tight" because of the recent, and anticipated, expenditures of state funds for recent immigrants.

Dreyfus and Mathew also discussed the proposed Arborway redesign project, with Mathew emphasizing that the JPA needs to make a "connection with the DCR in order to make our views known."

"We need traffic study data and we just don't have it," said Mathew. "This is an unusual situation in which decisions about traffic re-design are being made without data."

Mathew also lauded the members of the local state legislative delegation for their willingness to take up the issue with the DCR.

Reiskind, who as a member of the JPNC serves as the liaison to the JPC, said "there isn't much to report." He noted that the JPNC supported a request for a zoning variance for a property on Holbrook St. and endorsed two requests for local eateries pertaining to liquor licenses, one of which is for a transfer of the existing license to the new owner of the Blue Nile restaurant in Hyde Sq., and the other for a new beer, wine, and liqueur license for the Evergreen Eatery on Green St., which purchased the liquor license on the open market.

He also informed the members that a Life Alive vegetarian restaurant will be going into 435 South Huntington Ave., the former site of the Canary Square restaurant.

Reiskind also briefly discussed the issue of the city's regulations pertaining to cannabis dispensaries, which require local zoning approval. He said the city will be holding a hearing



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Continued on page 7

BPDA

Continued from page 3

at-grade transformer off of Kenton Road.

In speaking about the transformer, Sima said, "It kind of just looks like manholes with pavers that integrate into it." It should also be noted that the plans include a mechanical penthouse at the roof level.

In terms of landscape architecture, plans include short-term bicycle spots, greenery, and more.

Moreover, an eight-foot wall in the rear is planned to screen the parking area.

After Sima wrapped up his overview of the plans, attendees proceeded to provide comments and ask questions for the remainder of the meeting.

One attendee inquired about the amount of commercial space in the proposal, and Sima indicated it was about 800 square feet.

Another attendee commented on the proposal and raised concerns about the traffic issues and

the number of units slated to be built in the area.

"People have a right to good lives, and we're being inundated with housing in this part of JP," they said.

Multiple rear abutters also had questions and comments. For example, one abutter wanted to know about the placement of the transformer and potential landscaping in the rear.

Sima indicated that the transformer is not within the eight-foot privacy wall but outside of it and flush with the sidewalk, but indicated that the team would be amenable to "making something that I think folks like."

Regarding the landscaping question, Sima indicated he did not want to speak for the landscape architect but suggested there could be an opportunity for limited vegetation in a small strip outside of the privacy wall.

Burns also mentioned that he was willing to meet with the abutters to figure something out regarding rear landscaping.

There was also a concern from an abutter about the mechanical penthouse's height, to which Burns said, "I would be happy to go back with Phil [Sima] and the project team and see what we can do in terms of the scale of that upper penthouse area."

Another abutter had several questions for the project team. First, the abutter asked about the height of the building, including the mechanical penthouse. Sima guessed that the penthouse was 10 feet above the roof level.

This same abutter disagreed with Morancy's previous assessment that the project fully complies with PLAN: JP/Rox, claiming that the site is actually in the 55-foot DBA.

The abutter also added that he thought the project did not comply with the plan because it did not minimize adverse impacts on the scale and character of existing two and three families, ensure a gradual transition between new and existing buildings, and more. They also requested the proposal to "cut back" in the rear.

Morancy responded by saying he had to look up the DBA information. "I believe that I was correct. If that's not the case, then certainly nobody at the BPDA noted that as well, but I will follow up with that," said Morancy.

He also said the team would consider the suggestion from the abutter.

Later in the meeting, another attendee questioned the pro-

posal's compliance with PLAN: JP/Rox and claimed there were issues with the building's step back at the upper level.

In response to the concerns about compliance with the plan, Tyler Ross of the BPDA said, "A lot of people have questions about JP/Rox and the project's compliance with that, so I'll flag that for our planning staff and have them go through it and make sure that the project is in compliance."

The project's process was also discussed. Ross indicated that the comment period for the proposal has been extended, and there are plans for the project team to meet with groups like the Stonybrook Neighborhood Association (SNA) before the period closes.

Before the public meeting ended, several other topics were discussed, such as affordability, the privacy wall, setbacks, and much more.

For those interested in viewing a meeting recording or providing comments, visit <https://www.bostonplans.org/projects/development-projects/3458-washington-street>.

The project's comment period will end on May 21st, and the team will meet with the SNA on May 13th.

JPA

Continued from page 6

to consider amending the rules.

He also reported on the recent meeting of the JP Business and Professional Assoc. (BPA) at which State Rep. Bill MacGregor was the guest speaker. McGregor said that he expects favorable passage by the legislature of a bill that will allow for more liquor licenses, 250 over five years, to be available in the City of Boston. The increase in the availability of liquor licenses, which presently are restricted by state law based upon the population of a community and which can be incredibly expensive to purchase, is seen as crucial for the development of new restaurants by minority owners in the city.

Reiskind noted that the former Beirut Restaurant will become a Korean BBQ restaurant, the new Hub Restaurant on Centre St. has opened for business, and the 7 Pond St. Coffee Bar has been sold and will be reopening under a new name.

Thomson asked about the reuse of the former 7/11 Conve-

nience Store space, which presently is vacant. Reiskind said that the BPA is looking at up to six potential tenants for that space. However, he also mentioned that Boomerangs, the long-time thrift store that sells second-hand furniture and other items, will be closing in June, which will result in another large vacant space in the business district.

The annual meeting of the JPA will be held Monday, June 3, at the historic Loring Greenough House at 12 South Street in Monument Square starting at 6:00 for the election of members, to be followed by a reception from 6:30-7:30.

Mathew reported that there have been no new nominations for members of the JPA board and asked the current members to seek out potential new members to inject a fresh perspective into the JPA. Mathew noted that two long-time board members, Mazonson and Thomson, will not be returning. Mathew pointed out that though it would be preferable to add new council members at the June meeting, new board members can be added at any time during the year.

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Roslindale Neighbors

Mayor Michelle Wu's Coffee Hour Series held at Adams Park

Mayor Michelle Wu and the Boston Parks and Recreation Department hosted the 2024 Neighborhood Coffee Hour Series in partnership with Dunkin'®.

Mayor Wu's Neighborhood Coffee Hours was held in Roslindale at Adams Park on April 25, which offered a unique opportunity to speak directly with the Mayor and staff from City departments about open space and their neighborhoods. Through these conversations, and a suggestion box at each site, Mayor

Wu looks forward to hearing how the City of Boston can improve upon parks, public areas, and City services.

"Every neighborhood and every resident has their own diverse set of concerns that deserve to not only be heard, but to be acknowledged and addressed," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "I am excited for all of the conversations and connection that will come from Neighborhood Coffee Hours."

Leadership and staff from the

Community Engagement Cabinet will be at each Coffee Hour. Community members will have an opportunity to meet their neighborhood liaisons, who will share updates on each neighborhood, including how many 311 cases have been resolved, streets repaired, as well as the City's investments in housing, local businesses, and the arts. The City is again releasing a Community Input Survey, which provides an opportunity for constituents to ask questions and inform what

will be presented during Coffee Hours with the Mayor. Last year, this proved to be a success, allowing constituents to hear directly from the Mayor and City leaders as they addressed concerns and answered constituents' questions at each Coffee Hour event.

"Coffee Hours with the Mayor is an intentional effort to meet community members in the heart of their neighborhoods," said Brianna Millor, Chief of the Community Engagement Cab-

net. "I encourage residents, including our youth, seniors, civic organizations, business owners, and local leaders to attend this neighborhood-centered event. Boston 311 will be present to connect residents to essential city services."

Dunkin' will be on-site with freshly brewed Iced Coffee and MUNCHKINS® donut hole treats. Dunkin' will have lawn

Continued on page 14

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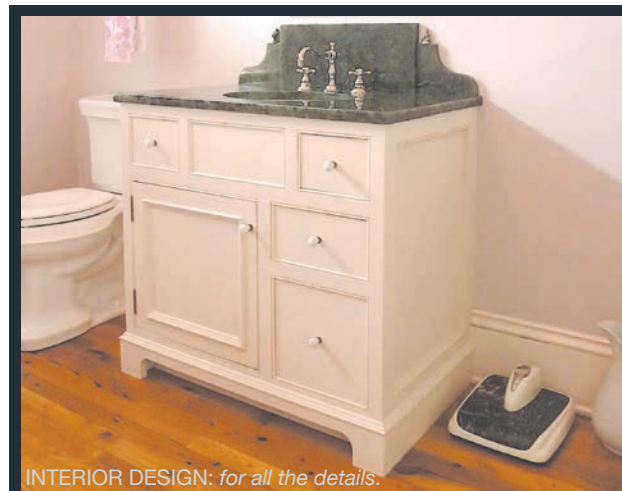
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RoslindaleNeighbors

ROSLINDALE VILLAGE MAIN STREET NEWS AND NOTES

The following listings are from the Roslindale Village Main Street weekly news and updates site. The mission of Roslindale Village Main Street (RVMS) is to promote Roslindale Village as an appealing destination and the dynamic center of our community.

NEW INSTRUCTORS

Two new instructors join the Akasha team! Lucia Nguyen is 200H YTT certified teacher and trained in Trauma Yoga Therapy, Mindfulness & Meditation, Sound Healing, EFT & TFT Facilitation, Reiki and Trauma Informed Hands-on Assist. Join Lucia on Mondays at 7:45pm for Stillness + Sound. Sign up as a drop-in or with an Akasha class pass. Tracey Francois is a Reiki Practitioner II, Intuitive empath, and facilitator of healing circles and workshops. Tracey offers individual Reiki sessions and hosts workshops around New and Full Moons.



Signature floral arrangements, cards, gifts, and so much more for all moms.

Join the first one coming up on Saturday, May 25 at 7pm.

MOTHER'S DAY IDEAS

Mother's Day is Sunday, May 12! The Centerpiece has you covered for the perfect way to make mom's day extra-special. Your best bet is to order online in advance, as it's their busiest

weekend of the year. They want to make sure they have exactly what you want, when you need it. They have their signature floral arrangements, cards, gifts, and so much more. They offer pickup at the West Roxbury or Roslindale locations, or delivery throughout Greater Boston.

POTTERY WORKSHOP

Summer is a great time to learn something new! How about a Throwing Crash Course Pottery Workshop at Create?! Choose one of two 3-week crash courses in July or August to learn how to throw on the wheel like a champ. This is a great course for new-to-the-wheel folks AND for experienced potters looking to freshen up their throwing skills. Register online before seats fill!

MOTHER'S DAY MENU!

Make this Mother's Day truly extraordinary with Shanti's Mother's Day menu! Experience the vibrant flavors and rich traditions of Indian cuisine with their special \$49 3-course meal, expertly crafted to delight her



Join their team and be a part of something special!

palate and warm her heart. Menu is exclusively available on May 12 from 3-9pm. Book your table now!

!HEALTHY IS HIRING

Join their team and be a part of something special! If you're passionate about good food and good vibes, they want to hear from you! Whether you're a barista, customer service pro, or just love loving on people, they may have a place for you on their team. Message them to learn more about their open positions.

Do you have an event, busi-

ness highlight, announcement, or resource you would like included in the newsletter? Send an email with the pertinent information and an image or graphic to manager@roslindale.net with "newsletter" in the subject line by Tuesday at 5pm!

#ROSLOVE

Roslindale Village Main Street and engaged residents like you have created a profound positive impact in our community since 1985 when we were established as one of the nation's first urban Main Street Programs. Ever since then, you have all helped our team continue Roslindale's rich history of community empowerment and involvement. Just walk around the square and you'll see the outcome of these community efforts in the number of successful locally owned businesses, public art, and open spaces accessible to everyone.

If you are able, please show your #ROSlove by giving today to support the community we've built together.

Continued on page 10

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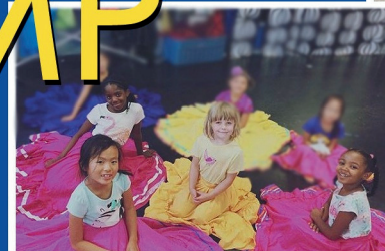
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Roslindale Neighbors

Main Street

Continued from page 9

THANK YOU, LOVE YOUR BLOCK VOLUNTEERS!

Thank you so much to everyone who came out for our Love Your Block Cleanup last

Saturday!

We had over 25 volunteers picking up trash, cleaning out tree beds and planters, putting down mulch, and more to help make Roslindale Village look its best. It was great to see so many people coming out to make a difference in our community!

Stay tuned for future cleanups if you'd like to help out!

RVMS ANNUAL PLANT SALE: MAY 18

Mark your calendars! Our annual Plant Sale will take place in Adams Park on Saturday, May 18! Stop by to pick up some plants from local farms to put in your garden! We will also have a compost service join us, and The Centerpiece Flower Shop will be there with some fun house plants to liven up your home!

When: Saturday, May 18 from 9am-12pm

Where: Adams Park

Our Design Committee will also offer free seedling starter kits for kids to grow their own plants at home!

EMPLOY BOSTON YOUTH

Are you a local business owner looking to employ Boston youth? To bring youth employment opportunities to all parts of Boston, the Office of Youth Employment & Opportunity (YEO) is hosting neighborhood pop-up youth job fairs in various locations across the city. They will have one in Jamaica Plain on Saturday, May 18 from 11am-2pm.



Space available for rent at 67 Poplar St.

ROSLINDALE OPEN STUDIOS

Save the date for the 18th annual Roslindale Open Studios! Join artists on October 18 & 19 at group sites, businesses, and home studios. More information about artist registration and sponsor opportunities will be coming soon! Mark your calendar now so you don't miss out on this art-filled weekend in Rozzie!

SPACE AVAILABLE FOR RENT

There is a commercial space available for rent at 67 Poplar St! This is a first floor commercial space that was formerly used as

an office. Rent is \$1,950. Find more information here. Email Erin Birmingham at erin@brum-corealty.com with any questions. You can view this and other vacant spaces available for rent on the Vacancies page of our website.

WAKE UP THE NIGHT

Check out the City of Boston's Wake Up the Night Grant Pilot Program! Through the Wake Up the Night Grant, Mayor Michelle Wu and the Office of Nightlife Economy will award individuals and organizations up to \$10,000 for nighttime activations. The program aims to revitalize Boston's nightlife economy and foster safe, inclusive social spaces by investing in events.

MINDFULNESS WORKSHOP

YMAA will be hosting a Mindfulness for Kids and Parents workshop on Friday, May 17 from 6-6:45pm! Our information age is full of distractions. Busy schedules, screens, social media

Continued on page 11

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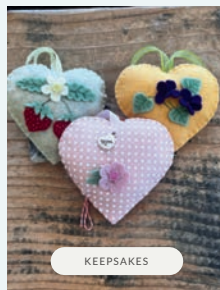
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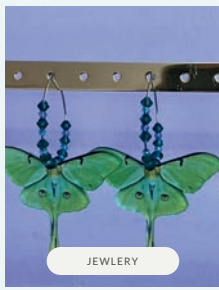
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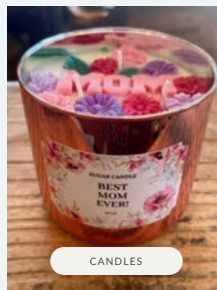
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Roslindale Neighbors

Main Street

Continued from page 10

and an overall hectic pace of life make it challenging for kids and even adults to find focus. In this workshop coach Malu Wilder will teach several different mindfulness techniques to help parents and kids manage our fast paced world.

LILAC SUNDAY EVENT

Experience the springtime bloom of the Arnold Arboretum's renowned collection of over 400 lilacs at their annual Lilac Sun-



Springtime bloom of the Arnold Arboretum's renowned annual Lilac Sunday event!

run through August 31. Catch Strength & Conditioning on Mondays at 6pm at Fallon Field, or choose from lots of other classes in-person or virtual! Everyone is welcome at these free classes, regardless of your fitness level.

SUMMER FARMERS MARKET JUNE 1

Mark your calendars! Our Summer Farmers Market returns on Saturday, June 1! The

day will be filled with live music, kids' activities, and of course, your favorite Farmers Market vendors - you don't want to miss this neighborhood staple!

The Summer Farmers Market runs from June 1 - November 23, every Saturday from 9am-1:30pm.

Stay tuned for more information including our vendor schedule and entertainment lineup, coming soon!

Visit www.rosindale.net for more details on each event.

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day event! Sunday, May 12 from 10am-3pm. Visit for tours with Arboretum experts, hands-on children's programming, dancing, meditation, chalk art, and more. Picnicking in the Arboretum landscape is permitted on this day only.

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Roslindale Neighbors

Ideas aplenty at Roslindale Square visioning session

By MICHAEL COUGHLIN JR.

On Tuesday, the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA) hosted a virtual visioning session to collect ideas for planning and zoning recommendations associated with the agen-

cy's Squares + Streets initiative in Roslindale Square.

According to the BPDA's website, the Squares + Streets initiative is a "planning and zoning initiative focused on adding, supporting, and improving housing, public space, small businesses,

and arts and culture in transit-accessible neighborhood centers and along main streets."

To begin the visioning session, Eileen Michaud, a Project Manager at the BPDA, provided a general overview of Squares + Streets.

Specifically, she discussed the criteria for determining where a Squares + Streets plan might be employed. These areas usually are transit-oriented areas, centers of neighborhoods, and

commercial activity. They have a mix of uses and potential for growth and have not had recent planning.

Michaud also detailed why there is a focus on Squares + Streets. "First and foremost... is to provide more housing to support Boston's current and future residents... and not only do we want to provide more housing, we want to provide it in areas that residents will have access to everyday resources and ser-

vices," she said.

Moreover, Michaud said plans are being developed in these Squares + Streets areas through zoning reform with new zoning districts and coordinated investments to address several needs.

The goals of the initiative include updating zoning, creating, enhancing, or preserving affordable housing, retail, and cultural spaces, improvements to local transportation and public space, and more.

Specifically, the study area for Roslindale Square is "a third of a mile around the main intersecting streets by Adams Park of South Street and Poplar Street," per Michaud.

However, it should be noted that Michaud said, "The proposed map amendment that will bring new Squares + Streets zoning to this area will be determined with the community and will not include this entire area but a much smaller area within the one-third of a mile radius that focuses on bringing more

Continued on page 13



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Visioning

Continued from page 11

mixed-use development where it's appropriate."

Following Michaud's overview, the visioning part of the meeting began. Attendees participated in activities associated with seven topics and provided feedback on what they would like to see in the aforementioned study area.

The first topic discussed was housing, where attendees were asked to provide feedback on four questions. These questions focused on the types of units attendees would like to see for new residential developments, the level of affordability, how the city could use extra funds to assist in stabilizing current residents, and what benefits should be provided to tenants in buildings slated for demolition.

In terms of unit size, those in attendance were more supportive of studios, one-bedrooms, and two-bedrooms. As for affordability, responses were all over the board, ranging from 30% of area median income (AMI) to market rate.

As for the responses to the extra funds from the city question, attendees wanted to see subsidizing the production of more income-restricted housing, financial assistance to help those buying market-rate or income-restricted homes, and more.

Attendees also wanted to see tenants facing demolition provided with housing search assistance, the right to remain in a unit and other services.

The next topic was small businesses. For example, attendees were asked what new businesses they would like to see first in Roslindale Square. There was widespread support for several businesses, such as restaurants, offices, retail, and more.

Moreover, attendees made other suggestions for small businesses, such as an indoor playground, and some even requested that private off-street parking be reduced.

There was also a discussion on how the city could support small businesses if it had extra money. Responses were widespread, supporting ideas such as providing grants or low-interest loans for small businesses to open in vacant storefronts, creating below-market-rate commercial spaces, and more.

Arts and Culture was the third topic attendees provided feedback on. They were asked what types of art and culture establishments they would like to see first in the square.

Establishments that focused on performative art and live music were supported, as was a movie theater.

Attendees were also asked where establishments like the ones above could be supported in the study area. One comment was that Alexander the Great Park was underutilized and could be used for visual art.

The question of where there could be improvements or activation of art and culture for current areas in Roslindale Square was broached. There were suggestions for using the commuter rail parking lot and Fallon Field.

Attendees also addressed open space and resiliency. They responded to several prompts and provided ideas, such as a pedestrian connection from Adams Park to Birch Street, more activities in the Birch Street Plaza, and more.

The meeting attendees also gave their thoughts on where and what type of programming for open spaces should be included in the planning area. There was support for community gardens, seating, trees, and more.

Regarding transportation, the team pre-identified three focus

area topics for transportation-related improvements.

The first focus area concerns areas with complicated circulation, such as Firth and Bexley Roads and around Adams Park on Washington Street.

Focus area two focused on skewed intersections. The intersections depicted during the meeting were the Belgrade Avenue intersections at Pinehurst and Amherst Streets and the Washington Street and Kittredge Street intersection.

The third focus area detailed bus stops without amenities like shelters or benches, including the Washington and Albano Streets stop.

In addition to the outlined focus areas, attendees suggested transportation improvements, such as bringing back a two-way road on Washington Street at Adams Park and more.

The penultimate topic was built form and design, where attendees were given examples of buildings and provided feedback on their appearance and where they might fit in the Roslindale Square study area.

Finally, to end the meeting, Maya Kattler-Gold of the BPDA outlined zoning — the Squares + Streets zoning districts — adopt-

ed this year.

Specifically, there are six Squares + Streets zoning districts, S0 through S5. S0 is primarily residential, with the smallest floor plate, lot coverage, and the largest yards. It also conditionally allows some small active uses on the ground floor.

S1 is also mostly residential, requires yards, and allows for small active uses. S2 has a lower lot coverage to require things like yards, requires outdoor amenity space, and will enable buildings to be built up to the lot line.

In S3, the ground floor does not allow residential uses but requires active ground floor uses and outdoor amenity space. S4 also requires outdoor amenity space and active ground floor uses while having larger floorplates and more allowed uses on the top floors.

Finally, S5 has the same allowed uses and required space for outdoor amenities and active ground floor uses as S4 but can allow for more density and new sustainable building practices.

"As of now, they don't exist anywhere in Roslindale — they haven't been mapped anywhere," said Kattler-Gold.

"One of the outcomes we're hoping will come out of the small

area plan that we're working through right now is to rezone Roslindale Square using these new zoning districts, and so the information that we're getting from you during these visioning exercises... is a huge part of how we'll figure out which of the districts should go in what part of Roslindale Square," she added.

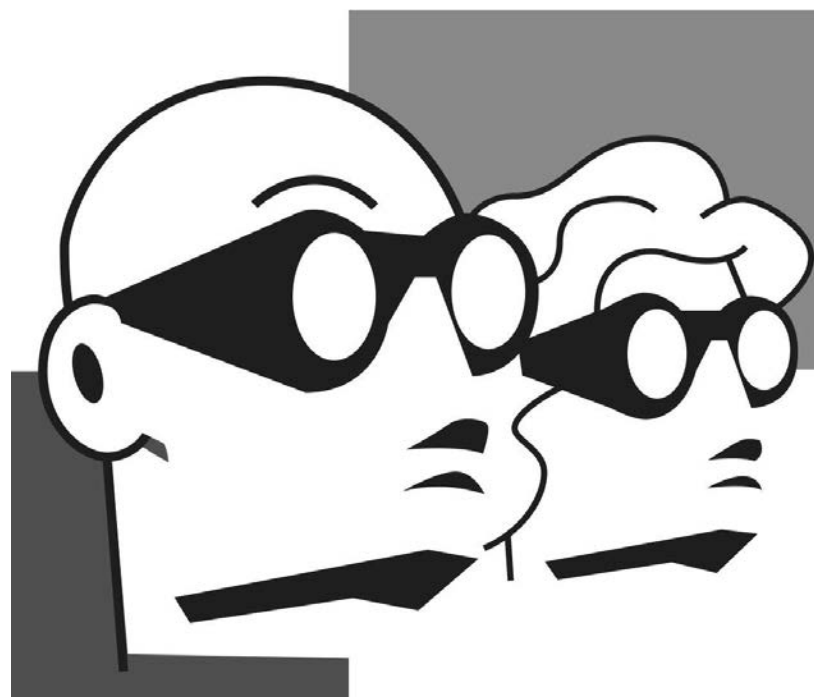
Kattler-Gold also emphasized that everything in the study area would not be rezoned and that multiple districts would likely be used throughout the square.

Regarding next steps, Michaud indicated the feedback from the meeting would "form the basis... for discussions with our city colleagues from a variety of departments on ways we can respond to community input through Squares + Streets small area plan recommendations."

She also indicated that the next round of engagement will be sometime in mid-summer. Ideas will be presented to the community and refined before draft recommendations are released later this summer.

For those who would like more information on this process or to view the recording of this meeting, visit <https://www.bostonplans.org/planning/planning-initiatives/roslindale-square>.

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Coffee Hour

Continued from page 6

games and gift card giveaways. Residents at each event will also be eligible to win a raffle prize from Dunkin'. Individuals in

attendance will receive a free flowering plant provided by the Boston Parks and Recreation Department, while supplies last. Fresh fruit will be provided by Star Market.

"Mayor Wu's Neighborhood Coffee Hours are vital for com-

munity engagement, allowing residents to share their thoughts directly. We're grateful for their participation," noted Ryan Woods, Commissioner of the Parks and Recreation Department. "These events not only foster dialogue but also mark the kickoff for

our exciting summer calendar of events. From outdoor concerts to movies to arts and crafts workshops for kids, our programming breathes life into our parks, fulfilling our core mission of creating vibrant spaces for all to enjoy."

For more information and up-

dates on possible rain locations, please contact the Boston Parks and Recreation Department at (617) 635-4505 or @bostonparksdept on X, Facebook, or Instagram, or by visiting boston.gov/parks.

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Camillo Liquor

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Check Cash

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Jamaica Laundry

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Zestos Pizza

460 Centre St.

Evergreen Café

154 Green St.

The Forbes Building

545 Centre St.

Gentle Dental

612 Centre St.

Southern JP

Health Center

640 Centre St.

Smoke Shop

566 Centre St.

The Purple Cactus

674 Centre St.

Polkadog Bakery

44 South St.

Fiore's Bakery

55 South St.

Italian Pizza

172 South St.

Metro Mark Apt.

3615 Washington St.

Metro Mark Apt.

3611 Washington St.

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BMC Market

3390 Washington St.

Ruggiero's Market

3345 Washington St.

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JP Apts.

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3145 Washington St.

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10 Store

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Mt. Pleasant Home

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LEGAL NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN FOR INCAPACITATED PERSON PURSUANT

TO G.L. c. 190B, Section 5-304 Docket No. SU24P0829GD Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Suffolk Probate and Family Court 24 New Chardon Street Boston MA, 02114 In the matter of: Judith Gayle Bennett of: Jamaica Plain, MA RESPONDENT Alleged Incapacitated Person To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by Mass. Dept. Of Mental Health of Westborough, MA in the above captioned matter alleging that Judith Gayle Bennett is

in need of a Guardian and requesting that (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve Without Surety on the bond. The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority. You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 AM on the return date of 5/21/2024. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance

if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date. IMPORTANT NOTICE The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed

at State expense. WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court. Date: April 22, 2024 Stephanie Everett, Register of Probate 5/10/24 JP

LEGAL NOTICE

CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR RESIGNATION OF A GUARDIAN OF AN INCAPACITATED PERSON Docket No. SU21P0426GD

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Suffolk Probate and Family Court 24 New Chardon Street Boston MA, 02114 In the Interests of: Judith Gayle Bennett Of: Jamaica Plain, MA RESPONDENT Incapacitated Person/Protected

Person To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by Shelly Oakes, LICSW of Braintree, MA in the above captioned matter requesting that the court: Accept the Resignation of the Guardian. The petition asks the court to make a determination that the Guardian and/or Conservator should be allowed to resign; or should be removed for good cause; or that the Guardianship and/or Conservatorship is no longer necessary and therefore should be terminated. The original petition is on file with the court. You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 AM

on the return date of 5/21/2024. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date. IMPORTANT NOTICE The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for

a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense. WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court. Date: April 22, 2024 Stephanie Everett, Register of Probate 5/10/24 JP

LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT Suffolk Division INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE Docket No. SU24P0788EA Estate of: Barbara Ashley

Walnut Also Known As: Barbara Ethel Walnut, Barbara E. Walnut, Barbara A. Walnut Date of Death: May 27, 2023 To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner Frederick P. Walnut of North Attleboro, MA A Will has been admitted to informal probate. Frederick P. Walnut of North Attleboro, MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond. The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with

the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner. Stephanie L. Everett, Esq. Register of Probate Court 05/10/2024 JP

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WAKE UP THE EARTH FESTIVAL

PHOTOS BY DEREK KOUYOUMJIAN

The Wake Up The Earth Festival started in 1979 bringing music, dance, performance, activities, and community awareness to the Jamaica Plain and Roxbury. This year the festival

was dedicated to the memory of Ron Hafer, who passed away in 2023. He led the Stop The Highway Movement that stopped the InnerBelt from treating down more neighborhoods in Boston. A

parade from festival organizers Spontaneous Celebrations led to the Southwest Corridor Park at Stony Brook Station where the festival spread out up towards Jackson Square.



Local musician James Purtle helps run the Junk Percussion area where hands young and old can make rhythmic sounds with all sorts of items.



A friendly couple, Osana and Rain, with Rain's trusty functional friend "Gus."



Tim, Ellen, Peter, and Laura Mathis enjoy family time together.



One of the latest bands to hit the JP music scene The Dead Beats make a kite together before playing.



It was a perfect Spring day for Wake Up The Earth to occur.



Wake Up The Earth starts with a parade that runs from Spontaneous Celebrations to the Southwest Corridor Park at Stony Brook Station.



Pumawari Tusuy Boston, supporters of Spontaneous Celebrations, Peruvian Dance Group.



Jeff Hammond, Raquel Pena, and Lorena Rivera look to bring attention to the Pop Warner Football league for Jamaica Plain/Brookline area.

WAKE UP THE EARTH FESTIVAL

PHOTOS BY DEREK KOUYOUMJIAN



In the Magic Forest Emma and Mia Mego discover Pheonix Eggs.



At Stoney Brook Station, attendees to Wake Up The Earth participate in a Zumba class taught by Nancy DeLeon and Joya Lonsdale.



Katherine Moskop and daughter Zara Swartz-Moskop with a kite they made together.



Linnea and her grandmother Anne.



Addy with his dad ND make some beats happen at Junk Percussion.



Steven Cain and Katrine Burkitt.



Zoya and Tony Gaetani.



At the Sun Stage Boston R&B band Pellaiah Auset preformed.



Rachel and Kate with The Neighborhood Farm.



Emma Belis had an important message about the environment to share with the crowd.



At the Zumix Youth Stage Sing Positive from Spontaneous Celebrations perform some Bruno Mars songs.

EDITORIAL

Change in marijuana scheduling was long overdue

The decision by the Biden administration last week to reclassify marijuana from a Schedule I drug to a Schedule III drug came as welcome (though long overdue) news for all Americans who have been aware for decades of the absurdity and injustice of that classification.

Marijuana became classified as a Schedule I drug, reserved for dangerous drugs such as heroin and LSD, during the administration of President Richard M. Nixon in 1970. Research into Nixon's presidential papers about 10 years ago revealed that Nixon's sole motivation for doing so was to provide a pretext to arrest, prosecute, and incarcerate Black and brown Americans, whom Nixon saw as political opponents during a time of political upheaval in our country.

That Nixonian policy of the past five decades has resulted in a disgraceful legacy of vast discrepancies in the enforcement of the drug laws by law enforcement at all levels, federal, state and local, to target Black and brown Americans at rates far greater than whites.

Countless lives -- and families -- in minority communities have been ruined because of racially-selective enforcement policies regarding the laws on marijuana.

Marijuana's classification as a Schedule I drug never had any basis in medical fact. Compared to just about any drug, both legal and illegal, marijuana has the least amount of harm and side-effects. No one ever has died from a marijuana overdose. By contrast, almost all commonly-available, over-the-counter drugs can cause a fatal overdose. (Even plain-old water can kill you if you drink too much of it.)

In addition, the common perception of marijuana as a so-called gateway drug, which became fashionable during the era of Nancy Reagan's "Just Say No to Drugs" campaign, was a myth. The only correlation that ever has been shown between a drug used early in life and hard-drug use later in life has been between cigarettes and opioid addiction.

On the other hand, we wish to emphasize strongly that marijuana should not be used by those under the age of 21, for whom marijuana use can have a lasting and deleterious effect on the still-developing human brain. (The same also can be said for nicotine, alcohol, high-sugar drinks, and ultra-processed foods.)

Hopefully, now that marijuana will be classified as a Schedule III drug (which is defined as a drug with a moderate to low potential for physical and psychological dependence, such as Tylenol with codeine), researchers in this country finally will be able to unlock how it affects the human body, which has THC (the active ingredient in marijuana) receptors throughout.

THC already has been shown to have a number of possible therapeutic uses, including treatment for glaucoma, pain, depression, and nausea for those undergoing chemotherapy.

Lastly, government regulation will ensure that dosage amounts are accurately labeled on available products. Just as alcohol content is indicated on beer, wine, and hard liquor, marijuana products, especially edibles, need to be labeled to provide consumers with needed-information about the potency of what they're ingesting.

The rescheduling of marijuana by the federal government is 50 years too late. But, as the saying goes, it's better late than never.

Anti-semitic and anti-Muslim hate crimes must be stopped

Both the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), the New York-based international Jewish non-governmental organization and advocacy group, and the Council of American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the U.S.'s largest Muslim civil rights organization, have pointed to alarming increases in hate crimes in recent years.

The ADA recently reported that anti-semitic incidents in the past 10 years have grown exponentially from about 750 in 2013 to almost 9000 in 2023. CAIR reported that over the past decade, anti-Muslim incidents have increased three-fold, from about 2500 in 2013 to 7500 in 2023.

The recent events in the Middle East have stoked a cauldron of hate in the United States that always was there, but which for the most part bubbled beneath the surface. Today however, that cauldron has reached the boiling point, leaving American Jews and Muslims fearful of displaying their identity in public, lest some hate-monger with evil intent be in the vicinity.

We would note that the vast majority of the recent spike in hate crimes is not being committed by Jewish or Muslim Americans, but rather by white Americans, who are using the Middle East as a convenient pretext for their malevolent acts.

It is at times such as these that we think back to the simple, but profound, words of Rodney King after the white police officers who savagely beat him were found not guilty at their criminal trial and Los Angeles erupted in massive riots:

"I just want to say, you know, can we all get along?" King implored. "Can we get along? Can we stop making it horrible for the older people and the kids?"



PLEASE WRITE...

The Gazette welcomes letters to the editor. Word limit: 500. Deadline: Friday at 5 p.m. one week before publication. Letters may be emailed to letters@JamaicaPlainGazette.com. Please include address and telephone number for verification purposes.

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The opinions expressed on these pages are not necessarily those of this newspaper.

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BRIGHAM AND WOMEN HOSPITAL HOLD BIANNUAL "YARD SALE"

PHOTOS BY DEREK KOUYOUNJIAN

The Brigham and Women Hospital Stronger Generations Initiative held its biannual "Yard Sale" event at Curtis Hall in Jamaica Plain. Over 360 families came to receive free diapers, wipes, clothing, blankets, hats, gloves, school supplies, and other household essentials.



A line of families await to receive their household goods. Items to be distributed include diapers, wipes, clothing, blankets, hats, gloves, school supplies, and more.



Family Partner For Stronger Generations rookie Yadelyn and Mia Acevedo, daughter.



Lyv Norris from the Kraft Center For Community Health at Mass General Brigham.



Frank Crowley, Brigham Women's employee.



Madison Louis with son Rye Soyt.



The Brigham and Women Hospital Stronger Generations Initiative team.

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