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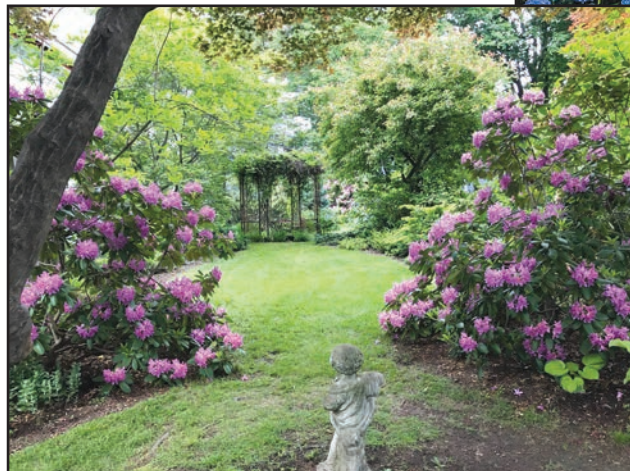


PHOTO COURTESY THE TRUSTEES - BOSTON COMMUNITY GARDENS.

Pictured are gardens from previous tours.

Annual Jamaica Plain Garden Tour goes virtual

The Trustees of Reservations (The Trustees) has announced the launch of its Third Annual Jamaica Plain Garden Tour now ongoing at thetrustees.org/jpgt.

This event is a key fundraiser for The Trustees' network of 56 Boston community gardens and parks, which are a more important resource now than ever

during COVID-19.

In lieu of the usual in-person walking tour of private gardens in Jamaica Plain, this year's tour

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Lawsuit brought against proposed supportive housing development on Washington St.

BY LAUREN BENNETT

A lawsuit has been brought against the proposed development at 3368 Washington St., which is slated to provide 202 affordable rental units and 140 units of housing for formerly

homeless individuals, developed by The Community Builders (TCB) and Pine Street Inn.

Monty Gold, the landlord of the building at 3377 Washington St., which is home to Turtle Swamp Brewery and located across the street from the proposed devel-

opment, claims that the project is too large and would cause issues with parking on the street, and is attempting to reverse the Zoning Board of Appeal (ZBA) approval

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The pandemic impacts local crime rates, for better and worse

BY LAURA PLUMMER

On Thursday, August 6, District E-13 of the Boston Police Department (BPD) presented its monthly virtual police and community relations meeting, where it showed how the COVID-19 pandemic may be influencing crime rates.

In attendance were Capt. John Greland, Officer William Jones and members of the public. This was Capt. Greland's last meeting since he is due to retire at the end of the month.

Officer Jones shared the local crime statistics for the month of July compared to July of 2019. The differences, he noted, could be attributed to the pandemic.

Residential burglaries and

package thefts were all down from last year, which he said could be because more people are at home than last year. Also experiencing a reduction was nondomestic assault, possibly because of social distancing measures that keep would-be rivals from encountering each other in public.

However, there was a spike in thefts from vehicles, which Officer Jones suggested may be due to people not securing their vehicles when running quick errands around town. Commercial burglary was also up as many places of business are closed. Finally, domestic assault saw an increase, possibly linked to more

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La pandemia afecta las tasas de delincuencia locales

BY LAURA PLUMMER

El jueves 6 de agosto, el Distrito E-13 del Departamento de Policía de Boston (BPD) presentó su reunión virtual mensual de policía y relaciones comunitarias, donde mostró cómo la pandemia puede estar influyendo en las tasas de criminalidad.

Asistieron el Capitán John Greland, el Oficial William Jones y miembros del público. Esta fue la última reunión del Capitán Greland ya que se jubilará a fin de mes.

El Oficial Jones compartió las estadísticas locales de delincuencia de julio en comparación con julio de 2019. Las diferencias,

señaló, podrían atribuirse a la pandemia.

Los robos residenciales y el hurto de paquetes se redujeron con respecto al año pasado, lo que según él podría deberse a que hay más personas en casa que el año pasado. También hubo una reducción en el asalto no doméstico, posiblemente debido a las medidas de distanciamiento social que evitan que los posibles rivales se encuentren en público.

Sin embargo, hubo un aumento en el hurto de vehículos, lo que puede deberse a que las personas no aseguran sus vehículos cuando hacen mandados rápidos.

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Mail-in ballots for upcoming elections are on their way

By JOHN LYNDIS

Despite President Donald Trump voting by mail during elections in 2017, 2018 and 2020, POTUS has spent the past week threatening to sue state's that will allow mail-in voting for this upcoming Presidential Election—falsely claiming it will lead to widespread election fraud.

While Trump has even suggested the November election should be postponed, Boston is going forward with sending residents 'vote by mail' applications.

At a press conference last week Mayor Martin Walsh said that registered voters in Mission Hill and the rest of the city should expect to get a mail-in ballot application in the mail this week, if they haven't received one already.

"This year, everyone can vote by a mail-in ballot," said Walsh. "In the past, Massachusetts residents had to show that they had a disability, that their religion prevented them from voting in-person, or that they would be out of town on election day. This year, Massachusetts passed legislation that waives these requirements, and anyone

who requests a mail-in ballot will get one. This will help make sure everyone can exercise their right to vote during COVID-19."

The Mayor said that it's important for residents to note that they are getting an application in the mail, and they must fill it out and send it back to the Elections Department to get a mail-in ballot. As of last week the City had received 4,000 applications for mail-in ballots.

"Voters can choose which election they'd like a ballot for — the Primary Election on September 1st; the General Election on November 7th; or both," said Walsh. "Independent voters who want to vote in the primary must check a party box. They should then sign the form, and drop it in the mail. No postage is needed."

Applications to request a mail-in ballot must be received by Wednesday, August 26th for the State Primaries, and October 28th for the General Election.

"Voters who would rather go to their polling place in-person can still do so," said Walsh. "The City of Boston Elections Department is adding COVID-19 protocols on social distancing, sanitizing procedures, and the proper use

of PPE in their training for poll workers."

In addition, the City will hold Early Voting again this year. Ear-

ly voting for the Primaries will happen August 22nd through August 28th; and for the General Election, it will run October 17th

through October 30th.

To learn more about mail-in ballots and the upcoming elections, visit Boston.gov/elections.

Solicitudes de votar por correo llegarán pronto

By JOHN LYNDIS

Donald Trump amenazó con demandar a los estados que permitan la votación por correo en las elecciones presidenciales, alegando que conducirá a un fraude electoral generalizado. Sin embargo, Boston continuará enviando solicitudes de voto por correo a los residentes.

En una conferencia de prensa la semana pasada, el alcalde Marty Walsh dijo que los votantes registrados en la ciudad deberían esperar recibir una solicitud por correo esta semana.

"Este año, todos pueden votar por correo", dijo Walsh. "Durante COVID-19, cualquiera que solicite una boleta por correo recibirá una".

Es importante que los residentes sepan que tiene que llenarla y enviarla al Departamento de Elecciones para obtener una boleta por correo. Hasta la semana pasada, la Ciudad había recibido 4.000 solicitudes.

"Los votantes pueden elegir para qué elección desean una boleta electoral: la Elección Primaria el 1 de septiembre, la Elección General el 7 de noviembre o ambas", dijo Walsh. "Los votantes independientes que quieran votar en la primaria deben elegir un partido."

Las solicitudes deben recibirse antes del miércoles 26 de agosto para las primarias estatales y el 28 de octubre para las elecciones generales.

"Los votantes todavía pueden ir a su lugar de votación [en vez de votar por correo]", dijo Walsh. "El Departamento de Elecciones de la Ciudad de Boston está agregando protocolos COVID-19 sobre distanciamiento social, procedimientos de desinfección y el uso adecuado de PPE en su capacitación para los trabajadores electorales".

Además, la Ciudad ofrecerá la Votación Temprana nuevamente este año. La votación anticipada para las primarias se llevará a cabo del 22 al 28 de agosto, y para las elecciones generales del 17 al 30 de octubre.

Para obtener más información sobre las boletas por correo, visite Boston.gov/elections.

Garden Tour

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more intimate look at several outstanding home gardens in the neighborhood and the remarkable people who tend them. The featured gardens range from a small urban homestead complete with chickens to a professionally designed garden in the formal English style. The cost is \$15 for members and \$20 for non-members.

"These small, hidden oases dotted throughout the city have stunning backstories and an out-sized impact on their respective communities," said Vice President of Nature & Agricultural Properties Alicia Leuba. "As the trend of going back to the land continues, these gardens and the stories of the people who tend them are more important than ever."

The role gardens play in providing food access as well as connection to nature and community has become essential during the coronavirus pandemic. In Boston and across the country, people who are concerned about food

budgets, seeking a stress-relieving activity, and looking for a safe way to spend time outdoors are turning to gardening in droves. The Trustees Boston Community Gardens staff and its affiliated volunteer garden coordinators have seen requests for garden plots more than double this spring. Interest in the free gardening workshops The Trustees provides—moved online this season—has increased exponentially as it's now common for hundreds of people to participate in classes that used to attract 15-20 people in person.

The particularly nourishing role of gardens during the pandemic applies to home gardens as well as community plots, exemplified by one of the gardeners in the video whose garden is his only connection to the outside world.

"One of the gardeners has a health condition that has kept him home and makes visitors in his house an impossibility, which means his garden serves as a social lifeline for him," says Boston Community Gardens Engagement Manager Michelle de Lima. "That's a feeling that many Bostonians can relate to and just

proves how gardens connect and enhance neighborhoods."

The video of this year's tour is available at thetrustees.org/jpjt and costs \$15 for Trustees members and \$20 for nonmembers. The funds raised by the JP Garden Tour, as well as the upcoming South End Garden Tour, directly support operations and educational programming in the community gardens.

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SNA provides update on Flanagan and Seaton site

By LAUREN BENNETT

The Stonybrook Neighborhood Association (SNA) gave an update on several projects that it has been involved with at its monthly meeting on August 10, which was held via Zoom.

The Flanagan & Seaton project, which consists of a community agreement in three parts: a community room, the garden, and the mural, took up much of the discussion.

Leanne and Gopi Manchineella, who are part of a subcommittee for the garden portion of the project, reported that there are plans for the garden, known as the Burnett Street Garden, that have been approved by the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) and the zoning “is ready to go,” Leanne said. “At this point, it’s pending construction.”

The garden consists of 26 raised beds, four of which are ADA reserved beds, that will be available for membership once the garden is established. This area will also eventually be an extension of the Southwest Corridor. The garden also includes a shed and a water supply. The 12,000 square foot park offers benches, a path, and 13 large caliper trees, along with more than 40 shrubs. The design was done by Ray Dunetz Landscape Architecture.

The garden is located in the green space between the ExtraSpace Self Storage building on McBridge St. and the residential building on Burnett St.

Leanne said that the park space is being prepared “for the community to receive it,” and she said that the subcommittee is “confident with the state of our [Memorandum of Agreement] “for both the garden and the park.”

The outlying issue is that “we don’t have an organization that will assume liability,” subcommittee member Fred Vetterlein said, adding that the park and garden needs water and materials to keep it going every year.

Vetterlein said they had approached the Trustees, who took on the Minton Stable Community Garden, but it did not pan out.

A City of Boston program, called the Boston Parks Priority Plan, came to the attention of the subcommittee, and Vetterlein said he believes this program could offer the support that is needed to make this park

happen.

The City of Boston said on its website that its “goal is to enhance and enlarge Boston’s network of resilient community parks,” and on the page for the Parcel Priority Plan, the City states that it is “prioritizing parcels of land to acquire and protect for public use.”

Vetterlein said they hope to include city councilors, city and state reps, and other stakeholders in the process to find an entity to assume liability.

Leanna also mentioned that discussion has been had about the potential separation of the community garden from the park, but nothing has been officially decided.

SNA member Jennifer Uhrhane said that she “urges” not separating the park from the garden, as it would cause loss of potential of gaining more garden space from the park in the future.

A small community room update from subcommittee member Tobias Johnson said that a meeting was held this week with a nonprofit “prospective managing partner.” The case is similar to that of the green space in that a separate entity is needed to help run the community room space that is located inside the ExtraSpace Storage building.

For the mural, Jennifer Uhrhane said that a conversation has been had with ExtraSpace Storage “about picking up the budget shortfall” for the mural and ExtraSpace will provide an answer shortly.

She also said that the City of Boston’s Office of Arts and Culture has been contacted, as another entity would become responsible for the mural one the 20 year maintenance period is over for the first one.

97-99 WILLIAMS ST.

Scott Glidden provided an update on the proposed project at 97-99 Williams St., which is being designed by architect Elaine Scales and developed by developer Joey Federico. Glidden, who is a member of the subcommittee for this project, said that he heard back about updated drawings from the team, who wanted to know when they could come back before the SNA for a vote.

“They’ve made significant changes that we had been requesting,” Glidden said. An originally proposed flat roof design had been removed, as well as some other details, “so it sort of fits into the neighborhood better than it did before,” Glidden said. He said a roof deck has been incorporated for owners on the third floor.

Glidden said the subcommittee has not had a chance to meet and discuss the new plans yet, as they had just been sent last Thursday. He said that while positive changes have been made to the proposal, there are still outlying issues and variances “that have not been satisfied or completely addressed,” so he said the subcommittee is “not ready to submit a recommendation to the general SNA prior to the September meeting.”

preparation.

District E-13 continues to take precautions against the spread of COVID-19 among its officers and staff through the use of masks, handwashing and work stations being spaced apart. Handwashing stations located outside of the station are generally stocked, though one resident said she had witnessed them empty.

The police and community relations meeting is held on the first Thursday of the month at 6:30pm. To join the meeting, go to meet.google.com and enter the meeting code hgf-fdqj-cui. You can also join the meeting by phone by dialing 1-720-507-3856 and entering the code 724 468 894 followed by the pound or hashtag sign.

Delincuencia

Continued from page 1

dos. El robo comercial también aumentó, pues muchos negocios están cerrados. Finalmente, el asalto doméstico experimentó un aumento, posiblemente vinculado a más parejas en aislamiento social.

El Oficial Jones comentó que la tasa de asalto fue “bastante buena para un mes de verano”, especialmente considerando la crisis económica y el hecho de que muchas más personas están sin trabajo.

Informó que, en su mayor parte, la comunidad estaba tomando en serio las precauciones de seguridad COVID-19. Citó una barbacoa semanal en los apartamentos Mildred Hailey donde los residentes recogen comida para llevar. El evento utiliza

estaciones de lavado de manos, distanciamiento social y preparación segura de alimentos.

El Distrito E-13 continúa tomando precauciones contra la propagación de COVID-19 entre sus oficiales y personal mediante el uso de máscaras, lavado de manos y estaciones de trabajo separadas. Las estaciones de lavado de manos ubicadas fuera de la estación generalmente están abastecidas, aunque una residente comentó que las había visto vacías.

La reunión de policía y relaciones comunitarias se celebra el primer jueves de cada mes a las 6:30 pm. Para unirse a la reunión, vaya a meet.google.com e ingrese el código de reunión hgf-fdqj-cui. También puede unirse a la reunión por teléfono marcando 1-720-507-3856 e ingresando el código 724 468 894 seguido del signo de libra o hashtag.



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Crime

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couples in social isolation.

Officer Jones commented that the rate of robberies (muggings) was “pretty good for a summer month”, especially considering the economic crisis and the fact that many more people are out of work.

He reported that, for the most part, the community was taking COVID-19 safety precautions seriously. He cited a weekly barbeque at the Mildred Hailey apartment complex where residents pick up meals to take back to their homes. The event uses handwashing stations, social distancing and safe food

Lawsuit

Continued from page 1

of the project in March. He seems to stand alone in his position, as most of the community is very much in favor of the proposal in its current form.

“Neither the appellant, his attorney, or the proprietors of Turtle Swamp Brewery are opposed to the construction of the proposed affordable housing project,” Gold’s attorney, Stephen Greenbaum, said in a statement to the Gazette. “In fact, they completely support the creation of housing for the homeless at this site. The problem is not the project, but its size and scope. The appellant has been vocal since it was first proposed that there is too little parking, which will result in a lot of cars parking on Washington Street, which is already stretched for parking. Additionally, there was no serious effort to address potential traffic issues. When and if these matters are properly addressed the appellant would happily resolve this matter.”

John Lincecum, one of the owners of Turtle Swamp Brewing, wanted to make it clear that “we are not party to the lawsuit. This has really been a lawsuit that has been brought on against the developer,” he told the Gazette. “It’s been very frustrating for everybody. We’ve always been supportive of the Pine Street Inn and what they’re trying to do.”

He said that as Gold’s tenant, “we’re just kind of stuck in the middle,” and are not opposed to the amount of parking proposed, which is 39 spaces. “The sooner this is settled, the happier we will be,” Lincecum added.

In a recent Instagram post, Lincecum and co-owner Nik Walther wrote that they do have

concerns about the “number of simultaneous large projects” on Washington St. “...there is NO integrated plan on how years of intense construction will impact the entire Stonybrook neighborhood,” they wrote.

The proposed development has been very popular with the community, with many neighbors speaking out in favor of the project. Several community meetings have been held and the public was given chances to voice concerns and make suggestions, many of which were taken into account by the developers. The building was originally proposed to be six stories, but after hearing community feedback, it was reduced to five stories.

The building also includes activated space on the first floor that will serve the community.

“During the community review process for 3368 Washington Street, area residents asked if we could eliminate a second curb-cut as that might impede sidewalk pedestrians and traffic, and instead activate the street by incorporating a glassy, well-designed community room that will be used as an amenity space for people in the building sometimes but can be used at other times for community meetings,” according to Bart Mitchell, President and CEO of The Community Builders. “Area neighbors explained there wasn’t a good place for neighborhood associations and others to meet on this stretch of Washington Street and asked so we accommodated that request, which we did.”

Pine Street Inn said in a statement to the Gazette, “After a significant participatory process involving residential and business neighbors, where changes were made to the project in response to community requests, no one spoke in opposition to this project before

the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council, and voted unanimously to support the approvals for this project.”

Pine Street Inn went on to say that only one owner of a commercial property spoke in opposition at the March 10 ZBA hearing, and the Board unanimously voted in favor of the project.

“We are really proud to be partnering with Pine Street Inn,” said Mitchell. “What has been designed is going to be incredibly successful.”

Mitchell said that TCB is “very hopeful” that Gold’s concerns can be settled as well as any community concerns about construction impact, which he said are “considered important” by the developer.

“Among the other things that it does, the Community Builders is landlord to many small businesses and we are about their success and that they thrive,” Mitchell added.

Construction on the building is expected to start at the end of the year and last for about two years, he said, adding that the lawsuit is “not delaying us right now.”

He added that he looks forward to working with neighbors on mitigating construction impacts as the project proceeds.

“Pine Street Inn is proud of the community process and support we have received on this project, and we are grateful to the Jamaica Plain supporters,” said Lyndia Downie, President and Executive Director of Pine Street Inn.

“Moving men and women off the street, out of shelter and into the safety and security of supportive housing is critical, particularly during these turbulent times. We look forward to moving beyond this lawsuit and welcoming 140 vulnerable men and women into a place they can call home. And in response to the question about parking, it is highly unlikely that any of these 140 residents will have a car,” she added.

Alex Ponte-Capellan, a Com-

munity Organizer for City Life/Vida Urbana, said that “City Life and the community really support the Pine Street Inn. We’re going to do everything in our power to support the Pine Street Inn project,” which he said will include asking for the lawsuit to be dropped, holding protests, making petitions, and garnering “as much community support as possible.”

Many residents and supporters of the project, Ponte-Capellan included, say that this project is more important now than ever with the virus exacerbating existing challenges faced by low income and homeless families.

“This is a very timely project,” he said. “The coronavirus has affected so many people.”

He said this project needs to move forward, as “it is something that would be one of a kind in Boston; the largest project of this kind to support formerly homeless people and families.”

Wes Kaplan, an abutter of the proposed project, said he is “strongly against the lawsuit,” calling the project “really important, especially during COVID. There is an urgent need for low income housing and housing for homeless folks.”

He continued, “[Gold] doesn’t represent the neighborhood by any means. We really need to stand in solidarity when it comes to housing. This really isn’t an issue that folks can ignore anymore.”

Jeffrey Jacobson and his husband have lived next to another housing facility managed by Pine Street Inn on Green Street for 14 years.

“They’ve been great neighbors, the whole time. Most of their residents don’t own cars, not even using all of few parking spaces they do have—no traffic congestion problems,” he wrote in an email to the Gazette.

He said he and his husband are in support of the proposed project and are opposed to Gold’s lawsuit. “The suit alleges hard to the community from density and traffic, the opposite of what we

have experienced,” he said. “Mr. Gold’s lawsuit is an attack on the diversity of the community and on our efforts to help each other in adversity.”

Resident Sarah Horsley responded to Gold’s lawsuit by saying, “what is truly dangerous is delaying critically needed affordable housing in the midst of a pandemic, an economic depression, and a pending eviction crisis. What is truly dangerous is asking 140 formerly homeless folks and 62 low and moderate income families to wait - or go somewhere else - because of a perception that traffic and parking will be worsened.”

Another resident, Zack DeClerck, lives around the corner from the proposed development and served on the Impact Advisory Group for the project.

“Our neighbors across Boston face homelessness, housing insecurity, and displacement because of the lack of affordable homes,” he wrote. “Every day this project is delayed is another day that people have to navigate the shelter system (or worse) amid a pandemic.”

He continued, “Monty Gold was invited to sit on the IAG and already had his perspective heard during the two year review process for this project - way more opportunity than most people have. To mitigate his concerns, the project is already providing less low & moderate income housing than initially proposed. That is unfortunate to say the least...permanent homes provide the sort of stability required to heal and recover from other ailments, not limited to addiction of course.”

The developers have their eye on the goal of bringing these units to life so more housing is available to those who need it.

“Pine Street Inn and The Community Builders are proud to have gained the support of many leaders and residents in Jamaica Plain, and how concerned they are that one party is seeking to stand in the way of the project,” Pine Street Inn said in the statement.

“The two organizations are in discussion to try and resolve the issues with the party who brought the lawsuit. Housing for vulnerable and low-income individuals and families is more critical than ever, and any project delays will have a significant impact on the lives of those who depend on this housing. We look forward to continuing to partner with our neighbors to bring this project to fruition.”

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BLC approves re-installation of flagpole in Jamaica Pond Park

BY LAUREN BENNETT

The Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC) on July 28 approved the re-installation of a flagpole in Jamaica Pond Park in a new location after it was removed in 2019.

Lauren Bryant, a project manager for the Boston Parks and Recreation Department, said the flagpole was removed for “a few different reasons,” including that it blocked circulation patterns which did not allow for ADA access.

Originally, the removal of the flag raised no concerns from the community when work was proposed for the park last year, but she said that recently, veterans who walked the pond every morning and saluted the flag said they miss it and asked the City to replace it.

A new location is being proposed for the 25 foot flagpole, which landscape architect Kyle Zick said would be “in and amongst newly restored benches, but not directly in between the view between the two buildings,” referring to the buildings on Boathouse Plaza where the other pole was located.

There is an excess of wheelchair companion spaces that were installed between benches at the park, so Zick said that placing the flagpole in one of these spaces would not be “jeopardizing ADA compliance.”

The pole would be an anodized bronze with an anodized aluminum ball on the top. Bryant said that the veterans would be in charge of raising and lowering the flagpole each day.

Commissioner David Berarducci said that this new flagpole “will have a different presence than the original one did. This one seems to be tucked in anonymously. I don’t have a strong feeling about it one way or another.”

Zick said it was a “deliberate” choice not to place it back in the original spot, because “we wanted the space in between the buildings to be more open.”

Bryant added that they also wanted the landscape to remain the way Olmsted had it, which did not include the flag pole in between the two buildings.

The BLC approved the proposal as presented.


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Boston City Council approves Edwards ZBA reform proposal

By JOHN LYNDS

In the wake of the scandal that rocked the Boston Zoning Board of Appeal (ZBA) last year, District 1 City Councilor Lydia Edwards has called for an overhaul of the city's zoning board.

The John Lynch bribing scandal trickled down to the ZBA and led Mayor Martin Walsh to call for an investigation into the board.

Lynch, the city's Director of Real Estate, pleaded guilty in federal court to accepting \$50,000 from a developer to sway members of the ZBA on a vote.

Since his plea, ZBA Board Member Craig Galvin has resigned and former ISD Commissioner Buddy Christopher, who has been serving as an advisor to Mayor Walsh, also jumped ship from City Hall. Reports then surfaced that Galvin's real estate company may have benefited from votes he took approving projects that he and his wife later sold.

As the scandal unfolded Edwards filed legislation to mod-



District 1 City Councilor Lydia Edwards.

ernize and reform ZBA.

Last week the City Council approved Edwards' call to reform the ZBA.

According to Edwards the changes include adding environmental and urban planning experts to the board, setting term limits for board members, requiring board members to recuse themselves from projects they've been involved with in the past five years (currently two), and requiring quarterly reports on the variances and conditional use permits given out by the board in each neighborhood.

Edwards' legislation would

also require that at least one renter and homeowner sit on the board and creates a new position to provide neutral advice to applicants and neighbors about the ZBA process.

"This is a huge win for us in terms of transparency," said Councilor Edwards. "These changes will help bring the ZBA into the 21st century and bring us towards a more equitable and fair ZBA process."

In late February, a number of changes to the ZBA were implemented through executive order by Mayor Martin Walsh that were included in Edwards' original proposal.

These changes include expanding interpreting services during board hearings and making both applications and records available online for review by the public.

Additionally, notices will be posted and delivered electronically.

ZBA board members must provide financial disclosures and get regular zoning law training. Finally, applicants for variances

must disclose their ownership interests.

"The ZBA plays a critical role for our city, but to be effective in this role and maintain public confidence, the board must operate at the highest standards of professionalism, ethics, and accessibility," said Walsh at the time of signing the executive order. "The changes we are making today will go further than state ethics laws that currently govern the board and its members, modernize the function of the board to make it more accessible and transparent to the public, and I will file legislation to change the membership of the board to ensure that it is reflective of our neighborhoods and their concerns. I want to assure the residents of Boston that they can have confidence in the ZBA and that we will continue to protect what we love about our neighborhoods as we grow and evolve as a city."

The additional changes approved by the Council last week were also proposed by Edwards but required legislative approv-

al. State Representative Adrian Madaro of East Boston spoke in support of the legislation while State Representative Dan Ryan of Charlestown said he would sponsor Edwards' home rule petition at the State House.

"As the role of the ZBA has evolved into one that often has final say over the changing fabric of our communities, it is critical that the board itself become more transparent, accountable, and reflective of the city it oversees. This home rule petition is the first step toward achieving those goals," said Madaro. "I'm proud to support this legislation, and to stand with the many residents who have called for change at the ZBA. I thank Councilor Edwards for her hard work and leadership on this issue."

Councilor Edwards first introduced her proposal in the fall of 2019 and re-filed the legislation in January 2020. Hearings were held in February and July before the council approved the reforms during last week's council meeting.



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by Sarah Carroll



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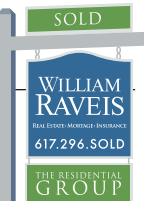


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JPNC hears proposal for medical/adult use cannabis dispensary on Hyde Park Ave.

BY LAUREN BENNETT

The Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council (JPNC) met on July 28, where Joseph Lekach came before the Council with a proposal to open an adult-use cannabis dispensary at 54 Hyde Park Avenue.

Though the Council did not vote on this matter at this meeting, Lekach said he hopes to present again for a vote at a later meeting. The JPNC did provide a letter of non-opposition for the medical dispensary in 2017, Lekach said, but he is now seeking adult-use to be co-located in the same facility, which requires an additional letter from the Council.

Lekach, co-founder and CEO of Apothca, a cannabis company with “significant operations within the state,” including a greenhouse facility in Fitchburg and a medical and adult use dispensary in Lynn, said that this meeting was the fourth one he had done in July. He added that he was “able to get some good feedback from some of our neighbors.”

Lekach’s hope for the Hyde Park Ave. facility is to open in January of next year for medical, and possibly next August for adult use.

The space at 54 Hyde Park Ave. is 1,500 square feet and will be a retail-only location that would offer products like pre-rolled joints, edibles, gummies, tinctures, and more, as well as

provide patient education materials. The facility will be fully handicap accessible and all bathrooms will be ADA complaint, he said.

Lekach talked about the safety of the facility, and said that “only patients and registered caregivers can enter the medical facility.”

All employees are “rigorously background checked” and must be 21 years old or older. He said that video surveillance cameras will be located “in all areas that contain marijuana as well as all points of entry and exit.”

Security agents will monitor areas outside the facility through cameras mounted on the exterior of the building, which Lekach said will be pointed away from people’s homes.

“During business hours, all marijuana will be kept in in limited access areas inaccessible to any persons other than dispensary agents,” he said, and during non-business hours, it will be stored in a “secure, locked vault.”

Additionally, “no consumption of marijuana by customers, employees, or visitors is permitted at the facility or in public,” he said.

When asked about hiring local, Lekach said “we’d love to hire local.” At the Lynn dispensary, he said that over 75 percent of employees are Lynn residents. “We always have a preference for local first,” he said.

Though the medical portion and the adult use portion will

be co-located, “[medical] patients can skip the line at the entrance. The checkout is the only thing that’s different,” Lekach said, and no adult use sales will be permitted in the patient-only area.

“We have to do the build-out,” Lekach said, and “expect to be able to open for medical sales in January” as “all the licensing has been done. He said that they will be operating the medical dispensary “no matter what,” but they also want to co-locate the adult use portion.

He said that the adult use portion still has to go before the ZBA and a host community agreement, among other approvals, are still pending. He said he is “optimistic” in saying that the adult use portion will open in August of next year.

Lekach said that police details will only be at the facility “so long as the locality requires us to. This agreement is for having [the Boston Police Department (BPD)] until the community decided it’s not needed anymore.” He said that the facility in Lynn required a police detail for five days, and he would prefer to hire his own unarmed security personnel than to have a “formal police detail.”

Andrew Brown, a neighbor who said he can see the dispensary from his house on Wenham St., is a medical patient himself and was wondering if Lekach would offer a discount for patients who take public transit,

as some other dispensaries do.

Lekach said he would offer a transit discount to medical patients, but law does not allow for the discount to be applied to adult use patrons.

He said he is seeking a letter of non-opposition from the Council, but would be happy to come back with more information and to answer questions. The Council did not vote on this matter.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMITTEE

Michael Reiskind, Chair of the Public Service Committee, asked the full Council to vote on whether or not they should urge BPD to adopt the national “8 Can’t Wait” policies, four of which the BPD is already using.

“BPD’s version is less stringent than the national 8 Can’t Wait,” he said, and reported that he was happy to see different viewpoints on the matter represented at the last Public Service Committee meeting.

After a motion that the JPNC “urge” the BPD to adopt these policies, JPNC member Peg Preble said “I would want to wait for something a little stronger before we vote.”

JPNC member Vicky Arroyo said that she would be “happy to vote ‘no’ and make it known to BPD that this is not it.” She said that with four of the eight policies already part of BPD’s policy, she said that they are not being upheld and this is an opportunity to “actively say ‘no’ when the wrong thing continues

to come along.”

The Council voted against the motion, with two in favor, eight opposed, and five abstaining. They did want to make sure, however, that their message was not that they do not support reforming the police, but many of them felt that stronger measures need to be taken and the 8 Can’t Wait discussion will continue at the next Public Service Committee meeting,

The Council did vote to approve the two municipal policies outlined in the Massachusetts Elected Officials of Color 10 Point Plan.

ZONING COMMITTEE

Two projects, one at 7A Eliot St. for the Footlight Club to upgrade its accessibility with a new fire stair and Limited Use/Limited Application elevator, and one at 98 Forbes St. to add a two story, 150 square foot addition, were approved by the Council.

JPNC ELECTION

The JPNC election, which was supposed to be in April and was postponed because of COVID-19, was rescheduled for this October.

After discussion amongst the Council members, who decided that October was a busy time for many and collecting in person signatures and having face-to-face interactions is not a good idea right now, the election is postponed once again until April of 2021.

Trump administration cuts 2020 Census count short by one month, fill out forms

BY JOHN LYNDEN

For months local nonprofit organizations have been helping the City of Boston get an accurate 2020 Census count for a part of the population that has been historically hard to count.

Having an accurate Census count translates into more federal dollars for education, housing, food programs as well as proper Congressional representation for the population.

However, the Trump Administration last week directed the Census Bureau to cut short the 2020 Census Count by a whole month prompting Mayor Martin Walsh to make a plea to all Boston residents to fill out their census forms.

Walsh said so far only 53.5 percent of Boston’s households have responded to the Census to date, with some neighborhoods lagging behind.

“The Census Bureau has abruptly decided to cut their national counting operations a month short,” said Mayor Walsh. “The last day to participate in the U.S. 2020 Federal Census is now September 30, formerly October 31. This announcement further jeopardizes Congressional representation, redistricting, and critical federal funding for things like education, housing, food programs, and more in Boston’s communities during the next 10 years. It could lead to a significant undercount, especially for renters, people of color, and

immigrants.”

Walsh said this is why he is once again asking everyone to fill out the Census as soon as possible.

“If you haven’t already you can self-respond online (my2020census.gov), or by phone 844-330-2020, and these services are available in 13 different languages,” said Walsh.

Walsh said a full list of language access hotlines can be found online. There’s also a resourceful FAQ page for any questions you may have. In the event you misplaced or never received your census ID, this guide will explain how you can still respond without that piece of information.

“As a reminder, the Census

Bureau will send staff to your house and attempt to assist your household in-person if you have not yet responded,” said Walsh. “The best way to avoid this visit is to self-respond immediately. It takes just a few minutes and, please remember, your responses are safe and confidential. You will not be asked about immigration status, and your answers will not affect any public benefits you receive.”

Last month NUBE received a grant for Census outreach and education from the Massachusetts Census Equity Fund (MCEF).

The grants by the MCEF went to some of the hardest to count communities in Massachusetts, as well as communities that were

among those hit the hardest by the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Historically, certain populations are “hard-to-count” in the census. Urban and rural areas with large low-income populations, people of color, immigrants, non-English speakers, migrant workers, ex-offenders, young children, the elderly, those who are disabled, renters, the homeless, and those living in mobile homes or multi-unit residences are historically hard-to-count.

“We want to make sure that everyone gets counted, because in Boston, everyone counts,” said Walsh. “This is a time to make your voices heard, own your power, fight for your city, and help keep Boston strong for years to come.”

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Together We Are Stronger.

As COVID-19 cases start to rise in some neighborhoods, BPS eyes two school reopening models

BY JOHN LYNDIS

With the percentage of residents testing positive for COVID-19 on the rise in some Boston neighborhoods, Boston Public School Superintendent Dr. Brenda Cassellius released an updated draft plan of BPS's reopening in the fall that rules out 'full' in-person learning.

As of today, BPS is eyeing two options-- reopening school remotely for all students or reopening school in a hybrid learning model through which students alternate between returning to school buildings and continuing to learn remotely.

However, with more and more surrounding communities that were hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic like Everett opening for remote learning for the first quarter of the school year, sources close to the BPS plan say remote learning will most likely be the plan for Boston schools in the fall if COVID numbers keep rising in neighborhoods across the city.

In a letter to parents attached to BPS's updated draft plan, Dr. Cassellius said the upcoming school year will look and feel different than any Boston has previously experienced.

"Never before have we started a school year in the midst of a global health crisis," said Cassellius. "In less than ten months, the COVID-19 coronavirus has taken the lives of far too many and changed the very foundations of how we gather as a community. The new school year is also arriving in the midst of another profound change in our nation. In that spirit of community, we will continue to support each other, follow public health guidelines to keep each other safe, honor each other's dignity and treat each other with respect, always guided by the fact that we can accomplish anything when we work collaboratively together."

According to Cassellius Executive Summary of the BPS reopening plan students will be going back to school either remotely for all students or reopening school in a hybrid learning model through which students alternate between returning to school buildings and continuing to learn remotely.

"We have not yet made a final decision regarding which of these options is best for the students of the Boston Public Schools," said Cassellius. "We continue to monitor local health data and will be

guided by the advice of our public health officials. We have decided that BPS will not reopen this fall with all of our students gathered in our school buildings together at the same time."

As BPS continues to work to decide whether it is best to start the school year fully remote or with a hybrid learning option, there are several foundational decisions that will shape BPS's decision.

Cassellius said science will drive BPS decisions.

"BPS will only reopen our school buildings to students and staff if and when the Boston Public Health Commission determines it is safe to do so given its constant monitoring of public health metrics," she said. "Once made, the decision may change. As the virus continues to evolve, our decision-making will continue to evolve as well."

A final decision will not be made until BPS partners weigh in and are heard.

"We have included school leaders, teachers, other staff and BPS families in the past several months of planning," said Cassellius. "The Reopening Task Forces are currently meeting to contribute their ideas in order to improve this draft plan. As new ideas are received and old ones are improved, updated versions of this plan will be released."

Cassellius admits the outlined hybrid model is not perfect and many have commented that the simultaneous teaching of students in person and online is impossible for BPS teachers to do, no matter what technology supports are provided.

"Now is the time to identify how BPS teachers can equitably teach all students - each of whom is legally entitled to structured instructional time, every day of the school year," said Cassellius. "That is the task before us; the time to complete that task is now."

In the end Cassellius said no matter how BPS starts school in the fall, students and staff will be back in school buildings in some manner, on some schedule, at some point during the 2020-2021 school year.

"As such, we are enriched by, and dependent on, the full community's continued commitment to working collaboratively to ensure that all of our students are safe and fully engaged in learning," she said.

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Pre-registration for tours: <https://forms.gle/ZR7ofkvEwuLJnv988>.

Please note: tours will be given based on the COVID 19 directives from the City of Boston and the Commonwealth. Please wear a mask and follow all required actions. Conducted by the Jamaica Plain Historical Society.

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leaders in their communities and their careers.

HOUSING COMMITTEE TO MEET AUGUST 18

The Jamaica Plain Neighborhood (JPNC) Housing Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 18 at 7 p.m. by ZOOM.

Agenda:

- Updates

- Discussion of lawsuit filed on Pine Street Inn-TCB project at 3368 Washington St. (see Richard Heath's article in Boston Bulletin)

- Informational presentation on plans for 3371 Washington Street (El Embajador) by Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corp.

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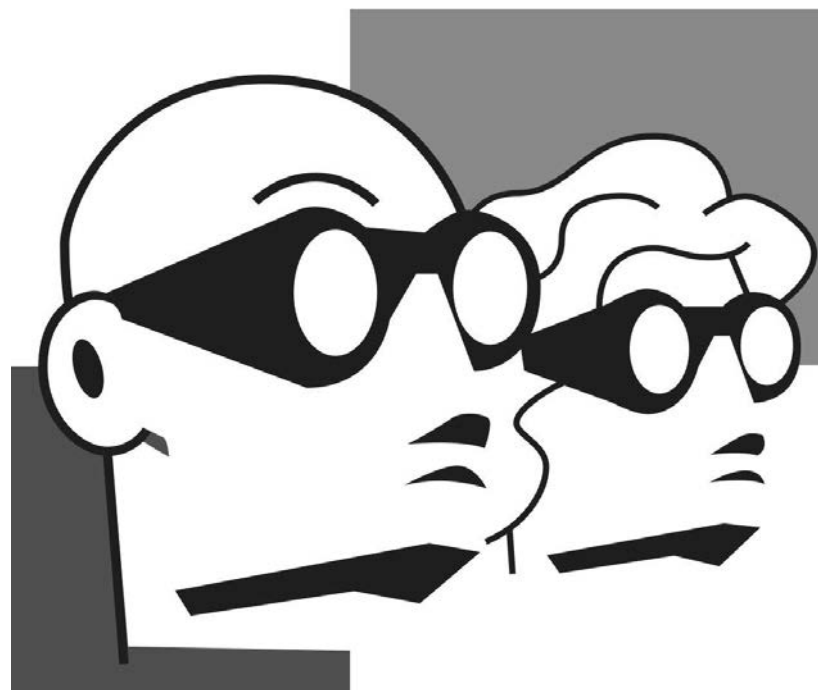
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Baker puts the brakes on state's reopening following COVID increases

BY LAUREN BENNETT

Governor Charlie Baker last Friday announced that Step Two of Phase Three of the state's reopening plan is postponed "indefinitely," after public health data showed an uptick in positive COVID-19 cases.

"We cannot say this enough—COVID-19 is highly contagious," Baker said at his press conference on Friday, adding that some people in the state have been "a bit too relaxed."

He cited several reports of big parties at various locations across the state, as well as illegal sports camps, private boat charters, and a 300 person wedding that is currently being investigated as a cluster and will "likely result in fines."

Baker announced that new initiatives would be put in place to slow the spread of the virus, some statewide and others targeted towards specific communities that are currently experiencing an increase in cases.

"In some respects, we're entering a new phase in our battle against COVID-19," Baker said. He said that additional town data will be reported starting this Wednesday, and will be posted on a weekly basis.

"An uptick in cases and reports of people not adhering to the guidance means we cannot move forward at this time," Baker said. He said that the state's contact tracing teams have identified large pool parties, birthday parties, and other gatherings as having "contributed significantly to community spread and new COVID clusters."

He said these gatherings are "too big, too crowded," and "people are not being responsible."

New guidelines statewide include reducing outdoor gatherings, on both public and private property, from a limit of 100 people to a limit of 50 people. Indoor gatherings remain at a limit of 25 people. People must remain six feet apart from one another and face coverings are

required when "more than 10 people from different households will be mixing," the state said.

He also said that restaurant guidance now states that alcoholic beverages can only be served for on-premises consumption if food is also served as part of the order. He said that "bars masquerading as restaurants" will not be allowed to operate.

Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders said on Friday that the state's seven day average positive test rate was about 2.1 percent, about .4 percent higher than the past couple of weeks.

On August 11, Baker said that the most recent seven day positive test rate is now 1.8 percent, but an "uptick in various communities across Massachusetts" has been seen.

He said that there are about 33 communities in the state that have more than four cases per 100,000 people (a standard for measuring cases across several states) over the past few weeks.

"These communities require specific strategies," he said. He said that "every community is different" and will require different enforcement measures, as well as additional testing, tracing, and isolation measures.

"The good news is that the vast majority of communities are experiencing low case numbers," Baker said, adding that 318 communities have low numbers of new cases over the past two weeks.

He also said that a map with case counts for every town in the Commonwealth will be released and "will be updated on a regular basis going forward," he said. It will include a color-coded ranking system of "typical traffic light colors:" red, yellow, and green to indicate concentration of cases in a particular area.

But Baker warned residents: "regardless of where your community sits, COVID is not going away."

The Commonwealth's Stop the Spread Initiative, which includes

free testing for communities that had a higher positive test rate as well as a lower overall test rate, began last month and has now expanded to 17 communities across the state. Sudders announced that the free testing for those communities will be expanded through September 12, and the administration is "prepared" to expand the program to other communities should they need it.

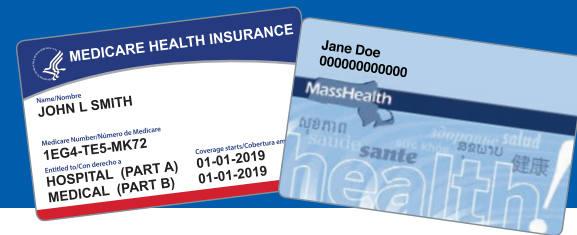
"Last week, Stop the Spread communities tested 56 percent more residents than the week prior," Sudders said. "Some communities have experienced decreases in their positivity rates."

Baker said on Tuesday that MassPort employees will "serve as ambassadors" to incoming travelers at places like Logan Airport to help them access the state's traveler form and make them aware of the travel guidelines.

Baker also announced a new

Continued on page 13





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Walsh discusses safety measures for BPS schools, addresses uptick in cases

BY LAUREN BENNETT

Mayor Walsh held a press conference on August 12, his first one in nearly two weeks. He talked about the rising number of cases, and focused on Boston Public Schools (BPS).

He discussed the “slight uptick in Boston” over the past few weeks, where the average positive test rate went from about 2.1 percent to about 2.8 percent. However, he announced that the most recent seven day positive test rate was down to 2.5 percent.

He said that while the increase in cases is “not alarming,” the City will continue to closely monitor the public health data. He also said that the expansion in testing across the city could be a reason for the increase in positive case numbers.

Walsh also said that he is “concerned” about college students returning to Boston from high risk states, and has asked colleges and universities to provide the City with information on testing and other reopening protocols.

“Many colleges have submitted information to us,” he said, but there are “still a few outstanding colleges” that have yet to provide the information.

He said that he understands people’s want to get together with friends and family, but he urged that people do so in a safe manner.

“We have to be clear: it’s not time right now to let up,” he said. When meeting people in parks, he suggested going in small groups where everyone has a mask on. He advised people to not sit in crowded areas at beaches, and masks must be worn “until you sit down” at a restaurant, he said.

“You can have fun, but we want you to make sure we minimize the risks,” he said.

He thanked those who have been following the guidelines and helping to stop the spread of the virus in the City, and reminded everyone that the work needs to continue.

BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

“The most important collective step before us right now is BPS opening,” Walsh said, as families and teachers “are concerned” about safety and need time to create plans.

“Everyone is rightly concerned about their safety and the safety of our young people,” Walsh said. “Keeping everyone safe is our first priority. That means our kids, our families, that means all of our teachers, our staff, that means our community at large, it means quite honestly everyone.”

He said that BPS will “not be starting with all in-person learning,” but rather either a hybrid model or a period of completely remote learning.

He said that the City is “doing the work now to ensure that remote and in-school learning will be as safe and effective as they can be.”

The City has purchased nearly 5,000 plexiglass and vinyl separators for use in schools, and is making sure that schools have nurses rooms with properly isolated, ventilated spaces for symptomatic children. Schools are being equipped with new HVAC filters, and window adjustments are being made to ensure that every classroom has at least one window that opens to allow for fresh air inside the classroom.

Walsh also said that the City is purchasing electrostatic sprayers—one for every single BPS school—to disinfect surfaces.

Additionally, sanitization stations will be installed at the entrances and exits for people to sanitize their hands before entering the school, and schools will be marked for foot traffic safety and distancing.

“Every school will receive a certificate of inspection before reopening,” Walsh said. “We will not send students or teachers or staff into a building that is not safe.”

He also said that BPS is working to strengthen remote learning capabilities, including internet access, to fix gaps that

occurred in the spring that did not allow some students to fully participate in the learning process.

Walsh also said there will be “new outreach and support plans” for families. “My concern right now with school is that we have a growing achievement gap, in particular for our Black and Latino students,” he said. “Our schools have two crises right now:” the pandemic, and racial inequity.

He said the BPS budget was increased “with a targeted focus of closing achievement gaps.”

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Walsh also announced that the USDA grant waiver allowing summer meals “to be served in safe ways” will expire on August

31, and if it is not extended, BPS will have to stop making deliveries of meals to students with disabilities and students who are homeless.

He also said that the “Grab and Go” method would have to be altered, and would no longer be open to all children.

Walsh said that he’s “simply asking the federal government in the midst of the pandemic to let us feed our children safely.”

Walsh also announced that \$30 million dollars is now available for affordable housing in the City, and projects will be awarded in September. The projects “must advance our goals of being a carbon neutral city,” as well as demonstrate diversity in the project team.

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City Council holds hearing on crowd control agents

BY LAUREN BENNETT

The City Council Committee on Government Operations held a hearing on August 10 regarding an ordinance that restricts the use of chemical crowd control agents and kinetic impact projectiles.

Sponsored by Councilors Ricardo Arroyo and Andrea Campbell, the purpose of the hearing was to learn more about these items and how they affect people, as well as learn about the process used by the Boston Police Department (BPD) and have a discussion with them about restricting their use.

Arroyo said that chemical crowd control agents are “strictly prohibited in warfare. Tear gas would actually be illegal if used on an enemy combatant but perfectly legal to use on our constituencies.”

Arroyo made it clear early on in the hearing that “this isn’t an outright ban.” Though several councilors stated their wish for the items to be completely banned, they acknowledged that

restricting them is a good first step. The ordinance also includes a two minute warning that must be given to the crowd before these devices are deployed, to give people a chance to leave the area.

“We know that these things are dangerous,” Arroyo said, citing a case in 2004 when a woman was killed in Boston by a rubber bullet after the Red Sox won the World Series.

“People exercising their lawful first amendment rights shouldn’t be met with destructive or deadly weapons,” Councilor Campbell said. “These are often called non-lethal. Prolonged use can cause blindness, or in severe cases, death.”

Councilor Liz Braedon said she grew up in Northern Ireland “where they invented the rubber bullet. It’s very personal to me. I understand the need for effective ways to try and manage street protests that are turning violent and getting out of control,” she said, “however ‘I do feel these rubber bullets are very dangerous. I would like to see clear

protocols for when they should be used.”

Dr. Rohini Haar, an adjunct professor at University of California Berkeley and a part time ER physician, has been studying the effects of chemical crowd control agents and kinetic impact projectiles on people.

She explained some findings of a “long, systematic review we did between 1990 and 2015.” She explained that there are various types of rubber bullets; some with a plastic base and hard foam on top that are much larger than a regular bullet, and others like foam batons, bean bag rounds, and scatter shot bullets, which include “multiple balls inside a single canister.”

She said that there is a “range of severe injuries caused by kinetic impact projectiles,” including to the skin, bones, muscles, limbs, eyes, lungs, head, neck, and belly.

She said the terms “non-lethal” or “less than lethal” should be retired, as “these are very much lethal.” There have been instances where the bullets have

fractured people’s skulls, causing brain damage to the point where a person can no longer be functional.

Tear gas can cause chemical burns and allergic reactions, and the can can cause explosive burns, as well as severe injuries to the eye. Haar said that over 50 deaths from tear gas were included as part of the research.

“We conclude that tear gas is indiscriminate and unnecessary,” she said.

Boston Police Superintendent William Ridge said he has been a police officer since 1983, and said he has been to “hundreds and hundreds” of demonstrations, at some of which force was used.

He said the only time they have ever used tear gas was at the protest on May 31 of this year.

“It was not a peaceful demonstration; police officers were being attacked,” he said. “We need tools to be able to disperse and disrupt people who are attacking us.”

He said that while the job of the police “is always to protect everybody’s first amendment right to peacefully protest, our officers were attacked with CS gas and pepper spray as well as a number of other projectiles that were coming down towards us.”

He said that permission to use things like rubber bullets and tear gas “is given strictly at the highest levels,” and he doesn’t want to restrict the use of those options.

“It’s not like we’re out there indiscriminately using this stuff,” he said.

Deputy Superintendent Kevin McGoldrick agreed, saying he does not want to “risk letting a riot run un abated or not controlled.”

He added that “no one is diminishing the fact that there is risk when you use impact weapons like that but it’s a balance of risk. The night of May 31 would have been quite calamitous if we didn’t take action. The vast majority of protestors there that evening were peaceful protestors.”

He also said he was concerned about the two minute warning, as the ordinance does not allow for an officer to react during a sudden attack and there are police concerns about having to

wait two minutes while being actively attacked, they said.

“The proposed ordinance does not go far enough,” said Rahsaan Hall of the American Civil Liberties Union Massachusetts, adding that he would like to see the councilors “enforce an outright ban.”

Superintendent Ridge said that these items are only used during riots, and never during peaceful demonstrations. “In the City of Boston we are not using those unless we have a riot situation,” he said.

He added that BPD has sponge rounds in its inventory, but they can only be deployed by specially trained officers.

“Once it escalates into a riot and we have to use those devices that we have, then I don’t see the need to start putting restrictions on it,” he said.

Ridge said that “in all circumstances, we can’t say that we’re able to give a warning. We can’t say ‘we’ll let you attack us for two minutes.’”

He said that currently, “if somebody’s under direct attack, they can use OC spray.” In order to use CS gas, the “police commissioner or his designee” would have to clear it first.

McGoldrick said that there would be “unhappiness at the police response if we don’t control violence for two minutes while we wait. It presents challenges that people may find unacceptable.”

Councilor Arroyo responded by saying that “the reality is if somebody threw a stick of dynamite, [there would be] no ability to leave because the response is immediate. That is not acceptable either.”

He reiterated that this is not a ban of these devices; “we’re not taking the tools away from BPD. The question is about how it’s implemented and used.”

A few members of the community shared their experiences of being pepper sprayed by BPD officers and described what they saw from the BPD at protests in May, which one said also included the use of batons “to move attendees because one of them dropped their bike.”

Campbell said the Council “talked for a long period of time

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Hyde Square Task Force holds virtual meeting following decision to sell Blessed Sacrament Church

BY LAUREN BENNETT

The Hyde Square Task Force (HSTF) held a virtual meeting on August 6 to provide information to the public about its recent decision to sell the former Blessed Sacrament Church after not being able to find a development partner.

The HSTF Board publicly announced on July 17 that it will be selling the former church building. The virtual meeting last week brought in more than 70 participants, many of whom were upset about the lack of community process that led to the decision being made.

HSTF Executive Director Celine Miranda explained at the meeting that the organization “could not take on the development of the church alone.” A Request for Proposal was issued last year “with the hope that it would identify a development partner,” but no “viable option” was found,” she said.

“We tried to leave no stone unturned here,” HSTF board member Carlos Garcia said. “The church is not a property suitable to be converted into affordable housing or any other sort of use.” He said the board had talked to developers in the area and tried to see if state or other local funds were available, but “unfortunately, we have not been able to find a suitable solution.”

Miranda said that “prior to the pandemic, we were already wrestling with some...truths. Now this is even more so as we’re in the middle of a pandemic.” She said that as a community-based organization with an annual budget of \$2 million, it is not possible for the HSTF to cover the costs of renovation without

a partner.

“It took us five years to raise a little bit over \$2 million to renovate our current home,” she said, which sits behind the church. She said the current building still needs exterior renovations as well.

“While the pandemic did not drive our decision, it definitely added a lot of urgency to our decision,” she said. “The outlook for fundraising in the immediate future is uncertain.”

Board Chair Mark Saperstein said that he has been on the board for 15 years, and is “one of the few people still on the board who was there when we voted to buy the church.” He said that HSTF bought it “because we were trying to prevent it from becoming luxury housing.”

He said that “a lot of weight” was put behind the decision to sell the church. “We don’t want to let the community down,” he said. “None of us were happy having to make this decision. We’re not real estate developers; we’re youth developers.”

Miranda said that real estate company Colliers International has been hired as the broker, because “they have experience with buildings like this one.” She said that the property will likely be on the market late this summer or early fall.

The public voiced their concerns about the community process surrounding this decision, and many suggested other things that could be done and discussed as a community.

“Where is that community base?” Vanessa Snow, a community organizer and HSTF alum, asked, referencing HSTF’s community reach. “The base was not engaged properly. There was not

a community meeting before the board voted on this. I’m very disappointed about that.”

She continued, “why wasn’t there a meeting before the vote, because the people who made this decision...weren’t on the board when I was a young person; when HSTF made a commitment to develop that campus in a way that met the needs of the community?”

Miranda responded by saying she was on the board when they voted to purchase the church.

“I know our history and how important we have been in that process,” she said. “It was hard knowing the amount of resources it would take. I hear your critique of the process and we will take it and I will make sure that we are more transparent and that we engage community differently going forward. I think it’s a fair question to ask.”

Carlos Espinoza-Toro of the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation (JPNDC) asked what would happen if no one bought the property, and whether or not the pending landmark designation would affect its ability to be developed affordably.

“If no one buys the property, we go back to the drawing board and try and figure out what we can do,” Miranda said. She said there is a lot of uncertainty around the circumstances, but HSTF would “continue to be owners of the church and try to figure it out.”

Board member Jon Block said that the church is pending landmark status right now. “I don’t think that can be overturned, but that’s also not really the driving cost of the redevelopment,” he said.

terms of passing this ordinance,” she said. “If the two minutes is too long, what is reasonable?” She said it would be difficult to make changes to the ordinance if the police department does not provide specific information about what would work for them.

“It’s about striking a balance,” Councilor Michael Flaherty said. “The [two minute] warning is in the best interest of public safety.” He said that if a warning is issued, it should be for a “short period of time” to give people a chance to leave.

Councilor and Chair of the Committee on Government Operations Lydia Edwards agreed with the need for a balance, and

said that issuing a warning before deploying these devices “I think is the most reasonable and low hanging fruit.”

She said she “hopes the police will agree to some kind of warning,” and added that it might even help the police weed out who is not at protests to be peaceful, as those who are would most likely leave after the warning was issued. She said that “we have, in the majority of cases, good police work,” but she still believes “codified protocols should be put in place.”

The discussion on this matter is not over. “This conversation will continue in a working session,” Edwards said.

Board member Kathy Lebron said she “did take a vote to sell the church. I’ve made my peace with that.” She said the decision was made to “ensure the youth are getting what they need.”

She continued, “with that said, I do agree with Vanessa that the community was cut out if this process...the issue is now how can we tap into the community.” Black and Indigenous people of color, Latinx people, and residents and small business owners who have always been in the neighborhood.

“How can we tap into those folks and make sure they have a say in this process?” she asked. “JP is very white now; it does not feel like the community I lived in, and I think that’s a problem.” She added that she believes HSTF should “demand” any buyer who purchases the building to ensure that people are not displaced from their community.

“We are not looking for the highest bidder,” Miranda said. “That’s not at all what we’re trying to do here. We would look at a bid more favorably if they include some sort of community space for HSTF.”

One resident, identified as Dorothy on Zoom, said that she “grew up in that church and that school,” and she and her parents were married there. “This building is extremely important to me,” she said.

She said that the HSTF should “start thinking in terms of Boston. There is so much that can be done with this building. It’s not a church anymore.” She said that she wants to save the building “so bad,” and not just for Jamaica Plain, but “there are so many organizations, cultural organizations that need a satel-

lite place, a satellite campus to practice,” such as choral groups, among others.

“It could be a museum, a concert hall, a convention center,” she said. “Keeping it just for JP, just for Hyde Square is not going to work. It’s got to be for all of Boston, for metro Boston... please, I beg of you to keep it.”

Betsaida Gutierrez, another resident and community leader, also said that “the church is a very precious place for me. It was my place of worship.”

She told the Gazette that she would like to see more community meetings about the church, as she is upset that the community was not involved in the first place. “We need to know if they want us to work together,” she said, and suggested a socially distanced meeting in which “community members of all parties work together as honestly as we can.”

Other residents expressed their dissatisfaction with the process and explained how they felt the community was not involved in the process. Much of the community thinks that with more meetings and input from everyone, a solution can be found.

Miranda said that “we did not involve the youth in the way we should have,” adding that the “makeup of young people has changed over the years” and now only around 14 percent of them actually come from the Latin Quarter.

She said this was “the beginning of a process,” and urged people to reach out to her as she would be “happy to have conversations; we can continue the dialogue and we will consider a lot of what we heard today,” she said, and “figure out a path forward.”

Crowd Control

Continued from page 12

before putting this ordinance forward. We wanted to have a robust conversation,” and added that she is “mindful of the fact that an absolute ban probably wouldn’t go anywhere.”

She said that she was “still confused” about the practices and protocols for the use of these devices in the city, and she believes the ordinance would codify them and make it clear to the public what the rules around them are.

“I do not think this should be a long, drawn out conversation in

Baker

Continued from page 10

COVID Enforcement and Intervention Team, which will assist in statewide enforcement and “coordinating local intervention efforts at the local level in higher risk COVID-19 communities,” according to the state. “Communities will be designated as higher risk COVID-19 communities based on public health data, including but not limited to rising trends for new cases and the percentage of positive

COVID tests.” Baker said on Tuesday that the team will help to provide resources in different communities as well as help towns access additional federal funds.

Some of the statewide enforcement will include road signs, PSAs, “potential restrictions or shutdowns for parks, playgrounds, businesses or other entities and locations believed to be contributing to the COVID-19 spread in higher risk COVID-19 communities,” other public health support resources, including tracing, testing, and quarantining, among others.

JP Centre/South Main Streets fundraising boom

JP Centre/South Main Streets is grateful for a grant from the Boston Foundation for \$1000, from the donor-advised Shawkeno Fund, to assist with their work during the COVID-19 crisis and BLM movement. JP CSMS' work has included the distribution of grants to eleven businesses in the district; the creation and distribution of the JP Main Streets Relief Fund; and their "Adapting, Reopening, Thriving in JP Centre/South" crowdfunding campaign to assist small businesses with reopening. This is coupled with the success

of their recent online fundraiser, Zoom Cocktail Hour.

JP Centre/South Main Streets' focus on helping businesses navigate the pandemic and shutdown left little time for them to continue their usual fundraising for operating expenses. Moreover, it was not possible to host in-person events. Instead, they pivoted to an online event format and called it the Zoom Cocktail Hour. They featured a wine tasting with Streetcar Wines, an art auction with a Q&A with local artist Mary McCusker, and recognized their 2020 Volunteer of the Year,

Patti McKenna, and Business of the Year, On Centre with owner Phil Celeste. The whole event was opened by celebrity host, City Councilor Matt O'Malley.

Some of the work that JP Centre/South Main Streets has done since the shutdown includes:

- facilitating eleven grants for \$1000 from Boston Main Streets Foundation to businesses in the district;

- partnering with other Main Streets organizations in Jamaica Plain to create the JP Main Streets Relief Fund. After raising over \$15,000, these funds

were distributed as \$500 cash grants to residents or workers in Jamaica Plain, who were not eligible for other forms of public assistance;

- raising over \$10,000 with an online campaign to assist small businesses with reopening. The organization is hoping to combine this with the Commonwealth Places COVID-19 Response Round: Resurgent Places grant, for a possible total of over \$30,000. JP Centre/South Main Streets thanks the 76 donors who contributed to this campaign.

JP Centre/South Main Streets is a volunteer-driven, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that seeks to guide the growth of Jamaica Plain's Centre and South Streets' business district through the active collaboration of residents, business owners, and others committed to a community-led initiative. In partnership with Boston Main Streets, we provide a direct conduit to the City of Boston and can provide technical assistance to help new businesses succeed.

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PLEASE RECYCLE

The Falmouth Road Race goes on, in Newton: A family affair

By TAYLOR LORD

At 5:15 each morning, Michael Sack, age 70, laces up his running shoes outside a rental house in Jamaica Plain. He sets out at a self-described “slow pace,” snaking around Jamaica Pond and the Chestnut Hill Reservoir. “You could call me Reservoir Man,” Michael says.

Michael is training for the Falmouth Road Race, a historic seven mile running race from Woods Hole to Falmouth Heights, though this year the race is virtual. Michael ends his runs at his daughter and son-in-law’s house for a morning visit with his granddaughters, Havi (almost 2 years) and Kaia (1 month).

Michael’s return to running races after 20 years has everything to do with his family—specifically his granddaughter Havi—and for raising money for the non-profit Courageous Parents Network (CPN). Last December, 2019, Havi was diag-

nosed with Infantile Tay-Sachs, a rare fatal genetic disorder that affects approximately 16 children per year in the United States. In the past eight months, Matthew and Myra Goldstein, Havi’s parents, and their extended family have grappled with the profound grief and anger that come with the diagnosis. This summer, Michael and his wife Sandi, along with Havi’s aunts and uncles, Jacob, Erin, Leah and Mike, arrived in Boston to support the family. Their shared experience of grief and love has coalesced into training for the Falmouth Road Race. In honor of Havi, nine members of the extended family and friends are running the virtual seven mile race on August 16th, and they are all raising money for CPN.

Founded in 2014 by Newton resident, Blyth Lord, Courageous Parents Network is a national non-profit organization and educational platform that guides, empowers, and supports families and providers caring for

children with life-threatening illness. Its online guided pathways and videos provide families with resources to advocate for their child, understand medical interventions, share their experiences, and consider end of life and bereavement. And for pediatric providers, it educates them on the psycho-social-emotional aspects of the lived family experience to help improve the course of care delivered and received.

Matthew, Havi’s dad, discovered CPN through Blyth Lord and husband Charlie, who lost their daughter to Tay-Sachs in May, 2001. He says “There really hasn’t been another resource that’s been as comforting and stabilizing and helpful as Blyth and Charlie, and I think CPN is an extension of that.”

For Erin, Jacob and Leah, running for CPN is a meditation on moving through and surviving the grief by connecting with families who have come before. Leah says, “to actually understand there’s a living breathing



Myra, Matthew, Havi and Kaia Goldstein .

embodiment of what it means to go on and go on as amazingly and beautifully and truly courageously...It’s inspirational.”

Their experience illustrates the healing power and hope of cou-

Continued on page 16

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Road Race

Continued from page 15

rageous parents and families in connection.

For Matthew, running means spending time with his daughter in his head. “There hasn’t been a run I’ve been on where Havi

isn’t right on top of mind.” It’s what he and his brother-in-law, Jacob, call their running Havi Gear. “Havi has gotten me up many hills,” Jacob says.

The race is also a source of family hilarity and competitive release. Myra, Havi’s mom, is by her family’s accounts a prolific runner, but just had their second daughter Kaia, so she can’t run.

She is competing vicariously by making Matthew a “regimented training schedule, including... track workouts and interval training which I haven’t done since college,” Matthew laughs. Erin jokes that she’ll be “focused on the time,” and Michael says that he has already told his children to “stay at the finish line, don’t come back for me! This will

be fun,” he says.

Along with the Goldstein/Sack crew, there are two nurses, two doctors and a generous donor participating in the live run for CPN. “It is meaningful and validating that both family members and pediatric providers are running for Courageous Parents Network. It’s this combination that together cares for children living with serious illness. It feels like a metaphor for the journey they take,” CPN Executive Director Blyth Lord reflects.

Among the runners is Shaelyn Waller, a pediatric acute care and palliative care nurse at Franciscan Children’s Hospital. Shaelyn says CPN has provided “support and guidance to many of the families that I have worked with as a pediatric patient care and hospice nurse, but also to the providers serving this population... I use their resources and reference guides daily to weekly, supporting families navigating through the journey of having a child with an acute chronic or life limiting illness.”

Kate Davidoff, a palliative care doctor at Massachusetts General Hospital for Children is also running. When asked why she is raising money for CPN, Kate says, “I can think of no better way than to promote awareness and education about

the incredible work and mission of CPN than by running on their behalf. In addition, as a native New Englander with family who live full-time on the Cape, the Falmouth Road Race is iconic!”

This year’s iconic race will look a little more home-spun than usual. On August 16, the ten runners will congregate—masked and socially distanced—in the Lords’ backyard. From there, they will set out separately on the course that includes Heartbreak Hill.

Matthew says he is looking forward to race day for reflecting on how much he loves Havi and what he’s learned from her. And if there is a gust of wind as he hustles up Heartbreak Hill, the type of breeze that Havi turns her face to and “takes big bites of,” he will think “There you are Hav. Hi Hav. We get her with us all the time.”

In a running sentiment that metaphorically reflects the hope of CPN and the strength of all families like Havi’s, Michael Sack says, “in running races, you do it yourself, but you don’t do it without others. I’m looking forward to appreciating how our families have come together around a shared experience in a conspiracy of support for what they’re going through, what we’re all going through.”

JOIN US!

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LEGAL NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT

Suffolk Probate and Family Court
24 New Chardon St.
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 788-8300

Docket No. SU14P2020EA
CITATION ON GENERAL PROBATE PETITION
Estate of: Helene C Leary
Date of Death: 07/27/2014
To all interested persons:
A petition has been filed by: Carol Leary of Jamaica Plain MA requesting Removal of Colin Lynch as a Trustee

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before 10:00 a.m. on 09/10/2020.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an Affidavit of Objections within thirty (30) days of the return date, action may be taken without further notice to you.

WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court.
Date: July 30, 2020
Felix D. Arroyo,
Register of Probate

8/14/20 JP

this proceeding.
WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court.
Date: August 03, 2020
Felix D. Arroyo,
Register of Probate

8/14/20 JP

LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT

Suffolk Division
24 New Chardon St.
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 788-8300

CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Docket No. SU20P1309EA
Estate of: Gary Gerlormini
Date of Death: 09/27/2017
To all interested persons:
A Petition for Formal Adjudication of Intestacy Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Anthony Gelormini of Saugus MA requesting that the court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petition requests that Anthony Gelormini of Saugus MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in an unsupervised administration.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 09/21/2020.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty days (30) days of the return date, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)
A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court.

Date: August 10, 2020
Felix D. Arroyo,
Register of Probate

8/14/20 JP

LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT

Suffolk Probate And Family Court
24 New Chardon St.
Boston, MA 02114
(617)788-8300

CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL APPOINTMENT OF SUCCESSOR PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE
Docket No. SU18P0916EA
Estate of: Chester Parasco
Date of Death: 04/05/2018
To all interested persons:
A Petition has been filed by: Elinor Horner of West Roxbury, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order that Elinor Horner of West Roxbury, MA be appointed as Successor Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before 10:00 a.m. on 09/09/2020.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an Affidavit of Objections within thirty (30) days of the return date, action may be taken without further notice to you.

The estate is being administered under formal 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 recipients 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.

WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court.
Date: July 29, 2020
Felix D. Arroyo,
Register of Probate

8/14/20 JP

LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT

Suffolk Probate And Family Court
24 New Chardon St.
Boston, MA 02114
(617)788-8300

CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME
Docket No. SU20C0144CA
In the matter of: Eutychos Nick Kalogerakis
A Petition to Change Name of Adult has been filed by Eutychos Nick Kalogerakis of Jamaica Plain MA Requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to E. Nick Kalogerakis

IMPORTANT NOTICE
Any person may appear for purpose of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Suffolk Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 8/13/2020.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to

19th Annual

'Best of JP' Reader Survey

Tell us what you love about JP!

Write clearly.
Vote in at least 5 categories.
Vote for the same thing ONLY ONCE.
Vote only once, please.
Photocopies of this survey are acceptable.
Entries or items that violate these rules will not be counted.

Results in the "Guide to Jamaica Plain" Sept. 11, 2020
Deadline: 5 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 2

SUBMIT THIS COMPLETED SURVEY IN ANY OF THREE WAYS

1. Visit jamaicaplainingazette.com/the-best-of-jp to submit your votes online!
2. Mail: Best of JP, Jamaica Plain Gazette, 7 Harris Ave., Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
3. Drop Box: Gazette office, 7 Harris Ave., JP, 24 hours a day

BEST PLACE TO:

- 1) Enjoy the outdoors _____
- 2) Work _____
- 3) Enjoy live entertainment _____
- 4) See art _____

CONSUMER FAVORITIES

- 5) Friendliest Business _____
- 6) Breakfast _____
- 7) Lunch _____
- 8) Dinner _____
- 9) Latin American Food _____
- 10) Asian Food _____
- 11) Bakery _____
- 12) Pub/Bar _____
- 13) Pizza _____
- 14) Cup of coffee _____
- 15) Retail store (not convenience) _____
- 16) Convenience store _____
- 17) Personal service (hair, dry cleaning, etc.) _____
- 18) Real estate service _____
- 19) Bank or financial service _____
- 20) Professional service (lawyer, doctor, insurer, etc.) _____
- 21) Home service (plumber, electrician, carpenter, cleaner, etc.) _____
- 22) Auto shop _____

BEST BUSINESS IN AN AREA (ANY TYPE)

- 23) South Street _____
- 24) Egleston Square _____
- 25) Hyde/Jackson Square _____
- 26) Centre Street (Monument to Canary Square) _____
- 27) Forest Hills _____
- 28) Washington Street (between Egleston and Forest Hills) _____

THE REST OF THE BEST

- 29) Community event _____
- 30) Playground/tot lot _____
- 31) Mural _____
- 32) Children's service or activity _____
- 33) Health service _____
- 34) Local school _____
- 35) Neighborhood association or group (no office) _____
- 36) Nonprofit service agency (office) _____
- 37) Gay/lesbian hang-out/meeting place _____
- 38) Storefront _____
- 39) Government service _____
- 40) JP environmental group or effort _____

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PLEASE CALL 617-524-7662

EDITORIAL

America is circling the drain

On January 30 -- what seems like a lifetime ago -- the World Health Organization declared that COVID-19 was a world-wide pandemic. On that same fateful date, the United States' Centers for Disease Control issued a press release that stated as follows: "The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) today confirmed that the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) has spread between two people in the United States, representing the first instance of person-to-person spread with this new virus here."

One month later, on February 29, after the first confirmed coronavirus death in this country, President Donald J. Trump said as follows:

"We've taken the most aggressive actions to confront the coronavirus. They are the most aggressive taken by any country and we're the number one travel destination anywhere in the world, yet we have far fewer cases of the disease than even countries with much less travel or a much smaller population."

Given Trump's reassuring statement, who among us could have imagined that five months later, the United States would rank as the nation that has been the most-ravaged by the virus? With more than 160,000 of our fellow Americans victims of the virus -- and increasing by 1000 per day -- we have recorded 25 percent of the world's deaths, though we have just four percent of the world's population. And our five million confirmed cases -- an increase of one million in the past 17 days alone -- account for almost one-quarter of cases world-wide.

The daily life of every American has been affected by the virus, with no end in sight. Not only has the fabric of our society been shredded, but the very foundation of our democracy -- the ability to hold fair and free elections -- is in serious jeopardy.

The virus has reduced us to the status of a banana republic in every respect -- and we're continuing to spiral ever downward, day-by-day.

Car repossessions are on the rise

Although most of the attention of the financial crisis brought about by the coronavirus pandemic has focused on the evictions and foreclosures facing millions of out-of-work Americans, the number of repossessions of motor vehicles because of loan defaults is starting to increase dramatically.

With the expiration of a ban on debt collection actions having ended in Massachusetts on July 31, lenders have begun to repossess the motor vehicles whose owners have defaulted on their loans.

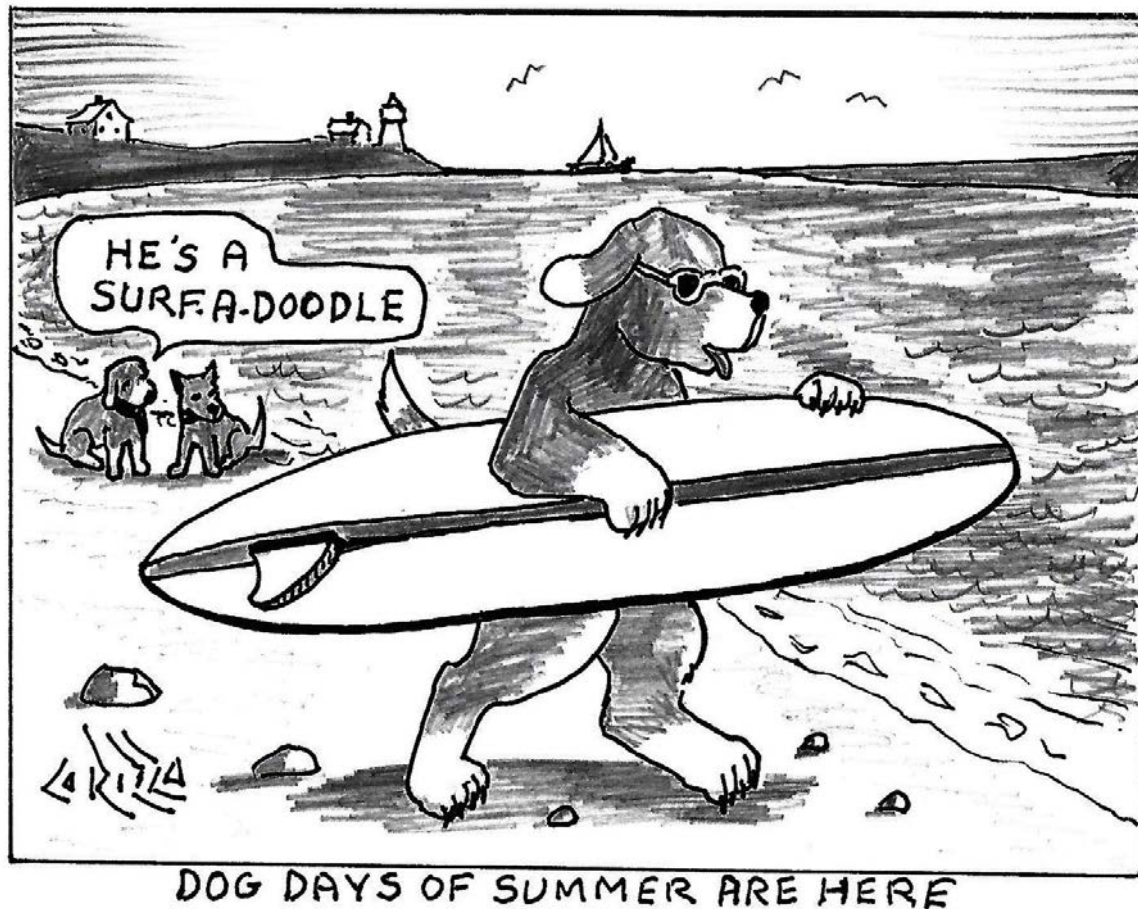
We are not taking issue with the lenders -- who only are seeking to protect the value of the motor vehicle for which they have the title -- but we are mentioning it to point out that this is yet another side effect of our nation's feeble national response to the pandemic.

The loss of an automobile will have catastrophic consequences for many families. But the sad reality is that some policymakers in Washington obviously do not care.

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. Anonymous letters will not be published. More information: 617-524-2626



DOG DAYS OF SUMMER ARE HERE

OP-ED

Every American has troubles

BY DR. GLENN MOLLETTE

Everybody has troubles. If you don't believe it then ask any American living in the year 2020.

Most of us are accustomed to having troubles occasionally. Some have more than others. Some people think that "some people" never have a problem. All people on some level have troubles.

An old preacher friend of mine from Florida use to say "Glenn, on every level, there is a new devil." This is true. The poor have troubles. The rich have troubles. The famous have troubles. People in obscurity have troubles. Today, 2020 in almost every inch of the United States and with every person of the United States we have universal troubles. You've heard the plea for universal health care? Welcome to universal troubles in America.

Every American in some way is impacted by Covid-19. You have had or have the disease. You know someone. You have heard of someone. Because of Covid-19 you may be unemployed. Your education is impacted. Your sports participation is wrecked at least for the Fall and probably winter. Students wonder every day if they will see the inside of a

classroom in September or even longer.

Every college town in American is on the brink of financial disaster. Can you imagine what it's going to do to South Bend if Notre Dame doesn't come back to campus? What about Gainesville, Florida, Lexington, Kentucky, Columbia, Missouri and just name any town that survives on 20,000 college students and families spending money in their town every day. You can add more to the expanded economic misery of this nation.

So far America's Social Security and Government retirees financially have been okay due to the security of their checks. This pandemic does not have limitations or boundaries. Our nation continues to print off money that we do not have to keep afloat families, small businesses and state governments. I'm afraid the printer in the federal reserve is going to blow up about when it's time to print off my cash for my social security check later next year.

From tourism, restaurants, small businesses or just having to wear a mask or social distance we've all to some extent experienced troubles in 2020. We can

overcome many troubles in life. Some troubles are life changing. Dying or burying a loved one is forever.

I've had ups and downs and most of us have. They aren't fun. The pandemic for many of us has been a lifestyle change. A new normal. An inconvenience. We are having to do some things like wash our hands more, wear a mask and be a little distant from people. That's not killing us. It's when we take on the attitude, "I'm an American. I'm going to do what I want to do, when I want to do it and however, I feel like doing it," then, that attitude becomes part of our national trouble.

Covid-19 is trouble enough. Americans are all in some way sharing in the troubles of this virus. Please, let's all work together to be part of the solution and not add to our national troubles.

Glenn Mollette is the publisher of Newburgh Press, Liberty Torch and various other publishing imprints; a national columnist -- American Issues and Common Sense opinions, analysis, stories and features appear each week in over 500 newspapers, websites and blogs across the United States.

LETTERS

Hyde Square Task Force: Please Don't Betray the Community

Dear Editor:

I am writing as a community leader about your article in the July 24, edition, ("Hyde Square Task Force to sell Blessed Sacrament Church building")

When I moved in 1972 from Mission Hill to Forbes Street in Jamaica Plain, the Blessed Sacrament Church became my place of worship, until 2002, when the doors were closed by the Archdiocese of Boston.

In 1980 I started as a community organizer to create community and engage residents, including the Latino community. We got help from Sister Virginia Mulhern and Father Donahue at Blessed Sacrament, plus Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation (JPNDC.) We worked together to lobby and advocate for justice and affordable housing. Blessed Sacrament Church was a center of our work for social jus-

tice. This work helped to create affordable homes for families, including developing limited-equity affordable cooperatives in Hyde Square and other parts of Jamaica Plain.

When the church was closed, many of us got together and asked JPNDC to support our call for keeping the church as a benefit to the neighborhood. We joined forces with parishioners, merchants, and the rest of the community, including youth and leaders of Hyde Square Task Force, to plan the future for the entire complex. It took many hours of work by hundreds of community residents and the outcome was a feasible plan to save the church and the other buildings on the campus, including the creation of an affordable housing building on the campus that I am proud to have named after me.

Now I have learned that the

Hyde Square Task Force board has voted, with no community input, to sell the former Blessed Sacrament Church with no restrictions about affordability or community space. They didn't have the decency to contact community members who were involved in the organizing and planning to save the Church, or to seek our help. Instead, they are hosting a virtual meeting to "inform the community" about their plans. This action is not respectful to the many residents who organized to keep the Church in the hands of community.

I am very proud to offer my help to residents who want to learn more about the power of people to change our community for the better. This includes board members and staff of the Hyde Square Task Force. I hope they will admit that they made a mistake and work with the

community to make sure the Church is not sold without restrictions for luxury condos or something else that doesn't serve our neighborhood. The Church

is not just a piece of real estate, it is the hopes and dreams of our community.

DOÑA BETSAIDA GUTIERREZ

LETTERS

Action needs to be taken

Dear Editor:

Along Forest Hills St. between Peter Parley, Olmstead and Washington Streets there have been many car accidents and countless near misses. On Wednesday, August 5, a speeding car with 2 young people inside rolled over near the intersection of Olmstead and Forest Hills after hitting a parked car. With the car on its roof and wheels spinning, neighbors ran out to help until the ambulance ar-

rived. Fortunately no one was killed.

The City needs to take action before someone -- either a passenger or a pedestrian or a dog walker or a bicyclist -- gets killed by speeding vehicles. We in JP know the roads. But many cars speed to reach the traffic light at Washington St. Drivers don't always pay attention and this section of Forest Hills St. is narrow and curved. Drivers can easily lose control -- and do!

The Boston Transportation Department must take immediate action before someone is killed. More signage is an easy fix. Speed humps would help save lives.

The entire length of Forest Hills Street has become a speedway. We need the City's help.

REVA LEVIN

ANTHONY PASQUARIELLO

LOST CAT

Lost Cat from Centre & Gay Head Sts., Jamaica Plain/ WHITE domestic shorthair/ Short Stubby Tail (bobtail)/ BLUE EYES/two GREY patches on head

Please contact: 617-522-2555/ahd02130@hotmail.com

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

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TWO BEDROOM WITH AN AMAZING KITCHEN



This unit has a cool boulevard view down Washington Street through huge windows, a beautiful kitchen with an open floorplan, two nice sized bedrooms and Moxie quality fit + finish. Garage parking included.

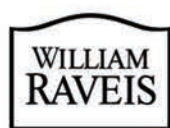
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SUNNY CORNER THREE BEDROOM



This Southern exposure three bedroom corner unit is absolutely flooded with light. The living room is large and open to the kitchen which has a center island. Experience Moxie quality fit + finish! Garage parking included.

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