

East Boston

TIMES - FREE PRESS

Wednesday, May 19, 2021

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Crime update; car-breaks down in Eastie

By John Lynds

District A-7 Community Officer Dan Simons reported Monday that car-breaks, which were a huge problem in 2020, have dropped significantly so far this year.

In 2019 there were 107 car-breaks, or larceny from a motor vehicle, in Eastie but that number soared 99 percent to 213 car-breaks in 2020. This caused Eastie's overall Part One Crime statistics, the more serious crimes that the Boston Police track, to increase 21 percent last year.

However, Simons said some arrests have been made and overall crime is trending in the right direction.

"Our statistics are trending in a good direction," said Simons. "It looks like

LOVE YOUR BLOCK



On Saturday a team of volunteers from the Harbor View neighborhood in East Boston participated in the "Love Your Block" clean up. Pictured are some of the volunteers that participated Saturday. See Page 7 for more photos.

BPDA approves Curtis Street project

By John Lynds

Last Thursday at its May board meeting the Boston Planning and Development Agency voted to approve a 29-unit residential development on Curtis Street.

Owners and developers of 7-11 Curtis St., Seth Williams and Jim Grossman plan to demolish the existing structure that currently houses Eastern Flooring, combine four separate parcels and erect two buildings—one on Curtis Street with 21 units and a second one on Saratoga Street with 8 units.

Williams and Grossman want to create a mix of condo/rental units. The building with 21 units will include 17 parking spots while the building with

only 8 units on Saratoga Street will have no parking spots. The developers also plan to contribute \$30,000 to the Mclean Playground rehab project. Four of the 29 residential units will be income restricted under the BPDA inclusionary policy. The units will be a mix of studio, one bedroom, two bedrooms, and three bedrooms. The housing will be transit oriented as it sits between the Wood Island and Orient Heights MBTA stops and is in close proximity to different bus routes. The project will also contain a bike room to encourage less vehicular travel.

The developers met several times with mem-

See BPDA Page 2

Baker announces all COVID restrictions to be lifted May 29

By Lauren Bennett

Governor Charlie Baker announced updates to the state's reopening plan and mask mandate on May 17, days after the CDC announced that masks are no longer required in most situations for those who have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Massachusetts set a goal of vaccinating 4.1 million residents by the beginning of June, and "today, Massachusetts leads the nation in vaccinations and are on track to meet the goal we set for ourselves in Sep-

tember," Baker said.

Baker announced that beginning on May 29, "Massachusetts will lift all industry COVID restrictions and capacity limits," and the face covering order will also be rescinded.

A new face covering order will go into effect on May 29, consistent with the CDC's guidance, that will require everyone, regardless of vaccination status, to wear masks "on public and private transportation systems (including rideshares, livery, taxi, ferries, MBTA, Commuter Rail and transportation

stations), in healthcare facilities and in other settings hosting vulnerable populations, such as congregate care settings," according to the state.

The State of Emergency will be lifted on June 15, Baker added.

Baker said that those who are unvaccinated are urged to continue wearing masks, and they should also go get vaccinated.

"We'll continue knocking on doors, making calls, setting up pop-up sites and doing everything

See BAKER Page 3



An artist rendering of the BPDA approved project on Curtis Street.

Environment Department gives update on climate ready East Boston

By John Lynds

On Monday, Boston Environment Department Project Manager Catherine McCandless gave an update on the work being done to develop a thorough plan for future protection and recovery from coastal flooding in East Boston.

"I'm here tonight to go over the Climate Ready East Boston and Charlestown project that we've been working on," said McCandless. "We're already seeing the impacts of climate change in East Boston—we're seeing extreme temperatures, which we mostly think of as rising heat but we're also seeing more extreme cold fronts as well. We're also seeing more extensive precipitation, sea level rise, and coastal storms. Those three things coupled together are leading to more storm water flooding inland in areas that you wouldn't think would be subject to flooding be-

See CLIMATE Page 2

Meet Latifa Ziyad, NOAH's new Resiliency Planning Coordinator

By John Lynds

East Boston's Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH) Executive Director Phil Giffey recently announced that NOAH has hired Dorchester resident Latifa Ziyad as its new Resiliency Planning Coordinator.

After working with government institutions for more than a decade as a liaison to state and local elected and appointed officials, Ziyad previously worked at the New



Latifa Ziyad was recently hired as NOAH's new Resiliency Planning Coordinator.

England Aquarium in the Education Department, Ocean Center as a Coordi-

nator for Community Resilience before coming to NOAH. At the Aquarium Ziyad connect community planners with nonprofits and educators, develop relationships with targeted area groups while building science learning and hosted numerous workshops around resilience

"Latifa has a variety of skills which make her an ideal candidate for NOAH's Resiliency Planning Coordinator, but mostly

See NOAH Page 3

Mayoral candidate Santiago makes campaign stop in Eastie

By John Lynds

On Sunday State Representative and Boston mayoral candidate Dr. Jon Santiago, MD made a campaign stop on Sunday at Pueblo Viejo in Day Square to discuss issues facing the Latino community in East Boston.

Santiago is currently serving his second term as the State Representative for the 9th Suffolk District that includes the South

End, Roxbury, Back Bay, and Fenway. He is an emergency room physician employed at Boston Medical Center and also serves as a captain in the U.S. Army Reserve and has deployed overseas.

Santiago said he hopes Sunday's campaign event is the first of many events in Eastie in the next couple of months.

"Meeting people and

See SANTIAGO Page 6



Mayoral Candidate Dr. Jon Santiago, MD talks with residents about their concerns for East Boston. The event also included music and food.



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Crime // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

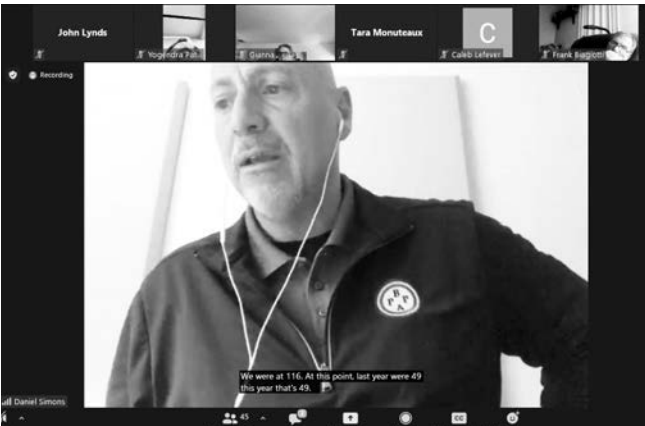
we are definitely a lot lower in our Part One crimes than we were at this time last year--especially with car-breaks way down.”

Simons said by this point in 2020 Eastie was hit hard by car-breaks.

“Around this time, when the pandemic and shutdown hit, we were really getting hit hard by car-breaks,” said Simons. “At this point last year there were 116 car-breaks in Eastie but that number has dropped to 49. This is over a 60 percent decrease.”

Simons said there was a recent rash of car-breaks in Orient Heights on Gladstone and Leyden Streets and a couple of residents reported that their cars were broken into overnight.

“One witness described a couple of people casing cars and looking for doors that were unlocked,” said Simons. “A lot of people still forget to lock the vehicle so these suspects will just walk down the



District A-7 Community Officer Dan Simons talks about the decrease in car-breaks.

street trying car doors”

Simons reported that on May 16 District A-7 officers arrested two individuals for breaking into a motor vehicle.

“So those two individuals were placed under arrest for the car-break,” said Simons. “We don’t know if they had any ties to the same activity that was going on in Orient Heights but we hope they were so they are no longer on the streets and committing crimes.”

Simons said one or two individuals committing car-breaks, an opportunistic crime that only takes seconds to pull off, can skew overall crime stats and wreak havoc on the neighborhood.

“In our experience when you have crimes like car-breaks or break-ins at people’s homes it’s usually a few individuals that are known to us,” said Simons. “And once they are apprehended those crimes tend to trend downward.”

BPDA // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

bers of the Harbor View Neighborhood Association (HVNA) over the past year and made several changes to the project after hearing feedback from the community.

Williams and Grossman moved away from boxy brick buildings and incorporated bay windows, the use of fiber cement clapboard siding, shed dormers and added continuity with windows to pick up site lines of adjacent buildings in the final design.

The project was also reduced from five stories

down to four stories and the parking has been sunk underground.

The owners also added greenspace and added greenscaping along the frontage of the buildings and reduced the overall square footage by 1,400 square feet.

At the meetings prior to the BPDA vote HVNA members seemed to be warming up to the project when compared to the initial presentation. Some applauded the changes and thanked the developers for listening to community input.

However, HVNA members still voted 23-9 against the project. Those in opposition pointed to density, lack of parking and the overall size and scope of the project as another example of over-building in the neighborhood.

One of the nine HVNA members that voted in favor of the project said, “I have been in the neighborhood for over 40 years. This could be a great opportunity for the neighborhood. I look forward to the new building and new activity in the area”.

Real Estate Transfers

BUYER 1	SELLER 1	ADDRESS	PRICE
Cuffe, Rachel	Crespo Holdings LLC	159 Bennington St #2	\$447,500
Donahue, Kagan	Duran, Jason	150 Bremen St	\$925,000
Reopell, Sophie	Macdonald, Kathryn C	20 Bremen St #3	\$370,000
Pagan, Hector L	Sharpe Airport Bremen	256-260 Bremen St #3	\$610,000
Alzate, Paola A	Ciruolo, David	55 Chelsea St	\$1,300,000
Cedrone, Gerard J	Coppersmith Way LLC	6 Coppersmith Way	\$885,000
Eslinger, Holly C	Berggren, Jillian	158 Cottage St #3R	\$426,000
Lee, Willian	Tedesucci, Michael A	331 E Eagle St	\$785,000
Zhang, Yao	Slip45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #207	\$815,000
Lee, Seunghee	Slip45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #215	\$999,200
Lu, Huayi	Slip45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #218	\$925,000
Gu, Billy	Slip45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #308	\$525,000
Isler, Vacide D	Slip45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #314	\$1,049,400
Zhao, Zhiyang	Slip45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #407	\$861,000
Huynh, Bill	Slip45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #408	\$550,000
Wenqiong Xue 2019 T	Slip45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #414	\$1,109,200
Hahn Family Boston RE LLC	Slip45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #416	\$1,010,000
Hahn Family Boston RE LLC	Slip45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #419	\$879,000
Dryga, Anatoly	Slip45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #420	\$625,000
Yoo, Angelina	Slip45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #507	\$880,000
VanDeRyd, Leendert	Slip45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #514	\$1,129,000
Bisht, Deepak	Slip45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #520	\$649,000
Goldstein, Gary	Slip45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #PH10	\$1,785,000
Chiu, Victor	Laloi, Reegy	63 Maverick Sq #11	\$657,500
Kayal, Anjali	Guzman, Francisco	320 Maverick St #204	\$699,000
First Moore LLC	Gaeta, Helen M	116-120 Moore St	\$2,750,000
Valsahagun, Adam S	Monteith, Ian M	156 Porter St #144	\$389,000
EG EB LLC	Legee, Albert J	238 Saratoga St #1	\$535,000
Gilbert, Abigail L	LG Srtg LLC	238 Saratoga St #1	\$535,000
Healey, Melissa A	Argueta Properties LLC	108 Waldemar Ave	\$717,000
Liberty, Lisa M	Winthrop Maverick LLC	4-8 Winthrop St #201	\$630,000
Hegarty, Geraldine	Winthrop Maverick LLC	4-8 Winthrop St #301	\$645,000

GCOD expanded to East Boston

By John Lynds

Last Thursday the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) board voted to expand the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District (GCOD) zoning Article 32 to East Boston, as well as Lower Roxbury, Audubon Circle and the Central Waterfront area.

According to the BPDA the GCOD ensures stable groundwater levels where buildings stand on filled land and utilize wooden pilings to support their foundations.

Depleted groundwater exposes the tops of those pilings to oxygen and promotes decay, causing structural damage and potential collapse of the buildings they support. The GCOD helps ensure stable groundwater levels by requiring projects that meet certain thresholds to release rainwater into the ground, rather than discharging it into the storm-

water sewer system.

A decade ago several buildings on Chelsea Street, just before Maverick Square, collapsed and displaced dozens of residents.

Numerous structural engineers blamed displaced groundwater as a contributing factor to destabilizing these structures and the entire block. Displaced groundwater, the MBTA tunnel running under the street and pervasive truck traffic rumbling on Chelsea Street all hours of the day and night exacerbated the situation. In addition, cracked foundations and displaced groundwater were found in some of the structures that collapsed as far back as 1978.

Eastie was originally several smaller harbor islands that were filled in and connected to form the neighborhood. Much of what the neighborhood is built on is former marsh

land and tidal basins.

The BPDA said the expansion is based on several years of data collected by the Boston Groundwater Trust (BGWT) from over 800 monitoring wells, and research of the foundation types and soil conditions of Boston’s neighborhoods where masonry buildings on wooden pilings may exist.

“The expansion of the GCOD area will ensure the structural safety of Boston’s older buildings that exist on filled areas of the City,” said the BPDA in a statement. “The proposed amendment will harmonize GCOD requirements with those of the Boston Water and Sewer Commission, provide for earlier notification to abutters of proposed projects, and standardize recharge requirements across the area of the GCOD.”

Both items also require approval by the Boston Zoning Commission.

Climate // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

cause they’re going away from the coast.”

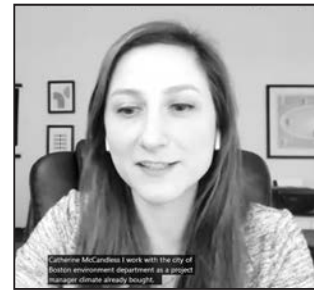
McCandless said the Climate Ready East Boston project is specifically looking at coastal solutions along the waterfront in Boston and building a more resilient Boston.

“A more resilient Boston is not just about coastal flooding, it’s really part of a broader strategy across the city,” she said. “Working with community groups, the private sector really and really everybody taking an all hands on deck sort of approach to protecting us from all the impacts of climate change--both along the shore and more inland.”

McCandless said the city is trying to find opportunities to take the impacts of climate change and create a lot of benefits whether it’s through job creation, creating healthier buildings, healthier neighborhoods, more open space, greater access to the waterfront, or managing stormwater inland.

“The Climate Ready Boston (and East Boston) was first launched in 2016 and in 2017 the city conducted the first phase of Climate Ready Boston in East Boston and Charlestown,” said McCandless.

Eastie and Charlestown were chosen because segments of these two communities are already prone to flooding and in 50 years, if climate change continues, will experience



Boston Environment Department Project Manager Catherine McCandless gives an update on Climate Ready East Boston

more coastal and inland flooding as sea levels rise.

“We’re expecting to see about 4 inches of sea level rise by 2070,” she said. “So in the next 50 years, if we don’t intervene by adapting to climate change impacts and coordinating climate change impacts by reducing our greenhouse gas emissions there will be more flood entry points into the neighborhoods. These low lying areas in the neighborhood are more susceptible to flooding, both during extreme weather events, such as hurricanes or rain events, but also gradual sea level rise. Some of these entry points are issues now whereas others will become an issue over time.”

McCandless said the city’s aim with the project is to look at the temporal nature of climate change impacts between now and 2070 and what the flooding scenarios will look like over time in different

situations.

“We’re trying to really develop a menu of options that can be looked at in each location along the waterfront and think about ways that we can adapt that will be beneficial for that specific area,” she said. “Whether it’s a berm park or setback walkways we really are just trying to create this list of options, with input from the community, and decide what will be the best approach.”

Currently the Climate Ready East Boston team is working on a wetland resilience assessment at Belle Isle Marsh and thinking of ways that the city can restore that landscape and use it as a way to mitigate flooding.

“Over time we’ve been collecting community input and had our first Community Advisory Board meeting in January and a second one in March,” said McCandless. “We also had our first open house at the end of April and we hope to have a second open house at the end of June or in early July. So really this project is going to culminate in a report that we anticipate releasing in late summer or early fall, which will have sort of an implementation roadmap with all of the different options that we’re looking at as well as the path forward that we intend to take to make East Boston more resilient to sea level rise.”

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Weekly COVID positive test rate drops once again in Eastie

By John Lynds

East Boston and Boston’s weekly COVID cases continue to drop and Acting Mayor Kim Janey announced Monday that she will align with the state’s reopening plan.

According to the latest data released by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), Eastie weekly COVID positive test rate has decreased for a fourth week in a row and dropped dramatically again last week.

According to the latest data released by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), last week 1,496 Eastie residents were tested for the virus last week and only two percent were positive--a 29 percent decrease from the 2.8 percent reported by the BPHC two weeks ago.

Of the 40,973 Eastie residents tested for COVID since the pandemic began, 18.8 percent overall were found to be positive for the virus. This was an increase of 3.3 percent from the 18.2 percent reported by the BPHC two weeks ago.

Citywide, the weekly positive test rate decreased once again.

According to the BPHC 18,713 residents were tested and 2.1 percent were COVID positive--this was a 12.5 percent decrease from the 2.4 percent posi-

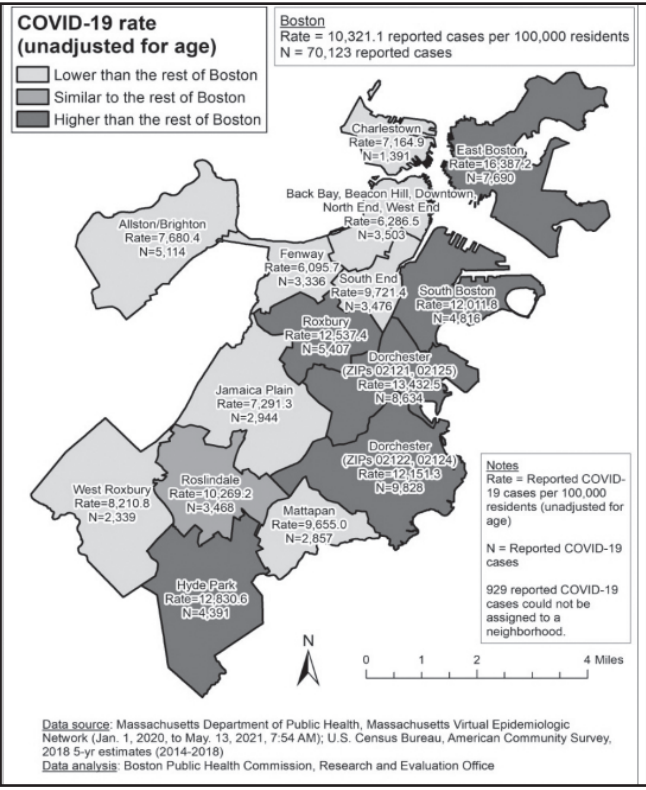
tive test rate reported by the BPHC two weeks ago.

On Monday, Janey announced that the City of Boston will align with the state’s reopening plan. All remaining COVID-19 restrictions will be lifted effective May 29. The city was going to delay reopening for three weeks but the positive test rate in Boston has remained under 2.5 percent for a couple of weeks now.

Following CDC guidance, the state’s face covering order will also be rescinded on May 29 and Governor Charlie Baker will end the State of Emergency on June 15.

The Department of Public Health will issue a new face covering advisory consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s updated guidance. Face coverings will still be mandatory for all individuals on public and private transportation systems—including rideshares, livery, taxi, ferries, MBTA, Commuter Rail and transportation stations--in healthcare facilities and in other settings hosting vulnerable populations, such as congregate care settings.

For more information on the lifting of restrictions visit <https://www.mass.gov/news/baker-polito-administration-to-lift-covid-restrictions-may-29-state-to-meet-vaccination-goal>



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WE DESERVE THIS GREAT WEATHER

With Massachusetts entering the reopening phase after 14 months of lockdowns, the arrival of the magnificent weather this week could not have been better-timed. All of us have had to make sacrifices to varying degrees during the pandemic.

Many of our fellow citizens have suffered greatly, whether from the deaths of loved ones, the loss of livelihoods, or the lingering effects of long-COVID.

However, what has become clear throughout the pandemic is the power of the resiliency of the human spirit. This was evident as we were walking along a crowded Newbury St. in downtown Boston this past Saturday afternoon under sunny skies with temperatures near 80. Sidewalk restaurants were bustling, shops had customers, and people were just happy to be out-and-about.

We were reminded of the words of our mother after she'd been diagnosed with the breast cancer that eventually would overwhelm her: "Life is for the living," she would say.

The pandemic has served to remind us that our existence is both short and fragile. Hopefully, with the realization that our grasp on this earth at best is tenuous, we will have a greater appreciation of the simple things -- a sun-filled sky on a warm afternoon -- and endeavor to make the most of every day as we strive to make the world a better place not only for ourselves, but for those around us.

LIZ CHENEY IS A PROFILE IN COURAGE

We disagree with Liz Cheney on just about everything, politically-speaking.

We suspect that most of our readers also have felt the same way over the years.

But there is no denying that her principled stand in opposition to her party leaders and in defense of the Constitution would be worthy of a chapter in John F. Kennedy's Profiles in Courage.

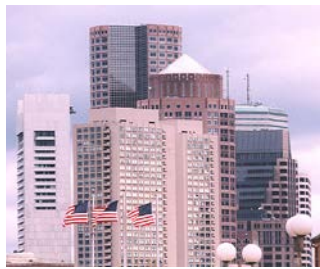
Liz Cheney could have taken the easy way out and simply remained silent in the face of the efforts by a large segment of the Republican Party to undermine the electoral process that forms the bedrock of our democratic institutions.

But Liz Cheney knows what her fellow Republicans are up to -- and she wants no part of it.

Beyond the attempt by GOP members of Congress to whitewash the events that occurred on January 6, the election "reforms" that are being enacted by Republican-controlled state legislatures in many states are a blatant and coordinated effort to subvert the very essence of our democracy.

The combination of newly-imposed restrictions on meaningful access to the ballot that target minority communities and the new laws delegating to those very same legislatures the final determination of the vote amounts to this: They are rigging the outcome of the electoral process both before the voting and after the counting.

Liz Cheney is standing up for the most basic of American values -- and if our democracy is to survive the coming elections of 2022 and 2024, we will need many more like-minded officeholders to join her cause.



Forum

GUEST OP-ED

Graduation and your destination

Dr. Glenn Mollette

Families across America are celebrating high school and college graduations.

American young adults are now faced with going to work or pursuing more education. Employers across America are looking for workers. Colleges are looking for students. Will you spend \$25,000 to \$60,000 per year to go to school? Or, will you go to work and earn \$25,000 to \$60,000 or more?

Some of America's graduates will find jobs working for state or federal government entities. One acquaintance went to work for her state government and retired by the time she was 46. With a full state retirement benefit she started a part time business that seems to do well. She did not have one day of college education. She started out at an entry level job but worked hard,

showed up and received several promotions that provided her with a good income and a very good government retirement.

A high school graduate can enlist into the military. He or she will start out on the bottom but show up and work hard every day and have a retirement by the time they are 38 years old. It's only 50% of their salary but it's a respectable check which will provide them financial security for the rest of their lives.

If school teachers start teaching at the age of 23 many can retire by about 51 years old.

Retiring at 46 or 51 is seldom on the mind of someone 18 or even 23. Often, just finding an enjoyable job that is maintainable is the main goal. However, give some thought to the type of work you are pursuing. What kind of financial stability and security will it provide for you and when

will it afford you retirement income?

You don't have to quit working at 46 or 50 just because you have obtained a monthly retirement check. There is a world of opportunities you can pursue. You can start a different career. You can work part time. Or, you can stay with the job you are doing. Or, just enjoy life.

There is a sacrifice to a lot of jobs. Many jobs may be fulfilling but often come up short on solid retirement plans. Pursue and enjoy what you do but you can't make a retirement plan happen out of thin air when you hit sixty. Keep in mind you can save a little bit of money every month and it will grow. Be diligent about this every month and you'll eventually see results. Start now.

The career you went to school for may also allow you to retire at 55 if you want to. You may also

train for a job that you will enjoy doing into your late sixties or even seventies or older. An acquaintance of mine is 82. He's been in the hotel business for many years and loves his work. Another friend was a college President until he was 78 and loved every minute of his work. One of my friends is a surgeon and is 72. He loves working every day.

Today is a good time to think about what you are doing and where it will take you. Consider what you want life to look like when you arrive at your destination.

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.

Spillane qualifies for City Council At-Large ballot

The Jon Spillane for Boston City Council At-Large campaign announced that Jon Spillane, of Beacon Hill, has officially qualified for the September Primary ballot, after the Boston Elections Department verified the required 1,500 signatures from the Spillane campaign. In total, the Spillane campaign has collected over 3,000 signatures on 90 sheets, representing the support of thousands of registered Boston voters from neighborhoods across the city.

As one of the first At-Large campaigns to make the ballot, the Spillane campaign solidifies its position as a top contender with the city-wide organization and grassroots momentum to elect Jon Spillane to serve as City Councilor At-Large. Over 70 volunteers have taken part in collecting signatures, soliciting signatures from family, friends, neighbors, and at train stations and grocery stores across Boston.

"The outpouring of support our campaign has received across large swaths of Boston has been incredible to witness," said Jon Spillane, candidate for Boston City Council At-Large. "Our vision for the City Council centers on our neighbors and community members, the folks who raised me and who I'm proud to have looked up to my whole life. As Boston rebuilds from the

pandemic, I would be humbled to bring my experience working in City Hall to the table as a City Councilor At-Large, getting to work and ready to deliver results on day one."

In April, the campaign also released their official announcement video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WmeS7lg-PMlw&t=1s>), which features Jon Spillane, a lifelong Bostonian and former City Council and Department of Neighborhood Development staffer, taking public transit and speaking with residents about increasing access to City services. The video, which highlights Jon's extensive knowledge of City government and readiness for office on day one, is intended to recruit attendees to the campaign's official kick-off event on May 25th.

In addition to the crowded Mayoral election, five of the Boston City Council's thirteen members are not running for re-election, leaving three district council seats and two At-Large seats open. The next Council will not only play a major role in the COVID-19 recovery, but will also be in charge of re-drawing council district lines based on the 2020 census results.

Jon Spillane, candidate for Boston City Council At-Large, is a lifelong Bostonian, experienced community organizer, and



Candidate for Boston City Council At-Large Jon Spillane will appear on the September Primary ballot.

dedicated civil servant. A graduate of Boston Latin School, Boston College, and Suffolk Law School, Jon has worked to address Boston's housing crisis as part of Boston's Department of Neighborhood Development (DND), where he helped to create over 1,000 affordable housing units across the City. As the Director of Budget and Director of Neighborhood Services for Council Chair of Ways and Means Kenzie Bok, Jon helped manage one of the toughest city budgets in recent memory and advocated for residents affected by COVID-19, connecting tenants to rent relief and small business-

es to Boston's Office of Economic Development. Jon previously served on Mayor Walsh's Spark Boston Council, which works with City Hall to represent and advocate for young adults in Boston aged 20 to 34. Currently, Jon is a member of the Boston Ward 5 Democratic Committee and is a founder and current Young Professional Board Member of the Genesis Foundation for Children, which helps children with rare diseases and rare genetic disorders. To learn more about Jon, follow him on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, and stay connected at <https://www.jonforboston.com/>.

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Your opinions, please

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Santiago // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

hearing their concerns and the significant issues that affect them is the most important part of this election,” said Santiago. “When I speak to people from East Boston whether it’s development, whether it’s environmental justice and whether it’s small businesses, those are the issues that not only affect residents here but keep coming up throughout Boston as I make phone calls and knock on doors.”

Sunday’s event was the first event Santiago hosted here to focus on outreach to the Latino community.

“The neighborhood has changed incredibly over the last couple of decades with a strong Latino community,” he said. “It’s becoming very apparent there’s a growing number of leaders from the Latino business community and the community at large so I was happy to be in the neighborhood to engage them and begin to persuade folks to join our campaign for the

next Mayor of Boston.”

One topic that popped up a few times in conversations with residents Sunday was Eastie’s need for more environmental justice.

“I was really honored to be part of the climate bill that we passed recently (in the State House) because as a person of color who grew up in underserved communities that lacked environmental justice it was important to protect particular neighborhoods with higher rates of asthma like East Boston, Roxbury with the Environmental Justice Community component added by Rep. (Adrian) Madaro. You saw, with respect to COVID-19, places with high levels of pollution had higher rates of COVID-19 hospitalization, so it is all related. I think the lesson I learned as an emergency room doctor during the pandemic is that when people come to the emergency department it’s a reflection of what’s going on in their respective com-

munities. It ultimately has a lot to do with poverty, violence, the lack of economic opportunity, or the lack of environmental injustice. That ultimately adds up and it will manifest into medical emergencies that I saw daily.”

Studies showed that the pandemic hit poorer neighborhoods and people of color due to preexisting conditions that tend to affect low-income residents like asthma, diabetes and heart disease. In many cases these Boston residents were on the front lines during the pandemic and many were essential workers who were exposed to COVID more regularly than the general population.

“The number of Latinos who were essential workers, who were living in cramped housing conditions in places like East Boston, Chelsea, Revere were being infected at a higher rate,” said Santiago. “This pandemic exposed a lot of inequities and long

standing issues that we need to address. As a doctor on the frontlines, the reason I decided to run for State Rep and now Mayor is no one was really getting at the root causes of these issues. I wanted to get at the root causes of these issues like cruising gun violence, disease and, now, COVID-19. I could no longer stand still and I grew frustrated with the situation.”

Santiago said Eastie issues like environmental justice, displacement, rising costs of living and development are some of the same issues other residents are facing in other parts of the city.

“These issues are not too dissimilar from what I’ve been hearing all across the city of Boston,” he said. “We have a current state of affairs where development is exploding and community members don’t feel engaged and they feel like their communities are being taken over. They don’t feel like they have a voice at the table. I got involved in the South End because my community

demand a voice in city government. That’s when I became aware of the lack of engagement, the lack of planning--these kind of piecemeal developments that were not well thought out. What I would like to see if elected is a focus on neighborhoods and communities and development that is well thought out and comprehensive that really

thinks about the neighborhood as a whole and the people who live there.”

“So, as mayor I want to make sure that residents have a voice, that they will be at the table, that they will be listened to and engaged, and that they will play a role in the future of what their neighborhood looks like and is the neighborhood they deserve.”



Mayoral Candidate Dr. Jon Santiago, MD discusses environmental issues with Chris Marchi Sunday.



Mayoral Candidate Dr. Jon Santiago, MD talks with Latino business and community leaders at Sunday's event at Pueblo Viejo in Day Square.



Mayoral Candidate Dr. Jon Santiago, MD talks with Lorraine Curry.



Mayoral Candidate Dr. Jon Santiago, MD poses with the owners of Pueblo Viejo in Day Square.

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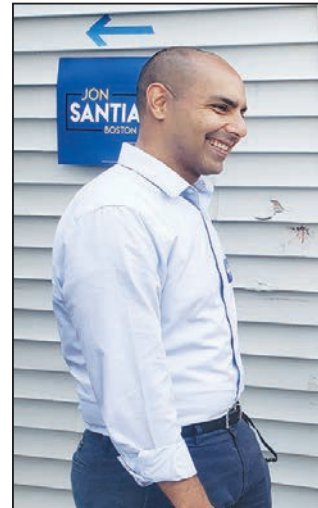
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State Representative and Boston Mayoral Candidate Dr. Jon Santiago, MD made a campaign stop in Eastie Sunday to reach out to Latino leaders and voters in the neighborhood.



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Mayoral Candidate Dr. Jon Santiago, MD talks with East Boston Community Soup Kitchen Director Sandra Nijjar (second from left) and others at Sunday's event.

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FORBESTOP PLACES TO WORK 2020

HARBOR VIEW NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPATES IN ‘LOVE YOUR BLOCK’ PROGRAM

On Saturday a team of volunteers from the Harbor View neighborhood in East Boston participated in the “Love Your Block” clean up.

Organized by the Harbor View Neighborhood Association, neighborhood volunteers cleaned up the streets around the neighborhood.

The annual “Love Your Block” spring clean-up is sponsored by the City of Boston. The city provides tools and supplies, and residents supply the labor to beautify public spaces.

“I believe our Neighborhood “Love Your Block” cleanup went well,” said Harbor View resident Barbara Gam-

bale-Puopolo. “We even met new neighbors. A sweet little girl who told her mom she wanted to help the world so her mom and grandmother joined her in our cleanup. Thank you to all who helped.”



On Saturday, residents from Harbor View in Eastie volunteered for the annual Love Your Block spring cleanup sponsored by the city.



One girl told her mom she wanted to help the world so her mom and grandmother joined her in the annual cleanup.



Volunteers removed trash and litter from public streets.



Skip and Dottie Marcella help clean Byron Street.



Volunteers work their way down Bennington Street picking up trash and litter.



The city-sponsored event was organized by Harbor View Neighborhood Association members.

SEND US YOUR NEWS

The Times encourages residents to submit engagement, wedding and birth announcements, news releases, business and education briefs, sports stories and photos for publication. Items should be forwarded to our offices at 385 Broadway, Revere, MA 02151. Items can also be faxed to 781-485-1403.

We also encourage readers to e-mail news releases and photos to deb@reverejournal.com

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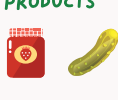
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COVID cases and deaths continue to decline in nursing homes

Staff Report

The latest release of AARP’s Nursing Home COVID-19 Dashboard shows that both cases and deaths in Bay State nursing homes have declined in the four weeks ending April 18. Although these rates are improving, chronic problems in nursing homes revealed during the COVID-19 pandemic continue.

A new dashboard measure on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), shows 1.1 percent of nursing homes in Massachusetts had an urgent need for PPE in the four-week period ending April 18. Well over a year into the pandemic, this is unacceptable.

Deaths of nursing home

residents in Massachusetts continue to decrease from what they were in the previous period, dropping from a rate of .10 to .05 per 100 residents. New infections among residents and staff also declined. Resident case rates went from .34 to .2 per 100 residents, and new staff cases declined from 49 to seven per 100 residents.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to light the chronic, ongoing problems that have plagued nursing homes for decades, including staffing shortages, poor infection control, transparency, and accountability,” said Mike Festa, AARP Massachusetts State Director. “Following the COVID-related deaths of

more than 9,000 nursing home residents and staff in Massachusetts, now is the time to address these challenges that jeopardize the health and safety of nursing home residents.”

AARP continues to urge elected officials to act immediately, focusing this year on:

- Enacting or making permanent the components of AARP’s five-point plan
- *Prioritizing regular and ongoing testing and adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) for residents and staff—as well as inspectors and any visitors.
- *Improving transparency focused on daily, public reporting of cases and deaths in facilities;

communication with families about discharges and transfers; and accountability for state and federal funding that goes to facilities.

- *Ensuring access to in-person visitation following federal and state guidelines for safety, and require continued access to virtual visitation for all residents.
- *Ensuring quality care for residents through adequate staffing, oversight, and access to in-person formal advocates, called long-term care Ombudsmen.
- *Rejecting immunity for long-term care facilities related to COVID-19.
- Establishing minimum nursing staffing standards.
- Ensuring progress is made so that in-person visitation can safely occur and facilitating virtual visitation.
- Creating a pathway for single occupancy rooms in nursing homes.

The AARP Nursing Home COVID-19 Dashboard analyzes federally reported data in four-week periods going back to June 1, 2020. Using this data, the AARP Public Policy Institute, in collaboration with the Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University in Ohio, created the dashboard to provide snapshots of the virus’ infiltration into nursing homes and impact on nursing home residents and staff, to identify specific areas of concern at the national and state levels in a timely manner.

The complete Nursing Home COVID-19 Dashboard is available at www.aarp.org/nursinghome-dashboard. For more information on how COVID is impacting nursing homes and AARP’s advocacy on this issue, visit www.aarp.org/nursinghomes.

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NEWS FROM AROUND THE REGION

OUTDOOR EVENTS COMING TO CHELSEA SQUARE

CHELSEA - Members of the Planning Department and Chelsea Prosperers appeared before the Traffic Commission to paint a picture – in the most literal sense – of fun outdoor events and improvements that are coming to Chelsea Square and Division Streets.

Ben Cares, of the Planning Department, and Mimi Graney, of Chelsea Prosperers, detailed to the Commission all of the parklets, temporary parking zones, street murals and outdoor activities that they are planning for the summer months – with a push to activate Chelsea Square this summer.

One of the most interesting pieces presented is a giant street mural slated for Winnisimmet Street in front of the Apollinaire Theatre – a community project that would use volunteers to pull off the design in a Paint Day on June 21. Following that, the area would serve as an event space for outdoor dinner theatre and other events throughout the summer.

“Our plan for the area is to bring more things more toward Chelsea Square and not so much in Luther Place,” said Graney.

“We hope to have Saturday night events there,” she continued. “It’s meant to be like dinner and show where we’d have tables put out and a QR code to help participants order from nearby restaurants and there would be a stage there for the show.”

She said after the paint day on June 21, and they would have four events like that where there would be a road closure on Winnisimmet. Beyond that, they would also be doing a Silent Disco event on Aug. 14 in the space, and three live performances, one in June, another in July and a final one in September.

“That would be a space where you could stage cultural events right in Chelsea Square and downtown areas and really help support the restaurants and businesses there,” said Cares.

That will be enhanced by a construction project where the City plans to elevate the small part of Second Street between Broadway and Winnisimmet in a procedure known as “table topping.” That would entail raising the street in that section to the height of the curb, allowing drivers access during the day, but also being able to close down the stretch and help the Square feel like one continuous event space without a street seemingly cutting through it.

“That’s going to allow

for better pedestrian safety, new ramps and ADA accessibility,” said Cares. “It’s an overall improvement to Chelsea Square for events and allowing people to pass through without there being a separation – while also reducing the issue of speeding that occurs in that stretch.”

Another exciting piece is an elaborate street mural and decorative crosswalks that will be installed all along Division Street as the City takes another step towards making that more of an bright, artistic pedestrian corridor and less of a dark, delivery truck thoroughfare.

“The reason for both of those is to help be a cue to drivers that this is dense area used heavily by pedestrians,” Graney said.

There would be three creative crosswalks installed, and the large street mural on Division Street as well.

Those improvements above are to be funded by a Shared Streets Grant the City won from the state Department of Transportation earlier this year.

Cares also asked for approval of parklets for restaurants in the area. The City is looking to support more and more parklets if restaurants want to take advantage of outdoor dining again this year. The approval streamlines the process and allows Planning to be able to approve the parklets without having to come to the Commission for each one that is requested.

Finally, City officials want to continue the five minute temporary parking zones that benefit restaurants doing take-out. Last year, several were approved, and those are to be renewed, while other new zones could also be proposed as well.

COUNCIL VOTES FOR TERM LIMITS

EVERETT - In a vote, 7-3, the City Council approved a Home Rule Petition to the State Legislature that would change the City Charter to enact term limits on Councilors, School Committee members and the mayor.

The measure came somewhat out of the blue by Councilor Anthony DiPierro two weeks ago, when he introduced it at the April 26 Council meeting. However, such a thing has been discussed for several years off and on.

Those voting against the measure were Councilors Fred Capone, Gerly Adrien and John Hanlon. Those voting in favor were Councilors DiPierro, Rich Dell Isola, Rose DiFlorio, Jimmy Tri Le, Mike Marchese, Stephanie Martins, and Michael McLaughlin. The measure did require a

super-majority (8 votes), but with Councilor Wayne Matewsky out on medical leave, it meant only seven votes were required. The matter goes to the State Legislature where it must be approved by both branches and signed by Gov. Charlie Baker.

“I’m pleased my colleagues voted to pass term limits for local offices in the City of Everett,” said DiPierro afterward. “Term limits increase the ratio of competitive elections, encourage more ordinary people to get involved in local government and promote a constant flow of fresh ideas. This change was a good compromise and doesn’t rule any one individual out from ever serving again.”

The measure would be pegged to start on Jan. 1 after the Municipal Election in the fall. It would allow Councilors and School Committee members to serve five terms, or 10 years. The mayor would be limited to three terms, which would be 12 years. The is also a clause for “break in service,” which means one could run for a different office and continue serving in a new capacity, or take a term off and then run again in the next Municipal Election.

The measure did create a lot of debate within the Chambers Monday, and only Hanlon was against the concept of term limits.

“I’ve always been against term limits and always will be,” he said. “Anyone can run for any office at any time if they want to...There’s no guarantee anyone up here will win their re-election. The way you win an election is to do a good job. I don’t think we should have to get rid of a good person when they’re doing a good job.”

Councilor Fred Capone was against the measure because it was yet another Charter Change proposed over the last 12 months that didn’t go to a vote of the people. On all the other Charter Changes – which has included Ward-only voting and adding the mayor to the School Committee, among others – Capone has opposed them due to his belief such changes need to go to the voters of the City.

“I’m not opposed to term limits, but I’m opposed to how we have proposed them,” he said. “It’s yet another Charter Change...Any change to the Charter should be decided by the voters...If we continue to change the Charter at a whim, we will not have a Charter anymore. It shouldn’t be this easy to change the Charter.”

Others, such as Martins and Marchese, didn’t like the current proposal

as they thought it wasn’t strict enough, though they said they would vote on it to get something on the books. They preferred fewer years, such as eight years on the Council.

“The experience I’ve had over so many years is this makes you a better City Councilor when you have to go after it and your time is restricted and you have to make an impact quickly,” said Marchese. “I’m going to vote for it because it’s before us, but I don’t think it’s restrictive enough.”

Councilor Michael McLaughlin was in full support of the measure and indicated it would bring in fresh ideas to the Council.

“We all know that it can be easy to get complacent and too comfortable,” he said. “This measure says you can serve 10 years and then you’ll have to sit out one term, and that gives room for someone else with fresh blood to come in with new ideas.”

Councilor Adrien said she’s in favor of the concept, but she questioned the agenda behind DiPierro’s measure. First of all, she said it was equitable because it didn’t start immediately, but rather allowed those already elected to stay in office for another 10 or 12 years starting Jan. 1. She said it should start fresh on Jan. 1 for anyone that’s served more than 10 years or 12 years already.

“From my personal experience with one of the councilors that is a sponsor, I’m wary of anything he puts up because there’s always an agenda behind it,” she said.

DiPierro said he had reached out and asked Adrien to collaborate on the matter, but she did not answer him back.

“I can’t change your personal opinion of me,” he said. “This was in Legislative Affairs and there was a meeting on it. One month ago I called you and asked you to co-sponsor and collaborate on this piece and I did not receive a response. So, that comment doesn’t fly with me. I understand where you’re coming from on this, but I can’t change your opinion of me.”

After the meeting, Mayor Carlo DeMaria said he does not support the term limits proposal.

“I want my position on this matter to be clear – I strongly oppose the imposition of term limits on local elected officials,” he said. “My opposition of term limits encompasses all local bodies: City Council, School Commit-

tee, Mayor, State Representative, and State Senator.

“As it is the elected position I currently have the pleasure of holding, I will begin by substantiating my stance with the position of Mayor,” he continued. “The job of the Mayor is to craft the overall vision of the City through the creation of innovative ideas and the implementation of methods to achieve these goals. While formulating a progressive and beneficial vision for a City is a time-consuming task, it pales in comparison to the time required to make tangible and effective steps toward the achievement of the vision. This requires assembling a team of professional staff members, forging relationships with fellow elected leaders on a local, state, and national level, and understanding the community’s needs and desires through constant engagement with our residents. Very often, innovative ideas cannot be crafted and implemented in one term; the approaches we have taken as a City and have been recognized as leaders for take time to come into fruition. Large-scale ideas like cleaning up a Brownfield site and attracting a multi-billion dollar resort, working with partners at the State House and in the Senate and House of Representatives to secure funding for Bus Rapid Transit, reimagining the future of cost-effective, environmentally friendly, equitable methods of transportation, opening up our waterfront, and many more ideas once-thought to be an unachievable dream can be achieved when we not limit our local leaders to a defined length of service.”

•BACKTRACKING ON NIP BOTTLES

The City Council was ready to all-out ban nip liquor bottles two weeks ago at its meeting, but since that time backed off on the idea. On Monday, they decided to not ban nips, but instead send a letter to support legislation at the state level that Sen. Sal DiDomenico is championing to get such bottles included in the “bottle bill.” That bill still has a long road ahead of it, and it may or may not pass. If it did, it would allow redemption of nip bottles at 10 cents per bottle.

Councilor Rosa DiFlorio said she was in favor of the ban, but the co-sponsor of the piece – Fred Capone – argued they should take a more measured ap-

proach to consider the impact on businesses.

“My feeling is let’s have this go one year and see about Sen. DiDomenico and Rep. McGonagle getting a 10-cent deposit on them, and if there is still a problem in a year, we’ll abolish them,” she said.

Said Capone, “To ban them completely would put a huge hit on these businesses. We need to be cognizant of that and know these things.”

Mayor Carlo DeMaria said after the meeting he also doesn’t agree with the ban.

“While I disagree with the outright banning of nip bottles, I do agree with adding a deposit fee to the purchase,” he said. “Even a one-cent deposit would increase the incentive of returning these bottles rather than littering them. Nip bottles allow someone to control the amount they’re drinking while having the option to purchase a small amount of alcohol. The real issue here is personal responsibility.”

Councilor Michael McLaughlin stayed the course on the ban, though, and was pretty much the only one left who still favored such a ban – which has successfully been enacted in Chelsea for almost three years.

“We have talked about this as long as I’ve been a city councilor and it never gets any better,” he said.

“If we’re going to get anywhere and stop these nip bottles from being everywhere on our streets, then we need to do more than just supporting state legislation,” he continued. “The City of Chelsea did it and it eliminated a lot of problems and it did not hurt businesses there in any significant way.”

The Council voted 10-0 to send a letter of support on DiDomenico’s bill.

•TND RESPONDS TO POPE JOHN

Mayor Chief of Staff Erin Devaney told the Council on Monday night that The Neighborhood Developers (TND) had been the only respondent to the Request for Proposals (RFP) to develop the former Pope John High School into affordable housing.

The project would be to redevelop the property for affordable senior citizen housing and for disabled veterans.

“We’re examining that proposal to make sure the City can accept the terms of the proposal,” she said.







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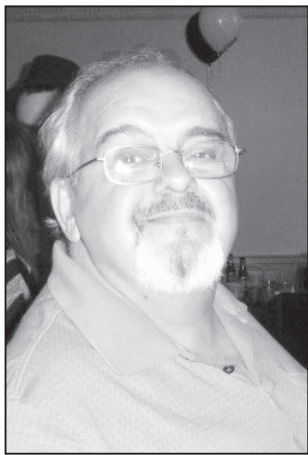
Proud Longtime Member of the Lynn
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William Douglas Veiga, Sr., 74, passed away in his South Yarmouth home on Wednesday, May 12, 2021. He was the beloved husband of the late Ellen (Capezzuto) Veiga, with whom he shared 49 years of marriage.

Born in Boston on August 30, 1946 to the late Charles and Florence (Cooper) Veiga, William was a veteran of the United States Army, honorably serving during the Vietnam War. Following his honorable discharge, William went on to work for Norelco for 23 years. He then worked for Stop and Shop in Swampscott for 12 years and also worked for the MBTA for 25 years. William was also a proud, longtime member of the Lynn Republican City Committee.

In his free time, William enjoyed traveling with his wife and friends, going out to eat and camping seasonally at Silver Lake Park Campground in Belmont, NH. In his later years, William enjoyed relaxing on the couch and watching ME TV and John Wayne movies.

William is survived by his loving children:



Cheryl Wilkins and her husband, Tom of Beverly, Denise Brown and her husband, William of Abington, and William D. Veiga Jr. and his wife, Kelly of Winthrop and his beloved grandchildren, Miranda and Anthony Marsi. He was predeceased by his brothers, Charles and Kenneth Veiga, his sister, Valarie Vitale, his granddaughter Cara Marsi and great-grandson Ashton Edward Marsi.

Funeral arrangements were by the Cuffe-McGinn Funeral Home, 157 Maple Street, Lynn. Burial was at Puritan Lawn Memorial Park, Peabody.

In lieu of flowers, donations in William's memory can be made to Patterson Place Home Care Inc., 270 Communication Way Unit 2B, Hyannis, MA 02601.

In tough times, communities find strength in people—and people find strength in their communities. In the past year, we've seen this time and again in our communities as friends, neighbors, and businesses have found new ways to support each other.

In our 11 communities we serve, older adults are a key source of this strength. Through their experiences, successes, and difficulties, they have built resilience that helps them to face new challenges. When communities tap into this, they become stronger too.

Each May, the Administration for Community Living leads the celebration of Older Americans Month (OAM). This year's theme is Communities of Strength, recognizing the

important role older adults play in fostering the connection and engagement that build strong, resilient communities.

Strength is built and shown not only by bold acts, but also small ones of day-to-day life—a conversation shared with a friend, working in the garden, trying a new recipe, or taking time for a cup of tea on a busy day. And when we share these activities with others—even virtually or by telling about the experience later—we help them build resilience too.

This year, Mystic Valley Elder Services (MVES) will celebrate OAM by encouraging community members to share their experiences. Together, we can find strength—and create a stronger future.

Here are some ways to share and connect:

- Look for joy in the everyday: Celebrate small moments and ordinary pleasures by taking time to recognize them. Start a gratitude journal and share it with others via social media, or call a friend or family member to share a happy moment or to say thank you.

- Reach out to neighbors: Even if you can't get together in person right now, you can still connect with your neighbors. Leave a small gift on their doorstep, offer to help with outdoor chores, or deliver a home-cooked meal.

- Build new skills: Learning something new allows us to practice overcoming challenges. Take an art course online or try a socially distanced outdoor movement class to enjoy learning with others

in your community. Maybe you have a skill to share? Find an opportunity to teach someone.

- Share your story: There's a reason storytelling is a time-honored activity. Hearing how others experience the world helps us grow. Engaging with family, friends, and neighbors can open up new conversations and strengthen our connections.

When people of different ages, backgrounds, abilities, and talents share experiences—through action, story, or service—we help build strong and educated communities. And that's something to celebrate!

To learn more about what MVES has to offer older adults, please visit us at www.mves.org or call 781-324-7705.

Baker-Polito administration applauds
Federal nod for Vineyard Wind project

Staff Report

The Baker-Polito Administration last week applauded the Record of Decision issued by the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) granting approval to the Vineyard Wind project and concluding environmental review of the project through the National Environmental Policy Act. The key federal permitting approval allows Vineyard Wind to advance its Construction and Operations Plan to bring 800 Megawatts of cost-effective, renewable offshore wind power to Massachusetts ratepayers, enough energy to power 400,000 homes. Following the announcement, Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen Theoharides will join Vineyard Wind CEO Lars Pedersen at the Wind Technology Testing Center in Charlestown to celebrate the decision.

"Massachusetts should be proud that this decision launches the nation's first commercial-scale offshore wind project on the Commonwealth's shores," said Gov. Charlie Baker. "This groundbreaking project will produce affordable, renewable energy, create jobs and prove Massachusetts developed a successful model for developing offshore wind energy. We appreciate the federal government's partnership to grant this approval and look forward to working with Vineyard Wind to create thousands of jobs and set the Commonwealth on a path to achieve Net Zero emissions."

Through a competitive

procurement process established in comprehensive energy legislation signed by Governor Baker in 2016, the Vineyard Wind project was selected in May 2018 to provide 800 MW of cost-effective renewable offshore wind power to Massachusetts. Following the selection of the Vineyard Wind project, a second competitive procurement process resulted in the selection of the Mayflower Wind project in October 2019. Together the two projects represent major steps in meeting the state's greenhouse gas emission reduction mandates and growing the Commonwealth's clean energy economy.

"Today's Record of Decision is not about the start of a single project, but the launch of a new industry," said Vineyard Wind CEO Lars T. Pedersen. "Receiving this final federal approval means the jobs, economic benefits and clean energy revolution that have been long talked about can finally come to fruition. It's been a long road to get to this point, but ultimately, we are reaching the end of this process with the strongest possible project. I want to thank BOEM, the Department of Interior and the Biden Administration for their efforts in finalizing the review of this project. I also want to thank Governor Baker, the Massachusetts federal delegation and State Legislature for their steadfast commitment to seeing this endeavor through to today. And of course, I want to extend my sincerest appreciation to all our supporters and stakeholders

for all of their work, input and dedication. We could not have reached this milestone without you."

The 800 MW Vineyard Wind project will utilize 62 GE Haliade-X turbines, currently the world's most powerful turbine with a capacity of 13 MW per machine utilizing wind blades spanning 107 meters. In November 2019, GE shipped a 107 meter Haliade-X blade to the Wind Technology Testing Center – the only facility of its kind in North America – for stress and durability testing that validated the technology can withstand more than 25 years of operation at sea, a key part of the technology development process.

The Record of Decision concludes NEPA review by BOEM, outlining along with its final decision an approval of the project's mitigation package. In response to extensive stakeholder engagement, including with the Massachusetts Fisheries Working Group, the Massachusetts Habitat Working Group, and other state and local entities, Vineyard Wind has agreed to provide millions of dollars to compensate Massachusetts and Rhode Island fishermen for potential loss of revenue and lost gear, and to enhance their ability to fish in and around the lease area. Vineyard Wind has also committed to continue funding pre- and post-construction survey studies with the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth School for Marine Science and Technology (SMST) and the Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association (MLA) to measure any impacts to the marine environment.

To ensure that the project is developed in an environmentally responsible manner that protects and preserves marine wildlife, including the critically en-

dangered North American Right Whale, Vineyard Wind will invest millions of dollars to develop and deploy innovative technologies and undertake scientific research to further safeguard marine mammals; institute comprehensive monitoring protocols to ensure that construction doesn't take place when right whales are near the lease area; utilize acoustic monitoring technology throughout construction including in transit corridors, and employ trained protective species observers to spot right whales visually during transit and foundation installation.

In August 2020, the Baker-Polito Administration announced the signing of lease agreements with Vineyard Wind and Mayflower Wind to utilize the New Bedford Marine Commerce Terminal as the primary staging and deployment base for the construction and installation of their offshore wind projects located in federal waters south of Martha's Vineyard. The lease agreements commit the facility to full-time offshore wind work from 2023 into 2027 and are worth more than \$32.5 million.

Constructed and operated by the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC), the New Bedford Marine Commerce Terminal is a 29-acre heavy-lift facility and the first port in North America specifically purpose-built to support the staging and installation of offshore wind components.

On May 7, 2021, the Baker-Polito Administration, in the third round of its offshore wind solicitation process, issued a Request for Proposals seeking up to 1,600 Megawatts of affordable, resilient clean energy. Bids are due on Sept. 17, 2021, and a selection of project(s) will be announced by Dec. 17, 2021.

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Coalition points to racial disparities in COVID-19 distribution process

The Vaccine Equity Now! Coalition has responded to Gov. Charles Baker’s joint event with President Joe Biden highlighting Massachusetts’ progress on vaccination. The Coalition pointed out that although Massachusetts has made rapid progress on overall rates of vaccination, persistent racial disparities in vaccination remain and illustrate the lack of equity in the rollout process to date. The most recent data shows that while 55 percent of white residents have received at least one dose of the vaccine, only 33 percent of Latinx residents, 37 percent of Black residents, and 53 percent of Asian residents have received at least one dose. This is despite the fact that communities of color have been disproportionately impacted by COVID hospitalization.

The coalition of more than 30 racial justice, immigrant justice, public health and civil rights organizations is doubling down on their calls for the Governor to meet with them, emphasizing that closing these racial disparities is essential if Massachusetts truly wants to claim to have a nation-leading vaccine program. Instead, equity has consistently been an afterthought for the Baker administration, as the Governor continues to use hesitancy as a scapegoat for inequities, rather than working in coordination with community organizations and unions to lower the barriers that exist for BI-POC and immigrant communities and workers.

“While Governor Baker is touting Massachusetts’ progress on vaccine distribution, racial disparities have persisted since the

beginning of the vaccine program and remain a major concern,” said Vaccine Equity Now! Coalition Co-Chairs Dr. Atyia Martin of the Resilient 21 Coalition, Eva Millona of the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, and Carlene Pavlos of the Massachusetts Public Health Association. “For months, our coalition of Black, Latinx and immigrant leaders has requested a meeting with Governor Baker and answers to basic questions about vaccine equity, such as what benchmarks the administration is using to measure its progress on closing these racial disparities. We have still not received so much as a response to our request to meet or any answers to our questions.”

The Co-Chairs pointed to Governor Baker’s remarks last week when announcing the shift away from mass vaccination sites towards regional and mobile sites as evidence that equity was not his priority from the start. “Now that we believe we are going to hit the 4.1 million goal we started with in the next few weeks, it’s time to adapt our vaccination effort to make sure we get to some of the harder-to-reach populations,” the Governor said at the time.

“Unions submitted proposals to Governor Baker to get essential workers vaccinated on site. Among the unions that submitted on-site proposals were United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1445 (UFCW 1445), the Transportation Unions, and the Massachusetts Teachers Association,” said Gabriel Camacho, Political Director for UFCW 1445. “Our pro-

posals were simple. Instead of having workers who take public transportation and may have more than one job with family obligations take a day off of work and go to one of the state’s mega vaccination sites, why not have the vaccinations go to where people work? These proposals were submitted with great detail to Governor Baker yet they were all rejected.”

“I have reached out to employers where our immigrants are working to make sure they are getting vaccinated at their worksites. Many of our clients work long hours and do not have the luxury of sick time in order to get the vaccine,” said Helena DaSilva, Executive Director of the Immigrants’ Assistance Center in New Bedford.

“Vaccine equity has not happened in the state of Massachusetts yet. Yes, there are resources that are available to do outreach in the BIPOC community, and yet that still has not happened,” said Renee Ledbetter, Director of the New Bedford Shannon Initiative, Vice President of the NAACP New Bedford, and President of United Interfaith Action of Southeastern Massachusetts. “There are still people dying from this terrible virus and we are waiting for funding? The lack of trust that our communities of color have in the government and the lack of confidence that they have in the healthcare system stem from all of the myths that have been put out there in the public that have yet to be dispelled. We have to act now and we have to act fast before we lose any more of our relatives, friends and community members.”

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New heritage forever stamps honor genetic diversity in farm animals

Staff Report

Heritage breeds of livestock are pre-industrial farm animals whose unusual appearances and remarkable qualities take us back to our nation’s agrarian roots — and may show the way to a more sustainable future. Their value as agricultural and cultural resources was honored by the U.S. Postal Service on stamps dedicated today at a ceremony at George Washington’s Mount Vernon in Virginia.

“The stamps beautifully represent the priceless genetic diversity of heritage breeds in the United

States,” said dedicating official, Steve Monteith, U.S. Postal Service chief customer and marketing officer. “Understanding the history of heritage breeds and their abilities for survival and self-sufficiency — it’s easy to see their value.”

Joining Monteith at the historic venue for the first in-person stamp dedication ceremony of the year were Douglas Bradburn, president and CEO, George Washington’s Mount Vernon; Alison Martin, executive director, and Jeannette Beranger, senior program manager, both from the Livestock Conservancy; and Aliza Eliazarov, whose photographs were used to design the stamps. Historical actor Dan Shippey was also on hand.

The pane of 20 stamps includes photographs of 10 heritage breeds: the Mulefoot hog, the Wyandotte chicken, the Milking Devon cow, the Narragansett turkey, the American Mammoth Jackstock donkey, (second row) the Cotton Patch goose, the San Clemente Island goat, the American Cream draft horse, the Cayuga duck and the Barbados Blackbelly sheep.

The stamps were de-



signed by Zack Bryant using photographs by acclaimed heritage breeds photographer Aliza Eliazarov. Greg Breeding served as art director.

The Heritage Breeds Forever stamps will always be equal in value to the current First-Class Mail 1-ounce price. News of the Heritage Breeds stamps is being shared with the hashtag #HeritageBreedsStamps.

With the worldwide adoption of industrial farming, a few breeds of livestock were standardized for maximum productivity. As a result, many other breeds with different traits are now critically endangered, and several are extinct.

In addition to retaining genetic diversity to help farms adapt to changing conditions, heritage livestock are also a valuable cultural resource as the breeds demonstrate the farming practices of earlier periods in American history and illuminate ancient agricultural traditions. Across the country, living-history farms and historical sites are working with breeders to acquire and raise heritage breeds, not only to preserve these animals but also to provide a more authentic sense of the past.

Face coverings still required on MBTA vehicles, stations, platforms

Staff Report

The MBTA is reminding customers that face coverings are required while on-board vehicles, in stations and facilities, on platforms and bus stops, and anywhere within the MBTA system for all riders, including those who have been fully vaccinated.

On May 13, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) updated guidance regarding face coverings for fully vaccinated individuals, noting that, “fully vaccinated people can resume

activities without wearing a mask.” While the CDC’s guidance relaxes face covering requirements in some settings, this guidance also notes that fully vaccinated individuals are still required to wear a mask on buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation. MBTA riders are reminded that federal and state regulations continue to require face coverings while riding MBTA vehicles and within the MBTA system, regardless of a person’s vaccination status. This includes outdoor bus stops and all outdoor platforms for the Commuter Rail, subway, and trolley systems.

Those who refuse to comply with the MBTA’s face covering requirement may be denied boarding of or be removed from MBTA vehicles and the system.

There continue to be exemptions to the face covering requirement for individuals with certain medical conditions and those who are so exempt do not need to produce documentation of their condition.

MassDOT to hold Virtual Meetings

Staff Report

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is announcing several public virtual meetings for the Capital Investment Plan (CIP), with each meeting focusing on a particular area in the state.

MassDOT is developing the annual CIP that guides how the Commonwealth prioritizes and funds local

and statewide transportation projects. The CIP determines funding for infrastructure including transit, accessibility upgrades, roadway improvements, municipal projects, and for the needs of Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs).

Input from the public each year is used to help inform project design and investment decisions as comments help MassDOT officials understand the level of community support for proposed projects.

The virtual events will be held as follows and while each meeting presentation will primarily highlight investments in that region, the public is welcome to comment on any aspect of the CIP.

- Boston issues, June 1, 6 p.m.

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