

# East Boston

## TIMES - FREE PRESS



Wednesday, January 19, 2022

### ZBA approves Curtis Street project

By John Lynds

On Tuesday the Boston Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) voted unanimously to approve the 29-unit residential development on Curtis Street. The project already received Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) approval so the ZBA approval was the final hurdle in getting the project off the ground.

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 will create a mix of condo/rental units. The building with 21 units will include 17 parking spots while the building with only 8 units



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

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 members of the Harbor View Neighborhood Association (HVNA) from 2019 through 2020 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 was sunk underground.

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

While some HVNA members seemed to be warming up to the project when compared to the initial presentation, members still voted 23-9 against the project last year.

### After dissolving, the GSCA will reconvene with new volunteers

By John Lynds

Since voting to disband in October the future of the Gove Street Citizens Association's (GSCA) has been in limbo for close to three months. After GSCA secretary Nat Taylor left a void in the community group, former GSCA Chair Lorraine Curry made several pleas to non-board members to step up and fill Taylor's position.

With no one from the community answering Curry's call for help the others on the board were either unwilling or unable to pick up the extra slack created by Taylor's departure.

Curry announced at GSCA October's meeting that nine of the eleven remaining board members had resigned and the group would be 'dissolved'.

Luckily, a small group of volunteers have decided to re-establish the community group and will hold the first meeting of the GSCA since October on Monday, January 24 at 6:30 pm via Zoom.

Neelesh Batra announced last week that the group would continue.

"A small group of volunteers has come together to keep GSCA running," she said. "We are planning to have our regularly scheduled meeting this month on Monday, January 24, 2022, at 6:30pm."

Residents can register for GSCA's first meeting in months at <https://govestreet.org/meetings/>.

The agenda of next Monday's meeting will include a welcome and introduction of the new board volunteers, an announcement from The Trustees, Boston Waterfront Initiative's Gabriela Ramirez on the Piers Park Phase III project as well as an introduction of the two candidates, Tania Del Rio and Gabriela Coletta, who are running for the District 1 City Councilor seat. The two candidates will have 10 minutes each to address the community.

The news in October that GSCA was disbanding came as a shock to non-board members like Peter Doliber who felt one board member's exit shouldn't have created such a drastic decision by the rest of the board.

Doliber said that there was too much at stake, like the several large development projects proposed for the Gove Street area, to abruptly dissolve the community group.

See GSCA Page 2

### Eliot School parents circulating petition to Mayor Wu over exam school entrance plan

By John Lynds

Parents at the North End's Eliot School are fuming over the introduction of the so-called '10-point' penalty placed on some high performing Boston Public Schools in order to level the playing field for entrance to Boston's exam school like Boston Latin, Boston Latin Academy and the O'Bryant.

The Eliot, which serves many students from East Boston, the North End, Charlestown, the Back Bay and Beacon Hill has for years enjoyed a high success rate of students getting into one of the three exam schools.

Eliot School parents are now arguing the introduction of what they are calling the '10-point penalty' will hinder their child's ability to get into the top Boston Public High Schools.

The Eliot, and five other schools have been

deemed high performing schools with a lower percentage of low-income students than most other BPS schools, so a student at the Eliot getting straight As in 6th or 8th grade hoping to get into an exam school will get 100 points in the exam school admissions system. This score will be used to determine the students eligibility for an exam school seat. The other schools are the Lyndon and Kilmer Schools in West Roxbury and the BTU Pilot School in Roslindale.

However, at all other BPS schools straight A students will receive 110 points. Not only will Eliot School students rank below all other straight A students at other BPS schools, they will also receive fewer points than any BPS student who receives an A- average.

Kelsey Barrett, a parent at the Eliot School, began an online petition hoping

to get 1,000 signatures. Once the petition receives 1,000 signatures it will be sent to Mayor Michelle Wu.

"Because of this 10 point penalty, the top achieving students at the

Eliot and four other Boston Public Schools will have no access to Boston Latin School, Boston Latin Academy or the O'Bryant," said Barrett.

See ELIOT SCHOOL Page 2

### Proof of vaccine begins in Eastie and across the city for indoor venues

By John Lynds

Indoor venues in East Boston like restaurants and gyms began adjusting to Mayor Michelle Wu's new mandate that requires workers and patrons at all indoor venues to show proof of vaccination in order to bend the curve of the latest COVID-19 surge.

The "B Together" mandate officially went into effect Saturday across Boston with Mayor Wu saying the best way for Boston to stay healthy and support communities, businesses, and cultural institutions is for more people to get vaccinated and the B Together policy helps the city do just that.

On Saturday, people were required to show proof of vaccination against COVID-19 to enter certain indoor spaces

in Boston that offer indoor dining like bars and nightclubs, indoor fitness establishments and indoor entertainment establishments. Employees working in those spaces are also required to now be vaccinated. Covered businesses are responsible for checking proof of vaccination and posting a notice about the COVID-19 vaccine requirement at their entrance.

Over at Rino's Place on Saratoga Street, owned by Chef Tony DiCenso and his wife, Anna, the B Together mandate seemed to go off without a hitch Saturday at the widely popular Italian Restaurant.

"We were checking vaccine cards Saturday," said Anna DiCenso. "Boston Police actually came in looking to speak to a manager to make sure we were in compliance with



Mayor Michelle Wu kicks off the B Strong proof of vaccination mandate for indoor venues Saturday.

asking for vaccine cards and if we had the correct signage—which thankfully we did. I have to say, I was a little taken back by it. Not once during the whole pandemic did anyone ever come in checking. I guess Mayor Wu is serious about this but we are happy to report we had not one issue."

At Planet Fitness on

McClellan Highway in Eastie, the team said they were fully prepared ahead of the mandate going into effect and there were no issues.

"Once the mandate was put into place, we immediately made sure we had the proper systems in place to be able to implement it."

See VACCINE Page 2

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# Senator-elect Edwards to be sworn in Thursday

By John Lynds

First Suffolk & Middlesex Senator-elect Lydia Edwards will be sworn into the state senate Thursday during a ceremony at the State House.

To mark the occasion Edwards and her team are hosting a watch party at Democracy Brewing, located at 35 Temple Pl, Boston on Thursday, January 20.

Due to COVID protocols the in-person swearing in at the State House will have extremely limited attendance but Edwards supporters can attend the watch party at Democracy Brewing or live stream the swearing in on Facebook at <https://facebook.com/events/s/senator-edwards-inauguration-w/-941179203428206/>.

The swearing in ceremony will be at noon Thursday with doors opening at Democracy Brewing at 11:30 am.

“I couldn’t be more excited to get to work, and luckily, I will be getting started soon,” said Edwards. “On Thursday I will be sworn in as a State Senator at the State House. I couldn’t have done this without you, so let’s celebrate this momentous day together. We will be live-streaming the inauguration and having a watch party to celebrate. I will arrive at Democracy

Brewing after the inauguration and join the festivities.”

To RSVP to the watch party email [Emma@LydiaEdwards.org](mailto:Emma@LydiaEdwards.org).

Edwards also announced this week she’s seeking residents to advise her on constituent and public policy issues impacting the Senate district as part of her Community Transition Committee.

Residents can apply for the committee by emailing [info@lydiaedwards.org](mailto:info@lydiaedwards.org). Residents in the district are asked to send their name, city, and the topics they are interested in discussing with Edwards and she will respond with a series of dates and times to discuss each topic.

Edwards said the transition committee will meet with her to discuss specific topics. The committee will cover issues including housing, transportation, addiction and recovery, Massport, seniors, education/youth services, public safety, and environmental justice. The meetings will be organized by topic and will meet regularly during 2022, providing residents opportunity for input on budgetary and legislative matters as the state continues to respond to the pandemic.

“The wisdom and lived experience of district residents is invaluable and key to our communities’

success,” said Edwards. “Some of the best policies I have ever worked on came from everyday people such as the Domestic Worker Bill of Rights, benefits from Suffolk Downs and the charter amendment for Boston. I believe so much of my job is amplifying the good hard work and ideas of the people I serve.”

Edwards was officially elected to the Senate on Tuesday, January 11 during the state General Election. Edwards previously edged out Revere School Committee member Anthony D’Ambrosio during the December 14 state Democratic Primary to fill the seat left vacant in the fall by Joe Boncore.

Edwards will represent Wards and Precincts in Eastie, Revere, Witterhjt, the North End, Beacon Hill, Bay Village, Chinatown, the South End and Cambridgeport.

In 2017, Edwards won the election to the Boston City Council. As a councilor, she wrote and advanced legislation to protect low-income renters and elder homeowners, combat discrimination, divest from fossil fuels, and protect civil liberties. She also partnered with state leaders to introduce legislation and passed a new state law prohibiting the naming of minors in eviction proceedings.

# Senator-Elect Lydia Edwards invites constituents to apply for Community Transition Committee

Senator-Elect Lydia Edwards is inviting residents of the 1st Suffolk and Middlesex District to advise her on constituent and public policy on issues impacting the Senate district. The transition committee will meet with the Senator to discuss specific topics. The committee will cover issues including housing, transportation, addiction and recovery, Massport, seniors, education/youth services, public safety, and environmental justice. The meetings will be organized by topic and will meet regularly during 2022, providing residents opportunity for input on budgetary and legislative matters as the state continues to respond to the pandemic.

experience of district residents is invaluable and key to our communities’ success,” said Senator-Elect Edwards. “Some of the best policies I have ever worked on came from everyday people such as the Domestic Worker Bill of Rights, benefits from Suffolk Downs and the charter amendment for Boston. I believe so much of my job is amplifying the good hard work and ideas of the people I serve.”

Residents can apply for the committee by emailing [info@lydiaedwards.org](mailto:info@lydiaedwards.org). Please send your name, your city, and the topics you are interested in discussing with the Senator. She will respond with a series of dates and times to discuss each topic. If there is a subject matter

not listed above please feel free to suggest it to the Senator -Elect.

Senator-Elect Edwards will be sworn in to the Massachusetts Senate on Thursday, January 20th at 12:00 pm. Due to COVID-19 protocols, the event will have extremely limited attendance, but supporters are invited to view online or join a watch party at Democracy Brewing (35 Temple Pl, Boston, MA 02111). Senator Edwards will join the in person event after her brief swearing in. Proof of vaccination is required. Doors open at 11:30 AM, the live stream will begin at 12 PM. Please RSVP to Emma at [emma@lydiaedwards.org](mailto:emma@lydiaedwards.org).

# News in Brief

## EVENING PRAYER

Residents are invited to Evening Prayer on Tues-

day January 25 at 5:30. Beautiful music sung by candlelight in English and Spanish . Our Saviour’s

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# Eastie Farm, EBNHC Farmers Market awarded grant to help expand SNAP benefits

By John Lynds

Two East Boston organizations that have been helping to fight food insecurities in the neighborhood for years were recently awarded a grant from the state to help expand access to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits at mobile locations.

This week the Baker-Polito Administration announced that Eastie Farm and the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center (EBNHC) Farmers Market will join 27 other farms and farmers’ markets in sharing \$39,900 in grants to expand local food access points for low-income residents across the state.

The grant will provide Eastie Farm and the Farmers Market with equipment at no cost to facilitate the acceptance of SNAP benefits at their locations.

These additional SNAP access points in Eastie will increase the availability of fresh, healthy food and drive federal dollars into the state’s economy.

“This grant program reflects the Baker-Polito Administration’s commitment to connect Massachusetts households with healthy and culturally accessible food in support of a strong local food system,” said Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders. “This program builds on the success of the Food Security Infrastructure Grant Program and the addition of 39 new Healthy Incentives Program vendors as

we continue to promote food security across the Commonwealth.”

Both Eastie Farm and the Farmers Market have been on the frontlines throughout the COVID-19 pandemic addressing food insecurities that have long existed but were amplified by COVID.

Eastie Farm volunteers worked through the pandemic’s height providing prepared meals, dairy, and meat to Boston residents and expanding their outreach efforts.

Over at the Farmers Market, administrators expanded the seasonal market that usually runs from the summer through the fall, to include a winter/spring market.

“One of the main reasons we introduced the online Winter/Spring Farmers Market is because we want residents to be able to take advantage of their SNAP benefits and be able to buy healthy produce all year round,” said Market Manager Nancy Slamet. “That is something that we’re really trying to push again this year after a successful season last year.”

SNAP customers at the Farmers Market get extra money through the Healthy Incentives Program, or HIP, to buy fruits and veggies at the market. Those who receive SNAP benefits are automatically enrolled in HIP, which allows Farmers Market customers to earn a dollar-for-dollar match on their EBT card when they buy fresh produce from a HIP-authorized vendor like the East Boston

Farmers Market.

“For families of 1-2 people, you can earn up to \$40 per month; for 3-5 people, up to \$60 per month; for 6 and more people, up to \$80 per month so we don’t want people to lose out on these benefits,” said Slamet.

The grant program is offered through the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) and with financial support from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

“DTA continues to work with our agricultural partners to expand equitable SNAP access points, enabling the over 590,000 households who receive SNAP to buy local food in the communities where they live,” said Department of Transitional Assistance Commissioner Amy Kershaw.

“This grant program also brings critical economic support into our state’s food system, supporting Massachusetts farmers and their employees.”

Baker-Polito Administration also announced a second round of grant funding started on January 14, 2022. Farmers and farmers’ markets can apply through February 18, 2022. A third application round will open on April 20th for all eligible vendors to apply. Application can be found at [www.mass.gov/service-details/massachusetts-ebtsnap-equipment-grant-program](http://www.mass.gov/service-details/massachusetts-ebtsnap-equipment-grant-program).

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# East Boston

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## MAYOR MICHELLE WU: GRACE UNDER PRESSURE

The job of mayor of a large American city never has been easy, but these days the challenges facing our public officials who lead our major metropolitan areas are greater than ever.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a confluence of difficult circumstances, ranging from an epidemic of drug overdose deaths, a housing shortage that is exacerbating homelessness, exponentially-increasing firearm murder rates, school closures, public transportation issues, and unprecedented small business failures.

In addition, the political rancor that exists at the national level has spilled over to the local level in an unprecedented manner. The axiom that all politics is local, as the great Tip O'Neill famously said, no longer is true -- the political demagoguery that has poisoned our politics in Washington now has spread to every corner of the country.

Michelle Wu, the new mayor of Boston, is now at the center of a firestorm regarding her order to require Boston's city employees to get a COVID-19 vaccine. According to the Boston Globe, there is a small minority of those who oppose her order who are protesting loudly outside her house, disturbing her neighborhood, and some who are hurling racially-charged comments and threats toward Mayor Wu and her family.

So we wish to take this opportunity to express our support for the mayor and for her order requiring vaccinations for city employees. Unfortunately, she is taking on the burden of dealing with the small but vocal mob alone -- and we are grateful that she is showing the courage to do what is right for the city and its residents.

## SOMETHING ELSE TO WORRY ABOUT

We were driving on the Expressway the other day and we heard on the radio that the Florida orange crop will be at its lowest output since the 1940s. "What? The 1940s?!?" we thought to ourselves.

The point of the news report was that orange juice prices will be higher this coming winter because of the low crop output. But what the report didn't explain was why the crop will be so low.

We assumed that there must have been a frost or some other weather-related event, or perhaps there was a supply chain or labor shortage issue, as the cause for the shortfall.

But when we looked into it, we discovered that the Florida orange crop has been declining steadily for the past 20 years or so.

And the reason for the decline is something far more insidious than the weather or COVID. According to Inside Climate News, a respected environmental news web-site, the culprit is an invasive insect: "The Asian citrus psyllid fills its stomach by feeding on the leaves and stems of citrus trees. The tiny brown insects infect the trees with bacteria that cause citrus greening, a disease that makes the fruits inedible. Natives to Asia, the citrus psyllids were first found in the United States in Florida in 1998."

Invasive species have been causing all kinds of damage in our country and around the world for many years. The zebra mussel (which came from Russia) and the Asian carp have wreaked costly damage in the past few decades. However, their impact is largely unseen by the American public.

But the Asian citrus psyllid's damage strikes home for all of us. Oranges and other citrus fruits are a staple food item in every American household.

So now, amidst our winter of discontent, there is one more thing to add to the list -- the Asian citrus psyllid.



# Forum

## Markey and Warren announce \$307.5 million in home energy funding

Senators Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.) and Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) announced that Massachusetts will receive a record \$307.5 million for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) for the 2022 fiscal year. The Biden administration reported that in addition to an annual appropriation of \$120.5 million for Massachusetts, the state received an additional \$187.1 million in funds from the American Rescue Plan -- more than

double the state's typical annual funding for the energy assistance program. LIHEAP is the main federal program that helps low-income households and seniors with their energy bills, providing critical assistance during the cold winter and hot summer months.

"This historic amount of funding to help households cover home energy costs in Massachusetts means no family or senior has to go cold this winter," said Senators Markey and

Warren. "Thousands of additional Massachusetts residents will qualify for vital fuel assistance, and we will once again ensure that our most vulnerable residents are taken care of -- especially in the midst of this pandemic. But as climate change makes seasons more extreme and supply chain disruptions continue to exacerbate energy burdens for families, LIHEAP funding must be allocated to not only give families the annual subsidies they need, but also to

provide support for weatherization, which will help them reduce their energy burdens over time. We thank the Biden administration for its efforts to distribute this funding and look forward to continuing to expand this home energy assistance program."

As a part of the American Rescue Plan, Senators Markey and Warren advocated for \$20 billion in funding for Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) and \$4.5 billion in additional funding to LIHEAP.

## LOCAL STUDENTS EARN ACADEMIC HONORS

### SNHU ANNOUNCES FALL 2021 PRESIDENT'S LIST

It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates Jose Morales of East Boston on being named to the Fall 2021 President's List.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits; undergraduate day students must earn 12 credits in the fall or spring semester, and online students must earn 12 credits in either EW1 & EW2, EW3 & EW4, or EW5 & EW6.

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) is a private, nonprofit institution with an 89-year history of educating traditional-aged students and working adults. Now serving more than 160,000 learners worldwide, SNHU offers approximately 200 accredited undergraduate, graduate and certificate programs, available online and on its 300-acre campus in Manchester, NH. Recognized as the "Most Innovative" regional university by U.S. News & World Report and one of the fastest-growing universities in the country, SNHU is committed to expanding access to high quality, affordable path-

ways that meet the needs of each learner. Learn more at [www.snhu.edu](http://www.snhu.edu).

### CRESPO NAMED TO SNHU DEAN'S LIST

Lauriana Crespo of East Boston has been named to Southern New Hampshire University's Fall 2021 Dean's List.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 are named to the Dean's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits; undergraduate day students must earn 12 credits in the fall or spring semester, and online students must earn 12 credits in either EW1 & EW2, EW3 & EW4, or EW5 & EW6.

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) is a private, nonprofit institution with an 89-year history of educating traditional-aged students and working adults. Now serving more than 160,000 learners worldwide, SNHU offers approximately 200 accredited undergraduate, graduate and certificate programs, available online and on its 300-acre campus in Manchester, NH. Recognized as the "Most Innovative" regional university by U.S. News & World Report and one of the fastest-growing

universities in the country, SNHU is committed to expanding access to high quality, affordable pathways that meet the needs of each learner. Learn more at [www.snhu.edu](http://www.snhu.edu).

### ZUNIGA NAMED TO COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS' FALL 2021 DEAN'S LIST

Naomy Zuniga of East Boston, was named to the College of the Holy Cross Fall 2021 Dean's List. A member of the Class of 2022, Zuniga is majoring in Psychology, Spanish.

Zuniga was among more than 1,375 students named to the Dean's List for outstanding academic achievement during the fall semester of the 2021-22 academic year.

To qualify, students must pass four or more letter-graded courses with no failing grades during the semester and earn a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

About Holy Cross  
The College of the Holy Cross, in Worcester, Mass., is among the nation's leading liberal arts institutions. A highly selective, four-year, exclusively undergraduate college of 3,100 students, Holy Cross is renowned for offering a rigorous, personalized education in the Jesuit, Catholic tradition. Since its founding in 1843, Holy Cross has

made a positive impact in society by graduating students who distinguish themselves as thoughtful leaders in business, professional and civic life.

### LASELL UNIVERSITY STUDENT GINA MUNOZ PRESENTS AT CAREER READINESS SYMPOSIUM

Gina Munoz, a Lasell University student from East Boston, participated in the institution's annual Career Readiness Symposium.

Munoz shared reflections on their communications internship at CK Communication Group. The presentation incorporated the NACE competencies of professionalism, leadership, and career & self-development.

Lasell's Career Readiness Symposium takes place every fall and asks students to present original research, projects, or field skills that align with core career competencies shared by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). Part of the Symposium's goal is to collectively assist students in identifying and pursuing opportunities that allow them to become proficient in those areas as preparation for successful transitions into the workplace.

## Boston residents can now access clean energy and save on electric

Residents within Eversource's service territory now have the option of locally produced, clean renewable energy through the Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) Program. Located 1 hour south of the city on Cape Cod, two new community solar farms, totaling 7 MW,

will produce enough energy annually to power 960 homes.

Both homeowners and renters are eligible to subscribe to this project through RooflessSolar™ with no long-term commitment, upfront costs, or cancellation fees. This is a completely free program for area residents. Once

subscribed, residents can expect to save up to 10% on their electric utility bills. The average customer saves \$176/year!

Community solar is the answer for those who do not wish to install solar panels on their property, rent and don't own a home, or would like the option to take their solar with them

to their next home. The electricity generated by the solar farm is delivered into Eversource's power grid and then distributed to subscribers in the form of on-bill credits.

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# Lawrence ‘Larry’ Braman, early NOAH supporter and board member, dies

By John Lynds

When Larry Braman was a graduate student enrolled at Columbia University in the early 1970s he found himself in front of the former East Boston Land Use Council pitching an idea for a parcel of land between Maverick Square and the waterfront. Braman, and his colleague Mossik Hacobian, pitched the idea of a series of low-rise and high-rise efficiency units that would help local senior citizens remain in the neighborhood they called home.

Braman had recently moved to Trenton Street and immersed himself in Eastie’s movement to create more affordable housing opportunities for seniors and residents.

Braman’s plans were unique at the time as it combined high and low-rise apartments with a variety of open spaces, private courtyards, semi enclosed yards, and a lawn open to the pedestrian mall.

What started as a school project for Braman and Hacobian eventually became Eastie’s 245-unit Heritage Apartment complex for seniors at 209 Sumner St.

Braman and Hacobian were quoted saying in a February 1972 edition of the East Boston Community News that, “School



Lawrence ‘Larry’ Braman (right) and Mossik Hacobian shown in 1972 pitching what would eventually become Maverick’s Heritage Apartments to community members. Braman passed away last month after a battle with cancer. (photo courtesy of the East Boston Community News Archives).

projects tend to have a sense of unreality. We decided to do a real project, so that aside from school it would also have some practical use for East Boston.”

Braman would eventually spend decades calling Eastie home and became an early supporter and board member of NOAH (East Boston Neighborhood of Affordable Housing) as well as numerous other organizations.

Sadly, Braman, who had been living in Cambridge, passed away on December 18 after a battle with cancer.

“Larry, who was an East Boston resident for almost

three decades, chose to spend his life improving the world for others, and held a successful career focused largely on affordable housing and community development,” said NOAH Executive Director Phil Giffie. “Larry was a kind and gentle man whose intelligence was often revealed in his sharp wit. He will be greatly missed.”

Braman was born into a life of privilege but chose to spend his life improving the world for others. He was educated at The International School in Geneva, Switzerland, Yale and Columbia Universities, and he was a Loeb Fel-

low at Harvard’s Graduate School of Design. Braman’s long and successful career focused largely on affordable housing and community development. He served on the Mass Architectural Access Board, held positions at Greater Boston Community Development (now The Community Builders), Urban Edge (a community development organization based in Boston’s Jamaica Plain neighborhood), the Boston Department of Neighborhood Development (DND), and finally at the Cambridge Building Department where he reviewed building plans for their compliance with architectural access requirements. He retired last year.

Never one to complain, he happily greeted the world from a wheelchair for the last 52 years of his life following a diving accident in 1969 that left him a quadriplegic.

He was survived by his half-sisters, Mary Stevens Fillman and Gladys Stevens Thacher, many nieces and nephews, many great-nieces and nephews, and many close friends.

Donations in Larry’s memory may be made to the Boston Center for Independent Living, 60 Temple Place, Boston, MA 02111.

## THE EAST BOSTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE COMMEMORATES MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY



The East Boston Chamber of Commerce placed a display of American flags to commemorate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on Monday, Jan. 17, at the Daniel H Solari Square outside the Chamber of Commerce office at 464 Bremen Street.

Martin Luther King Jr. exemplified organized protests to voice his concerns in a peaceful way, without violence. He will forever be remembered for advocating for meeting with violence in non-violent ways while voicing his concerns through protests.

Please note that the flags are for display purposes. If anyone wishes to obtain a flag, please feel free to contact the Chamber at eastbostonchamber.com. You can take a selfie of yourself or others with the flag display and post it on social media with the hashtag #eastbostonchamber to enter in a raffle for a free US flag like those found in the display.

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# Baker-Polito administration files \$5 billion general government bond bill

The Baker-Polito Administration filed legislation seeking \$4.991 billion in capital funds to support core improvements that will enable the Commonwealth to continue delivering critical state services to the people of Massachusetts.

An Act Financing the General Governmental Infrastructure of the Commonwealth, includes \$4.15 billion to maintain, repair, and modernize assets that serve those most in need across the Commonwealth, help educate the future workforce, deliver on key environmen-

tal objectives, and keep the Commonwealth's communities and workers safe. It also includes \$841 million to continue existing, successful grant programs that support Massachusetts communities, to improve cybersecurity and other technology infrastructure, and to ac-

quire critical public safety equipment.

"This bill supports essential capital investments that will deliver long-lasting benefits to Massachusetts residents for years to come, with a focus on safety, resiliency and opportunity," said Governor Charlie Baker. "We look forward to working with our colleagues in the Legislature to make these important investments, which will pave the way for the continued efficient delivery of government services and economic growth."

"The proposed investments in this bill continue our Administration's work to improve a wide range of critical infrastructure and foster growth and development across Massachusetts," said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito. "These funds will ensure the continuity of proven programs and enable impactful future economic, health and safety initiatives that will benefit the Commonwealth's communities, businesses and residents."

The bill filed today makes authorization available through Fiscal Year 2028 that would support \$2.4 billion in existing maintenance and resiliency projects through the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM). DCAMM maintains nearly 1,700 major buildings covering 60.8 million gross square feet of property across the Commonwealth, including higher education buildings, health and human services facilities, public safety facilities, and trial courts. It also leads decarbonization and resiliency efforts in accordance with Executive Order 594, Leading by Example: Decarbonizing and Minimizing Environmental Impacts of State Government, which was issued by Governor Baker in April of 2021 and directs efforts to reduce gas emissions in Massachusetts facilities. The bond bill proposes \$400 million in energy efficiency ini-

tiatives at facilities statewide.

An additional \$1.8 million in DCAMM authorization is proposed to meet new facilities' needs and mitigate future risks. This includes an increased focus on incorporating lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic related to the physical space and layout of facilities.

The bill also proposes \$185 million in authorization for the Executive Office of Technology Services and Services (EOTSS) to support a variety of cybersecurity, IT infrastructure, and application modernizations initiatives. This includes projects that would modernize the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Online system and build out an integrated eligibility and enrollment system to streamline the benefits application process across multiple state agencies. \$50 million is proposed to improve virtual and physical security infrastructure at the Trial Courts facilities, including intrusion detection and video monitoring. Further public safety investments include \$60 million for equipment for fire services, corrections, and communications towers, and \$100 million for the replacement of approximately 300 Massachusetts State Police vehicles per year, half of which will be hybrid vehicles.

"This \$5 billion bond bill reflects the Baker-Polito Administration's dual commitment to supporting the Commonwealth's assets and making sustainable, fiscally responsible capital investments," said Secretary of Administration and Finance Michael J. Heffernan. "The projects proposed are key to maintaining core government operations and will keep the state moving forward, and we are looking forward to working with the Legislature to pass this bill into law."

The bill seeks to support Massachusetts' communities by authorizing \$496 million for established and successful grant and community programs that have a track record of providing valuable resources for workforce development, economic development, housing, and more to communities across the state. This includes the Workforce Skills Capital Grants Program, the Community Compact IT Grants Program, the Cultural Facilities Fund, the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, the Housing Stabilization Fund and the Housing Choice Capital Grants Program.

In June 2021, the Baker-Polito Administration finalized its Capital Investment Plan for Fiscal Years 2022-2026, and the authorizations in this bond bill would support investments and initiatives in the upcoming annual update to the Capital Investment Plan, which will include capital spending for Fiscal Years 2023-2027.

Highlights of the bond bill include:

- \$185 million for various cybersecurity and IT infrastructure initiatives, including:
- \$100 million for cybersecurity investments and to support existing large business applications

modernization projects


- \$50 million for virtual and physical security infrastructure at the Trial Courts facilities, such as intrusion detection, duress, physical screening, access control, video monitoring, and communications
- \$35 million to upgrade Lottery gaming systems, decommission end-of-life equipment, and address cybersecurity vulnerabilities

- \$160 million for public safety investments, including:
- \$100 million for the replacement of approximately 300+ vehicles per year, half of which will be hybrid
- 60 million for public safety equipment for fire services, corrections, state police & parole vehicles, and communications towers

- \$100 million to continue support for the Workforce Skills capital grants program, which provides grants to high schools, community colleges, training programs, and non-profit organizations to purchase equipment that will help expand access to career technical education programs
- \$100 million for municipal grants to support a broad range of local infrastructure improvements and projects
- \$64 million to support the Massachusetts State Revolving Fund (SRF) – specifically, for the Commonwealth's matching funds required to secure federal dollars for the Fund, which helps cities and towns improve water supply infrastructure and drinking water safety
- \$60 million for the Housing Stabilization Fund, which provides funding for municipalities, non-profit, for-profit developers and local housing authorities in support of affordable rental housing production and rehabilitation

- \$51 million for the continuation of the Food Security program, which improves food security for the people of the Commonwealth through grants aimed at enhancing access to and production of local food for the next two years at current funding level
- \$50 million for the Cultural Facilities Fund to continue providing grants for planning, acquisition, rehabilitation and construction of cultural facilities administered through Massachusetts Cultural Council and MassDevelopment
- \$30 million for the Community Compact IT competitive grant program aimed at driving innovation at the local level and available to any municipality that is part of Community Compact Cabinet Initiative
- \$25 million for Housing Choice grants to municipalities that receive a Housing Choice designation through high housing production and/or demonstration of best practices
- \$16 million for MassVentures START grants, which help businesses commercialize ideas that have been backed with federal Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) funding.

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Wednesday, January 12, 2022



This aerial view shows how celebrated Colombian artist Felipe Ortiz turned the intersection at Ashley and Boardman Streets into a work of art.

### Celebrated Colombian artist Felipe Ortiz turns Eastie intersection into work of art

By John Lynds

Anyone who lives in Orient Heights knows the area near the Marty Pino Community Center where Ashley Street dumps out onto Boardman can be a dangerous area for pedestrians and motorists.

With a community center and neighboring Noyes Park hosting hundreds of children each week once the weather gets warm the city has heard enough complaints about the intersection to begin trying something different.

Since last March the Boston Transportation Department has deployed

a host of different traffic calming measures including installing permanent traffic cones to demonstrate the city's plan to transform the triangular intersection into a more user friendly area for motorists and pedestrians.

Recently, Redgate, the developers of the 230-unit apartment community on Addison Street, teamed up with the City of Boston's Tactical Urbanism Initiative to create a safer intersection at Ashley and Boardman streets.

Redgate commissioned celebrated Colombian artist Felipe Ortiz to turn the portion of the troubled in-

tersection within the traffic cones into a work of art.

Ortiz's now completed mural incorporates imagery of native wildlife from Belle Isle Marsh into a public art piece for all to enjoy while drawing attention to the traffic calming measures that have been deployed by the city.

The commissioning of Ortiz was part of a community benefits mitigation package in connection with Redgate's Addison Street project and was funded through the Addison project in collaboration with the tactical urbanism initiative

"The place we have created at Addison is very welcoming and hopefully inspiring to the artist community, and these wonderful pieces of public art reflect that idea," said Damian Szary, a Principal at Redgate. "Felipe's street mural not only has created great beauty for all of East Boston to appreciate, but it will actually contribute to improved public safety at the Ashley and Boardman intersection."

Ortiz's unique murals are a fusion of artistic themes representing the urban scenery from the U.S., its vast landscape, and fast-paced urban en-

vironments. In addition to Colombia's vibrant culture, colors, sounds and dense natural scenery. For this mural at Ashley and Boardman, Ortiz took both of these factors and put them down taking nature's elements from Eastie.

This is not the first time Redgate has commissioned local artists for work in the community. The developer hired cross-medium artist Mia Cross also created a dra-

matic interior painting which is the signature feature of Addison Street project's lobby.

Cross, a Boston-based artist who is originally from Framingham – has been featured in numerous galleries and exhibits throughout New England and New York, and her work lives in private collections throughout Europe and the United States.

See ART Page 2

### Boston Licensing Board approves new restaurant

By John Lynds

Last week the Boston Licensing Board approved plans for a new 'pan-Latin' restaurant on the corner of Border and Decatur Street inside a commercial space created by NOAH (East Boston Neighborhood of Affordable Housing) as part of its Coppersmith Village project.

According to the proposal before the Licensing Board last week, Pearl & Lime Restaurant, which will be managed and partially owned by lifelong Eastie resident Vanik Hacopian, plans to obtain a seven day all alcoholic license for the planned 3,626 square foot restaurant. Attorney Andrew Upton told the board his clients plan to create 3,071 square feet inside and an additional 555 square foot seasonal outdoor patio with 40 seats. Upton said the patio would close by 10 a.m. but the indoor portion of the restaurant would remain open until 1 a.m.

"Pearl and Lime is a fresh pan-Latin concept with neighborhood price points and a commit-



Eastie resident Vanik Hacopian talks about his new restaurant concept at last week's Licensing Board hearing.

ment to being part of the community," said Upton. "Fresh food and a comfortable modern atmosphere and decor will be the calling cards of this new neighborhood restaurant. The character and fitness of this applicant is clear. This is the team that's behind Pearl and Lime in Quincy and are a family friendly, fresh pan-Latin concept that has become a neighborhood fixture and has had no violations or complaints from their neighbors. They've proven this concept and are excited about this East Boston location. Further their landlord, NOAH, has chosen this team due to their sensitivity to the residents, the neighbors and the community."

The planned restaurant approved last week received support from City Councilor Lydia Edwards and Rep. Adrian Madaro as well as the Maverick Square Neighborhood Association (MSNA).

See LICENSING Page 2

### City Councilor Edwards becomes Senator-elect Edwards

By John Lynds

Yesterday, voters in East Boston and the rest of the First Suffolk & Middlesex district went to the polls and elected City Councilor Lydia Edwards to serve as their next state senator. Once sworn in Edwards will become the first woman and the first person of color to represent the district.

"I am grateful to the people of Boston, Cambridge, Revere and Winthrop for sending me to Beacon Hill to fight for our communities," said Senator-Elect Edwards. "I know how to fight for what you believe in, build a movement and win, and I am looking forward to continuing the work in the state house. When in 2014 we passed the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, we showed the world that nannies and house cleaners can write laws: they know as workers, as women, as immigrants and people of color, about the



Senator-Elect Lydia Edwards.

dignity they deserve and they know when our government needs to do more to guarantee their rights

and wellbeing."

Edwards continued, "Like so many in our communities, I know what

it's like to be unable to afford school lunch, to lose a job and panic about next month's rent, to live each day breathing in air pollution and to worry about tomorrow as the sea levels continue to rise. Together, with our pain and purpose, we will fight for laws and the social conditions that protect people, communities and our planet. I am excited for the journey ahead."

The election took place across the district during Tuesday's frigid state general election and included Wards and Precincts in Eastie, Revere, Winthrop, the North End, Beacon Hill, Bay Village, Chinatown, the South End and Cambridgeport. With no Republican challenger on the ballot Edwards's win was all but guaranteed Tuesday.

Edwards defeated Revere School Committee member Anthony D'Ambrosio during the Decem-

See EDWARDS Page 2

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# OBITUARIES

## Lucille Drago

Founding Member of the Boston Socialites  
Red Hatters

Lucille A. (Langone) Drago of Winthrop, formerly of East Boston, passed away peacefully on Monday, January 17 at 75 years of age after a courageous three-year battle with pulmonary fibrosis.

The loving daughter of the late Gerald and Rockina (Nuttoli) Langone, she was the devoted wife of the late John C. Drago, beloved mother of Jeffrey R. Drago of Winthrop, treasured Godmother of Nicole Langone, cherished cousin of Roberta Casaletto, Lisa Langone and Lucille Reed and is also survived by many loving cousins and friends as well as her two special canines, Doc and Romeo.

Lucille worked for over 30 years with American International Group, Inc. (AIG) as an Executive Secretary. She was a billing clerk for Drago and Toscano, LLP for the last 11 years. Lucille was also a licensed real estate agent in the Boston area. She was a founding member of the Boston Socialites Red Hatters. Lucille was a member of East Boston Piers PAC and East Boston Sons of Italy.

Family and friends will



honor Lucille's life by gathering at the Ruggiero Family Memorial Home, 971 Saratoga Street, (Orient Heights) East Boston, on Sunday, January 23 from 2 to 6 p.m. and again on Monday morning at 8:30 before leaving in procession to the Sacred Heart Parish, East Boston, for a Funeral Mass celebrating Lucille's life at 10 a.m. Services will conclude with Lucille being laid to rest with her beloved husband, John, at Saint Mary's Cemetery, North Street, Salem. May they rest in peace.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made in Lucille's name to Northeast Animal Shelter, 347 Highland Avenue, Salem, MA 01970 or to [www.neas.org/donate](http://www.neas.org/donate). To leave an online condolence, please visit [www.ruggieromh.com](http://www.ruggieromh.com)

# Baker-Polito administration launches first-in-the-nation Commission on Clean Heat

The Baker-Polito Administration announced that the members of Massachusetts' first-in-the-nation Commission on Clean Heat were sworn in, helping to advance the Commonwealth's ambitious goals to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions in the buildings sector. The Commission, which was created via Executive Order 596, held its first meeting on Wednesday, January 12, 2022, and over the next year will advise the Administration as it works to achieve Net Zero emissions by 2050. The Commission membership, representing a wide range of backgrounds and expertise including affordable housing, energy efficient building design and construction, health care and real estate, will identify policies and strategies and recommend a framework to achieve emissions reductions that is well-balanced, affordable, and equitable.

"This Commission brings together a diverse, experienced and thoughtful group of experts and stakeholders to help our Administration develop the policies and strategies we will need to meet the challenges associated with decarbonizing the buildings sector in Massachusetts," said Governor Charlie Baker. "The membership of the Commission on Clean Heat represents a variety of important perspectives that will be critical in the development of balanced, forward-thinking approaches to decarbonization that prioritize innovation, affordability, and equity as we make this transition."

"We thank the new members of the Commission on Clean Heat for their willingness to take on this important work on behalf of the Commonwealth," said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito. "As the Commission on Clean Heat begins this vital work, our Administration will also ensure ample opportunities for members of the public to fully participate and contribute in the process as we work to reduce emissions from heating fuels in a way that is both effective and affordable."

Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Kathleen Theoharides has appointed EEA Undersecretary of Energy and Climate Solutions Judy Chang to serve as her designee and chair of the Commission, and its membership reflects a diversity of perspectives and backgrounds from outside stakeholders, including representatives from the fields of affordable housing, energy efficient building design and construction, healthcare,

heating system design and technology, real estate, and heating fuel distribution.

"The Commission on Clean Heat will bring together stakeholders to take on our most pressing emissions reduction challenges in the building sector through a collaborative, inclusive approach," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen Theoharides. "Gathering these voices and perspectives from technical experts, the affordable housing community, business leaders, environmental organizations, and major industries in the Commonwealth, will enable our continued, nation-leading pursuit of the equitable, creative strategies we need to meet our ambitious climate targets."

"This groundbreaking Commission begins its work with a membership that represents the diversity of voices required to identify recommendations to achieve the Commonwealth's emission reduction, housing, and economic development goals," said Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy. "We are grateful to the Commission members for investing the time necessary to do this important work and I look forward to the group's recommendations."

The Commission on Clean Heat is comprised of the following members:

William Akley  
President of Gas Business, Eversource  
Lauren Baumann  
Vice President, New Ecology  
Kenan Bigby  
Managing Director of Development, Trinity Financial  
Harry Brett  
UA Representative in New England, Plumbers and Gas Fitters UA Local 12

Alexander "Zan" Bross  
Manager, Design & Construction, MassHousing

Andrew Brown  
Assistant Project Manager, The HYM Investment Group

Emerson Clauss III  
President, Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Massachusetts (HBRAMA)

Rebecca Davis  
Chief Operating Officer, Massachusetts Competitive Partnership

Eric Dubin  
Senior Director, Utilities and Performance Construction, Mitsubishi Electric Trane HVAC

Mike Duclos  
Founder and Member of Board of Directors, Passive House New England

Madeline Fraser Cook  
Director, Government

Investments and Technical Assistance, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)

Eugenia Gibbons  
Independent Consultant  
Dharik Mallapragada  
Research Scientist, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Energy Initiative

Cameron Peterson  
Director of Clean Energy, Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Robert Rio  
Senior Vice President of Government Affairs and Counsel, Associated Industries of Massachusetts (AIM)

Kimberly Robinson  
Executive Director, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

Dorothy Savarese  
President and CEO, Cape Cod Five  
Tamara Small  
CEO, NAIOP Massachusetts

Charles Uglietto  
President, Cubby Oil & Energy  
Dennis Villanueva  
Senior Manager, Energy and Sustainability, Mass General Brigham

Jolette Westbrook  
Director and Senior Attorney, Energy Markets and Regulation, Environmental Defense Fund (EDF)

The Commission on Clean Heat will meet regularly to work on developing policy recommendations, which are due to Governor Baker by Wednesday, November 30, 2022. The policies developed by the Commission will seek to sustainably reduce the use of heating fuels and minimize emissions from the building sector while ensuring costs and opportunities arising from such reductions are distributed equitably. The Commission on Clean Heat will also hold public stakeholder meetings throughout the year, with the first to be scheduled in March, 2022. Dates and times for the public stakeholder meetings, as well as additional opportunities for public input, will be announced on the Commission on Clean Heat website.

"Climate leadership over the next decade will require a fundamental transition in how we heat and cool our homes and buildings," said Department of Energy Resources Commissioner Patrick Woodcock. "While we move forward with accelerating the aggressive deployment of energy efficiency and heat pumps this first-in-the-nation commission on clean heat will identify the next generation of cost-effective and equitable policies that yield deep building sector decarbonization across the Commonwealth."

In March 2021, Governor Baker signed nation-leading climate legislation that commits the Commonwealth to reducing emissions below 1990 levels by 50% by 2030, 75% by 2040, and to achieve Net Zero emissions by 2050. The Commission on Clean Heat's recommendations will aid the state in its efforts to meet these emissions targets. For more information on the Commission members, please visit the Commission on Clean Heat's webpage.

The Executive Order signed by Governor Baker in September, 2021 also establishes an Interagency Building Decarbonization Task Force to support the work of the Commission. The Task Force will consist of subject-matter experts from across the Executive Branch, including the Department of Energy Resources and the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development.

In October 2021, the Energy Efficiency Advisory Council unanimously voted to approve the 2022-2024 statewide Three-Year Energy Efficiency Plan. The plan represents a transformational shift of the Mass Save programs to better align with the Commonwealth's ambitious climate requirements and focus on increasing participation in environmental justice communities across the state. In July, EEA Secretary Theoharides set ambitious greenhouse gas reduction goals for the 2022-2024 Mass Save Plan. In aggregate, the investments made through the electric and gas plans in 2022-2024 will need to deliver 845,000 tons of emissions reduction towards our 2030 GHG limit. It is anticipated that Mass Save will achieve the GHG emission reduction goals by increasing the number of buildings retrofitted and weatherized each year, making significant investment in electrification of existing buildings to transition customers away from fossil fuels, reducing support for fossil-fuel heating incentives, phasing out LED light-bulb incentives, increasing equitable program investments in environmental justice communities and low-moderate income households, and increasing workforce development investments to expand diversity in the workforce. It's estimated that this plan will provide an \$13 billion in benefits to the Commonwealth. This plan was submitted to the DPU on November 1, 2021 and can be approved by the Department as early as January 31, 2022.

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# Baker-Polito administration announces additional measures to protect acute care hospital capacity

In response to continuing staffing shortages across the healthcare industry, the Baker-Polito Administration announced several measures intended to ensure acute hospitals can serve those in need of acute care. The Commonwealth’s healthcare system has been facing a critical staffing shortage which has contributed to the loss of approximately 700 medical/surgical and ICU hospital beds since the beginning of 2021. Hospitals are also seeing many more patients than usual, the majority due to non-COVID-19-related reasons.

To assist hospitals amid the staff shortage, the Department of Public Health (DPH) issued orders to:

- Curtail unnecessary Emergency Department visits for non-emergency services
- Allow qualified physician assistants to practice independently
- Provide greater staffing flexibility for dialysis units
- Allow foreign-trained physicians to qualify for licensure more easily

“Our healthcare system continues to experience significant workforce and capacity constraints due to longer than average hospital stays, separate and apart from the challenges brought on by COVID,” said Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders. “Working closely with our hospital leaders, these additional actions by DPH will allow for flexibility to preserve our hospital capacity in the coming weeks.”

DPH has previously updated public health orders and issued advisories to hospitals and other healthcare facilities to alleviate staffing shortages and enhance the capacity of the health care system. These new actions include:

- Advisory Curtailing Unnecessary Emergency Department Visits
- Emergency Department

ments across the Commonwealth, like all other healthcare systems, are experiencing significant staff shortages and long wait times for care. In order to ensure critical resources are available for those who are having a medical emergency, individuals should not seek ED care for routine healthcare needs, COVID-19 testing or COVID-19 vaccination. For non-urgent, routine healthcare needs, individuals should contact their primary care providers.

Physician Assistants

Physician Assistants (PA) may practice independently without physician supervision, provided they are employed within a provider setting where PAs work together with physicians to provide patient care and the PA is qualified and practicing within their scope of practice, experience, and training.

Moonlighting for resident flexibility

Resident physicians can engage in “internal moonlighting,” which will allow flexibility to provide patient care outside of their specialized training program so that they may be redeployed to parts of the health care system with the highest staffing demands.

Credentialing: interfacility staff transfer flexibilities

Requires DPH-licensed facilities to expedite credentialing and to facilitate staff transfers across and between hospitals and provider systems to best meet patient care and capacity needs.

Out-of-hospital dialysis center staffing flexibilities

Enables out-of-hospital dialysis providers, including hospitals with outpatient dialysis centers, to relax staffing requirement levels while maintaining safe patient care by following DPH guidance that otherwise ensures that sufficient direct care staff, who are trained in dialysis care, will be available to meet the needs of patients undergoing dialysis.

Foreign-trained physician order

Enables an expedited licensure of foreign-trained physicians by allowing those with at least 2 years of post-graduate training, but who do not have a Massachusetts limited license, to qualify for licensure.

These actions align with or expand upon emergency public health orders issued since March 2020 to preserve the healthcare system while still providing quality care.

Residents can help these efforts by getting a vaccine and booster, which remains the best way to protect against serious illness or hospitalization from COVID-19.

These actions are in addition to the deployment of additional Massachusetts National Guard staff posted at acute care hospitals.

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## FRESH AND LOCAL

## The reality of expensive food

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By Penny & Ed Cherubino

We're all concerned about the rising cost of food. Right now is a perfect time to remember that the most expensive food we buy is the food we throw away. Our household has been on the food waste elimination bandwagon for years. And, we're happy to share our tips for more intelligent shopping, storage, and using leftovers.

Sarah Showfety's article, "Always Label Your Leftovers, And Other Ways to Stop Your Family From Wasting Them" for the website Lifehacker gave good advice on the topic. We were happy to see that we had already adopted some good habits. However, Sarah taught us a few new tricks.

## Label Everything

A roll of blue painter's tape sits next to our refrigerator. Following the lead of friends in the restaurant industry, we use blue tape labels on food containers as we put them into our refrigerator or freezer. We even add a blue tag to packaged food with tiny

best by dates.

We always store ready-to-use and home-prepared food and leftovers in the same space. Those are always in view when one of us opens the refrigerator door.

Sarah suggested a designated day to eat leftovers. If your style is to do a major shopping weekly or cooking session on weekends, this could work for you. Living in a small city space, we shop often and buy what we need for a couple of days. We use leftovers instead of cooking every day.

## Second Acts!

The great cookbook editor Judith Jones referred to her leftovers as “second acts.” We agree. And, while we’ll use leftover soups, casseroles, curries, as they are, for a second meal.

we'll also turn excess proteins, last chance veggies, extra grains, legumes, and beans into new soups, casseroles, and curries.

## Sandwiches & Salads

**Sandwiches & Salads**  
Many of us enjoy sandwiches and salads to finish

up leftovers. Non-cooks and family members who make nothing else may occasionally prepare a sandwich or salad for themselves. Have you ever thought of readying leftovers to use in sandwiches?

The cook in the group will have to do a bit of preparation and perhaps add an item or two to the routine shopping list to assist the non-cooks. Penny might find a slightly old carrot, scallion, and wedge of cabbage in the crisper and turn those into a slaw that we can use to top a sandwich. She'll slice leftover chicken into slices just right to pile onto bread or toss into a salad.

## Buy Less and Cook Less

Think about the food you are wasting. Did you buy more than you needed? Did you make too much of a meal that is consistently not used up as a leftover? Is it something hidden from sight and spoiled before you found it?

For example, we were wasting cheese because we bought too much. Now we'll ask for a quar-



The slaw in this ham sandwich was once a tiny wedge of cabbage, a carrot, and some scallions found lingering in our crisper drawer.

ter-pound or hold up one small finger to tell the cheesemonger how much cheese we want.

## Reality Check!

**Reality Check:** The National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) reports, "In the United States alone, 40 percent of food gets tossed every year—and that amounts to

\$162 billion in waste annually.

To help resolve both the economic and environmental issues around this waste, the NRDC established a “Save The Food” campaign. At [www.savethefood.com](http://www.savethefood.com), you can find resources to estimate how much food you will need to serve guests, tips on

meal preparation, storage  
smarts, recipes to use left-  
over food, and all the facts  
about the reality of what  
food waste is costing you.

*Do you have a question or topic for Fresh & Local? Send an email to [Penny@BostonZest.com](mailto:Penny@BostonZest.com) with your suggestion.*

## FEMA awards more than \$14.6 million to Massachusetts for COVID PPE expenses

The Federal Emergency Management Agency will be granting more than \$14.6 million to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to reimburse the costs of purchasing personal protective equipment (PPE) for use during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021.

The \$14,659,688 in Public Assistance grants will go to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) to reimburse it for purchasing nitrile gloves, hand sanitizer, alcohol wipes, N95 disposable respirators, disposable face masks, non-surgical isolation gowns, medical goggles and hand sanitizing wipes for healthcare workers.

patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection, and first responders.


In total, EOHHS received and managed the distribution of emergency materials and equipment on behalf of over 250 state agencies, group homes, congregate facilities, and essential healthcare facilities, including hospitals and nursing homes.

“FEMA is pleased to be able to assist Massachusetts with these costs,” said FEMA Region I Acting Regional Administrator Paul Ford. “Providing resources for our partners on the front lines of the pandemic fight is critical to their success, and our success as a nation.”

tance program is an essential source of funding for states and communities recovering from a federally declared disaster or emergency.

So far, FEMA has provided almost \$835 million in Public Assistance grants to Massachusetts to reimburse the commonwealth for pandemic-related expenses.

Additional information about FEMA's Public Assistance program is available at <https://www.fema.gov/publicassistance-local-state-tribal-and-non-profit>. To learn more about the COVID-19 response in Massachusetts, please visit <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4496>.



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