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Wednesday, August 4, 2021

Residents hold march against development

By John Lynds

A grassroots group of concerned residents opposed to what they call an ‘overdevelopment’ of East Boston led a protest march from Wood Island MBTA station through Day Square last Thursday evening.

The group, Stand Up for Eastie, was founded by Frankfort Street resident Joni DeMarzo after she and her family opposed a development project next door to their home they feared would severely impact their quality of life.

DeMarzo coordinated a group of neighbors into Stand Up for Eastie and are now committed to protecting the neighborhood’s identity and character from what they call the adverse effects of overdevelopment like an increase in density, displacement and lack of affordability.

“I’m a lifelong resident here in East Boston,” said DeMarzo at last week’s protest. “Sadly the impact from overdevelopment was putting my family



Last Thursday the new grassroots group, Stand Up for Eastie, held a protest in the Wood Island and Day Square areas to call attention to what they call an ‘overdevelopment’ of the neighborhood.

During the protest march from Wood Island to Day Square members of the group carried homemade anti-development signs (left) and adorned hardhats and Stand Up for Eastie tee shirts (below).



and I at risk to leave and that’s when I started this group called Stand Up for Eastie. Eastie is made up of families from diverse backgrounds. You never had to be rich or wealthy to live here but due to the new luxury developments that we’re seeing today the lower and middle class residents are being forced and priced out. Families are being displaced due to the rents being raised and property taxes rising.

See PROTEST Page 2

Madaro testifies in support of his low-income MBTA fare program

By John Lynds

Since taking office Rep. Adrian Madaro has emerged as a proponent of closing the equity gap for East Boston commuters who rely on public transportation to get back and forth to jobs, medical appointments and school.

This week Madaro testified in favor of his bill (H.3526) to establish a low-income fare program for low-income workers that use the MBTA and Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) across the state.

“For low-income workers transit is a lifeline,”

said Madaro. “Even before COVID fares were unaffordable for many. Public transit is critical to an equitable recovery from the pandemic and a low-income fare program will ensure transit is affordable & accessible for all our residents. We need to guarantee that public transit is affordable and accessible to those who rely on it most.”

In his testimony to the joint committee on transportation, Madaro said countless residents in Eastie and across the Commonwealth use buses, subway, trains, and ferries on a daily basis to

get to work, to go school, to make doctors appointments, to run errands, and to travel around the cities and communities they live in.

“Although we saw a temporary decrease in ridership during the COVID-19 pandemic, ridership has been steadily

returning to pre-covid numbers,” said Madaro. “But even during the pandemic, some lines saw less of a decrease than others. In my district of East Boston, ridership on the Blue Line remained so steady throughout the pandemic.”

See MADARO Page 2

Final Mural For East Boston HarborArts Sea Walls Boston finished

By John Lynds

Last year, local public art group HarborArts collaborated with the international nonprofit Pangea-Seed Foundation to bring their globally renowned public art program to Boston. The initiative, known as Sea Walls Boston, Artists for Oceans installed seven public murals throughout East Boston in 2020.

Building on the success

of last year’s public art initiative to bring attention to sea-level rise and climate change, Sea Walls Boston returned and created another series of murals during the month of July.

The last of the murals was completed last week by artist Beau Stanton on the side of the Sumner Street Fire Station along the Mary Ellen Welch Greenway.

See SEA WALLS Page 3

HYM Investment Group opens Suffolk Downs racing circle to the public

By John Lynds

Last Wednesday, HYM Investment Group’s Founding Partner and Managing Director Tom O’Brien joined East Boston and Revere elected officials to cut the ribbon for the new “The Track at Suffolk Downs” public open space.

For the first time in the history of the thoroughbred racetrack, residents from Eastie and neighboring communities can now walk, jog or take their dogs down to the historic mile-long racing oval. O’Brien said HYM also plans to hold a series of community events and activities throughout the year.

O’Brien said HYM, who is redeveloping the entire 161 acre site into a mixed-use development over the next two decades, will begin the first phase

of the redevelopment of the site later this year.

“But really for us the most important part of today is we’re opening this track for public access,” said O’Brien at last week’s ribbon cutting. “For years and years and years people have come to this track and have looked out onto this track, as well as the beautiful infield, and we began to think about how great it would be to kind of walk around the track and get a sense of how big the infield is and get a sense of how big the site is. Today we’re opening the track to public access. This gives people the chance to come down here and run on the track or run on the inside turf or walk on the infield or bring a dog down and walk with a dog. You can really enjoy this place and

See SUFFOLK DOWNS Page 5

CONSTITUTION BEACH YOUTH BEACH BASH & SPLASH



This summer’s Splash included aerialists, acrobats and jugglers from the Boston Circus Guild. See more photos on Page 6.



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DISTRICT A-7 HOSTS ON-ICE HOCKEY PROGRAM

Courtesy photos

On Saturday July 24 Community Officer Gary Marino and other officers assigned to the District A-7's Community Service Office hosted an on-ice hockey program at the Porrazzo Skating



Sascha Molnar from Molnar Hockey with Caroline Harvey of Team USA and Nicholas Marino of Northern Cyclones NCDC.

came by special athletic guest stars Alexander "Sascha" Molnar, Founder of Molnar Hockey, and



Nicholas Marino, NCDC with his father, District A-7 Community Officer Gary Marino.

Caroline Harvey of Team USA Hockey, who donated their time to share their skills and experience.



Program participants pose for a photo on the ice.

Madaro // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ic that the MBTA actually had to reverse their planned service cuts just to keep up with demands. Many of the people who continued to ride public transit during the pandemic did so because they had no other choice. They did not have the luxury of working from home. As essential workers, their jobs required them to continue to go into work every day to keep the Commonwealth running."

Madaro said despite the praise that we have given essential workers throughout the pandemic, the fact remains that many of them, especially in the service and custodial industries, tend to be among the lowest income earners in the Commonwealth. "For these low-income workers, public transportation has been a lifeline," he said. "The pandemic disproportionately burdened low-income com-

munities and communities of color, throwing many further into economic insecurity. Many faced unemployment, and even those who kept their jobs were hit hard by the economic effects of COVID. Even before the pandemic, low-income riders were struggling to afford bus and train fares, especially in light of fare increases on the MBTA in recent years." Madaro explained that

his legislation would require the MBTA to implement a low income fare program to provide free or discounted fare options to qualifying riders and assistance to RTAs across the Commonwealth to implement similar programs throughout their systems. "In implementing low income fares, the bill requires the MBTA and RTAs to develop stakeholder engagement plans, providing opportunity for public input, as well as conducting a full implementation analysis that will examine eligibility for the program, cost, the amount of discount, and rider benefits," said Madaro. "Reducing or eliminating fares for low-income riders would ensure that those who need public transit most are able to access it at rates affordable to them. Additionally, it would also drive up the use of public transit and encourage more workers to use the system to travel to and from their jobs and other appointments, thus reducing vehicular congestion on our roads."

Madaro added that the public transportation system is critical to an equitable recovery from the pandemic. "This legislation would help to address long standing inequalities exacerbated by COVID through making public transit more affordable to those who need it most," he said. "Luckily, most of the groundwork for this bill has already been done. The language of this bill is essentially identical to that passed by the General Court at the end of last session in the Transportation Bond Bill. It was only foiled by the Governor's Veto and unfortunate timing. With all due respect to the Governor, I disagree. I think this legislation is more important now than ever to increase access to public transportation. I ask that the committee report this bill out favorably, and I encourage the legislature to pass this once again to guarantee affordable transit and mobility to residents across the Commonwealth."

News in Brief

ADDITIONAL PACKAGE SORTERS ARE INSTALLED

The Postal Service is preparing for the holiday and ready to meet the growing customer demand for package delivery.

Two of 118 new package sorters distributed nationwide have been installed in the Woburn and Worcester Post Offices in Massachusetts to provide more reliable service that customers expect through the holiday and beyond.

Last year's holiday season was like no other for both USPS and its customers. Package delivery grew nearly 48 percent driven by the surge in online shopping and e-commerce due to the COVID pandemic. Last year, despite the challenges of the pandemic, the Postal Service delivered a record 1.1 billion packages.

Massachusetts Post Offices, like many facilities across the nation, relied on manual sortation of packages. The new package sorters will process thousands of packages an hour – up to 12 times faster than manual sortation.

As part of the 10-year plan to achieve financial sustainability and service excellence, the Postal Service is investing \$40 billion on people, technology and equipment to modernize its operation and provide a world class service to customers, including the installation of new package sorters.

These new package sorters will meet our customers' evolving mailing and shipping needs and help achieve long term service improvements.

With this immediate investment, the Postal Service is prepared to deliver the holiday season.

MASSACHUSETTS TOMATO CONTEST TO BE HELD

The 36th Massachusetts Tomato Contest will be held in the KITCHEN at the Boston Public Market in downtown Boston on Tuesday, Aug. 24.

Tomatoes will be judged by a panel of experts on flavor, firmness/slicing quality, exterior color and shape. Always a lively and fun event, the day is designed to increase awareness of locally grown produce.

Farmers can bring tomatoes to the market between 8:45 and 10:45 a.m. on Aug. 24 or drop their entries off with a registration form to one of the regional drop-off locations on Monday, Aug. 23. Drop off locations include sites in Great Barrington,

South Deerfield, Worcester, Dighton and West Newbury. These tomatoes will be brought in to Boston on Tuesday.

Be sure to include a registration form with all entries.

The 36th Tomato Contest is sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, New England Vegetable and Berry Growers Association and Mass Farmers Markets in cooperation with the Boston Public Market.


For more information, contact David Webber, David.Webber@mass.gov.

AFT MASSACHUSETTS SEEKS MASK WEARING IN K-6 SCHOOLS THIS FALL

In response to new guidance from the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) that contravenes CDC recommendations by suggesting that only unvaccinated students, educators, and staff members in Massachusetts schools should wear masks indoors this fall, the 23,000-member AFT Massachusetts released the following statement from AFT Massachusetts President Beth Kontos:

"The state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education needs to listen to health experts, including the CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics, and require - not just recommend - universal mask wearing in K-6 schools this fall. If DESE continues to reject public health guidance and fails to act, local school committees need to step up and require universal mask wearing to keep us all safe and to maximize the likelihood of schools staying open this school year.

"We all want a safe and productive return to school in September, and with the surge of the incredibly contagious Delta variant and vaccine disinformation threatening the progress we've made against COVID, we need to use all the public health tools we have to stop the spread and keep schools open for in-person learning. Until we can get all school-aged kids vaccinated, basic public health precautions like masking are the bare minimum needed to keep our students and their vulnerable family members safe."



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Coalition for a resilient and inclusive waterfront host mayoral candidate forum

By John Lynds

Last Thursday afternoon at the New ENgland Aquarium the Coalition for a Resilient and Inclusive Waterfront hosted a Mayoral Candidate Forum.

Of the candidates running for Boston Mayor in the upcoming fall election, John Barros, Anissa Essaibi-George, Andrea Campbell and Michelle Wu took part in the forum and fielded questions on how to make Boston’s waterfront more accessible, equitable and climate resilient.

While each candidate that participated in last week’s forum all had solid ideas on how to make the waterfront more sustainable and resilient against the threat of climate change and sea level rise, the question on how to make the waterfront more accessible and equitable was based on experiences of East Boston residents.

The question last week

from Alberto Vasallo III, President and CEO of El Mundo Boston, was, “Maverick Station is right on the Blue Line in East Boston. There’s an overwhelming amount of residents who speak Spanish and are immigrants, many who faithfully served this city as essential workers and, obviously by default, suffered more during this pandemic than any other group. (Maverick) is adjacent to the East Boston Waterfront and just one stop on the MBTA away from the aquarium. Yet when I walked through the area. I don’t see Latino families enjoying this beautiful resource. What can the next mayor of Boston do to change this?”

Mayoral Candidate Campbell said when she jumped into the mayor’s race because Boston had the opportunity to not only talk about our painful history of racism and division and segregation, but to really begin to do the hard work of closing

those gaps where folks in any part of the city would recognize the waterfront is theirs.

“I live in Mattapan with my two beautiful boys and my beautiful husband as well,” she said. “I also represent Dorchester and I often hear residents remark about the waterfront. I had seniors in Codman Square Public Housing say, “I want to go to that new neighborhood” at the Seaport. To them it felt so far away. So when we’re talking about what it means to advance a bold vision, inclusivity is critical. The best thing about the waterfront is not just making sure that folks in every part of the city feel as though this space is theirs but the economic vitality in this community can help create jobs to close the racial wealth gap for entrepreneurs in our immigrant communities. In addition, it can bring us together. We’re still very much a segregated city so inclusivity is key.”

Essaibi-George said the waterfront here in Eastie and around the city is a beautiful resource that should be enjoyed by all and added that there is economic opportunity that has been ignored.

“There are assets, institutions, opportunities and experiences right here and whether you live in Maverick Square in East Boston or Dorchester or Mattapan you should be able to experience these things and not leave it just for the tourists,” she said. “When we think about visitors to the city we think about the important role they play in our local economy but our residents should be able to enjoy these places too. While it’s about enjoyment (of the waterfront) it can also be about economic opportunity. I was a teacher at East Boston High School and I had a student that was really interested in studying marine biology and Boston’s waterfront became her place to explore that love

in that career. But it took someone else making that connection so we need to make sure that we are not just opening doors for our families and our city’s residents to come in but that we’re going out and getting them and bringing them to these places.”

Wu said she comes from an immigrant family with parents that didn’t speak English for a good part of her childhood so she knows the invisible barriers other immigrants experience when it comes to inclusivity or lack thereof.

“I’m committed to making sure that the physical connection (to the waterfront) is easy,” said Wu. “We should be fighting for accessible, affordable transportation to be able to connect people (to the waterfront). We should be also working with our institutions to truly meet people where they’re at and reach our residents. The ICA’s Watershed over in East Boston is spectacular. The exhibit there right

now features immigrant stories with local voices. It’s really important that the residents of Boston feel like the city’s theirs.”

Barros said as a young black man growing up in Roxbury he remembers feeling that the two blocks around his home is where he could explore. “We’ve got to break those invisible walls,” said Barros. “We’ve got to make sure that we do programming—not just programming for the sake of programming—for those who want to reclaim their waterfront. That means that we’re bringing people together and we’re talking about what should happen while providing the opportunity for citizens to join the economic vitality of the waterfront. This includes talking about (job opportunities) for people to be employed there as well as allowing people to build wealth in companies on our waterfront.”

Labor and community groups demand funds go to frontline workers and impacted communities

Staff Report

Massachusetts residents, labor and community groups convened on the steps of the State House last week, demanding that billions in federal relief aid allocated to Massachusetts from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) be distributed to help those most impacted by the coronavirus pandemic — frontline workers, communities of color, and low-income communities. Advocates are calling for the estimated \$5.3 billion in ARP funds to be used for frontline workers who put their lives on the line to keep our economy and our communities afloat during the pandemic. “There must be an equitable distribution of these funds to help those most impacted by the pandemic,” said Lee Matsueda, Executive Director, Community Labor United.

“During the pandemic, working families across the state were on the frontlines protecting our communities. Now the legislature must ensure that we are paid for our hard work, and use these funds to build systems that will support Massachusetts working families.” Advocates made recommendations for the disbursement of the funds — including hazard pay for frontline workers, for housing preservation and redevelopment, for child care tax credits, and more. The action comes on the heels of the hearings being conducted by the Joint Committee on Ways and Means and the House Committee on Federal Stimulus and Census Oversight. This action has been organized to raise collective voices for the systemic changes necessary to build a just society, eliminate structural in-

equalities, and call for the investments Massachusetts communities deserve. “Frontline workers, including those in the health care and public transit sectors — many of whom were already underpaid — deserve hazard pay for the risk and pressure they faced during the pandemic,” said Roxana Rivera, Vice President, 32BJ SEIU Local 615. “They came to work in the worst of the surge, without basic safety-net protections, including a lack of adequate PPE, emergency sick time, and potential denial of workers’ compensation claims if exposed to COVID-19.” More than 8 million Americans fell into poverty in 2020 during the height of the pandemic. Many of these families faced a compounding crisis exacerbated by the lack of access to affordable child care and housing. The

crowd at the State House today demanded that legislators take action to help Massachusetts residents. The ARP funds have provided the state with a unique pathway to help dismantle systemic barriers to opportunity and combat injustices faced by families and communities across Massachusetts. “The state must not allow the American Rescue Plan to become just another bailout for large corporations, as has been proposed by some special interest business groups,” said Fernando Lemus, President, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1445. “With the forward-looking and comprehensive framework of these budgetary recommendations, the legislature can address issues impacting millions of working people and their families.” “Today’s gathering is a testament to change,” said Darlene Lombos, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Greater Boston Labor

Council (GBLC). “People across Massachusetts are ready to bring change into our communities, and that

begins with funding our public services through the funds from American Rescue Plan.”

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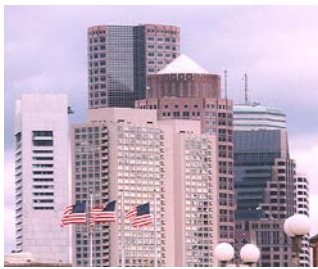
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Forum

GUEST OP-ED

Life Learning, Commitment and Hard Work

Dr. Glenn Mollette

We are always learning. Life is filled with education. We learn all the time.

Every day we receive new information about health, the planet, communication, medicines, the universe and more. Life is a process of learning and developing.

Education is more than grades one through twelve, college, and beyond. There are many aspects to every job we do that we never learned in school. We learn from parents if we will listen. We learn from coworkers. We learn from our failures. We learn how not to do something because we tried it once and it failed. The good thing about failing is that it doesn't haven't to be final. Some things are final but not everything. Just because your first marriage failed doesn't mean your second marriage will fail. Hopefully you learned from

your first marriage and you won't make the same mistakes the second time around.

You may have a business failure. This happens to a lot of people. This doesn't mean your business efforts will fail in the future. Hopefully you learned from your first efforts and can avoid the same mistakes again in your next endeavor.

Possibly you tried a lifestyle that did not work out for you. Maybe you abused alcohol or even drugs or pursued a negative lifestyle that greatly diminished your life to the point where your life seemed hopeless. This doesn't mean you have to stay this way. With a dedicated decision and often help from others you can turn your life around and do better.

We can learn from mistakes. They are educational and usually expensive. They set us back in life. They aren't fun and can be

tormenting.

Remember, you can't live in the past. Don't totally forget what past failure did to you because you don't want to repeat your mistakes. However, the past is over. Live your life forward.

As you go forward there are easier ways to learn. Study the lives of others. Research what they did and read. People all around us are either succeeding, failing or at least stable. Study others whose lives intrigue or impress you. Study their careers, work ethic, their values and how they make them work to achieve the life they are living. You can learn a lot by observing and studying others. You can also learn from the failures of others. What were some of their obvious mistakes?

Volunteering or taking an entry level job with someone you would like to emulate is a great way to learn their success prin-

ciples.

There are cases where nothing seems to make sense. Life is not always fair. We all have different interests, physical abilities, backgrounds and lifelong developed skills. Take all these into consideration and bring them together to work for you.

Success always has new twists, turns and innovative ways. However, they are not accomplished without some form of life learning, commitment and hard work.

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.

NOT ALL PARENTS KNOW WHAT'S BEST FOR THEIR KIDS

The executive order signed last week by Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida banning local school boards from requiring students to wear masks in schools in that state rates as one of the most reprehensible actions of any public official since the pandemic began.

Thanks to DeSantis's lack of leadership and nutty pronouncements throughout the course of the pandemic, Florida now rates as one of the biggest hotspots for the coronavirus in the world, accounting alone for almost 20% of the daily infections in the U.S. and recently breaking its own one-day record for infections.

Predictably, the state's healthcare system is being swamped by COVID-19 patients, who are dying at a rate that is 10 times greater than New York City's.

DeSantis's order fails to recognize two basic facts: First, although the rate of serious illness among children who catch COVID remains low, more than 19,000 children have been hospitalized with coronavirus in 24 states and New York City as of July 22, according to a database from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Children's Hospital Association.

That is a large number and it surely will spike when children return to school indoors.

Second, DeSantis's order fails to acknowledge that while masks afford some protection to the mask-wearer, the primary benefit accrues to everyone else who is around the mask-wearer, whose aerosols are contained within the mask, rather than being spread around a room unimpeded where they linger to be inhaled by another person.

Maskless students needlessly risk infecting their teachers, classmates, and staff members, as well as the family members and everyone else who comes into contact with anyone who is at those schools.

In short, the reopening of schools without adherence to the COVID-19 precautions that we're all familiar with will become a superspreader event in every community in Florida, even among the vaccinated, thanks to the highly-contagious Delta variant.

However, it is the basic false premise of DeSantis's executive order -- that parents know what is best for their children's health -- that is the most harmful aspect of his reasoning.

Typical parents are not the best caregivers for their children's health for the simple reason that they are not medical experts, especially when it comes to COVID-19.

While we will concede that most parents love their children, it also is undeniable that parents who are not following the guidelines set forth by the CDC and the American Society of Pediatricians (which are recommending mask-wearing in schools) are sacrificing their children's health on the altar of their political views.

Gov. Ron DeSantis shamelessly is kow-towing to a vocal minority that has placed their perceived political aspirations over ending the pandemic -- and the end result will be thousands of more infections and deaths, including among the children of Florida.

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By John Lynds

Last week the Boston Police released its first half-year crime statistics that compares January 1, 2021 through July 25, 2021 with the same time period last year and found both Violent Part One Crime and Non-violent Part One Crime to be down.

Part One Crimes are the more serious crimes that the Boston Police and other law enforcement agencies track and in East Boston the overall Violent Part One Crime is down 35 percent so far this year when compared to the same six months in 2020.

According to the statistics, there were no Homicides reported in Eastie through July 25, 2021. This was the same number between January 1 and July 25 of last year.

By John Lynds

All through the rainy month of July East Boston residents took to social media to complain about the unbearable number of mosquitoes plaguing the neighborhood--especially in the Orient Heights section near Belle Isle Marsh. Residents reported sending messages to the City's 311 citizens complaint line, calling the Boston Public Health Commission and elected officials begging for the city to conduct its annual mosquito spraying to help control the population of the biting pests.

One resident, whose kids play ball at Noyes Park, said her children and her children's teammates as well as parents would be covered in mosquito bites after every game and practice.

"The kids have games three days a week and practices and they are down Noyes almost every night and when I say 'covered' they are covered (by mosquito bites). Our children shouldn't have to suffer. Let's alleviate the

Robbery or Attempted Robbery was down 57 percent with 35 incidents reported in the first half of 2020 and only 15 reported so far this year.

Domestic Aggravated Assault is down 30 percent with 37 incidents reported in the first half of 2020 and 26 reported so far this year.

Non-domestic Aggravated Assault is also down and dropped 27 percent with 33 incidents reported during the first half of 2020 and 24 incidents reported so far this year.

However, Rape and Attempted Rape is up 50 percent in the neighborhood with 4 being reported during the first half of last year and 6 reported so far in 2021.

Overall there were a total of 71 Violent Part One Crimes between January 1, 2021 and July 25,

2021. This was down from the 109 Violent Part One Crimes reported during the same period last year.

As for Non-Violent Part One Crimes the numbers are down 18 percent in Eastie. These crimes include Commercial Burglary, Residential Burglary, Larceny From Motor Vehicle, Other Larceny and Auto Theft.

According to the report Commercial Burglary is down 50 percent and went from 14 incidents reported during the first half of 2020 to 7 incidents reported so far this year.

Residential Burglary is down 5 percent and went from 36 reported incidents during the first half of 2020 to 34 incidents reported so far in 2021.

Larceny From Motor Vehicles, which was a huge problem in Eastie last year, has dropped 56

percent with 156 incidents reported during the first half of 2020 and only 69 incidents reported so far this year.

Auto Theft is down 29 percent in Eastie with 28 incidents being reported during the first half of 2020 and only 20 incidents reported so far this year.

The one spike in Non-Violent Part One Crimes was Other Larcenies, which has risen 72 percent during the first half of the year. Last year there were 87 incidents reported during the first half of 2020 but that number has grown to 150 reported incidents so far this year.

Overall there were 351 Non-Violent Part One Crimes, down 18 percent from the 430 reported during the first six months of 2020.

BPHC finally sprays for mosquitos in Eastie

infectious disease carrying animals," the parent wrote.

Luckily the BPHC finally decided to conduct a spraying operation last night.

"The recent rainfall has resulted in very high numbers of mosquitoes being found in surveillance traps," the BPHC said in the announcement of spraying in Eastie. "So far this year, mosquito samples have tested positive for West Nile Virus in Jamaica Plain, Brighton and Roxbury. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has raised the risk level for West Nile Virus in Boston to 'moderate.'"

On Tuesday evening the Suffolk County Mosquito Control Project (SCMCP) used a truck mounted sprayer to spray in Eastie neighborhoods located near Orient Heights, including streets in the vicinity of Orient Avenue, Boardman Street, Andrew Road and Horace Street. All spraying happened between dusk and 11:30 pm.

"The mosquito control product being used

is Zenivex E4 (EPA Reg No. 2724.807)," said the BPHC. "It is being applied at 1 oz per acre. Zenivex E4 is a non-ester pyrethroid and is classified by the EPA as a reduced risk pesticide. Mosquito control applications of Zenivex E4 do not pose a significant risk to people or their pets due to the low toxicity and the small amount used to control mosquitoes. Zenivex E4 biodegrades rapidly and doesn't build up in the environment."

Residents with questions related to the spraying should call the Suffolk County Mosquito Control Project (SCMCP) at 781-899-5730.

Each year the BPHC partners with the SCMCP to protect Boston residents from mosquito-borne illnesses and to control the mosquito population in certain areas of Boston. SCMCP collects mosquito samples in traps every week during the summer and fall. Those mosquito samples are tested to see if WNV or Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) are present. Mosquito con-

trol measures are also implemented during the summer and fall months. Wetlands, storm drains and other areas around the city are treated to limit the number of mosquitoes by killing mosquito larvae.

The BPHC said mosquitoes in Boston are most active from dusk to dawn during the months of July to September. However, mosquitoes can spread disease until the first hard frost--as late as November. Mosquito species have different breeding habits, but most want to lay their eggs near water--usually in vegetation or in still water.

To help prevent mosquitoes from breeding, BPHC advises residents to limit places around the home where standing water can collect. Residents should turn over unused flowerpots, buckets, wheelbarrows and garbage cans; remove leaves and other debris that can clog gutters and trap water; dispose of or cover old tires; and cover swimming pools when not in use.



East Boston and Revere Officials join HYM Investment Group Founder Tom O'Brien and his staff to cut the ribbon on opening the historic thoroughbred racing oval to the public for the first time.

Suffolk Downs // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

explore the whole track and have a great time doing it. The track is now open to the public from dawn until dusk from today on, which we're really excited about."

The track will also serve as a satellite location for the first sand sculpture as part of this year's annual Revere Beach International Sand Sculpting Festival, one of the largest sand sculpting festivals in the world. The sculpture will be on view to the public until August 8,

Beginning August 1st, The Track will also be hosting a run club every other Sunday at 10 a.m. These guided 30-40 minute runs around the track are led by live DJ and Run

Instructor Chris Cappozzi, and all fitness levels are welcome.

O'Brien said more activations and events will be announced in the coming weeks.

The ribbon cutting also unveiled an art installation titled "The Window Walk" by Artists For Humanity, a Boston-based organization that provides under-resourced teens the keys to self-sufficiency through paid employment in art and design.

The Window Walk leverages the vast length of windows at Suffolk Downs and creates six different experiences that are in alignment with the future of the public space and that they hope will

resonate with viewers. O'Brien said the Artists For Humanity installation will be live for the foreseeable future.

"Artists For Humanity has partnered on hundreds of wonderfully creative projects during its now 30 years of mentoring and employing Boston teens in art and design," said Richard Frank from Artists For Humanity. "But none has been as large, and ambitious, as the transformation of an iconic racetrack into a new, vibrant community. The Window Walk at Suffolk Downs is a perfect example of connecting a progressive, values-based company [HYM] and a creative teen arts enterprise to build more inclusive spaces that express young, imaginative voices and invite all to participate in the fun," "We look forward to the evolution of this new space, beginning with the public space at the Track, and hope it's an example to everyone of what thoughtful companies [HYM] and underrepresented, but skilled and talented teens [at Artists For Humanity] can build together."

Plans for the redevelopment of Suffolk Downs received approval from the Boston Planning and Development Agency in 2020. Approved plans for the project include

16.2 million square feet of development including 10,000 residential units and over 6 million square feet of life science, office, street level retail and publicly accessible parks that will be developed over the next two decades.

"It was a lot of fun working with Tom (O'Brien) and his team on new public open space opportunities at the Suffolk Downs site," said Rep. Adrian Madaro. "I have never worked with a team that was so willing to sit at the table and collaborate. Through that work we came up with a historic community benefit agreement that will yield at the end of the day over 40 acres of green and open space for our communities to enjoy for the future. But the fact that Tom and his team at HYM is not making us wait until the project is complete to enjoy that open space is really exciting. Today we're standing on this track and we will now get to enjoy it for the foreseeable future. I have a two and a half month old at home and I'm so excited to bring my wife and son down here to stroll on this oval and take in the historic nature of what this means for our communities and further access to green and open space."



Jesse Purvis, East Boston Social Centers Executive Director Justin Pasquariello and Sandra Nijjar.



Revere Mayor Brian Arrigo, Rep. Adrian Madaro and Jim Kearney.



NOAH's Latifa Ziyad and Social Centers Gloria DeVine.



The ribbon cutting also unveiled an art installation titled "The Window Walk" by Artists For Humanity, a Boston-based organization that provides under-resourced teens the keys to self-sufficiency through paid employment in art and design.



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CONSTITUTION BEACH YOUTH BEACH BASH & SPLASH

On Friday, July 16, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay brought more than 300 kids from more than a dozen youth and community groups back to the clean waters of Constitution Beach in East Boston for the first Youth Beach Bash & Splash of 2021.

Six groups from East Boston, including the Salesian Boys and Girls Club, the East Boston YMCA, Colectiva NNT, Colectiva de Apoyo Neighborhood, Big Brothers Big Sisters and the East Boston Community Council, took part in the event.

This summer's Splash included aerialists, acrobats and jugglers from the Boston Circus Guild, free kayak instruction from NOAH, sea shanties led by Save the Harbor's song leader David Coffin, and music and motion with a pop-up dance floor from a Trike Called Funk. It was "All Hands On Deck" for Save the Harbor's Youth Environmental Education program staff of 34, who brought sports and games, touch tanks, fishing, crabbing, face painting, food and unbridled enthusiasm to the beach.



A group shot of the children from the Salesian Boys & Girls Club.



Children and staff from the East Boston YMCA enjoy the beach.



Boston's Chief of Environment, Energy, and Open Spaces Reverend Mariama White-Hammond joined Save the Harbor's Youth Environmental Education Program Staff at Constitution Beach in East Boston.

Sea Walls // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Other murals added this year include murals on the side of the Cunard Tavern, the Donald McKay School



Sea Walls Boston created more than a dozen new ocean advocacy murals this past week. This new mural on the side of the Cunard Tavern was done by artist Josie Morway.



Caregiver Solutions

with Meg Hogan, CEO of Boston Senior Home Care

Being the primary caregiver for an older adult or person with a disability, even when it's a welcome choice, can be challenging on many levels. The good news is that help is available. Today, supportive and interactive technology in the home can empower caregivers with the tools they need to deliver more effective care.

Caregiver Solutions, the caregiver support program of Boston Senior Home Care, offers several technology programs at no cost to caregivers enrolled in our program. For example, Birdsong and Amazon Echo Show are two easy-to-use devices designed to keep care recipients connected to the world around them with music, games, news, video chat, and email. Both devices are designed to reduce isolation and improve the emotional wellbeing of care recipients while also providing caregivers with a break from constant care. And Video Doorbells are simple to install and can add a sense of security when the caregiver needs to leave home for work or other responsibilities. Although nothing can take the place of in-person contact, these devices can supplement social interactions and even help to promote a safer home environment for caregivers and their care recipients.

Want to learn more? To enroll in our program, please visit bshcinfo.org or call 617-292-6211.

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and along Border, Chelsea, and Liverpool Streets.

Sea Walls Boston is part of Sea Walls: Artists for Oceans, a global initiative that has produced over 400 murals in 16 countries calling attention to climate change from New Zealand to Mexico to Indonesia to the Caribbean.

Last year was the first time Sea Walls: Artists for Oceans has come to the Northeast and Eastie has become home to "Sea Walls Boston". The art initiative is going to be part of a bigger pilot project that will involve more artists and more murals in Eastie and other parts of Boston.



PHOTOS COURTESY PANGEASEED FOUNDATION/HARBORARTS
A mural by artist Sophy Tuttle, one of the many murals completed as part of this year's Sea Walls Boston project. The final mural was completed on July 27.

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BIKE RAFFLE HIGHLIGHT OF LAST WEEK’S EAST BOSTON FARMERS MARKET

The East Boston Neighborhood Health Center’s (EBNHC) Farmers Market has returned for another season with more fresh, locally grown produce than ever before.

The Farmers Market, which runs every Wednesday starting at 3 p.m. in Central Square, usually has fun family-friendly activities each week.

The highlight of last week’s Farmers Market was a special bike safety day and bike raffle. EBNHC CEO Manny Lopes was on hand all afternoon measuring children for bike helmets and picking raffle tickets for the free bikes. Eastie’s Farmers Market began when organizers at the Health Center’s Let’s Get Movin’ program asked how they could help families in the community increase the amount of fresh fruit and vegetables in their diets. The market brings produce picked that day at Massachusetts’s farms to Eastie. The selection changes throughout the season, from lettuce and greens in early summer to apples and squashes in the fall. At the Market, vendors feature produce important to the many cultures represented by the community.



EBNHC President and CEO Manny Lopes presents the winner of the girls bike raffle.



EBNHC President and CEO Manny Lopes gives the thumbs up to a local bicyclist that scored a new helmet last Wednesday.



Families during last week's Farmers Market and bike and helmet raffle.



EBNHC President and CEO Manny Lopes fits a young resident with a new bike helmet.



The afternoon event included the bike raffle and the distribution of both boys and girls bike helmets.



EBNHC President and CEO Manny Lopes helps size more helmets during the yearly event.



Families anxiously await the results of the annual bike raffle.



A mother fills out a raffle ticket for the bike raffle.



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Protest // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Families are also leaving East Boston due to the negative impacts on our quality of life such as parking becoming more and more scarce and the unbearable amount of traffic. There's trash and rats, construction noise, trucks and their supplies on every corner and for some reason we are being manipulated to believe that this is what the city wants and this is what's good for our neighborhoods."

Stand Up for Eastie's goal is to create homes that are affordable and encourage developments that restore family homes. The group also supports developments that build true 'family-style' homes adjacent to pre-existing one, two and three family dwellings.

"So how are developers getting away with this?",

asked DeMarzo last week. "There are laws in place to protect us and prevent over development from happening. However, the City of Boston and its Zoning Board are failing all of us by granting developers permission to build whatever they want. The city says that community participation is a strong factor in their decision making, yet no matter how strongly we oppose these developments they still go through (the ZBA). We are the community but our voices are being ignored. Today, we shall be seen and heard loud and clear."

Prior to last week's protest the group met with local elected officials and Acting Mayor Kim Janey to air their grievances. At those meetings the group told the electeds that development projects need



Members of Stand Up for Eastie hold signs expressing their frustration over Eastie's development boom.



One protester holds a sign blaming the Zoning Board of Appeals for the increase in development here.



Protesters are interviewed by local news agencies during last week's protest.



Stand Up for Eastie founder Joni DeMarzo addresses the crowd.

to be built to the current zoning codes to ensure residents' safety and quality of life. They argue development disregards proper planning due to population density and the increased number of vehicles on the road.

"I'm always grateful when constituents participate in the process and show a strong sense of civic engagement," said City Councilor Lydia Edwards. "I agree with a lot of the frustration displayed last week. The planning process stopped for a year because of the pandemic, but development did not. We can't continue to see unplanned development at the rate we've seen recently. I'm going to continue working on reforming the ZBA so that the development process is more transparent and accountable to residents."

Rep. Adrian Madaro added, "As a lifelong resident of Eagle Hill, I grew up hoping for more investment in our often over-



Longtime Bennington Street and Orient Heights residents joined the march from Wood Island to Day Square.

looked neighborhood. Yet, over the past several years, the overdevelopment and subsequent displacement of many of my neighbors has been shocking, upsetting, and unfair. Residents feel unseen and unheard. I share in the frustrations of my East Boston family and friends as we attend community meetings, write letters of opposi-

tion to the Zoning Board of Appeals, and voice our concerns, only to be ignored time and time again. I stand in solidarity with

my neighbors, urging the City to take notice and take action in our current displacement crisis."



The group makes their way through Day Square near Neptune Road.



Longtime Eastie activist Gail Miller during the protest.



The march begins as dozens of residents head down Bennington Street.



Stand Up for Eastie founder Joni DeMarzo (center) leads the march.



A Stand Up for Eastie member leads the crowd in a rallying cry against development.

Eastie’s weekly COVID positive test rate continues to rise again

By John Lynds

With the Delta variant of the COVID-19 virus running rampant across the U.S. and recent infections in Boston traced back to an outbreak in Provincetown over July 4th weekend, East Boston and the rest of the city have seen breakthrough infections among vaccinated people skyrocket.

Eastie was one of the hardest hit neighborhoods during the height of the pandemic but targeted vaccination efforts reduced positive cases among Eastie residents to almost non-existent levels a few months ago.

However, it seems the party is over as the weekly positive test rate continues to climb in the neighborhood. Just the other day the Quiet Few on Sumner Street was alerted to a customer who had recently tested positive for the virus and was forced to close its doors until all the

staff tested negative for COVID.

Last week, 1,131 Eastie residents were tested for the virus last week and 2.7 percent were positive--this was an increase of another 50 percent from the 1.8 percent reported by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) two weeks ago.

Of the 45,056 Eastie residents tested for COVID since the pandemic began, 17.4 percent overall were found to be positive for the virus. This was a decrease of 0.57 percent from the 17.5 percent reported by the BPHC two weeks ago.

Citywide, the weekly positive test rate increased over 30 percent. According to the BPHC 15,872 residents were tested and 2.9 percent were COVID positive--this was a 32 percent increase from the 2.2 percent reported by the BPHC two weeks ago.

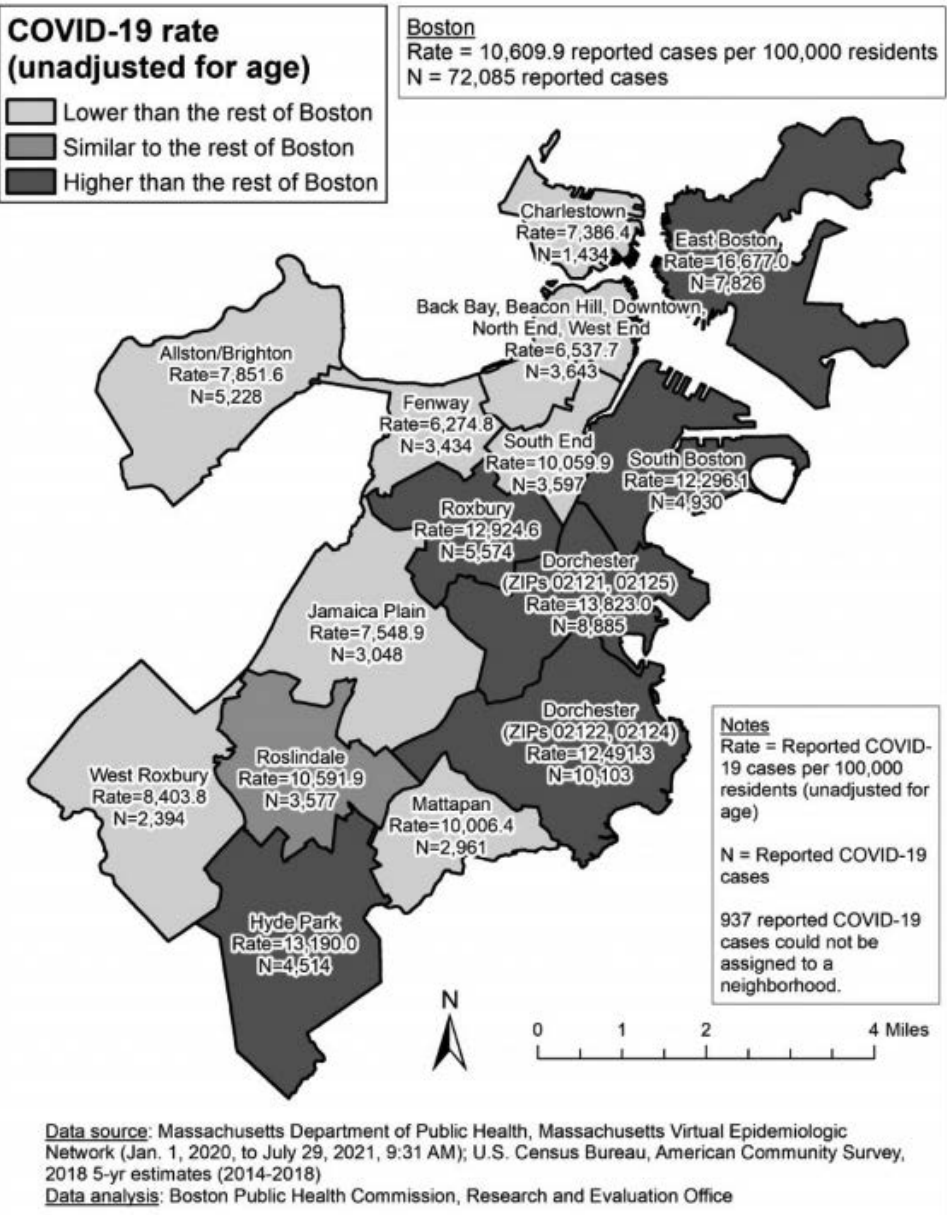
Eastie’s COVID infection rate increased only 0.42 percent and the rate

went from 1,660.8 cases per 10,000 residents to 1,667.7 cases per 10,000 residents.

Thirty-two additional residents contracted the virus between July 16 and July 23 and there are now 7,826 confirmed cases in the neighborhood since the start of the pandemic. Eastie positive cases last week represent a little over 5 percent of all the new cases in Boston.

The statistics released by the BPHC as part of its weekly COVID19 report breaks down the number of cases and infection rates in each neighborhood. It also breaks down the number of cases by age, gender and race.

Citywide positive cases of coronavirus increased 0.80 percent since July 16 and went from 71,846 cases to 72,422 confirmed cases in a week. Four additional Boston residents died from the virus in the past two weeks and there are now 1,400 total deaths in the city from COVID.



On Friday the BPHC released its weekly COVID-19 stats by neighborhood that tracks infection rates and COVID testing results in Boston neighborhoods.

Inspect your boxwood shrubs for tree moths

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) is alerting Massachusetts residents that it has received notification from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) that a number of nurseries within the Commonwealth received Canadian boxwood plants potentially infested with box tree moths.

Box tree moths are an invasive pest that feed on the leaves of boxwood shrubs and can cause complete defoliation, eventually killing the plant. While state and federal inspectors have not found any signs of box tree moths at the nurseries, state officials warn that some of the plants may have been sold before inspections began, or were purchased out of state and planted in Massachusetts. MDAR and APHIS urge anyone in Massachusetts who may have purchased boxwood shrubs this spring to check the plants for signs of the moth.

“MDAR is working

with its federal partners at the USDA to prevent the box tree moth from spreading and establishing itself in Massachusetts,” said MDAR Commissioner John Lebeaux. “We ask Massachusetts residents that purchased boxwood shrubs this spring to take a close look at the plants to aid in our efforts to prevent this invasive species from expanding into the state and causing severe damage to Massachusetts’ popular boxwood shrubs.”

If a boxwood plant was purchased this past spring, state officials request that residents inspect it for signs of the moth, and report any findings to <https://massnrc.org/pests/report.aspx> or by calling 617-626-1779. When inspecting your boxwood shrubs, look for all of the life stages of this pest: eggs, caterpillars, pupae, and adults. Eggs are typically laid in gelatinous masses on the underside of boxwood leaves, but may also be laid singly. Caterpillars can grow up to 1.5 inches long, and are yellowish green with

a black head, and long black stripes and spots that reach from the head to the end of the body. The caterpillars create pockets of webbing within the boxwood shrubs to wall themselves off from predators. When they are ready to morph into adult moths, they form small green pupae. Adults typically have white wings with a dark brown border, but can sometimes be all brown with just a small white streak on each wing.

Box tree moths (*Cydalima perspectalis*) are native to Asia and are now a pest in both Europe and Canada. They can produce several generations between June and October, which makes urgent action essential to prevent this pest from establishing itself in Massachusetts.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF MATTEO MASPERO AND ANDREA TANTARDINI, CENTRO MIRT - FONDAZIONE MINOPRIO IIT.

An Adult box tree moth (wingspan is 1.5 to 1.75 inches).



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DPH releases updated face-covering advisory

Staff Report


The Department of Public Health (DPH) released updated guidance regarding the use of face coverings and cloth masks by individuals who are fully vaccinated for COVID-19.

This week, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released updated guidance that continues to state that individuals who are fully vaccinated may, as a general matter, resume many of the activities that they engaged in prior to the pandemic without wearing a mask or staying six feet apart, except where otherwise required by federal, state, or local laws, rules or regulations. In response to the recent spread of the Delta variant, however, the CDC’s updated guidance does recommend that even fully vaccinated persons wear masks or face coverings when indoors if other risk factors are present.

In light of the information provided by the CDC,

and in order to maximize protection of vulnerable individuals from the Delta variant, the Department of Public Health released updated guidance today that recommends that a fully vaccinated person wear a mask or face covering when indoors (and not in your own home) if you have a weakened immune system, or if you are at increased risk for severe disease because of your age or an underlying medical condition, or if someone in your household has a weakened immune system, is at increased risk for severe disease, or is unvaccinated.

All people in Massachusetts (regardless of vaccination status) are required to continue wearing face coverings in certain settings, including transportation and health care facilities. Please see www.mass.gov/maskrules for a complete list of venues where face coverings remain mandatory as of May 29, 2021.



Virtual Public Meeting

205 Maverick Street

Monday, August 16
6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Zoom Link: bit.ly/3rqGxea
Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864
Meeting ID: 161 453 0378

Project Description:

The Proposed Project consists of the demolition of an existing single story commercial structure which contains the Maverick Street Market and Swish & Swash Laundromat at 197-207 Maverick Street and the construction of a 5-story mixed-use building with approximately 3,237 square feet of ground floor retail space, 49 residential units, including 7 income restricted units, and approximately 34 off-street parking spaces.


La información de esta reunión es crucial para usted como residente y parte interesada de la ciudad de Boston. Los servicios de interpretación están disponibles para comunicar el contenido de estos documentos para usted sin costo adicional. Si necesita servicios de traducción, contáctese con: (makena.c.parker@boston.gov). La reunión está programada para el 8/16/2021 Por favor, solicite los servicios de interpretación a más tardar 5 días antes de la fechade la reunión.

mail to: **Makena Parker**
Boston Planning & Development Agency
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Boston, MA 02201

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Close of Comment Period:
7/23/2021

BostonPlans.org

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Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary

OBITUARIES

Louis Gizzi

Lifelong East Boston resident

Louis Gizzi, a lifelong resident of East Boston, passed away on Thursday, July 22 at the age of 94.

The beloved husband of the late Rose (Faretra) Gizzi of East Boston, he was the devoted father of Debbie Cassano and her husband, Don of Framingham and Gail Visco and her fiancé, Mark DiPireo of Stoneham; dear brother of Adeline Magnuson and the late Alfred Gizzi, Annie Andriotti, Theresa LaRossa, Helen Tiano and Mary Wolochka; cherished grandfather of Craig Cassano and his partner, Jeanine Solomon of Norton, Nicole Rodriguez and her husband, Angel of Haverhill and Laura and Michelle Visco



of Stoneham and adored great grandfather of Arianna Rodriguez and Bella Cassano.

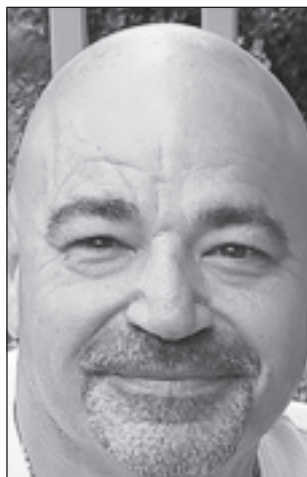
Funeral, memorial service and burial will be private. For more information, please visit www.ruggieromh.com.

Joseph Anthony Sasso

Will be truly missed

Joseph Anthony Sasso of Revere, formerly of East Boston, passed away on Sunday, July 25 at 49 years of age.

The beloved husband of Jennifer Sasso, he was the devoted father of Alexa and Anthony Sasso of Revere, dear brother of Lisa (Sasso) Ferri and her husband, Vinnie of Revere and Jessica Scenci and her husband, Dante of Salem, NH; loving son of the late Joseph and Marie "Netta" Sasso and treasured son in law of Ann Gayhart of Saugus. He



is also survived by many loving nieces and nephews.

Family and friends honored Joseph's life by gathering at Saint Joseph - Saint Lazarus Church, Ashley Street, East Boston on Sunday, August 1 and again on Monday, August 2 for a 10 a.m. Funeral Mass. Services concluded with Joseph being laid to rest at Woodlawn Cemetery, Everett. Joseph will be truly missed. May he rest in peace.

For more information or to leave an online condolence please visit www.ruggieromh.com.

Michael Paulicelli

Of Florida, formerly of East Boston

Michael J. Paulicelli of Florida, formerly of East Boston, passed away on July 28.

The beloved son of the late Cosimo "Gus" and Marion (Capuana) Paulicelli, he was the cherished husband of Julie (Luongo), dear son-in-law of the late Joseph and Julia (Altieri) Luongo, loving brother of Al and Carol Paulicelli, Marilyn and the late Edward Broderick, Judith and the late David Cantalupo and Kathleen and Paul Engian; dear brother-in-law of Joseph and the late Debra Luongo, the late George and Martha Luongo and the late Adele and John Ceca. He was also adored by many loving nieces,



nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews and cousins.

In accordance with the Paulicelli family's wishes, all services are private. For more information or to send an online condolence, please visit www.ruggieromh.com.

Patricia Peppe

Of Everett, formerly of East Boston

Patricia J. (Ferrandini) Peppe, 79, of Everett, formerly of East Boston, passed away on July 22.

Born in Boston, the cherished daughter of the late Joseph and Frances (Gelormini) Ferrandini, she was the devoted mother of Michele Frazier and Joe Peppe and his late wife, Maria of Salem, NH, David Peppe and his wife, Lynne of Winthrop and the late Larry Peppe; the adored grandmother of Kimberly Sharp, Lakeisha Maxwell, Mario, Raffaella and JoJo Peppe and Nicholas and Justin Peppe and the loving great-grandmother of Tabatha and Tavin Bland and Charlee

Peppe; the dear sister of Frank Ferrandini of California, Robert Ferrandini of Winthrop, Linda Ferrandini of California and the late Joseph and Diana Marie Ferrandini.

A visiting hour will be held in the Maurice W. Kirby Funeral Home, 210 Winthrop

St., Winthrop on Saturday, August 7 from 1 to 2 p.m. followed by a funeral service in

the funeral home beginning at 2 p.m. Relatives and friends are invited. Interment

will be private. For guestbook, please visit:

www.mauricekirbyfh.com

Cornelius "Neil" Manning

US Postal Service retiree

Cornelius "Neil" Manning died in East Boston on July 29.

Neil was a US Army veteran of the Korean Conflict who served in the Heavy Motor Co. of the 5th Calvary. He was also a retired employee of the US Postal Service.

The beloved husband of Etta M. (McArdle), he was the loving father of Doreen and Charles "Chuck" Manning, both of East Boston, brother of Laurita Swope of Arizona, Patricia Manning of Lady Lake, FL and the late Catherine Bearse, Margaret Kaminski, Mary McIntyre, Helen Chodor, Dennis and John Manning. He is also survived by three generations of nieces and nephews. He was the brother-in-law of Dottie and Skip Marcella and Special «Unk» to Joseph and his wife,

Mary, Matthew and his wife, Mariana, Christopher, Emilia and Jameson Marcella.

His funeral will be held from the Magrath Funeral Home, 336 Chelsea St. [at Day Sq] East Boston today, Wednesday, August 4 at 10 a.m. followed



by a Funeral Mass in the Sacred Heart Church, 45 Brooks St., East Boston at 11 o'clock. Relatives and friends are invited. Committal Services with Military Honors will be in Holy Cross Cemetery, Malden

Neil's family would like to extend special thanks to John Cannon, Amy Parker, RN, Jeaneddy Paul and Patrick Pierre-Paul who took such wonderful care of Neil during his illness.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Neil's memory to the St. Mary - St. Lazarus St. Vincent dePaul Society, c/o Charles Marcella, 178 Wordsworth St., East Boston, MA 02128 would be appreciated. Please leave messages of condolence to Neil's family on his Tribute Page at MagrathFuneralHome.com

Michael Dellorfano

MGH X-Ray Technician for 50 Years

Michael H. Dellorfano, a life-long resident of East Boston, passed away on July 30.

The beloved husband of Evelyn (MacDonald) for 42 years, he was the dear brother of Carmella Casey and her husband, Edward of Lexington and Ann Marie Doherty and her husband, John of North Billerica and is also survived by many loving nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews.

Michael worked as an X-Ray technician at Massachusetts General Hospital for 50 years. Michael loved to spend his free time bowling. He will truly be missed by all.

Family and friends will honor Michael's life by gathering at the Ruggiero Family Memorial Home, 971 Saratoga Street (Orient Heights) East Boston, today, Wednesday, August 4 from 4 to 8 p.m. and again on Thursday morning at 8:30 AM before leaving in procession to St. Joseph - St. Lazarus Church, 59 Ashley Street, East Boston, for a 10 a.m. Mass honoring Michael's life. Ser-



vices will conclude with Michael being laid to rest at Holy Cross Cemetery in Malden. To leave an online condolence please visit www.ruggieromh.com.

Lillian Foley-Tierney

August 3, 1957 – July 29, 2021

Lillian Foley-Tierney, 63, passed away on July 29 in Mesa, Arizona.

Prior to her retirement, Lillian was a Boston Public Middle School Teacher. Lillian loved teaching her students and did keep in touch with a few of them during her retirement years.



Lillian was born in Boston and lived much of her life on Princeton Street in East Boston. She was the daughter of Theresa B. (Shanahan) and James J. Foley and the sister of the late Karen B. Foley. Lillian leaves behind her loving husband of 30 years, Peter Tierney of San Tan Valley, AZ, her daughter, Pauline Tierney of Apache Junction, AZ and her precious granddaughter, Emma Tierney. She was

the stepmother of Patrick Tierney, Kate LaChapelle and Ryan Tierney, all of Maine. She also leaves behind her best friend, Bernadette McDonald McEvoy whom she met at Saint Rose High School in Chelsea.

The family is planning a private service in the fall.

Eugene Keenan

Retired Mass. State Trooper

Eugene E. Keenan, 88, of Byfield, formerly of Winthrop, passed away on July 30.

The beloved husband of Margery A. (Driver) Keenan, he was born in East Boston, the cherished son of the late Edward A. Sr. and Mary J. (Vargus) Keenan.

Eugene was a U.S. Army veteran, serving during the Korean War from 1954 to 1956.

He was a member of the 101st Airborne Division known as the "Screaming Eagles." Prior to his retirement, Eugene was employed as a MDC Police Officer and after the merger with the Massachusetts State Police in 1996, retired as Massachusetts State Trooper. He was a life member of the Woburn Sportsman's Association and also served

as a Eucharistic Minister in Immaculate Conception Church in Newburyport.

He was the devoted father of Lauren Eremian of Florida, Linda Nowlan and her husband, Gerard of Boxford, Kathleen Guckert and her husband, Bruce of Billerica, Margery Beckwith, Eugene Keenan Jr. and his wife, Elaine and Patrick Keenan and his wife, Kathleen, all of Winthrop. He was the adored grandfather of 13 grandchildren and the great-grandfather of seven great-grandchildren. Eugene was the dear brother of the late Edward A. Keenan Jr. and his late wife, Louise.

Visiting hours will be held in the Maurice W. Kirby Funeral Home, 210 Winthrop St., Winthrop today, Wednesday, August 4 from 4 to 7 p.m. The funeral will be from the funeral home Thursday, August 5 at 10:30 a.m. followed by a Funeral Mass in St. John the Evangelist Church, Winthrop at 11:30 a.m. Relatives and friends are invited. Interment will follow in Winthrop Cemetery (Belle Isle Section.) In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the American Heart Assn. 300 5th Ave. Ste. 6, Waltham, MA 02451. For guestbook, please visit: www.mauricekirbyfh.com



In Memoriam
2008 Aug. 4th 2021
13th Year Anniversary

**William
Leach F. Jr.**

"Little Bill"



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Missed
Always Loved
Wish you
were here
With all of us

Love
Mom, Dad,
Mark + Family



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OBITUARIES

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ST. JUDE NOVENA

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, glorified, loved and preserved throughout the world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus pray for us. St. Jude, worker of miracles, pray for us. St. Jude, helper of the hopeless, pray for us. Say this prayer 9 times a day. By the 8th day your prayer will be answered. It has never been known to fail. Publication must be promised. My prayers have been answered.

S.D. M.D.

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OBITUARIES

Robert E. Kimmerle

March 3, 1928 - July 22, 2021

Robert E. Kimmerle of Columbia, MD, formerly of Revere and East Boston, passed away on July 22 at the age of 93.

He was born March 3, 1928 in Syracuse, NY. After graduation from Onondaga Valley Academy, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy, serving in the Philippines and Guam. Robert was a Life Member of the VFW and a member of the American Legion.

In 1949, he married Mary McCue. They were married for 55 years until her death in 2004.

Robert is survived by his children: Jacklynn of Revere, John P. Kimmerle of Saugus, his daughters-in-law, Susan Kimmerle and Sylvia Foley, his grandchildren: Robert J. Kimmerle (Christine), Diane Blackwell (Brian), Kristin Vera (Joshua) and Christopher Kimmerle



and eight great-grandchildren.

He was predeceased by his wife, Mary, his sons, Robert J. and James R. and grandson, Justin Kimmerle.

A Funeral Mass will be celebrated on Saturday, August 14 at 12 noon at Immaculate Conception Church, 133 Beach Street, Revere,. Interment will be private. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in Robert’s memory to a charity of your choice. Online condolences may be made at www.harrywitzkefuneralhome.com.

by Penny & Ed Cherubino

August is a month of abundance at local farmers’ markets and in home gardens. When we lived in the suburbs, our next-door neighbor had a big garden and took vacations in August. In exchange for watering his crops while he was away, we were encouraged to pick as much food as we wanted. As you can imagine, we were overwhelmed the first year and asked that he share with a few more friends and neighbors the following summer.

Shop Local with Self Control

We all want to support the fabulous farmers who maintain our local food supply and bring highly nutritious produce to our markets. However, we should exercise self-control so that the food they have worked so hard to produce doesn’t become food waste in our kitchens.

Buy only what you know you can use before it spoils. Remember that

FRESH & LOCAL

Summer flavor stars

local food suppliers don’t plan days of transport, storage, and distribution when they harvest crops. Farmers’ market produce is ready to eat in the next few days. Some items like greens and apples do last longer than what you would buy in a supermarket. However, others like tomatoes and stone fruit will be at their best for only a short time.

Local Sweet Corn

August is the month to add corn to as many meals as possible. We cook our corn in the husk, in the microwave. There are numerous videos online showing how to do this. Penny zaps a couple of ears for one meal and a few more to slice off the cob and add to a salad, taco, wrap, stir-fry, or soup.

Chef Sara Moulton says in her article, Fresh Corn: Cook It, Chill It, or Lose It, “... buy your corn locally if you can, buy it as early in the day as possible, and if you are not going to cook it right away, get it into the fridge.”

Penny also learned a different way to cut the kernels off the cob from a Sara’s Weeknight Meal episode. Forget standing the ear in a bowl, bundt pan, or sheet pan. Just place the ear flat on your cutting board and slice it from end-to-end the way you would any other food.



An alternative to corn on the cob is this dish of sautéed corn with bacon and honey from the menu at Grand Tour

To make this as safe as possible, use a very sharp knife and flip the ear onto the flat side as soon as you’ve completed the first couple of slices.

Summer Tomatoes

While corn begins losing quality at the moment of harvest, tomatoes will continue to ripen at room temperature. At the market, we try to buy tomatoes for today and the next couple of days. We’ll pick a couple of ripe and ready ones to have for supper and some with a bit of firmness to put in our kitchen counter tomato bowl. The surest way to diminish the flavor of a local August tomato is to put it in the refrigerator. It’s far better to stand over the sink and devour that ripe, perfect tomato with a

sprinkle of salt.

Other Crops

We try to make one pass through the market to see what is available and which farms offer our favorite vegetables. Today we have more crop choices. It can cause the greedy part of our minds to buy too much. Ask yourself when you’ll make a meal of the bunch of greens tempting you. Will you actually make something with that okra you’d like to try? Our advice is to visit markets more often and plan outings to local farm stands.

Do you have a question or topic for Fresh & Local? Send an email to Penny@BostonZest.com with your suggestion.

Baker announces appointment of Tesler as transportation head

Staff Report

Gov. Charlie Baker and Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito last week announced the appointment of Jamey L. Tesler as Secretary of Transportation and CEO of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). Tesler has served as Acting Secretary since January, when he was appointed to replace former Secretary Stephanie Pollack after Pollack’s appointment as Deputy Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration for the Biden-Harris Administration.

“Jamey Tesler is a dynamic leader and with

several years of experience in senior roles in the transportation sector, he and the team at the Department are ready to advance the important work underway across Massachusetts’ transportation systems,” said Gov. Baker. “From safety to planning for the mobility needs of the Commonwealth’s future, the job of Transportation Secretary is hugely important and Jamey is the right person to lead the Department.”

“Since January, it has been the honor of my professional career to serve as Acting Secretary of Transportation and I am grateful and humbled that Governor Baker and Lt. Gover-

nor Polito have confidence in my ability to continue to lead the organization as we deliver a transportation system that is safe, reliable, resilient and equitable,” said Secretary Jamey Tesler. “With the support of MassDOT’s dedicated workforce and management team, I am looking forward to continuing to advance customer service improvements, programs giving municipalities resources, and infrastructure projects which connect people with where they want to go, whether they are walking, bicycling, traveling by public transportation, or riding in a vehicle.”

Labor and community groups demand funds go to frontline workers and impacted communities

Staff Report

Massachusetts residents, labor and community groups convened on the steps of the State House last week, demanding that billions in federal relief aid allocated to Massachusetts from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) be distributed to help those most impacted by the coronavirus pandemic — frontline workers, communities of color, and low-income communities. Advocates are calling for the estimated \$5.3 billion in ARP funds to be used for frontline workers who put their lives on the line to keep our economy and our communities afloat during the pandemic. “There must be an equitable distribution of these funds to help those most impacted by the pandemic,” said Lee Matsueda, Executive Director, Community Labor United. “During the pandemic, working families across the state were on the frontlines protecting our communities. Now the legislature must ensure that we are paid for our hard work, and use these funds to build systems that will support Massachusetts working families.” Advocates made recommendations for the disbursement of the funds — including hazard pay

for frontline workers, for housing preservation and redevelopment, for child care tax credits, and more. The action comes on the heels of the hearings being conducted by the Joint Committee on Ways and Means and the House Committee on Federal Stimulus and Census Oversight. This action has been organized to raise collective voices for the systemic changes necessary to build a just society, eliminate structural inequalities, and call for the investments Massachusetts communities deserve. “Frontline workers, including those in the health care and public transit sectors — many of whom were already underpaid — deserve hazard pay for the risk and pressure they faced during the pandemic,” said Roxana Rivera, Vice President, 32BJ SEIU Local 615. “They came to work in the worst of the surge, without basic safety-net protections, including a lack of adequate PPE, emergency sick time, and potential denial of workers’ compensation claims if exposed to COVID-19.” More than 8 million Americans fell into poverty in 2020 during the height of the pandemic. Many of these families faced a compounding crisis exacerbated by the lack of access to affordable

child care and housing. The crowd at the State House today demanded that legislators take action to help Massachusetts residents. The ARP funds have provided the state with a unique pathway to help dismantle systemic barriers to opportunity and combat injustices faced by families and communities across Massachusetts. “The state must not allow the American Rescue Plan to become just another bailout for large corporations, as has been proposed by some special interest business groups,” said Fernando Lemus, President, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1445. “With the forward-looking and comprehensive framework of these budgetary recommendations, the legislature can address issues impacting millions of working people and their families.” “Today’s gathering is a testament to change,” said Darlene Lombos, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Greater Boston Labor Council (GBLC). “People across Massachusetts are ready to bring change into our communities, and that begins with funding our public services through the funds from American Rescue Plan.”

Real Estate Transfers

BUYER 1	SELLER 1	ADDRESS	PRICE
JC Mercer Development LLC	Eagle St Development LLC	211 E Eagle St	\$1,300,000
Maier, Brianne	4-6 Everett Place LLC	6 Everett Pl	\$685,000
Franco, Ana M	Martinez, Rosa E	228-R Lexington St	\$530,000
Merchant, Lucas R	Florio, James	63 Maverick Sq #8	\$650,000
Cabral, Duarte N	Hanley, Christine A	320 Maverick St #407	\$515,000
Guidoboni, Joseph	Solano, Nicholas J	3 Monmouth St #1	\$520,000
Wiesner, Timothy	104 Princeton St LLC	104 Princeton St #1	\$675,000
Keefe, David	Bonfiglio, Peter J	123 Saint Andrew Rd	\$760,000
Spoldi, Francesco C	Landverda-Guevara, Emma	122 Saratoga St	\$610,000
Wing, Jonathan R	Donegan, Daniel	131 Saratoga St	\$1,120,000
Nascimento, Sanderson	Cassaro, Jane	255 Saratoga St	\$680,000
Sinha, Ritwik	Walley 19 LLC	11 Walley St #208	\$647,000
Barrymore, Jennifer D	Walley 19 LLC	11 Walley St #404	\$554,000
Sanders, Danica L	Sullivan, Ellen B	49 Webster St #1	\$455,000
Mais, Stephen	Friedman, Jesse	82 Webster St #1	\$458,900

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NEWS FROM AROUND THE REGION

ALTERCATION ON BUS OVER MASK

CHELSEA - Amidst a string of abusive behavior to MBTA bus drivers who are required to ask riders to wear masks on the bus, this week the MBTA is asking for help to identify a woman who entered the bus in Bellingham Square on Sunday and destroyed the bus and cursed out the driver when he asked her to wear a mask while on-board.

The individual depicted in the photo is wanted for questioning relative to a malicious destruction of property (an MBTA bus) after getting on the bus about 3:57 p.m. on Sunday, July 25.

The woman was apparently asked to put on a mask when entering the bus, and then refused and began breaking windows on the bus before fleeing.

If anyone knows the whereabouts or identity of this individual please contact the Criminal Investigations Unit at 617-222-1050. If you would like to assist our investigators but wish to remain anonymous you can always text us your tip to 873873 or use the anonymous feature on our See-Say app.

The MBTA said there have been at least 13 incidents of an MBTA employee being assaulted after asking someone to wear a face covering.

On July 21, in Roslindale, a Bus Operator reported that an irate male customer spat at him before exiting the bus. Driving on the Route 30 outbound, the bus driver stated that the man became angry when the operator asked him to wear a mask. Before exiting, the man spat at the operator, with most of the spittle hitting the driver’s partition door, luckily.

All riders must wear a face covering that completely covers their nose and mouth while using public transit. Failure to comply may result in denial of boarding or removal, the MBTA said..

The MBTA said it is constantly stressing the importance of wearing face coverings. MBTA

trains and buses make thousands of trips each day, and during these trips, riders hear and see multiple messages about the mask mandate. Throughout the MBTA system, hundreds of digital panels display messages, reminding customers that face coverings must be worn at all times while using transit. While the vast majority of riders comply with the mandate, there is always a small number of people who need to be reminded, and that’s why the MBTA continues its comprehensive public awareness campaign, they said.

While mask reminder signs are already omnipresent around the transit system, the MBTA is in the process of expanding the coverage to even more locations.

NUMBER OF CANDIDATES ON BALLOT

EVERETT - With all of the Nomination Papers now certified, City Clerk Sergio Cornelio said there will likely be five Preliminary Election contests on Sept. 21 for voters in the City – including three citywide offices and two ward seats.

The last date and time to turn in Nomination Papers for certification was on Friday, July 23, and Cornelio said that everyone that wanted to run and turned in papers was properly certified.

That meant that the Council at-large race and the School Committee at-Large races – which were still in the balance last week – were headed to the Preliminary Ballot. They join the Mayoral Preliminary and races in Council Ward 4 and School Committee Ward 6. That will hold true unless someone that has qualified withdraws from the race or there is an objection to Nomination signatures, which must be done by Aug. 10.

“It is going to be an exciting Preliminary,” said Cornelio. “Most of the City will have three races on the ballot and Ward

4 and Ward 6 will have four positions to vote for. I’ve seen Preliminaries for mayor and for City Council and School Committee in Ward 2 a few times, but the most I’ve seen in my time is three Preliminaries at one time. In the older days, you saw that a lot in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Since then there has been no more than three at a time. It’s an interesting time.”

Cornelio said he also expects a great turnout in September as well, with the Preliminary featuring three mayoral candidates and several Council candidates that have already been very actively campaigning. Also, it will be one week after a large Boston mayoral Preliminary, so there will likely be a lot of election coverage in the news.

“I certainly expect 3,000 to 4,000 and maybe 5,000 to come out in the Preliminary,” he said. “I even think it could be a larger number depending on the get-out-the-vote and maybe put turnout at 5,500 voters. It looks like the mayoral candidates and the city council candidates are campaigning vigorously and are on the ground and that will help increase interest in the election.”

Cornelio said they will once-again have mail in voting for the Preliminary and for the General Election on Nov. 2. The state Legislature is expected to approve an extension of last year’s format of mail-in voting any day now, and that extension goes until Dec. 15. Though it hasn’t officially been approved, Cornelio said his office is proceeding as if the approval will be in place for Sept. 21.

“We will be doing mail-in voting and not just absentees,” he said. “There will be no excuse necessary, but just mail-in ballots like we did last year. We expect the extension to be approved any day now so we’re going forward on it and just waiting to see how it will all work out logistically...Things are evolving and we’re pre-

BOSTON JUMPS PROVIDE SUMMER FUN WITH THE WINTHROP PARKS AND REC DEPARTMENT



Winthrop youths enjoyed a visit from Boston Jumps and its fitness exercise experience as part of their seven-week summer camp hosted by Winthrop Parks and Recreation.

paring.”

The candidates certified for the mayoral Preliminary are:

- Councilor Gerly Adrien, 15 Cumberland St.
- Councilor Fred Capone, 383 Broadway
- Mayor Carlo De-Maria, 75 Abbott Ave.
- The certified candidates for at-large Council Preliminary are:
 - Angelmari DiNunzio, 78 Hancock St.
 - Councilor Michael Marchese, 91 Elsie St.
 - Councilor Richard Dell Isola, 13 Griswold St.
 - James Mastrocola, 56 Preston St.
 - Stephanie Smith, 15 Mansfield St.
 - James LaVecchio, 59 Oliver St.
 - School Committee-man Allen Panarese, 35 Wolcott St.
 - Ken Giannelli, 44 Winslow St.
 - Councilor John Hanlon, 173 Main St.
 - Irene Cardillo, 25 Rosedale St.
 - Guerline Alcy, 77 Walnut St.
- The certified candidates for the School Committee at-Large Preliminary are:
 - Margaret Cornelio, 43 Luke Rd.
 - School Committee-woman Cynthia Sarnie, 30 Forest Ave.

- School Committee-woman Samantha Lambert, 20 Pierce Ave.
- Robert Santacroce, 57 Englewood Ave.
- Berardino D’Onofrio, 44 Kelvin St.
- School Committee-man Joe LaMonica, 14 Lawrence St.
- Jenny Montresor, 24 Harley Ave.
- The certified candidates for the Ward 4 Council Preliminary are:
 - Councilor Jimmy Tri Le, 41 Westover St.
 - Benjamin Murray, 30 Waverly Ave.
 - Holly Garcia, 688 Broadway

- The certified candidates for the Ward 6 School Committee seat are:
 - School Committee-man Tom Abruzzese, 18 Peirce Ave.
 - Catherine Tomassi Hicks, 9 Oakes St.
 - Councilor Michael McLaughlin, 120 Tremont St.

There are several other races that won’t appear on the ballot until the Nov. 2 General Election, as they didn’t have enough candidate to trigger a Preliminary. Those races include:

- WARD 1 COUNCIL
 - Councilor Wayne Matewsky, 86 Lewis St.
- WARD 2 COUNCIL
 - Councilor Stephanie Martins, 59 Lexington St.
- WARD 3 COUNCIL
 - Councilor Anthony DiPierro, 51 Sycamore St.
 - Darren Costa, 143 Elm St.
- WARD 5 COUNCIL
 - Councilor Rosa Di-Florio, 26 Dyer Ave.
 - Vivian Nguyen, 75 Linden St.
- WARD 6 COUNCIL
 - Al Lattanzi, 57 Peirce Ave.
 - Rose Pietrantonio, 45 Alfred St.
- SCHOOL COMM. WARD 1
 - School Committee-woman Millie Cardello, 27 Ferry St.
- SCHOOL COMM. WARD 2
 - Jason Marcus, 133 Dartmouth St.
 - Cady Steinberg, 139 Fremont St.
- SCHOOL COMM. WARD 3
 - Jeanne Cristiano, 53 Abbot Ave.
 - Samantha Hurley, 21 Freeman Ave.
- SCHOOL COMM. WARD 4
 - School Committee-woman Dana Murray, 30 Waverly Ave.
 - Michael Mangan, 104 Walnut St.
- SCHOOL COMM. WARD 5
 - School Committee-

man Marcony Almeida Barros, 105 Bradford St.

NEW ELECTION COMMISSIONER

City Clerk Sergio Cornelio reported this week that long-time Election Dept. staffer Danielle Pietrantonio has been hired as the new Election Commissioner.

Pietrantonio will still operate under Clerk Cornelio, but will coordinate the upcoming election and all of the candidate activities. She was promoted within the Department, he said.

Last year, there was no Election Commissioner in place for the Presidential and State Representative contests, and the duties fell on Cornelio to carry out. This time around, the Council had been adamant that the City get an Election Commissioner in place prior to September so that the contests would run smoothly.

OFFICIALS MULL ATTENDANCE POLICY


REVERE - At last Tuesday night’s Revere Public School (RPS) Committee meeting Superintendent Dr. Dianne Kelly said last year RPS began discussing the need to revisit school handbooks and policy books based on the advancements that RPS has made around equity and inclusion.

In the coming months the Policy Committee is going to meet along with the Equity Subcommittee in order to start discussing some of the changes that were suggested by the equity advisory board.

One of those changes has zeroed in on RPS’s attendance policy.

“You might recall at the April meeting we shared some information about how changing the attendance policy at the Seacoast to be non punitive resulted in a number of students actually passing classes that they otherwise would have failed,” said Kelly. “I wanted to give a presentation on our thoughts about attendance policy, and give the Committee some time to think about it and reflect on it.”

RPS is mandated by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to assess student atten-



Virtual Public Meeting

Bremen and Orleans Development

Tuesday, August 10
6:00 PM

Zoom Link: bit.ly/3hZSR27
Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864
Meeting ID: 161 031 4501

Project Proponent:
The Davis Companies, EBNHC & EBCDC

Project Description:
Public meeting to discuss the proposed Bremen and Orleans Development. The Proposed Project consists of the construction of a new, primarily residential project on five parcels of land comprising approximately 3.32 acres generally bounded by Maverick Street, Bremen Street, Orleans Street and Gove Street. The Proponent is seeking BPDA approval for the construction of six new structures that will contain approximately 426 residential units, parking accommodations for approximately 172 vehicles, approximately 3,500 square feet of ground floor commercial space, among other public realm improvements.


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mail to: **Caitlin Coppinger**
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor
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Close of Comment Period:
9/3/2021

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Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary

Metro News //

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dance. Students who are absent, seven times in a six month period, are considered chronically absent by the DESE.

“That number, stated by DESE, is what drives the numbers that are currently written in our student handbooks on how many absences a student is allowed to have in each quarter or trimester,” said Kelly. “We are required, no matter what, to work with families to engage chronically absent students. Last year we suspended the attendance policy in light of COVID and our current policies on attendance vary by grade level. But generally speaking, they all say, if you’re chronically absent you automatically fail all of your classes and that’s meant to incentivize good attendance.”

Kelly said other rules are in place, such as when a student is absent regardless of whether it’s one time or five times or 20 times they cannot participate in extracurricular activities on the day of their absence.

“What we really need to rethink is the piece about automatically failing students, particularly when they have demonstrated mastery of the content in question,” said Kelly. “It doesn’t happen too often. When a student is chronically absent, they miss so much of the content of a course that they’re not able to be successful academically, but there are times when students are able to master the content. Often it happens with students who are a little more self motivated or learn a little bit differently than the traditional students and

do a lot better at home than they sometimes do in a classroom environment. It’s kids who might have some social emotional complications that prevent them from engaging well in the classroom but don’t diminish their knowledge of the content or their ability to succeed.”

Kelly said it is students like those who are unfairly getting penalized by the current attendance policy.

“These students automatically fail because they were absent seven times, not eight, not six, seven,” explained Kelly. “However, our effort and our dedication to be more inclusive and generate more equity for all students we need to make sure that we don’t have policies that do actually harm. This is one that I think does.”

Kelly said data shows that it’s typically more students of color, and those who are economically disadvantaged, who run into these attendance problems.

“Another example that I’ll give is a student who might be working overnight in order to help support his or her family and struggles to get up for school in the morning and misses morning classes,” said Kelly. “Even though they are at home and grinding and can get the work done and can demonstrate this, we automatically have to fail those kids because of the way the policies are written. However, if we eliminate that policy piece of automatic failure fewer students will drop out at the high school level because they won’t be unaccredited; more students will graduate on time and it will increase

our four year graduation rate; and students won’t be excluded from advanced coursework for having failed the previous course.”

Kelly admitted some of the cons is that student absences may increase.

“It’s data that we’ll have to track and monitor if we were to make this change in policy,” she said. “I would argue that if school is enticing enough and interesting enough and connected

enough to students’ lives they will not want to miss school. That’s the area that we should be focusing on. Instead of saying you missed seven days you failed, we should be focusing on why you missed seven days and how we fix whatever that issue is.”

Kelly said if RPS is to embrace the idea that students’ grades should reflect what they know and not how well they perform to school structures

the School Committee should consider keeping basic attendance policy but nix the seven day absence is an automatic fail policy.

“The consideration would be to keep the basic attendance policy with the reference to the Massachusetts federal law. Keep a definition of what unexcused absences are. Keep the requirements for medical documentation where they’re needed. Keep the

rules about dismissals and tardiness and how they impact attendance. But just remove the rule of failure for attendance and threats of academic implications,” said Kelly.

The School Committee voted to send the proposal to the Committee of the Whole subcommittee for consideration before it comes back before the entire committee for a vote.

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