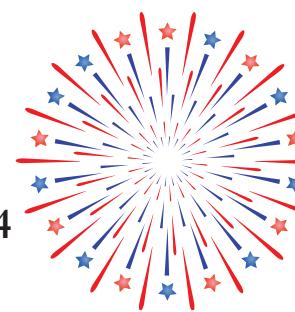


Happy Fourth of July

WHAT'S HAPPENING ON MAIN STREETS, PAGE 4



FREE
20 PAGES

VOLUME 29 • NUMBER 6



Printed on
recycled paper

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JULY 2, 2021 — AUGUST 5, 2021

Long-time Mission Hill champion for all, Theresa Parks, passes at her home

BY SETH DANIEL

Theresa Parks, a Mission Hill legend, never locked the door to her hard-fought homestead in Mission Park.

In fact, anyone could simply knock and walk in.

One might think that to be a little dangerous for someone living in the middle of the city on busy Huntington Avenue with so much hustle and bustle and po-

Beloved Mission Main advocate Adline Stallings has passed away

BY LAUREN BENNETT

Mission Hill resident Adline Stallings was known for her selflessness and her constant fight for the betterment of others, passed away on June 1 at the age of 76, but she leaves behind a legacy of caring for others and standing up for what she believed in, especially through her work on the Task Force at the Mission Main development.

Continued on page 6

Continued on page 3

MBTA calls for 24/7 work in Mission Hill through August

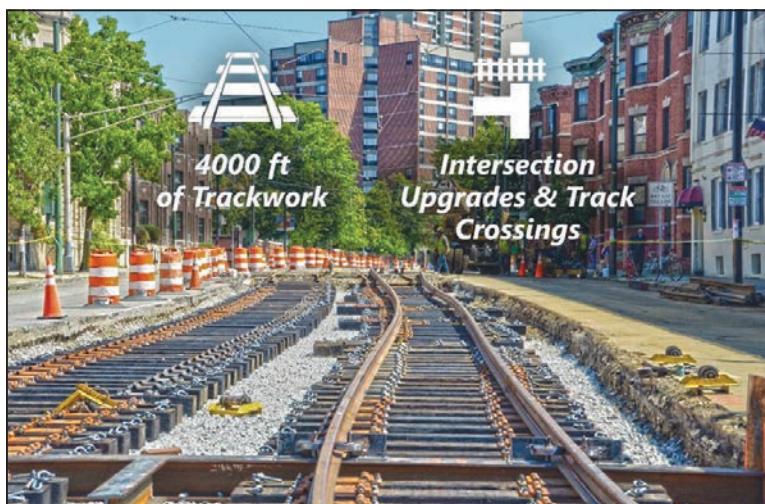
STAFF REPORT

The MBTA announced an accelerated construction schedule on Mission Hill's E Line train system that includes night work through July, and 24/7 work throughout all of August – an ambitious schedule that will im-

pact areas from South Huntington Street to Brigham Circle.

The T announced on Wednesday that from Monday, August 2, through Sunday, August 29, crews will work around the clock to replace outdated track including ties, ballast, and rail as well

Continued on page 5



FIRST MISSION HILL ARTS FESTIVAL KICKS OFF JAZZ-INSPIRED SUMMER



The 1st annual Mission Hill Arts Festival kicked off on Saturday, June 26, with Anibal Cruz and the Blue Island Project in The Yard at the Tobin. More concert and art show dates will take place in July and August. Read about it on Page 7.

CAMH votes on Flann O'Brien site

BY LAURA PLUMMER

The Community Alliance of Mission Hill (CAMH) met virtually on June 16, where it viewed a presentation about a new cannabis dispensary and voted on the old Flann O'Brien's property. Around 26 members of the public attended.

1441 Tremont Street

Jody Mendoza and Richie Peña appeared before CAMH to pitch their idea for Team Green Mission Hill, a cannabis dispensary at 1441 Tremont St.

Mendoza and Peña touted their Boston roots. Their proposed dispensary would be about 1,000 square feet, and would include industry standards for

security, such as a vault, metal walls and ceiling, 24/7 surveillance, and an interior obscured from the street. Industry leader Sira Natural is currently mentoring the team.

Team Green would create around twenty new jobs that pay a living wage. Eighty-five percent

Continued on page 2

CAMH vota en sitio de Flann O'Brien, escucha nueva propuesta

BY LAURA PLUMMER

La Alianza Comunitaria de Mission Hill (CAMH) se reunió virtualmente el 16 de junio, donde vio una presentación sobre un nuevo dispensario de cannabis y votaron en la antigua propiedad de Flann O'Brien.

Asistieron alrededor de 26 miembros del público.

1441 Tremont St.

Jody Mendoza y Peña presentaron su propuesta para Team Green Mission Hill, un dispensario de cannabis en 1441 Tremont St.

Mendoza y Peña promocionaron sus raíces en Boston. Su dispensario tendría aproximadamente mil pies cuadrados e incluiría estándares de seguridad de la industria, como una bóveda, paredes y techo de metal,

Continued on page 2



State Sen. Sonia Chang-Diaz pictured at her campaign announcement.

State Sen. Sonia Chang-Diaz announces candidacy for governor

By LAUREN BENNETT

Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz announced on June 23 that she is joining the race for governor of Massachusetts. Chang-Diaz currently serves as the state senator for the Second Suffolk District, which includes parts of Jamaica Plain.

The Boston Globe and other outlets report that Ben Downing and Danielle Allen, both Democrats, have also announced their candidacies, and incumbent Gov. Charlie Baker has not made an announcement regarding running for a third term.

"I've spent my life listening to powerful people tell me to slow down, to think smaller, to wait," Chang-Diaz said in a video published on her YouTube channel on Wednesday.

"Voters didn't send me to the State Senate to wait. I'm Sonia Chang-Diaz, and Beacon Hill has learned three things about me: I speak up, I organize, and I win."

Chang-Diaz is the first Latina on the Massachusetts Senate, and in the video, she said

"Beacon Hill insiders drag their feet every step of the way, saying 'think smaller.' Instead, we fought unapologetically for the things working families actually need."

Chang-Diaz is a Jamaica Plain resident, along with her husband and two children.

"Our state is at a turning point now, and we face a choice," she said in the video. "Do we go back to business as usual, or do we run toward problems with the urgency and determination to solve them. That's the kind of fire we need in government."

She tweeted on the 23rd, along with a group of photos of her supporters holding signs, "I was proud to kick off our campaign today alongside so many organizers, community leaders, & residents working on the front lines for justice -- and who are hungry for change. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We can build the Commonwealth we know is possible."

Chang-Diaz has launched a campaign website, which can be found at www.soniachangdiaz.com.

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**1524 Tremont St.
(across from Mission Church)**

Boston's drinking water complies with state and federal standards according to MWRA report

BY JOHN LYNDS

The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) has begun mailing its Annual Water Quality Report to every household in its service area.

In the report published online the MWRA includes statistics on the quality of Boston's drinking water, which the Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC) says meets state and federal standards.

"This report contains an annual update on the quality of drinking water supplied in partnership with the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA)," said the BWSC in a statement. "The water delivered is of high quality and complies with federal and state quality standards. While the world is engaged in a battle with coronavirus, BWSC and MWRA want to assure that the water delivered is safe from the virus. BWSC has been continuing to maintain excellent drinking water through the investment of millions of dollars to upgrade its infrastructure."

The report says BWSC has once again received a citation

from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) acknowledging BWSC's consistent performance in the public drinking water system.

With the Flint water crisis bringing more awareness of lead in tap water, the water provided by BWSC and the MWRA is lead-free when it leaves the reservoirs.

"However, lead present in water may come from the service line feeding your building, private plumbing, lead solder or old plumbing fixtures," the statement continues. "We care about lead because infants and children who drink water containing lead in excess of the action level could experience delays in their physical or mental development. Children could show slight deficits in attention span and learning abilities. Adults who drink this water over many years could develop kidney problems or high blood pressure."

According to the report the BWSC's 2020 lead sampling of higher risk homes, lead results were 25.2 parts per billion (ppb), with 5 samples over the lead Action Level of 15 ppb while copper results of 137 ppb were well below the Action Level of 1300 ppb.

"In our Spring 2021 sampling, our lead results of 6.8 ppb were back below the 15 ppb Action Level," said BWSC in the report.

BWSC offers a Lead Replacement Incentive Program to qualified homeowners to remove private lead pipes. You can find more information in this report and on www.bwsc.org.

"This report brings you the results of our annual water quality testing. While 2020 was a year filled with uncertainty, one thing remained constant: the quality of your drinking water was excellent," said MWRA's Executive Director Fred Laskey. "MWRA takes hundreds of thousands of tests each year and, for 2020, we again meet every federal and state drinking water standard."

Laskey said the MWRA also wants its customers to know that their water was again named 'Best of the Best' at a national taste test conducted by the American Water Works Association. "In just a few years, our water treatment has been upgraded from chlorine with its taste and odor issues, to ozone and ultraviolet light, which resulted in better tasting, safer water," said Laskey.

CAMH

Continued from page 1

would be Boston residents, with a focus on minorities and those impacted by cannabis criminalization. Employees would enjoy free or reduced childcare, transport vouchers, and microloans to cover urgent needs.

The team received a Provisional License by the Cannabis Control Commission, and certi-

fication from the City's Equity Program and the State's Economic Empowerment program.

Team Green's closest competition would be Raices on the Hill at 123 Terrace St., a mere five-minute walk away. But the couple emphasized that theirs is a unique business model and wished Raices "the best of luck."

1619 Tremont St. (Former site of Flann O'Brien's)
The CAMH membership vot-

ed on a proposal by MH Tremont LLC to convert the former bar Flann O'Brien's into a restaurant with indoor and outdoor seating. The company would also manage rental properties above the restaurant. Sadly, the iconic statue of Flann O'Brien has to go. Seventy-five percent of meeting participants voted to approve the project. Nineteen percent opposed it and six percent didn't vote.

1619 Tremont St. (Antiguo sitio de Flann O'Brien's)

Los miembros de CAMH también votaron sobre una propuesta de MH Tremont LLC para convertir el antiguo bar Flann O'Brien's en un restaurante con asientos en el interior y exterior. La compañía también administraría propiedades de alquiler por encima del restaurante. Lamentablemente, la icónica estatua de Flann O'Brien tiene que desaparecer. El setenta y cinco por ciento de los participantes de la reunión aprobaron el proyecto. El diecinueve por ciento se opuso y el seis por ciento no votó.

CAMH

Continued from page 1

vigilancia las veinticuatro horas, y un interior oculto de la calle. Un líder de la industria, Sira Natural, está ayudando al equipo.

Team Green crearía alrededor de veinte nuevos puestos de trabajo que pagaría un salario digno. El 85 por ciento serían residentes de Boston, con un enfoque en las minorías y los afectados por la criminalización del cannabis. Los empleados disfrutarán de cuidado infantil gratuito o reducido, vales de transporte, y

microcréditos para cubrir necesidades urgentes.

La pareja recibió una licencia provisional de la Comisión de Control de Cannabis y certificaciones del Programa de Equidad de la Ciudad y del Programa de Empoderamiento Económico del Estado.

La competencia más cercana de Team Green sería Raíces on the Hill en 123 Terrace St., a solo cinco minutos a pie. Pero la pareja enfatizó que el suyo es un modelo de negocio único y le deseó a Raíces mucha suerte.

Adline Stallings

Continued from page 1

In 1970, Stallings came to Boston from Mississippi and "spent a lot of her own time... working to improve her community," said Lydia Agro, Chief of Media and Engagement for the Boston Housing Authority (BHA).

Agro, a former reporter for the Mission Hill Gazette, said she first met Stallings while working for the paper.

"She just was a very strong leader in the community," Agro said. "She was a very strong advocate for what she believed was best for both the residents and the site in terms of the details of that development."

Stallings' daughter, Sadie Stallings, said that "my mother was a no-funny-business type of person." She said that while her mother "would be your friend," she also "would cuss you out" if something annoyed her. "She was known for her cussing," Stallings said.

When it came time for the redevelopment of the Mission Main development in the 1990s, Stallings said that Mayor Menino wanted a different developer

than the Task Force, who wanted Arthur Winn. Menino wanted Edward Fish, according to a 2015 Boston Globe column. Stallings helped fight for what the tenants wanted.

"It had been like four or five hours and when they came out of the room, Menino had picked his company and she was like no, the neighborhood is not going to agree with that," Stallings said. "So they had to scrap the proposal he had and they had to go back to the conference room and work at it again until they agreed with the Winn company. His developer and her developer worked together."

Stallings reflected on what it was like to have Adline has her mother, saying that "she was very strict, but she was the best mom. We didn't see her as everyone else saw her; we just saw her as our mother."

Adline Stallings' graciousness didn't stop at ensuring the redevelopment was done properly.

"She was very giving," Stallings said. "I had a lot of brothers and sisters in this development," referring to other kids who lived there. She only had one biological sibling, her late brother Irving.

If someone didn't have any food, she would invite them in

and feed them from our dinner table. She would give you her last dime."

A park at Mission Main was dedicated in Adline Stallings' name in 2015 by Winn Development, the BHA, and Mayor Walsh.

"She was deeply loved and re-

spected by her neighbors, and she was adamant in acknowledging that the work she does and has always done, was for others," the BHA wrote in a statement. "Adline Stallings was an extremely loving and selfless person, and will be deeply missed."

She might have been tough,

but it was out of the care and concern for others.

"If you promised her, you had to come through or you were going to get cussed out," Stallings said. "My mother was like a Harriet Tubman of her community. She made sure that everybody around her had before she did."



Photo courtesy of the Boston Housing Authority

Adline Stallings at her park dedication ceremony at Mission Main in 2015.

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What's Happening on Main Streets

BY ELLEN WALKER
SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

Mission Hill Main Streets is pleased to announce this year's 2021 Annual Award Recipients. The "Business of the Year" goes to Boston Building Resources for being innovative, providing great service and stability in the community. "Volunteer of the Year," for the first time, is awarded to two very special individuals – Alice and Cindy Diggs while the "Golden Broom" goes to Mama's Place and is given for the cleanest and most welcoming shop. Please congratulate them when you see them!

June was a busy month in Mission Hill for the MH American Legion Post 327 and for Veterans Services. The MH Post generously donated over a 100 pounds of dry goods to both the BCYF Tobin's John Jackson and to Mission Hill Health Movement's Mary Ann Nelson. John was able to distribute all the goods within a matter of hours to needy families and seniors in Mission Hill. Colonel George Rollins and the Post members have extraordinarily strong ties and memories to Mission Hill and frequently look for ways to support their old neighborhood. Judging from the conversation and laughter among the attendees at MHMS events, Post members seem to enjoy mingling with each other and the Mission Hill community as there is a visible increase of participants at the

annual memorial services and celebrations in Brigham Circle.

On June 26th, Veterans Services dedicated the John Moreau Square before a large crowd of family and friends. The square is located at the corner of Parker Street and Fisher Avenue, a place where the Moreau brothers played as children. As Bob Moreau said, "it is only fitting, John will be here at Fisher forever." The ceremony included a heartfelt speech by Commissioner Santiago about John and his service to his country, reminding us all that freedom is not free. John's brother Bob recalled their days of youthful play at this corner and how important it was to all of them but especially John. He is missed every day by his brothers, family and friends. On behalf of Councilor Bok, Emily Brown read the councilor's remarks and closed with "it means so much to honor this beloved son of Boston." In John Moreau's honor, the U.S.S. Constitution Color Guard performed at the service while Taps were played on a 100-year-old bugle by U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary member Kimberley Shaw.

As many of you know, one of Mission Hill's most loved activists Theresa Parks recently passed. The service was held at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, commonly referred to as Mission Church. Father Dabney returned to Mission Church to preside over the service and brought such a warm and touch-

ing tone to the service as only one who knew Theresa well could do. There were many laughs, stories and tears during and after the ceremony as everyone gathered to honor a truly remarkable woman.

The first annual Mission Hill Arts Festival launched on the last Saturday of June and will be running through August 21st. Anibel Cruz, a Cuban pianist and Berklee graduate, performed original works of jazz with a twist that included middle eastern and island influences. It was an uplifting experience and the audience enjoyed asking the musicians several questions. Please go to www.facebook.com/MHArtsFest for more details.

As we enter the hottest Sum-



Commissioner Santiago, Veterans Services and Emily Brown, Councilor Bok's Office



Kimberley Shaw, Bugler, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

mer months, I encourage you to visit and patronize our neighborhood businesses. This past month, I stopped in at TBar's to speak with owner Elaine Huang about her most popular fresh smoothie's. The Mega C+ Smooth-ie, made with pineapple, grapefruit, mango, orange and banana was so refreshing and paired with their purple sweet potato fries at only \$5.49 was perfect! TBar's is located at the site of the former Green T Café at 754 Huntington Avenue. Along with the lifting of restrictions

and anticipation of students coming back, Mission Hill is alive and well - have a great 4th of July!

A quick apology for a typo in last month's article. The wonderful artist from Mass College of Art who painted the four utility boxes throughout the neighborhood is Melina Illinger. We look forward to seeing more from this wonderful, young artist.

"Don't put a limit on anything. The more you dream, the further you get." – Michael Phelps gold-medal swimmer



U.S.S. Constitution Color Guard and Bob Moreau



Angel and John Jackson of BCYFTobin, Colonel George Rollins, MH Post 327 and Mary Ann Nelson, MHHM

Theresa Parks

Continued from page 1

tential for bad things. However, Parks was known far and wide as probably the most generous person in Mission Hill, if not Boston.

One didn't need to break into her home for something, but simply ask, and she would give what she could on the spot – or find someone that could help then and there.

The generosity of Parks is just one hallmark of a noteworthy life for a woman that grew up, fought for housing issues, helped others at all times and held "office hours" in Brigham Circle with friends daily. Sadly, Theresa Parks, 84, passed away on June 9 at her home in Mission Park.

Parks' nice, Laura Adams, was very close to her aunt and said she fought for Mission Hill causes to the very end.

"Up until the very end, she still participated in community meetings and fought to the end for housing," said Adams, who also works at Roxbury Tenants of Harvard (RTH), which Parks helped to found during an epic fight against Harvard University expansion in Mission Hill 50 years ago. "Affordable housing

was a big issue for her. We were even holding meetings at her apartment towards the end so she could be part of it...She was a people person and if you needed help, housing or money for food, she would do her best to give it to you and if she couldn't, she knew who could help. She had a wonderful and full life. She left a legacy behind to us to always help people."

Dermot Doyne, owner of Penguin Pizza in Brigham Circle, became a very close friend of Parks through the years, and so much so that he agreed to give the eulogy at her funeral in Mission Church on June 17.

"She went beyond what was required of a human in terms of having a passion for people," he said during an interview recently. "She was very saintly and very old school. I always saw her at the Penguin in Mission Hill and outside on the benches were destitute people. She would always help them and she was probably too generous. You had to really cross her for her to dislike you...I came to Mission Hill 20 years ago and she would introduce me as her 'very good friend.' If you were talking negatively about someone, perhaps, she would always say how much she loved them..."

"She definitely had an angelic



Theresa Parks is shown here surrounded by friends at the Mission Hill Neighborhood Housing Services Annual Meeting. She was on the board of the organization for many years.

notion and responded with extra kindness in her willingness to help," he continued. "Someone would ask for a dollar and shed' give them \$5. I don't think she ever got any money back in her life, but that was something she probably never realized."

Doyne said he has only given the eulogy at three funerals, his mother, his father and his best friend, Theresa Parks. He said she was such a warm person, but at the same time one with a very



Theresa Parks, 84, passed away on June 9 at her home in Mission Park.

quick wit whose comments could cut to the bone. When it was time to fight, he said, she was ready to fight for her neighborhood.

Nothing of the sort was more apparent than her fight against Harvard University 50 years ago in their bid to expand in Mission Hill. In an unprecedented fight, she, her husband, Bob, other neighbors and several Harvard students stood up to the University and won – creating 900 unit of affordable housing in what is now known as Mission Park through the Roxbury Tenants of Harvard (RTH).

"Theresa was 4 feet, 10 inches tall, but you had Goliath's big brother on your side with her," said Doyne. "When she got behind you, she gave everything. I don't know where Mission Hill is going to go because she was a gatekeeper for this area. She was triumphant in her David vs. Goliath attitude. She brought Harvard – one of the wealthiest institutions in the world – to their knees and made them agree to things they never would have ever agreed to without her advocacy."

Born in Jamaica Plain, she lived in Mission Hill most of her life and graduated from Mission

Church High School in 1954. The daughter of Irish immigrants, she loved all things Irish. She told the Boston Memoir Project, "We were not well-off, but thought we were the richest people in the world." She was a founding member of Roxbury Tenants of Harvard (RTH). Eventually, Harvard and RTH collaborated on Mission Park and the creation of 900 units of affordable housing. For years, she coordinated elder services at Mission Park. She also worked at Shea's Dry Cleaners and Mariner Health-care at Longwood. She served on too many boards of directors, advisory boards and task forces to mention, many city-wide. Her work was recognized with citations and awards. The state certified her as a Licensed Social Work Associate. A longtime poll worker, she loved the bustle of election day.

She is survived by her sons, Robert S. Parks of Mission Hill and John Parks and wife Patricia of York, ME; a daughter, Vanessa Parks and husband James Amorello of Shrewsbury; three grandchildren, Tess Parks of Portland, ME, Kelly Breiner of Weston, FL, and Alexander Parks of the North End; two great-grandchildren; beloved sister Anna Adams of Mission Hill; four nieces, Nancy Geary of West Roxbury, Elaine Adams, Laura Adams and Maureen Adams of Mission Hill, two nephews, Frederick Adams of West Roxbury and Daniel Adams of Roslindale; and many great-nieces and nephews, cousins & friends. She was pre-deceased by her husband, Robert Parks; a daughter, Karynn Parks; and her parents, John and Margaret (Culkin) Casey.



MISSION HILL MAIN STREETS

Congratulations 2021 Annual Award Recipients!

BUSINESS OF THE YEAR: Boston Building Resources

VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR: Alice and Cindy Diggs

GOLDEN BROOM AWARD: Mama's Place

THE KEVIN W. FITZGERALD AWARD: Courtney Wright, WIT

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSET AWARD WINNERS:

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First Mission Hill Arts Festival kicks off jazz-inspired summer

BY SETH DANIEL

As the summer began to roll around, Mission Hill's Luisa Harris knew that the community needed an outdoors pick-me-up, and at the same time, she also knew that the city's musicians and visual artists needed to get their work back in front of audiences.

So, she put the two things together and came up with the 1st annual Mission Hill Arts Festival, a summer-long series of concerts and arts shows in The Yard behind the Tobin Community Center that kicked off last weekend, on June 26.

"In April, when things started to open up a little, but COVID-19 protocols were still in place, I thought it would be good to find space outside and put together some concerts and encourage the musicians who have been on the sidelines for so long now, and also encourage the community at the same time," she said.

At the beginning, it was only



Anibal Cruz performing new work during the kick-off show of the first annual Mission Hill Arts Festival.

her and her husband, noted jazz musician Kevin Harris, who were on board. That quickly changed as Luisa said she was able to get the support of Mission Hill Main Streets, and then got some funding from the Mission Hill/

Fenway Neighborhood Trust and the approval of John Jackson at the Tobin Community Center.

"We saw it as a way to give back even if it was just Kevin and I trying to get this to happen," she said. "We felt it was a way to

give back to the community."

Now they also have the support of the City of Boston Credit Union, Eastern Bank, Arts Talks, The Boston Foundation, East Boston Savings Bank, The Record Company, Mandlora Music and more.

Harris said she has also partnered with Massachusetts School of Art (MassArt) to have showings at each of the concerts of their artwork. That makes it a great way for original music and original art to be shown to the public throughout the summer.

"One of the great parts of this is everything that is going to be played each of the five nights are original works," she said. "There are no covers. It's all new and original and amazing work."

Already, last Saturday, Anibal Cruz and the Blue Island Project kicked off the Arts Festival, but more is to come on July 10. The full lineup includes:

- July 10: Steve Langone and The Jinga Project,

with Art Exhibit by Nicholas Milkovich.

- July 24: Kevin Harris Project featuring Fabio Rojas, with Art Exhibit by Rania Abdalla.

- August 7: Débo Ray and Eco-SoundSystem, with Opening Act by Boston Arts Academy Students.

- August 21: The Arni Cheatham Project (CD Release event).

The event is not free, Luisa Harris said, as she said it's important for the musicians to be compensated for their work after so many months out of work. So far, that hasn't been a barrier and the price has been well-worth the experience.

Tickets are \$40 for front-row seating, and \$20 for general admission. Seniors and students are \$10 and Teens are \$5. Those 12 and under are free. Pre-registration is required by going to the Arts Festival Facebook page at www.facebook.com/MHArtsFest.

Dispensary

Continued from page 5

Mendoza said that no deliveries will be made in the front of the building so as to not add to existing traffic in the area.

"We are a family business," she said, adding that they do not have the means to purchase a parking lot. "This is a small neighborhood shop."

A parking spot will also not be offered, as "we are not encouraging vehicular traffic," she said.

For patrons of the dispensary, "green bonus" gift bag items that incentivize biking or taking public transportation will be available, according to the presentation. The team will ask local businesses for coupons, samples, or other freebies that could be given out in the bags.

Mendoza added that a "fast-pass" will be offered to customers who pre-order for pickup. Customers who double park will not be admitted to the dispensary. Additionally, no billboards will be used to advertise this facility.

"We're a neighborhood facility," Mendoza said.

During the public comment period, many residents spoke in favor of the proposal, while others expressed concerns they had regarding the proposed location's proximity to facilitate that deal with children.

"I do not want a drug dealing business in Mission Hill," one resident said. "Mission Hill has suffered historically from drug use. There are around five high schools in the area, and this is the wrong place for a cannabis dispensary."

Pena responded by saying he attended Madison Park Technical Vocational High School, "which is one of the schools around there," so he is "well aware of what is happening around there."

He said that as a teenager, he saw "what happened" to his friends if they were caught in possession of or using cannabis.

"I think that putting a business that sells a drug, or flower, however you want to call it, that this is a legal substance that's been approved in the state, in a location that has been affected by the war on drugs and illegal narcotics, is a positive thing," he said.

He added that the "reason I say that" is that marijuana purchased on the street could be laced with dangerous chemicals, but what is sold at the dispensary is highly regulated.

"This is a very safe alternative for people to consume cannabis," he said.

A resident who was identified as Drew said he supported the proposal. "I think cannabis is here to stay," he said, adding that he believes it is "very highly

scrutinized," more so than liquor stores. He said he feels that Pena and Mendoza are "responsible business owners who are invested in the community."

Former City Councilor Felix Arroyo said, "I think Mission Hill would be lucky to have Jody and Richy open a business in their community."

A question was asked regarding whether or not this proposed location was outside of the 500 foot buffer zone of schools.

Pena said that this location is not within 500 feet of "any school that would disqualify us from opening a dispensary at this location."

Mary Ann Nelson said she lives one block from the proposed location, and she said she is "concerned about having two cannabis shops so close to each other. I think that this is the wrong location for a second cannabis location in Mission Hill," as she believes there are too many youth-oriented activities in the area.

Nelson also asked the team how they would handle someone who smokes a Team Green product on her front porch or in the general area.

"Every product has a QR code that is assigned to your name," Pena said. "We know what we sold and how much we sold," so any person who wants to "over-buy" can be kept track of, and only a certain amount of product

can be purchased at once.

Anyone caught consuming products outside after leaving the facility will be banned from returning to the dispensary. In the case of not being able to provide that a product came from Team Green (such as if the wrapper had been thrown away), he said to "call the officers and have

them deal with that situation."

Other residents expressed support of the location and of the owners's plan to open this business in the neighborhood.

Anyone with further questions, comments, or concerns about this proposal can reach out to Patrick Fandel at patrick.fandel@boston.gov.

Date Lost: 5-27-2021

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(perro perdido)

JAMAICA PLAIN, MA
last seen at Day St and Russell Hill St HYDE SQ AREA

white around mouth and eyes

Tail Fringe

Her family is desperate to get her back!

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Mission Hill Post 327 donating 500 pounds. of food to Tobin Community Center. Left to right, Angel (don't know last name), Jon Jackson, Col. George Rollins and Mary Ann Nelson.

Hill Happenings

Continued from page 8

June 16.

The Tobin Center is a great organization for our youth, which features computer classes, sports

and other activities under the superlative guidance of Jon Jackson.

Happy 245th birthday to America, and have a nice July Fourth celebration.

John Adams, who would later become our second president and

our first V.P., said, "Apt to believe this day will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival."

What did they call the American Revolutionary who drew cartoons?

A Yankee Doodler.

2021 Boston Pops July 4th Spectacular Concert to take place at Tanglewood

STAFF REPORT

This 2021 Boston Pops July 4th Spectacular will be a televised, live-streamed concert to take place under the direction of Keith Lockhart from the stage of Tanglewood's Koussevitzky Music Shed, Sunday, July 4, 8-11 p.m., broadcast live on Bloomberg TV and Radio, as well as locally on WHDH-TV Channel 7. The Boston Pops will partner with the City of Boston on a live fireworks display from the Boston Common, bringing the closing portion of the July 4 event back across the state to the city that has proudly presented this iconic, large-scale event since 1974. The Boston Common fireworks display will be carried by Bloomberg and locally in Boston on WHDH-TV Channel 7.

The July 4 event will consist of the Boston Pops/Keith Lockhart televised concert live from

the Shed at Tanglewood (approx. 8-10:30 p.m.), with no fireworks planned at Tanglewood; the concert will be followed by a live fireworks display televised from the Boston Common (approx. 10:30-11 p.m.), with no concert sound or video planned for the Boston Common.

Keith Lockhart, who will direct his 26th Fourth-of-July program as Boston Pops Conductor, will lead a program featuring the extraordinary talents of headliners Jon Batiste—winner of the Academy Award for Best Original Score for the Pixar film Soul, Grammy-nominated musician, television personality, and bandleader of The Late Show with Stephen Colbert—and Mavis Staples—the legendary R&B, soul, and gospel singer, civil rights activist, and Rock

Roll Hall of Fame inductee,

Continued on page 10



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End Date: June 24, 2022

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- FREE Classes at Northeastern's College of Professional Studies
- Monthly Professional and Personal Development
- \$6,345 Education Award upon completion
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Small Scale Safety Improvements proposed for Mission Hill

BY LAUREN BENNETT

The Boston Transportation Department (BTD) held a community meeting on June 16 to present to residents plans for small scale safety improvement in the Mission Hill Neighborhood as part of the city's Slow Streets program.

Dan Lesser, Director of Strategic Initiatives for Boston's Transportation and Public Works departments, explained that the Small Scale Safety Projects is a new program that is "filling in a gap in our Vision Zero work" to have no fatal or serious traffic accidents in the city by 2030.

"Annually, the City receives over 2000 comments related to safety improvements at specific sites, streets, and/or intersections," according to a slide presented at the meeting.

Lesser said that comments will be prioritized based on how many crashes are happening on a particular street, "what key community institutions are nearby," and who lives in the neighborhood, such as young people, elderly people, or those with a disability.

There are different categories for safety issues, including safer crossings, safer turns, and safer speeds, according to the presentation.

"Many of our tools that can create safer crossings and safer turns can be implemented with quick-build materials (flexposts and pavement markings)," the presentation read.

Amy Cording, Director of Engineering for the Boston Transportation Department, said that part of the work includes "tightening up intersections," as well as "creating refuge for pedestrians in the middle of the road or making turns closer to 90 degrees."

She spoke about the intersection between Calumet and St. Alphonsus Streets, as well as at Hillside and Calumet Streets, among other intersections.

At North Calumet St., she said that daylighting will be done "for sight distancing."

Cording said that while BTD has heard "about the desire for crosswalks," all projects proposed as part of the Small Scale Safety improvements are "paint and post."

She said that if those do not end up solving the issues, "we can change it before coming back with anything permanent."

She also said that BTD "wanted to get at least one project per neighborhood in Boston" as part of this program, and "prove to people that 311 can work."

Gary Walling said that "as a cyclist, I see people riding bikes

and skateboards straight down to Tremont," adding that he is "expecting a death any day."

Lesser said that the timeline for these projects is "based on the availability of our contractors," but the goal is to have them complete before the winter comes. A comment was made about not doing these sorts of projects as kids are going back to school, and Lesser said he is "hopeful we can get that in before then."

Residents who have follow-up questions or concerns regarding these projects, or who would like more information, can reach out to William Moose from the BTD at william.moose@boston.gov.

Boston Pops

Continued from page 9

Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award winner, and Kennedy Center honoree.

In addition, the Six-String Soldiers of the U.S. Army Field Band—the most-followed military music group in the world—and members of the United States Air Force Band's Singing Sergeants, the official chorus of

the USAF and the first premier military chorus to enlist women—will be featured in small ensemble and choral selections during the evening's performance. Among the quintessential patriotic selections to be performed are "The Star-Spangled Banner," a salute to our armed forces medley, a patriotic sing-along, and the Boston Pops' signature piece, "The Stars and Stripes Forever." No Boston Pops

July 4 concert would be complete without a performance of Tchaikovsky's "1812" Overture, which, in traditional style, with live cannons and bells, will bring the musical portion of the evening to a close. Hosts for the July 4 program will be Bloomberg's Alix Steel, Romaine Bostick, Janet Wu, and Joe Shortsleeve. Stay tuned to www.bostonpops.org and the Boston Pops social media platforms for further pro-

gram details.

DECISION TO MOVE THE 2021 BOSTON POPS JULY 4TH SPECTACULAR TO TANGLEWOOD

After careful consideration of recent issuances from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts easing restrictions on masking, physical distancing, and capacity allowances, the Boston Pops determined that in order to best ensure the health and safety of everyone involved, it was prudent to postpone its return to the Esplanade until 2022, when there would be adequate time to plan and execute the complex event, which usually entails a ten-month planning process involving multiple government agencies and many event and concert planning organizations. Owned and operated by the Boston Pops' parent company, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Inc., Tanglewood has the video-capability infrastructure in place to record the concert in a cost-effective way—an important consideration following a year of lost revenue in the millions of dollars due to 16 months of concert cancellations related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"All of us at the Boston Pops are putting our hearts and souls into planning our Fourth-of-July live concert stream for the many wonderful fans of the Boston Pops and the July 4 holiday," Keith Lockhart said in a statement.

"We are thrilled that this special event will launch Tanglewood's reopening and that we

will have a chance to show Boston Pops fans across the country the great beauty and appeal of one of America's most beloved summer music festivals.

Though health concerns related to the pandemic have abated over the last few weeks, after careful consideration we determined there wasn't enough time to organize the many forces needed to safely return to the Esplanade and present what is considered one of the largest concert events in the world. We decided that it just wasn't advisable to squeeze what is normally a ten-month planning period into a five-week window.

When we return to the Esplanade next year, we look forward to working closely with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the City of Boston to bring the Boston Pops July 4th Spectacular back to the banks of the Charles River and to the extraordinary citizens of Boston and music fans worldwide," he added.

"Although Independence Day celebrations look different this July, I am pleased that residents and thousands of others across the country will have the opportunity to enjoy this special televised program from the comfort of their own homes," Acting Mayor Kim Janey said in a statement. "The televised show will feature a spectacular fireworks display from the iconic Boston Common and a musical performance by the renowned Boston Pops broadcast from Tanglewood. As we reopen our City, it is vital for everyone to continue to follow the public health guidance and get vaccinated."

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Two Little Free Libraries with diverse books now in the JP/Mission Hill area

BY LAUREN BENNETT

On June 10, the Little Free Library launched its Read in Color initiative by unveiling 10 new Little Free Libraries throughout Boston. The initiative was made possible by Little Free Library, 826 Boston, and Candlewick Press.

According to a press release, "designed to promote equity and inclusion, Read in Color brings Little Free Library book-sharing boxes and diverse books to readers of all ages."

Ten new Little Free Libraries will be established across Boston, each filled with diverse books that provide perspectives on racism and social justice, and amplify BIPOC, LGBTQ and other representative voices."

In Jamaica Plain, Read in Color Little Free Library boxes can be found at the James W. Hennigan School, at the Boston Teachers Union School, and in Egleston Square in Roxbury, one is located at 826 Boston on Washington St. Readers are encouraged to "take a book, share a book" as part of the organization's mission to increase global access to books.

"We are excited to bring our Read in Color program, along with its diverse books, to the wonderful city of Boston," Greig Metzger, Executive Director of Little Free Library, said in a video celebrating the launch.

Acting Mayor Kim Janey said in the video, "I'm excited about the launch of Read in Color Libraries. 826 Boston, which empowers youth through writing and publishing, worked with the Boston Public Schools to install 10 Little Free Libraries across the City of Boston." She added that Candlewick Press has donated "one year's worth of books to stock the libraries."

Janey continued, "now, people of all ages can enjoy free books by authors of color, as well as books written by students of 826 Boston. Teaching young people to tell their own stories help to build character and improve language skills. Reading their stories lets them know their voices matter."

Aside from Candlewick Press, Little Free Library is also purchasing books for the libraries from Frugal Bookstore, the only Black-owned bookstore in the city of Boston, according to the release.

An application process is also



The new Read in Color Little Free Library in front of the James W. Hennigan School in JP.

available for "stewards" of existing Little Free Library locations

for bundles of these books.

Candlewick is also organizing

FREE Delivery to Mission Hill, LMA, & Surrounding Major Universities

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Gazette Pet of the Week

by Sarah Carroll



A R C H E R

Meet Archer! This handsome 2 year old kitty is FULL of personality. He is confident, playful, sassy, and charming. He did fine with the big dog in his prior foster home, but he is a bully to small dogs and other cats. No kids for Archer because he likes to rule the roost and isn't afraid to get his message across with a swat if something isn't to his liking. Archer

is highly skilled at turning on his charm and winning you over once you meet him. If you've had a sassy kitty before and loved the spunky, playful personality type, then this guy is for you!

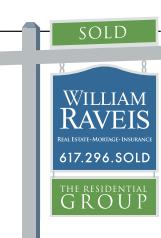
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Mayoral candidates answer questions on parks and open space in recent forum

BY LAUREN BENNETT

Boston Park Advocates, which is "a citywide network of people who champion urban greenspace," according to its website, hosted a mayoral candidate forum on June 29, where candidates responded to a multitude of questions relating to parks and open space in the city.

Candidates John Barros, Andrea Campbell, Anissa Essaibi George, and Michelle Wu were in attendance for the entire forum, while Jon Santiago joined late from another event. Acting Mayor Kim Janey was not in attendance.

The forum was moderated by WBZ journalist Anaridis Rodriguez.

The first question posed to candidates had to do with conflicts between neighbors in the

way parks are used, and what changes they would impose to help with these issues.

John Barros said that he has heard from residents that there is "confusion" over park access for some parks. He said the permit process for booking space in parks should be made easier for residents. Additionally, he called for the creation of more green space and park space and "meet the demands of all of our residents."

Andrea Campbell said that "sometimes there are conflicts," such as people wanting or not wanting dogs or bikes in park space. She also brought up the discussions had recently regarding dirt bikes, especially in Franklin Park. She said that as mayor, she would engage all residents, including those who are active in civic organizations and

neighborhood groups, as well as those who aren't and may not be aware of certain issues. She said more dog parks are necessary, as well as space for young people to ride bikes and play music "between reasonable hours," and "invest in better maintenance."

Anissa Essaibi George said that it's important to ensure "that we've got active space that is well maintained," adding that "parks offer such an incredible opportunity to attract visitors to our city."

She said that she would advocate for more "safe space for dogs to run and play," as well as "active space for youth programming." She also spoke about active spaces like the Franklin Park golf course versus other areas of green space like city parklets.

Wu said that "parks have al-

ways been the lungs of our city," and said that for her family, "Boston parks and open spaces are our summer home." She said that she recognizes this is the case for many other residents as well, and not just in the summer, but year-round. She said an "integrated city plan" is necessary "to match what residents need."

She said that additional staffing and funding is also needed, as "we are very aware that many of our parks are underutilized."

Another question was related to development and open space. "While more housing is critically needed in Boston, development also brings threats to our current and potential green spaces," Rodriguez said. "What creative strategies will your administration implement to balance development and the need for protected and public open space to accommodate a rapidly ex-

panding population?"

Essaibi George talked about "space that is actively designed for passive parklets," and she said these should be integrated with development in the city. She also talked about increasing the city's tree canopy and creating more spaces for "moments of respite and moments of sort of quiet here in the city."

Wu said that "Boston is the place that invented the idea of free, open parks for all," and called for "changes within this process" relating to balancing housing and open space requirements.

Wu said that she has also "stood with parks groups" and helped to "defend" the Public Garden and the Common from "encroachment."

Barros said that "when we

Continued on page 13

State legislature votes to extend outdoor dining and cocktails-to-go bill

Gov. Baker signs bill

BY JOHN LYNDS

Last year groups of bar and restaurant owners emerged as vocal proponents of the state legislature's 'to-go cocktail' bill. During the height of the pandemic owners became frustrated by the fact that liquor store businesses were booming but expensive liquor inventory was collecting dust on the shelves of bars and restaurants in Mission Hill. Many establishments were forced to close due to the COVID-19 pandemic and later

reopened with limited capacity and outdoor seating but couldn't sell any liquor at a profitable volume.

Luckily, the state legislature provided relief with the cocktail-to-go bill but that was set to expire this month after Gov. Charlie Baker lifted the state emergency order that was given back in March 2020.

In May, the state legislature moved to give restaurants and bars in Mission Hill the tools to achieve financial recovery from the pandemic.

The House and the Senate found supporting the local restaurant industry's successful

recovery needed to be of the highest priority--as it was among the hardest hit by economic challenges associated with the state of emergency caused by the pandemic.

The state legislature took the necessary steps to extend the outdoor dining and cocktails-to-go bill that was signed by Gov. Charlie Baker last month.

The bill will allow restaurants to serve patrons who prefer dining to-go while making the streetscape in neighborhoods like Mission Hill more vibrant.

During the height of the pandemic local restaurant and bar owners lobbied the state legisla-

ture for permission to start moving inventory of expensive liquor that had been sitting on shelves since the pandemic began.

The result was the cocktail-to-go bill that was tied to outdoor dining programs across the city and state.

The bill let bars and restaurants sell to-go cocktails with takeout only or delivery food orders. Customers of bars and restaurants in Mission Hill will be able to continue to order two cocktails per entree. However, the total volume of liquor being sold can not exceed 64 ounces.

All cocktails must be sold in a sealed container, and the volume

of alcohol-to-mixer must be the same as for on-premises consumption.

Numerous Mission Hill restaurants took advantage of the cocktail-to-go and the City of Boston's outdoor dining program.

Restaurants that dot the neighborhood received a special permit from the city that allowed them to set up outdoor patios on roadways and sidewalks throughout the neighborhood. That coupled with the cocktail-to-go legislation helped restaurants increase capacity, move inventory and increase profits during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Administration awards \$3.2 Million for COVID-19 Vaccine equity efforts

STAFF REPORT

The Baker-Polito Administration last week announced \$3.2 million in grants and contracts to community-based organizations as part of the Massachu-

setts Vaccine Equity Initiative to increase awareness and access to the COVID-19 vaccine in the 20 cities and towns hardest hit by the pandemic. The awards are part of the Administration's investment of \$27.4 million in federal funds announced in March.

The funds, which will be distributed to select community- and faith-based organizations statewide, aim to reduce barriers to vaccination for communities and populations most disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

Seven new community-based organizations, community health centers, and behavioral health centers have been awarded \$2.2 million to support vaccine navi-

gation services and customized vaccine administration, building on \$6.8 million previously awarded to 25 other organizations.

Local award recipients include:

- Boston Health Care for the Homeless.

These organizations will receive funding to link individuals to vaccination services in the community, and to directly administer vaccination to groups that are not reached by other outreach efforts. These include populations who may benefit from one-on-one vaccination support, such as substance use disorder treatment facilities, places of worship, homeless encampments, food pantries/congregate meal

locations, LGBTQ+ community programs, shelters and day programs, and immigrant assistance centers.

"As we work to build trust in the vaccine across the Commonwealth, we also put our full trust in community-based organizations to know what their communities need, and how to best serve them," said Public Health Commissioner Monica Bharel, MD, MPH. "Our goal has always been to work toward equity by finding solutions that are right for each community."

An additional \$1 million in funding is being administered by Health Resources in Action (HRiA) in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of

Public Health, building on \$2.8 million in previously awarded funds. These funds are being awarded to 23 organizations (resulting in 61 total organizations through this funding) to support their efforts to expand vaccine education and awareness that address the specific needs of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and other communities of color within the 20 prioritized communities.

Newly funded organizations:

- Black Ministerial Alliance of Greater Boston
- Chelsea Black Community
- Sociedad Latina (Mission Hill)



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Mission Hill/Roxbury COVID-19 positive test rate down in June

BY JOHN LYNDS

The weekly COVID-19 positive test rate in Mission Hill/Roxbury dropped to zero last

week according to the latest data released by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC).

The report released last Friday shows 823 residents were

tested last week and no residents tested positive. This was a 100 percent decrease from the 1.8 percent that tested positive during the last week of May.

Mayoral forum

Continued from page 12

think about past developments, we think about what the federal government did with housing," adding that "quality of life matters." He said that investing in more open space and paying specific attention to the tree canopy, as well as the "planning process and zoning for the City of Boston," are important.

Campbell said that the pandemic has shone a light on the need for access to green space. "Sometimes residents don't necessarily know the value that it brings until you don't have it," she said. She said that all of this should also be looked at "through a public health lens," including the planting of more trees and the creation of more open space and parks. She said using Community Preservation Act funding and the Vacant Lot Initiative, both of which she has advocated for as a city councilor, is a way to deal with this issue.

Equity was also a major factor when it came to all of the questions asked about parks and open space, but candidates were asked what "initial steps" they would take for making parks and green spaces more equitable for all.

"One of the ideas I'm most excited about is already moving forward," Wu said, referring to the Urban Conservation Corps that has been proposed. She said that restoring buildings so they are more climate resilient as well as continuing the city's work on an urban forestry plan. Wu said that the city "also need[s] to move forward with the creation of permanent open space for urban agriculture and community gardens as well."

Barros said that "I'll make sure that we move forward on building our parks," and he also called for more protection of parkland from coastal flooding. He said that expanding green space is something he will work on "immediately" if elected mayor.

Campbell said that "greater planning efforts" are needed to create equity in green space, and she called for jobs for people of color, women, and members of the LGBTQ+ community. She said

she "has a track record of delivering" as a district councilor, so she believes she would continue to deliver as mayor of Boston.

Essaibi George said that "by investing in open spaces, we can mitigate the disproportionate impact of climate change on communities of color." She said that it's important to pay attention to neighborhoods "that are most affected by climate change," as well as improving the tree canopy for better air quality. She also said that she would ensure that "the condition of the parks" in neighborhoods like Dorchester is the same as the ones in the Back Bay and downtown.

Community gardens and urban farms have become increasingly important during the pandemic as a food source for many people, and candidates were asked "what specific actions do you propose to support community gardens and urban farms in our city?"

Essaibi George said that she has been able to visit many community gardens across the city as a city councilor. She said the community factor is one of the most important aspects of the gardens.

"It's about the flowers and it's about the vegetables, but it's also about that sense of neighbor to neighbor engagement."

She said that providing community gardens with the proper access to resources is important.

"We see community gardens have been a mechanism for organizing, for empowerment, for democracy along with all of the good that directly comes from open space and the financial and economic independence that can come from producing your own food," Wu said.

She said that the city should "set aside preference for community land trusts, create funding to directly fund the permanent affordability or commitment to designating open spaces as part of community gardens and these spaces."

She said that "we can model this with our own culture that we create on public land," and suggested having fruit trees that are available for anyone in a public

space or a seed library at public libraries.

"I live right next to a community garden," Santiago said, which has helped provide food during the pandemic and allow the community to connect. "I really want to focus my administration on supporting the work that community land trusts do, and by investing in a trust fund to establish them."

John Barros agreed that the community land trusts are a "very important tool when we're thinking about urban farms." He said that providing technical assistance to residents and ensuring that they have healthy, clean soil to grow crops is important for providing healthy and fresh food to Boston residents. He also said that youth should be involved with community gardens and growing food as well.

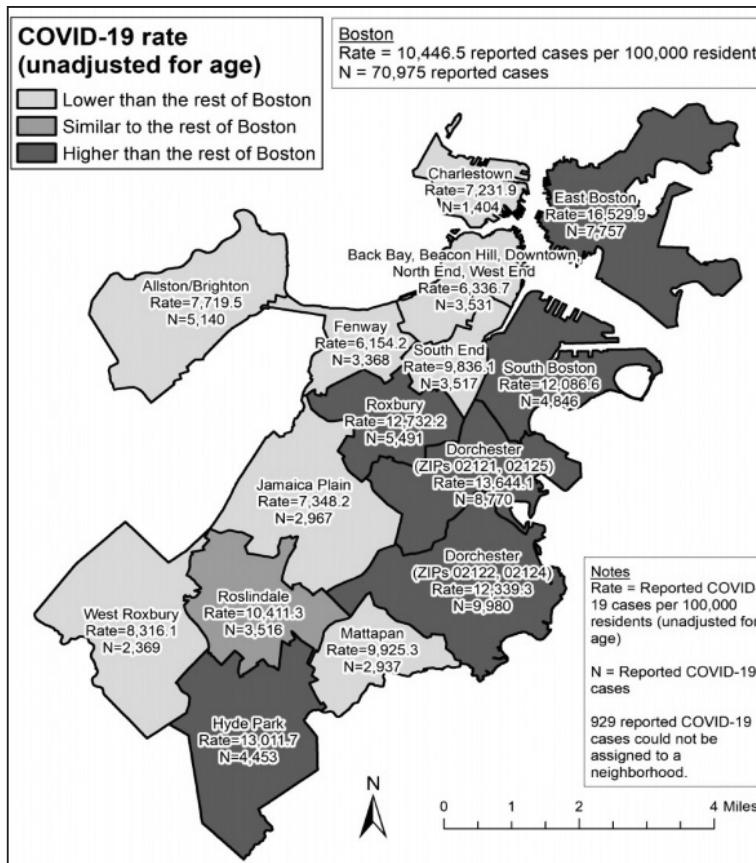
"This is a tool to address issues of food insecurity," Campbell said, adding that the City of Boston could use the "hundreds of vacant lots" to create garden spaces. She agreed that technical assistance, providing resources and investing in community land trusts are important, adding that "food co-ops and co-op models are also critically important" in the city.

Candidates were asked if they would commit to allocating one percent of the city's operating budget to the Parks Department budget, as currently only 0.75 percent of the budget is allocated, Rodriguez said.

All candidates said they would commit to increasing the Parks Department budget, which Rodriguez said covers "maintenance, programs, and project management."

Candidates were asked several other questions as well on topics relating to programming and access to parks and ensuring that parks and other open space will help Boston be climate ready moving forward, as well as maintenance for woodland areas in the city.

The full video of the forum with all questions asked can be found on the Boston Park Advocates Facebook page. Additionally, responses to a candidate questionnaire can be found at bostonparkadvocates.org.



Stats released by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) as part of its weekly COVID-19 report breaks down the number of cases and infection rates in each neighborhood

Of the 47,842 Mission Hill/Roxbury residents tested for COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic, 11.5 percent were COVID positive. This was a 1.7 percent decrease from the 11.7 percent that were found to be positive overall at the end of May.

Citywide, the weekly positive test rate decreased. According to the BPHC 12,562 residents were tested and 0.6 percent were COVID positive--this was a 45 percent increase from the 1.1 percent positive test rate reported by the BPHC two weeks ago.

The Mission Hill/Roxbury COVID-19 infection rate increased only 0.6 percent throughout the month of June.

According to data released last Friday by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) the COVID-19 infection rate went from 1,265.8 cases per 10,000 residents to an infection rate of

1,273.2 cases per 10,000 residents during the month.

An additional 32 Mission Hill/Roxbury residents became infected with the virus throughout June and the number of cases increased from 5,459 to 5,491 cases overall since the pandemic began.

The statistics released by the BPHC as part of its weekly COVID-19 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 0.08 percent last week and went from 70,951 cases to 71,008 confirmed cases in a week. One additional Boston resident died from the virus last week and there are now 1,392 total deaths in the city from COVID.

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EDITORIAL

Enjoy an awesome -- and safe -- 4th of July

Although the Fourth of July falls on a Sunday this year, many of us will be enjoying an extra-long holiday weekend for which the weather hopefully will cooperate.

In addition, with most (though not all) of the COVID-19 restrictions having been lifted, Americans will be primed to enjoy the holiday festivities in many of our traditional ways.

The Fourth of July rekindles fond memories from our childhood of the times when we spent the holiday with our families and friends for gatherings at barbecues, at the beach, and at municipal fireworks displays in the evenings.

Amidst all of our celebrating however, we often overlook the reason why we have a Fourth of July. That's the date in 1776 when a group of America's leaders and best thinkers gathered in Philadelphia to declare their independence from England by means of a proclamation to the world in which they stated "... that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

Another overlooked aspect of the Fourth, especially during a long holiday weekend, is that too many among us will engage in behavior that is risky not only to ourselves, but to our loved ones and others around us.

Possession of fireworks is illegal for everybody, and in no event should be allowed in the hands of children. It is a sad -- but inevitable -- fact that countless Americans will be maimed for life because of accidents involving fireworks over the holiday weekend.

Alcohol abuse is rampant in our country today, especially in the wake of the pandemic, and the Fourth unfortunately provides an opportunity -- which is to say, another excuse -- for those who have alcohol abuse issues to indulge way more than they should, especially when operating a boat or automobile.

It is the responsibility of each of us to ensure that the Fourth is enjoyed safely not only by ourselves, but by those we care about. If someone has had too much to drink, take their keys -- none of us wants to say to ourselves the next day, "If only I had not let them drive...."

As we emerge from the pandemic, we wish all of our readers an awesome -- and safe -- Fourth of July.

The tragic shooting in Winthrop shows all that is wrong in America

The tragedy that struck the town of Winthrop on a quiet Saturday afternoon represents a confluence of everything that is wrong in America today.

The deranged, 28 year-old white gunman who shot two Black persons multiple times in cold blood on a residential sidewalk on an early-summer afternoon was motivated solely by one thing and one thing alone -- racial hatred.

He came across others on that same sidewalk who were white, but he did not threaten them. He saved his wrath -- and his bullets -- for two Black persons, 68 year-old Dave Green and 60 year-old Ramona Cooper, who were not connected to each other, but who only shared the same fate of being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Racial animosity is nothing new in America, but incidents of race-based hate crimes have been on the upswing in recent years, not only as to persons of color, but also against the Asian, Latino, Muslim, and Jewish communities.

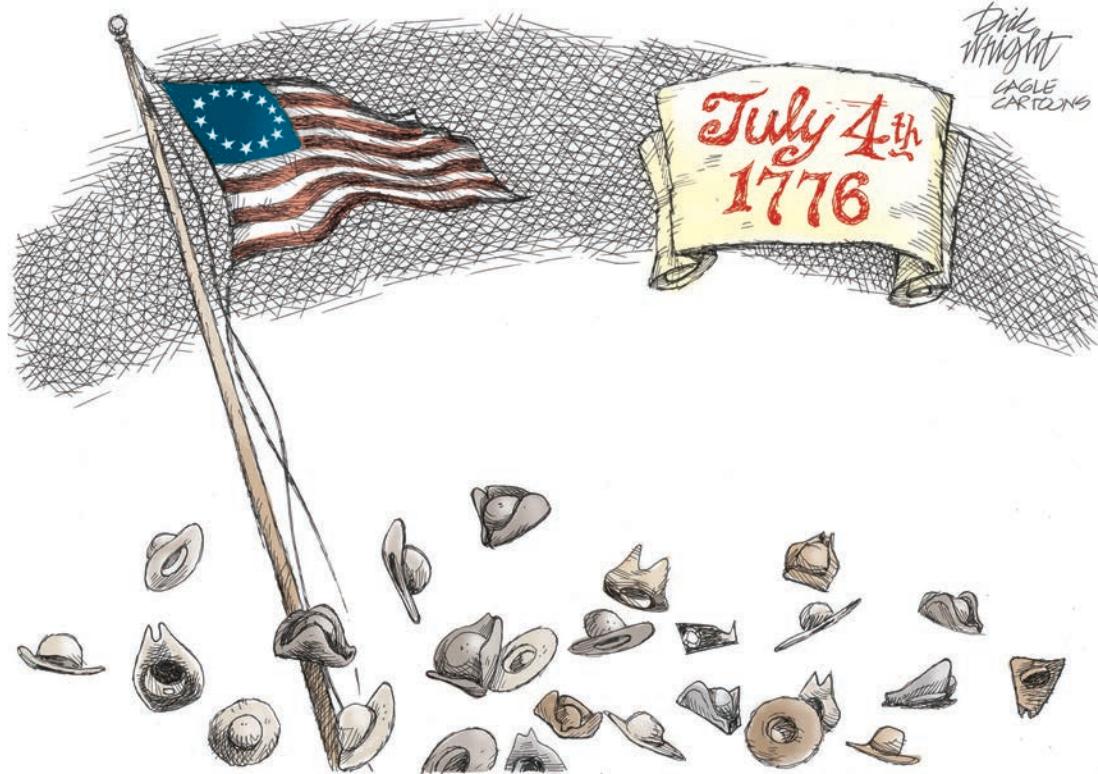
Fueling the increase in race-based violence is the easy accessibility to military-grade weaponry that is becoming omnipresent in our country, where there are almost as many guns as people. The Winthrop shooter had obtained a license to carry a firearm from another police department and was armed with multiple weapons, providing him with the firepower to carry out his murderous spree.

Social media is playing a huge role in the radicalization of white men such as the Winthrop shooter. Social media has opened the doorway to the ideology of white supremacist groups for disgruntled and mentally-unstable individuals. Although the shooter reportedly had a Ph.D and was married, neighbors described behavior that was not normal for a 28 year-old man.

Finally, the economic dislocation being caused by the huge degree of income inequality in our country has left many people in a state of despair, which manifests itself either in self-destructive drug abuse or socially-destructive acts of violence.

None of this is meant to excuse hateful behavior -- but it does provide an explanation for what is going wrong in America today.

The greatest threat to the safety of every American exists within our own country from white supremacist groups and individuals. Whether our nation is capable of facing up to the threat of these domestic terrorists will determine the fate of our democracy and our way of life.



OP-ED

Economic equity is key in Boston's efforts to recover from the pandemic

BY ACTING MAYOR KIM JANEY

Throughout the pandemic, our city has remained resilient through uncertainty and hardship. Together, we are making real progress in our public health recovery. Cases of COVID-19 continue to decline, as vaccination rates climb steadily across the city. Now, we must focus on an economic recovery, reopening and renewal that includes all of our communities. That starts with bold measures that encourage equity in our city and open opportunities for those who have been shut out.

Boston's recovery and reopening is a chance to renew our city, making it stronger and more equitable. The racial wealth gap among Boston residents made headlines even before the pandemic. I know we can do better. My administration is implementing concrete changes to help working families earn living wages and build wealth of their own. I have announced two new measures to promote economic equity and opportunity for working families in Boston.

The first initiative put homeownership within reach for first-time homebuyers. I used a first-time buyer program to purchase my own home, so I know how important

ant homeownership is to economic stability and breaking the cycle of poverty. That is why I am excited to triple down payment assistance for the Boston Home Center's first-time Homebuyer Program.

With a \$2.4 million commitment to this program in my FY22 budget proposal, we will be able to provide up to \$40,000 in assistance to income-eligible residents seeking to purchase a home for the first time. Residents can also receive assistance with down payments and closing costs. This change more than triples the average amount of assistance previously offered by the City.

Owning a home is part of the American Dream, and I am proud of the work our City is doing to make this a reality. As we work to close the racial wealth gap, it is programs like these that can help us achieve equity in Boston.

Closing the wealth gap means we also have to address the wage gap. That is why I have also signed an executive order establishing a prevailing wage standard for key city service contractors.

Starting July 1, Boston will guarantee rates for city contractors of \$14.85 to \$20 per hour for services such as cleaning and security, with an

additional \$6.26 to \$6.70 per hour in health and pension benefits.

This executive order recognizes the importance of sustainable wages and benefits. It is time that the City of Boston sets a standard for other employers to follow that supports the wellbeing of Boston's working families, while also encouraging other employers to join us in the effort.

These new steps help ensure an equitable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. These efforts will work together with other programs I have introduced since being sworn-in as Mayor, including the ONE+Boston Homebuyer Program, \$50 million in new rental relief to help residents stay in their homes and a \$50 million emergency package to support an equitable recovery and reopening for our City's residents, workers and small businesses.

I will continue fighting for a stronger, more equitable Boston. It takes persistence to make a difference, and I promise that economic equity for residents will be at the forefront of Boston's agenda to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Kim Janey is the Acting Mayor of Boston

OP-ED

Taking on our Housing Crisis

BY MICHELLE WU, CITY COUNCILOR AT-LARGE AND CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR

One of the biggest challenges the next Mayor of Boston will take on is our housing crisis.

Too many Bostonians are shut out from buying homes, dealing with soaring property taxes on a fixed income, or struggling to make rent. Many residents worry about the cost of living, so much that they aren't sure that they can stay.

That's reflected in the number of families being pushed out by cost of living. Though our population keeps growing, the number of school-aged children in Boston is about half what it was in 1970.

The vibrancy and long-term wellbeing of our city depends on

our ability to keep our housing costs under control—not just to attract and retain new residents but also to protect and invest in the ones already here.

We cannot allow the city of Boston to be hollowed out by its lack of affordable housing options.

Our city has a proud legacy of incredible innovation. We were the first city in this country to build a public library, a public park and a taxpayer-funded public school. Yet when it comes to tackling the housing crisis and managing development in a way to build growth, affordability, community and environmental justice, we have lagged behind.

As home prices skyrocket, rents rise and disparities along racial and economic lines only

increase, we need bold solutions that match the scale and urgency of the crisis.

In Boston, our leadership for housing can have immediate and far-reaching impact. Several years ago, when Airbnb was driving rents up across the city, we built a coalition to stand up and pass the most protective ordinance in the country. They sued Boston, but when we won in court, it set a national precedent so cities across the country could also protect their tenants.

This week, I am announcing a Housing Justice Agenda to expand homeownership opportunities and housing stability for low- and middle-income Bostonians, residents of color and seniors, and to address the intersection of our homelessness, substance

use, and mental health crises.

As Mayor, I will expand existing city programs to increase the purchasing power of first-time homebuyers, increase property tax relief for seniors and others living on a fixed income, and leverage our capital budget to build new, permanently-affordable housing. We must take advantage of existing public assets to co-locate housing with libraries, schools and other municipal buildings to create new, multi-use developments that are deeply affordable and energy-efficient. This is a simple solution to help grow our housing stock while ensuring that units fit the environmental standards we need for a city of the future.

I will also push for greater tenant protections against eviction and displacement, and I'll prioritize investments and improvements in the Boston Housing Authority while creating new

supportive housing.

These are just some of the actions we can take to tackle displacement and make Boston a city where people of all incomes, backgrounds, professions, and ages can make a home and build community.

We will only deliver housing justice when we place our full focus and energy on opening up more housing opportunities, and listen to our residents who are dealing with this crisis every day.

But we have to act quickly. Our city is made vibrant by our neighborhoods and communities. To ensure they can thrive well into the future, we need leadership that takes on our housing crisis with the urgency it requires.

Michelle Wu is a Boston City Councilor as well as a candidate for Mayor in the upcoming election.

OP-ED

Medical care, American Dream

DR. GLENN MOLLETTE

Until recently my wife and I paid over \$2,000 a month for medical insurance. We each had a \$6,000 deductible. One year we both had procedure's which meant we had \$12,000 in out of pocket expenses. There were also some other "uncovered" medical costs throughout the year which resulted in over \$40,000 in medical insurance and out of pocket costs. The procedures themselves of course cost far and above what our out of pocket expenses were. Most likely if we had not had health insurance the doctors and medical facilities would not have performed them. In America, you have to have medical insurance or the means to cover the costs of your healthcare.

For the average American \$40,000 in medical costs in one year means an eternity of debt. The prospects of such makes average Americans shy away from medical care they need. Unaffordable medical care is not an American dream. Honestly, for

too many Americans it's a nightmare.

A business owner recently told me, "I pay for insurance for my employees but it's barely enough insurance to meet the legal requirements for our business. It's terrible insurance. It pays for almost nothing and no one with our insurance would ever want to go to the hospital." This is tragic as all Americans need good medical care. However, the insurance companies in America are making billions in profit. The way they make profit is by denying to pay for something you need. The health insurance industry had a "net" profit of 22 billion dollars in 2019. Businesses need to make profit, but Americans need medical care, not denial and medical debt that leads only to serious anxiety for Americans.

"If you are buying an ACA (Obamacare) plan as non-subsidized health insurance for a family of four, you can expect to pay about \$25,000 for the year in premiums and deductibles. That

or Nightmare?

breaks down to an average of \$17,244 in annual premium cost for health insurance for families of 4 and \$7,767 in deductible expenses. If you qualify for a subsidy this will certainly help but just the out of pocket deductible can make healthcare daunting for most." (ehealthinsurance.com)

Healthcare is a major component of financial security. Financial devastation is lurking around the corner for any American who does not have a good medical care safety net. Any hospital stay today amounts to tens of thousands of dollars.

You must make medical insurance a priority for you and your family. Also, our government is still a long way from solving our medical insurance dilemma. Obamacare has not fixed our problem. It's a step but we have a long journey ahead of us. We must have access to good and affordable medical care in this country and we must not give up on making it good for all Americans.

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Mission Hill GAZETTE

Circulation 7,000

Published 12 times a year in Jamaica Plain by Independent Newspaper Group

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MassDOT releases information ahead of the July 4th holiday weekend

STAFF REPORT

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is asking the public to plan ahead this Fourth of July, and to expect increased holiday travel. If driving, plan for trips utilizing MassDOT's many "real time" travel tools, and if taking public transportation, to check holiday schedules in regard to your trip.

"The number of people traveling has been steadily increasing since early spring so members of the public should expect to find it busy on the roads and on public transportation this holiday weekend," said Acting Transportation Secretary and CEO Jamey Tesler. "And while the Baker-Polito Administration is pleased to report approximately 4.2 million individuals in the state are fully vaccinated, travelers should be prepared for some COVID-19 restrictions to continue in some instances, including a mask mandate on public transportation and some health policies specific to some establishments."

"We ask that anyone traveling for the Fourth to plan ahead," said Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver. "With the Fourth

falling on the weekend, travelers should expect higher volumes on Friday and Monday. We urge everyone to slow down and make smart decisions before getting behind a wheel this weekend."

MassDOT is taking steps to facilitate the flow of traffic during the holiday period and will be postponing scheduled roadway construction effective at 5:00 a.m., Friday, July 2, with scheduled construction activities resuming at the normal start of business on Tuesday, July 6. In addition, the High Occupancy Vehicle Lane (HOV) between Boston and Quincy on I-93 will open one hour early for the afternoon commute on Thursday, July 1, at 2 p.m. and two hours early on Friday, July 2, at 1 p.m. The HOV lane will re-open during regularly scheduled hours on Monday, July 5. The Sumner Tunnel Swing Lane will open to normal scheduled operations Friday, July 2, and Monday, July 5.

MassDOT has carefully scheduled construction to avoid high summer holiday traffic volume periods so work activities will pause over the Fourth of July Weekend on the project to replace eight bridges during eight weekends on I-90 in Southborough and Westborough.

The MBTA has released the information regarding travel during the holiday period which can be found on www.mbta.com.

Customers are reminded that face coverings are required on all MBTA property, including vehicles, stops, and stations. More on mask requirements on public transportation can be at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-mask-requirements>.

- Additional subway service will run after 2:00 PM to accommodate Boston Harborfest attendees on Saturday, July 3.

- Additional subway service will run after 2:00 PM on Sunday, July 4.

- All Bus, and the RIDE service will run on a Sunday schedule on Sunday, July 4.

- All Commuter Rail and Ferry service will run on a regular weekend schedule on Sunday, July 4.

- All MBTA modes will be free after 9:30 PM on Sunday, July 4.

- Subway and Commuter Rail service will run on a Saturday schedule on Monday, July 5.

- Bus and the RIDE service will run on a Sunday schedule on Monday, July 5.

- Ferry service will run on a weekday schedule on Monday, July 5.

- For full MBTA schedule details, please visit: mbta.com/July4

Customers should sign up for T-Alerts and follow @MBTA on Twitter for the latest service information. Real-time parking updates can be found on Twitter @MBTA_Parking.

The MBTA has also provided additional information for those traveling to see the Boston Common fireworks on Sunday, July 4.

In the interest of public safety, Park Street and Boylston Stations will close at 8 PM. Nearby Green Line service is available at Government Center or Arlington. Nearby Red Line service is available at Downtown Crossing or South Station.

Commuter Rail lines will hold the last outbound train for riders returning from fireworks on the Common.

Customers should be aware that the City of Boston will close some streets near the Boston Common.

Customers are also advised that all Commonwealth of MA Administrative offices are closed on Monday, July 5, including the Registry of Motor Vehicles customer service centers. Please visit, at any hour of the day, the RMV online to learn more: www.mass.gov/RMV. In addition, AAA

members can conduct many RMV services at numerous AAA branch office locations in Massachusetts during AAA normal business hours.

Massport expects higher than normal traveler volume over the weekend. Additionally, there are several ongoing construction projects happening at the airport. Airport travelers are advised to allow for extra time while getting to and from Logan Airport. Massport encourages travelers to use the MBTA Blue and Silver Lines, or the Logan Express to get to the airport. More information on transportation options can be found at <https://www.massport.com/logan-airport/to-from-logan-transportation-options/>.

For traffic and road conditions, drivers may use the following options to make decisions:

Download MassDOT's Go-Time mobile app and view real-time traffic conditions.

MassDOT wishes all members of the public an enjoyable holiday weekend and reminds the public that the mask requirement remains in place in certain spaces. Additionally, if you are sick you are asked not to travel. And if you are having symptoms of Covid-19 you should get tested. For more information about Covid-19 and to get a vaccine visit: www.mass.gov/covid-19-updates-and-information.



The Joys and Challenges of the "Sandwich Generation"

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