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# Mission Hill GAZETTE

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APRIL 3, 2026 — APRIL 30, 2026

## CELEBRATING AT THE PENGUIN



DEREK KOUYOUJIAN PHOTO

The Penguin in Brigham Circle was a happening place to go to for St Patrick's Day fun. Penguin staff, Shey, brings out a pizza. See Page 5 for more photos.

## Community pushes back against proposed Parker Hill Ave. projects

BY DYLAN SHOBE

Mission Hill locals are pushing back against two approved developments and one project currently under city review along Parker Hill Avenue. The residents say they are worried the additions would eliminate parking, clog traffic and alter the community demographic and dynamics with transient residents.

"If it's not [Northeastern University] students, it's going to

be Longwood Medical Area and short-term people," said Richard Giordano, a Mission Hill resident who has community planning experience. "I understand there's a need for [students] — the problem is that it doesn't stabilize a neighborhood."

Savage Properties, a Boston development company, is creating each of the three developments at 11-11A, 36 and 85 Parker Hill Ave. The sites begin at the bottom of the street's

steep slope that allows one-sided street parking.

The building at 85 Parker Hill Ave. first served as a home for New England Baptist Hospital nurses and, later, seniors before its eventual sale to Jason Savage last year, said Giordano.

The three apartment buildings will total 223 units consisting of 112 studios, 70 one-bedrooms and 41 two-bedrooms. The site at 11-11A and 36 Parker Hill

Continued on page 3

## CAMH considers Sachem Street rental development

BY ADAM SWIFT

A local developer and business owner is looking to convert a longstanding two-family house at 73 Sachem St. into a six-unit development.

David Hassman appeared before the Community Alliance of Mission Hill at its March meeting to discuss the project and review the zoning relief it will need from the city. Hassman is the owner of Boston Property Services, and notes that he currently rents out nine other units in the Mission Hill neighborhood.

Hassman will be before the

CAMH again later this month for a quick review of the project and a CAMH vote to recommend its approval to the city's zoning board.

In addition to the 73 Sachem St. plot, Hassman was the successful bidder on a request for proposals to purchase and develop the adjoining lot at 0 Sachem St. Hassman said he is looking to combine the lots for the project. The 0 Sachem lot contains a historic wall constructed as part of the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s, and Hassman will be responsible for

Continued on page 2

## Concerns over proposed apartment complex on Washington Street

BY DANIELA GINSBURG

A proposed construction on a Washington Street strip in Jamaica Plain has raised concerns from business owners about congestion, inflation and other neighborhood concerns.

Three dozen residents, including local business owners, attended a virtual public meeting on March 11 to hear the proposal. They said the development would cause housing prices

to skyrocket, making JP even more unaffordable, with many disapproving of the aesthetics of the proposed building and the traffic havoc the construction would cause on nearby streets.

"How can you possibly put a crane in the backyard on our property?" asked Michael West, a local funeral home owner who said he is "vehemently opposed" to the proposed site.

Continued on page 13

## PINE STREET INN HOLDS ANNUAL HOME REMEDY BREAKFAST

Pine Street Inn held its annual Home Remedy breakfast on Thursday, March 26, bringing together corporate, civic, and philanthropic leaders to support the organization's mission to end homelessness.

The event included featured speaker Liz Murray, a New York Times bestselling author and subject of the film Homeless to Harvard, and a presentation of "The Key to Pine Street Inn" to Massachusetts State Representative Aaron Michlewitz.



MA State Rep. Aaron Michlewitz receiving the "Key to Pine Street Inn" from Lyndia Downie.



Pine Street Inn President and Executive Director Lyndia Downie speaking.



Pine Street Inn Board of Directors Life Trustee Dave Manzo, MA Senator Bill Driscoll, Lyndia Downie, Pine Street Inn BoD member Fr. John Unni.



The crowd applauds at Pine Street Inn's Home Remedy breakfast.



Keynote speaker Liz Murray.



Co-Founder and Executive Director, Breaktime Connor Schoen, and Marty Martinez President & Chief Executive Officer, United Way.



Omar, Pine Street's tenant speaker, and Christian Petit-Frere, Pine Street Inn case manager on stage.



Pine Street Home Remedy 2026\_1: (l-r) - Pine Street Inn Board of Directors member Fr. John Unni, Rep. Aaron Michlewitz, Pine Street Inn Deputy Director April Stevens, Chair of the Pine Street Inn Board of Directors Lorn Davis, Pine Street Inn President & Executive Director Lyndia Downie, Liz Murray — featured speaker and New York Times bestselling author, Home Remedy emcee and GBH radio host Callie Crossley, Pine Street Inn tenant speaker Omar, Pine Street Inn case manager speaker Christian Petit-Frere.

## CAMH

Continued from page 1

preserving the wall, as well as maintaining a large historic oak on the property.

Once the lots are combined, the total lot size will be 6,880 feet. The project will add four new units to the existing two units in a single building on the site. Two of the units will be two bedrooms, two will be two bedrooms plus an office, and two will be three bedroom units with an office, according to Hassman.

Several CAMH speakers said they appreciated that Hassman was seeking variances to construct smaller units on the combined lot, rather than building two larger six- to seven-bedroom

units that could be constructed by right. The project also required zoning relief because there are no on-site parking spaces.

As is typical in the Mission Hill neighborhood with the development of new rental units, concerns were raised about the apartments being rented to college students.

Hassman said his goal is to rent the units to young professionals rather than college students. He added that of the nine units he currently has in Mission Hill, five of the units are rented to professionals. In addition, he said his property services company will run a thorough check on any potential tenants for the Sachem Street property.

The developer said he would also take into consideration con-

cerns about a patio on the building being potentially used as a party spot by student tenants. Hassman added that the project was designed with no roof or regular decks attached to the units to curtail that type of activity.

Hassman was also asked about the potential of developing the site as a condominium development, rather than a rental project.

"If there was another floor to this and there was parking, a condo developer could make this work," said Hassman. "As it currently stands, with the six units I have, I can't make condos work without parking and I couldn't get financing. If there were more units, it starts to tip the scale, but that's not what I have."

In other business at its March

meeting, the CAMH heard from the project team and owner of 163-165 Hillside St. Project attorney Ryan Spitz said property owner Christopher McGue is looking to renovate the existing two-family dwelling into a three-family dwelling. The building would provide two on-site parking spaces and be equipped with a full sprinkler system, according to Spitz.

"This property has been severely neglected and an eyesore to the neighborhood," said McGue. He said he purchased the property from the city when the property was in receivership and had a number of health and safety violations that were never rectified by the previous owner.

"Our intentions are to completely renovate the entire

building up to 100 percent code compliance, remove the junk and abandoned cars in the back, regrade the alleyway in the back, and bring this property up to its full value to fit in with a lot of the other houses in the neighborhood," said McGue.

The project will be back before the CAMH at its April meeting for a recap of the plans and any potential revisions so that the community alliance can make a recommendation on the project to the city's zoning board.

In other business, the CAMH also heard from the architect for a proposed three-unit triple decker project at 18 Delle Ave.

That project will also be back before the CAMH at its April meeting.

## Parker Hill

Continued from page 1

Ave. will cost \$8 million and \$9.5 million, respectively, according to the BPDA.

Giordano spoke out against the apartment unit mix of 11-11A at a zoning appeals meeting in late February. He contrasted the social dynamic that studio and one-bedroom apartments create between different age groups in Mission Hill.

“When you have a neighborhood where people are bringing up families, the stability that’s there is that everybody is looking out for each other,” Giordano said in an interview after the meeting. “That kind of thing just does not happen when you’ve got... 3,000 students living on Mission Hill.”

Martin Beinborn, a resident and the president of the Community Alliance of Mission Hill, said that in his 15 years on Mission Hill, he has witnessed families and students fade into the distance as they fight against rising rent prices.

“They have to compete with investors,” said Beinborn.

Absentee investors generate much more revenue renting to students than families, he added.

Beinborn said the alliance’s only leverage against displacement is to push back on intrusive development plans. He said the alliance has set two meetings with developers — one to provide details and feedback about the plan; the other to present modifications and formally vote. The second meeting — on the site at 85 Parker Hill Ave. — has been postponed to April 15, per the developers’ request, said Beinborn.

Boston’s Planning and Development Agency must approve



Parking lot located behind 11 Parker Hill Avenue, where the six story addition will be built. Dylan Shobe / Jamaica Plain Gazette Staff

the project.

The agency said it received differing requests for smaller (studio and one-bedroom) and larger (two-bedroom) units for the site at 11-11A Parker Hill Ave. Officials decided to add more two-bedroom units in addition to studios and one-bedroom apartments, according to an agency spokesperson.

Giordano and Beinborn also expressed concerns over parking due to an expected influx of residents and students moving into the proposed apartment buildings. The 35 parking spaces proposed between the three buildings will put pressure on a street that already lacks the bandwidth for more parking, deliveries, and daily traffic, Beinborn said.

“Oftentimes development isn’t synchronized with traffic planning,” said Beinborn. “It would have made sense to look at it from a traffic standpoint first, but I think that hasn’t happened.”

He said officials are exploring calm traffic on other narrow

streets, such as Terrace Street, but that thus far it’s been more talk than action.

Beinborn also said he has been hearing that the heavy student population — near the Orange Line tracks up on Fort Hill — has spilled into Mission Hill and is causing various problems.

Beinborn also pointed to the alliance’s now defunct “Problem Properties Task Force,” made up of university representatives, residents and campus police. That group used to analyze where police calls clustered to understand issues like disruptive and boisterous student parties.

Beinborn said the community worsened after the task force dissolved, but he is now hoping to open dialogue with residents from all ages to improve relations.

“We need more talking to each other,” he said. “I’m sure there are quite a few people here who could take us around or give us the other perspective... and to



Westside entrance of the current building under review and located at 85 Parker Hill Avenue. Dylan Shobe / Jamaica Plain Gazette Staff.



Parking lot currently located where 36 Parker Hill Avenue will commence building. Dylan Shobe / Jamaica Plain Gazette Staff.

find some compromise.”

This story is part of a partnership between The Independent Newspaper Group and the Boston University Department of Journalism’s Newsroom pro-

gram.

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# Hill Happenings

By MAURICE 'MOSSY' MARTIN

The Mission Hill Post 327 held a meeting last month at Siro's Restaurant in Dorchester.

We are always seeking good men and women to join our Post, and we welcomed new associate Bill Mulvey as a S.A.L. member (Sons of American Legion).

Bill is my buddy from Tobin Court and a Mission High graduate, class of '71. Back in the day, Bill was the player-coach for the 'Honkey Cats,' a popular hoop team in the Parker Hill Summer Basketball League.

Belated Happy Birthday (March 14) to Elaine Adams, who is a delightful Mission Hill woman and a retired nurse at the N.E. Baptist Hospital. I love nurses. It was a milestone birthday for Elaine, who celebrated with a gleeful trip to Aruba with friends

Penguin Pizza was packed with St. Patrick's Day celebrants.

In the afternoon, eight Irish dancers from the Woods Irish Dancing School in South Boston delighted the Penguin crowd with a skillful display of step-dancing.

A few hours later, the Boston Police Gaelic Column of Pipes and Drums marched into the Penguin, and soon thereafter,



Local Irish step dancers and Penguin Pizza owner Pamela Carthy celebrating St. Patrick's Day.

they strode across the street to a booming standing ovation at The Mission Bar & Grill.

Thanks to Penguin Pizza owner Pamela Carthy for giving me a gleaming green St. Patrick's Day shirt.

I stopped in the Penguin last weekend to watch the March Madness and had a cold mug of

fresh Penguin Ale and a tasty slice of pizza.

Down the road at Roxbury Community College, Mission Hill seniors were treated to a flavorful corned beef and cabbage dinner while listening to Irish vocalist James Armstrong.

The terrific event was spon-

sored by Roxbury Tenants of Harvard and the evening culminated when talented Mark Coyle sang his signature song, 'Danny Boy.'

Condolences to the family of Joe DeGiacomo, who passed away in February.

Joe, an Army Reserves veteran, lived in Braintree and he grew up in the Mission Hill project. Joe was a mentor to many kids in Braintree, where he coached baseball and basketball.

Joe would beam when he'd see his former players, and they would greet their beloved coach, calling him "Mister D."

I didn't know Joe, but I knew his brother, Salvatore 'Sully' DeGiacomo from the old Tobin Court days.

Sully was a sturdy lineman on the famous 1966 undefeated Killilea Club football team in the Boston Park League. That team won all six of their games, and they didn't yield a point.

Killilea, coached by Butch McGrath, climaxed their perfect season with an 8-0 win over the Dorchester Knicks, witnessed by a few hundred howling fans at McLaughlin Park.

Mary 'Mae' (King) McCarthy, a wonderful woman from Mission Hill passed away peacefully last

month. Mary was living in Braintree, and she graduated from Mission High in 1957.

R.I.P., Mae, and donations in her memory can be made to Grow Associates Inc., a non-profit in Randolph dedicated to empowering adults with disabilities.

Last Sunday, two attractive local ladies, Kacy Hughes and Carol, accompanied me to Encore Casino.

We had a nice time and while gambling we used our heads for more than hat racks, and the day culminated with a Shake Shack bite to eat.

Play ball!

With the warm weather here, it's baseball season and still time to sign up for the Mission Hill Little League. Registration is free, three brackets from ages 4 to 12. Visit [www.missionhill-littleleague.org](http://www.missionhill-littleleague.org), or call Dan Weldon 617-939-1766 for more information.

Opening Day is Saturday, April 25, at Killilea Park.

What are the rules in Zebra baseball?

Three stripes, and you're out!

Maurice can be reached at [mossymartin2@gmail.com](mailto:mossymartin2@gmail.com).

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Neville Building.....	Huntington Avenue	The Mission Pub .....	724 Huntington Ave	Crispy Dough Pizza.....	1514 Huntington Ave
Robert & Theresa Parks		Stop & Shop .....	Tremont & Huntington	Discount Auto Part.....	1486 Tremont St
Community Building.....	Mission Park Drive	Walgreens .....	Tremont & Huntington	Laundromat .....	1460 Tremont St
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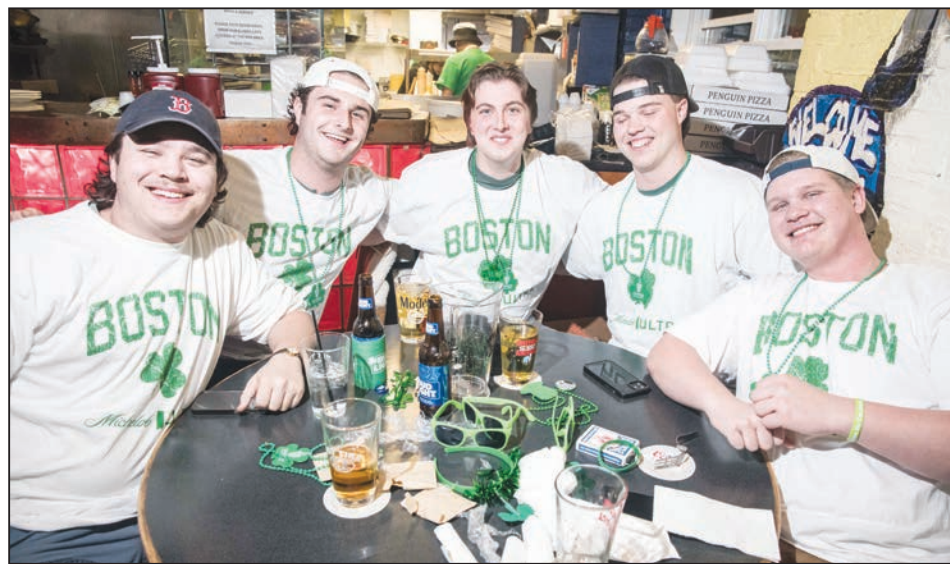
# CELEBRATING ST. PATRICK'S DAY AT THE PENGUIN

The Penguin in Brigham Circle was a happening place to go to for St. Patrick's Day fun.

DEREK KOUYUMJIAN PHOTOS



The Penguin was packed with St. Patrick's Day shenanigans.



Friends convene (shown above and below) to enjoy St. Patrick's Day together.



Eddie, Jacob, and Valerie enjoy some good drinks and excellent company.




Friends convene to enjoy St. Patrick's Day together.

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# Jamaica Plain Gazette & Mission Hill Gazette 2026 Publishing Calendar

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## JANUARY

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## PALM SUNDAY PROCESSION AT ST. CECILIA CHURCH

St. Cecilia Church on Belvedere Street held a procession before their Palm Sunday Mass.

DEREK KOUYUMJIAN PHOTOS



St. Cecilia Pastor Fr John Unni delivers the reading at the start of the Palm Sunday procession held outside of the church.



Parishioners follow into St. Cecilia Church to continue the Palm Sunday service.



The sidewalk on Belvedere Street is readied for the Palm Sunday procession outside of St. Cecilia Church.



St. Cecilia Pastor Fr John Unni finished the Palm Sunday procession outside of the church.



Parishioners inside St. Cecilia Church.



Children of the St. Cecilia Parish bring up canned and boxed food donations for the Mary Ann Brett Food Pantry in Uphams Corner in Dorchester.

## What's Happening on Main Streets

BY COURTNEY WRIGHT

"In the Spring, I have counted 136 kinds of weather inside of 24 hours." -Mark Twain

St. Patrick's Day is always a big deal in Boston and while Mission Hill is acutely aware of the debauchery that accompanies it, we did our best to counter that and offer some festive entertainment in its place in Brigham Circle on the Saturday prior to the holiday for the second year in a row. On March 14th, the Boston Police Gaelic Column Pipe and Drum Band arrived on their trolley tour and performed amongst packed houses at both Penguin Pizza and the Mission Bar and Grill. I loved seeing people's faces as they entered each of the businesses and began playing. For those who didn't know it was happening, they were pleasantly surprised and joined in. It was a great night and judging by how long they hung out, I believe them when they say they can't wait to come back next year. Thank you again

to MHMS Board member and Penguin owner Pamela Carthy for making the connection that made the event possible and to Harry Walsh, owner at the Mission, for being such a gracious host to the post-performance festivities and collaboration all weekend. It was a great Saturday in Mission Hill and I'm so appreciative of everyone who helped to make it possible.

This Saturday, April 4th, at 1 p.m., the Parker Hill Library will host the annual Anthology Reading of the Mission Hill Women's Writing Group. With a grant from the Mission Hill/Fenway Neighborhood Trust, the MH Women's Writing Group works throughout the fall with writing coaches and others to create an annual Anthology of their work. Nancy Ahmadifar works hard to put this together and her efforts are appreciated by so many; I am excited to attend and hear the work of our MH Women's writers in person. I hope you will too.

As we prepare for 'May flowers', April is a busy month. April

1st means that street cleaning is back, but I encourage everyone to download the 311 app and report sidewalk and street trash as you see it. Graffiti Busters- the city's graffiti removal program starts back up the first of May but I encourage you to report it as you see it as well in the meantime.

We secured grant funding last year that enabled us to hire Project Place to do twice weekly street and sidewalk sweeping. I am sure you saw Ivan and Terry out and about on Tuesdays and Fridays helping to clean our business district. They wear vests that say Project Place and I hope you were able to engage with them. Thanks to Rep. Chynah Tyler getting an earmark in the State budget for Main Streets, we will be renewing the contract with Project Place so that the cleaning can continue. Thank you Rep. Tyler!

On Saturday April 11th, a group of Northeastern student volunteers will be joining us to do a neighborhood clean up to

help prepare for Spring and new planters which will be installed by the end of the month with their spring/summer plantings.

If you want an opportunity to get your hands dirty and participate in some neighborhood clean-up efforts, April 25th, is the City's annual Love Your Block clean-up day for Mission Hill. MH Main Streets is one of the registered sites so if you would like to join our Board and other volunteers to participate in a clean-up during Love Your Block, please reach out to me at missionhillmainstreetsboston@gmail.com. We will be meeting at Sheehy Park on April 25th at 9:30 a.m. and all are welcome (but if you plan to come and can let us know, please do so we can prepare supplies). As Margaret Atwood says, 'In the Spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt'.

Mission Hill Little League also kicks off on the 25th of April (see more in Mossy's column) so you could make it a complete day in the neighborhood by volun-

teering in the morning and then going to watch the MH Little League kick-off around noon!

Some good news on the business front- Congratulations to Diego Restrepo on his upcoming new business opening at 1536 Tremont Street! (the former Kush Groove Space) Empire Fruit, as it will be called, is finalizing their buildout of the space and securing final permits (hopefully by the time you're reading this) and hopes to open by the end of the month or early April. The photo accompanying my article this month was provided by Diego to give a preview of their menu and the types of products they will be selling- predominantly fruit, smoothies and cold items like salads and sandwiches. Diego is a Mission Hill resident and has poured his heart into this endeavor so I hope you will all welcome him and his new business when it opens in the coming weeks.

## The great timing debate: should I claim Social Security early or late?

(StatePoint) Retirees become eligible to claim Social Security benefits at age 62, but the timing of when you claim can drastically impact your benefit amount. Still, when to claim will be entirely dependent on your unique situation. As you approach retirement, it's important to understand the impact that timing has on your benefits.

"The timing of when you elect to receive your Social Security benefits warrants thoughtful consideration," said Rich Guerrini, head of PNC Wealth Management. "This decision can significantly influence not only the total benefits you receive, but also the trajectory of your investment income, your tax obligations, and even your health-care premiums."

### How Your Benefit is Calculated

Your benefits are based on



(c) Inside Creative House / iStock via Getty Images Plus

your top 35 years of earnings, adjusted to account for changes in wages from the year they were earned. The Social Security Administration then applies a formula to those figures to arrive at your specific benefit amount at full retirement age (FRA), also referred to as your primary insurance amount (PIA).

There are three options for when to claim your benefits: claim early, claim at your FRA, or claim at age 70. Each comes with its own benefits and risks.

### Claim at age 62

You can begin claiming your benefits as early as age 62, but your benefits will be permanently reduced. Still, there are instances when claiming early

makes sense:

- You're in poor health – The benefit of receiving Social Security early may be worth it, particularly if you're unsure if you'll live beyond your break-even point;
- You're maximizing benefits with a spouse – Timing your claim to Social Security with your spouse can help you maximize a long-term benefit, while fulfilling cash flow needs in the present;
- You no longer want to work – The lifestyle benefits of not working may outweigh a larger future financial benefit from Social Security; or
- You want to preserve assets with growth potential – Claiming Social Security early may preserve investment or savings

accounts.

### Claim at your full retirement age

The primary benefit of waiting until your FRA is that you are then entitled to 100% of your benefits, without possibility of reductions over time. Your FRA for purposes of Social Security is based on the year you were born. For those born between 1943-1954, their FRA is 66. For those born between 1955-1959, their FRA is 66 + 2 months for every year after 1954 until 1960. For those born 1960 and later, their FRA is 67.

### Delay your claim to age 70

You can delay claiming your benefits until the maximum age 70, with the primary advantage of increasing your benefits for the remainder of your life. Delaying a Social Security claim may make sense if:

- You have other forms of income – You may realize tax benefits from pulling from sources such as retirement accounts or savings;
- You're still working – Working beyond your FRA may allow you to meet lifestyle expenses while increasing your future

benefit; or

- You're concerned about spousal or survivor benefits – When you delay claiming your Social Security, your spouse may be entitled to a larger spousal benefit and/or survivor's benefit as well.

Further, cost-of-living-adjustments (COLA) begin giving your potential benefit a boost at age 62 – and that boost will continue to compound every year you delay making your claim.

### Tax and Other Impacts

Generally, your Social Security income will be tax dependent on your "combined income," which factors in gross income, nontaxable interest earned, and half of your Social Security income. Potential effects on health-care premiums should also be factored in.

Additional insights can be found by visiting [www.pnc.com](http://www.pnc.com).

While the question of when to claim Social Security benefits will be unique to your individual financial situation, it's a decision that warrants careful consideration – and potentially even a professional opinion.

## Forever Young Program for older adults returns for spring 2026

SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

The Boston Parks and Recreation Department is excited to announce the return of the Forever Young Program this coming spring.

This free program for older adults, offered in partnership with Boston Centers for Youth & Families (BCYF), provides a welcoming space for fun and fitness, featuring activities such as bocce, cornhole, and archery.

The program will take place once a week on Weds.s from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. from April 1 through June 25 at City parks. Each month brings a new activity, providing participants with opportunities to try something different in a welcoming environment.

**Cornhole at Edwards Playground**, 10 Eden Street,

Charlestown

Test your aim and enjoy some lighthearted competition with cornhole, a game that's as entertaining as it is social.

- Weds., April 8, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- Weds., April 15, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- Weds., April 29, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

\*Note: no class on Weds., April 22, due to BPS School Vacation\*

**Bocce at Langone Park**, 529 Commercial Street, North End

Experience the timeless game of bocce, a relaxing and strategic sport that's easy to learn and fun for all.

- Weds., May 6, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- Weds., May 13, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- Weds., May 20, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- Weds., May 27, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

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~ Family Member of Rehab Patient

# Rogerson announces six-figure gift in support of Boston Memory Care Development

SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

Rogerson Communities has announced a six-figure naming gift made by Mary R. Jeka, Chair of Rogerson's Board of Directors, in support of the organization's redevelopment of its Rogerson House memory care community in Jamaica Plain. Jeka's gift will be commemorated with the dedication of a library space, which will be known as the Jeka Family Library, on the new building's main level.

"I'm so pleased to be able to make this gift in support of older adults and their care," said Jeka, "The new Rogerson House is such a crucial project, both for those in need of memory care and for those with limited incomes in need of housing in their community. These needs are at crisis proportions in Massachusetts, and Rogerson's efforts to meet those needs are worthy of all of our support."

Rogerson is currently in pre-development of the new Rogerson House project, an updated and expanded community comprising 66 private memory care



beds, 41 affordable independent living units, and dedicated space for a 24-person social day program. In addition to amenities like the library, the new building will feature courtyards and outdoor spaces open to both the public and residents, gardens

with native vegetation and pollinator-friendly plantings, and indoor air quality exceeding code requirements.

"We are beyond grateful for Mary's generous contribution in support of both this project and Rogerson's mission," said

Rogerson's President and CEO Walter Ramos. "Driving this redevelopment project forward is not just a strategic imperative for our organization but a stark necessity in the face of the senior care crisis. Mary understands this as well as anyone, and has

stepped up to add a very personal stake to our efforts. It's fitting that we name this space in the new Rogerson House in honor of her leadership philanthropy."

Jeka joined Rogerson's Board of Directors in 2019, and has served as chair since 2024. She is the Senior Vice President for University Relations and General Counsel at Tufts University.

Rogerson Communities provides affordable housing, memory care, senior living, and adult day health solutions for older adults in Massachusetts. A resource to the community since 1860, today the organization serves more than 2,000 older adults across 25 properties and programs, providing a diversity of individuals with greater independence and longevity.

Rogerson's mission is to enhance the well-being of older adults by elevating housing, community, and care to address their needs as they age. Our goal is a world where every older adult feels valued and can age with dignity in their community.

More information can be found at [rogerson.org](http://rogerson.org).

## Forever Young

Continued from page 8

**Archery at Langone Park**, 529 Commercial Street, North End

Try your hand at archery in a safe and guided environment.

- Weds., June 3, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- Weds., June 10, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- Weds., June 17, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- Weds., June 24, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Each session is designed to encourage physical activity,

mental well-being, and community engagement. Sessions are drop-in and pre-registration is not required. Join us to try something new and make a friend.

To stay up to date with news, events, and improvements in Boston parks, visit [boston.gov/parks](http://boston.gov/parks), call 617-635-4505, join our email list, and follow our social channels at @parks.boston.gov on Bluesky and @bostonparksdept on Facebook and Instagram.



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www.mreinc.org 617-698-3005

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<p><b>Winter Valley</b> 600 Canton Avenue, Milton</p> <p>16 Private Apartments available with services. Prices range from \$2,250 to \$5,400* *Two meals / 1 hour services per day.</p>	<p><b>Unquity House</b> 30 Curtis Road, Milton</p> <p>Independent living in studio and one or two bedroom apartments. On site amenities. Activities and trips. Transportation available for a fee.</p>
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[www.MountPleasantHome.org](http://www.MountPleasantHome.org)

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# State to celebrate 20 years of landmark health care reform at Faneuil Hall on April 13

SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

Governor Maura Healey, former Governors Mitt Romney and Deval Patrick, and other state leaders will gather at Faneuil Hall on Monday, April 13, to mark the 20th anniversary of Massachusetts's landmark health care reform law, Chapter 58 of the Acts of 2006.

Signed into law on April 12, 2006, at Faneuil Hall, the historic legislation expanded access to affordable health coverage for hundreds of thousands of Massachusetts residents. Before the law was enacted, nearly 10 percent of residents were uninsured. Today, Massachusetts has the highest coverage rate in the nation, with more than 97 percent of residents insured.

The law created a first-in-the-nation health insurance marketplace, introduced key consumer protections, required most adults to carry health insurance, and provided financial assistance to help residents afford coverage. It also reduced uncompensated care costs and strengthened financial protections for patients

and families.

Four years after the law was passed, the Massachusetts model was used as the framework of the federal Affordable Care Act, which currently delivers health insurance to more than 20 million Americans, including more than 350,000 people in Massachusetts. The law continues to shape how Massachusetts approaches affordability, access and equity in health care today.

"Twenty years ago, leaders from both parties came together to prove that we could expand health care and make it more affordable for people across Massachusetts," said Governor Maura Healey. "I'm grateful to Governor Romney and the Legislature for championing the effort to create this landmark law, to the late Senator Kennedy for his leadership, and to Governor Patrick for carrying it forward. Because of that work, more families can see a doctor, fill a prescription and have the peace of mind that comes with health coverage. As we celebrate this milestone, we're reminded of what's possible when we work

together and of our responsibility to keep building a health care system that works for everyone."

"I'm proud to have been part of a team that expanded access to health insurance for so many people across Massachusetts," said Governor Mitt Romney. "As a result, over a million residents have been able to receive preventive, wellness, and life-saving care from our world-renowned healthcare professionals."

"Health care reform 20 years ago was neither perfect nor unanimous. But it has helped millions of people — first in the Commonwealth and eventually across the country — lead healthier lives," said Governor Deval Patrick. "I am proud of the role my team and I played in standing up and making it better. This anniversary is a reminder that, if we work together, we can do the work that remains to extend affordable, high quality care to everyone, everywhere."

The event is being co-hosted by Governor Healey and the Massachusetts Health Connector, which was created as a centerpiece of the 2026 reform

law. The Health Connector is a competitive health insurance marketplace that allows residents to compare plans, enroll in coverage, and access financial assistance to help lower costs.

Since the first enrollment period in 2007, more than 1.5 million Massachusetts residents have received coverage through the Health Connector.

"The Commonwealth's health reform law was a historic, collaboration-based achievement — one that allowed more Massachusetts residents than ever to have the protections of high-value health coverage and to be able to count on the meaningful health care access and financial security that comes with it," said Audrey Morse Gasteier, the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Health Connector. "Twenty years later, the law and the Health Connector have proven to be effective and enduring models that continue to make our Commonwealth a healthier, fairer, and more secure place to live."

The event will feature remarks from Governor Healey,

Governor Romney, who signed the bill into law, Governor Patrick, whose administration implemented the reform and later helped advance the Affordable Care Act. Additional speakers will include current and former legislative leaders, as well as Health Connector enrollees who will share how the law has impacted their lives.

Two panel discussions featuring leaders from the business community, health care industry, government and policy sector will reflect on the collaboration required to pass the law, and then the necessary momentum post-signing needed to successfully implement it

The event will be held at Boston's Faneuil Hall beginning at 10 AM on Monday, April 13, the same location it was signed 20 years ago. Faneuil Hall was opened in 1742 and is known as "America's Cradle of Liberty" as the site of Revolutionary-era gatherings and protests. The event is open to the press, and more information will be provided closer to the event date.

## Massachusetts House passes fair share supplemental budget

SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

The Massachusetts House of Representatives today passed a \$1.8 billion supplemental budget that invests \$885 million in public transportation and \$417 million in public education, and funds several Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) deficiencies. The bill passed today also includes the tax conformity legislation filed by Governor Healey that delays the state's alignment with the corporate tax changes passed by Congress in the OB3 Act last year.

"From significant investments in public transportation and public education, to support for DTA caseworkers and expenses related to the World Cup, to fiscally prudent tax conformity measures — this legislation is representative of the responsible approach that the House will continue to take as we navigate a period of significant economic uncertainty," said House Speaker Ronald J. Mariano (D-Quincy). "I want to thank Chairman Michlewitz for his hard work, as well as all my colleagues in the House for recognizing the importance of the investments and reforms that this legislation

makes."

"The use of these one-time surplus funds provides us with a unique opportunity to better strength the Commonwealth in numerous ways. By further improving our educational and transportation sectors we will build off the work we have done in the last several budget cycles with a judicious use of the Fair Share funds. The tax changes contained in this bill will help support the state's economic competitiveness, while giving us time to absorb the expected loss in revenue," said Representative Aaron Michlewitz, Chair of the House Committee on Ways & Means (D-Boston). "I want to thank Speaker Mariano and all our House colleagues for their input and support on this critical funding legislation."

I'm excited to have secured Fair Share funding for organizations across East Boston, which will provide critical transportation and education resources for our community," said Representative Adrian Madaro, Chair of the Joint Committee on Revenue (D-East Boston). "From expanding East Boston ferry service, now with year round service and longer hours, supporting senior

transportation through NeighborHealth's PACE program, and providing more resources for educational and youth programs across East Boston, I'm proud to support these vital assets for our neighborhood!"

"In addition to my work advocating for East Boston, I'm grateful to my colleagues for the opportunity to lead the work on the tax change provisions in this bill in my role as Chair of the Joint Committee on Revenue," continued Representative Madaro. "These adjustments are limited in scope and make timely, necessary changes in response to the 5 costliest provisions of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, simultaneously mitigating significant state revenue loss while maintaining Massachusetts' economic competitiveness."

Representative Madaro was able to secure \$2,725,000 in provisions for organizations and services that benefit the East Boston community. In line with the guidelines for Fair Share funding, these investments are focused on education and transportation projects.

Projects funded include:

- East Boston Ferry — continues funding for the East Boston

- Ferry service between Lewis Wharf Mall in East Boston and Long Wharf in the North End, including new year-round service and longer hours

- NeighborHealth PACE — supports medically necessary transportation and home meal delivery services through the PACE program out of NeighborHealth

- Boston Debate League — funds after-school debate league programs

- Friends of the Children — supports the expansion of professional K-12 youth mentorship programs

- Piers Park Sailing Center — provides funding for sailing and maritime education and operations in East Boston

- East Boston Social Center — supports their mission to provide community-based initiatives for kindergarten

- Boston Scores — supports the operations of east Boston FC and Festival 2026 programming to involve youth in celebrating Boston hosting the World Cup

- East Boston School STEM — provides funding for experiential STEM and innovation programming for public schools serving K-6 in East Boston

- YouthConnect — provides for community-based mental health services for high-risk youth and their families

- Salt Marsh Education — supports the UMass Stone Living Lab's research of salt marsh rehabilitation in East Boston

The bill delays conforming to the federal corporate tax changes that were passed by Congress in the OB3 Act last year, which will represent approximately a \$400 million revenue loss for the Commonwealth when fully implemented. Under the bill, the Research and Experimental expense deduction will be delayed one year, the deductions for the Modification of Business Interest, Depreciable Asset Expensing, Qualified Production Properties will be delayed two years, and the Modification of Qualified Opportunity Zone Investments program will also be delayed two years. However, should the ballot question to lower the state income tax from 5 percent to 4 percent pass in November, which would result in a \$5 billion revenue loss when fully implemented, the Common-

# Boston Center for the Arts appoints Shey Rivera Ríos as Artistic Director

SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

The Boston Center for the Arts (BCA) announced the appointment of Shey Rivera Ríos as its new Artistic Director, marking a new chapter for one of Boston's most vital cultural institutions. Rivera Ríos will lead the artistic vision and programmatic direction of the organization, advancing BCA's mission to support artists and strengthen Boston's creative ecosystem.

Rivera Ríos joins BCA with more than a decade of leadership experience at the intersection of arts administration, cultural strategy, and community-rooted artistic practice. Born and raised in Puerto Rico and rooted in New England for more than fifteen years, Rivera Ríos has built a reputation as a collaborative cultural leader who strengthens creative ecosystems by connecting artists, institutions, and communities.

Prior to joining BCA, Rivera Ríos held a leadership role at AS220, the Providence-based artist-run arts organization



Kerry Constantino photo

**Shey Rivera Ríos.**

known for its interdisciplinary programming and long-standing commitment to artists and creative communities. Their work spans cultural districts, festivals, site-responsive projects, and cross-sector collaborations with municipalities, foundations, universities, grassroots

organizations, and independent artists. Rivera Ríos brings significant leadership experience cultivating institutional partnerships, engaging funders, and advancing artist-centered programming that positions the arts as a vital force in civic life.

Rivera Ríos is also an interdisciplinary artist whose work explores ritual, social practice, and cultural memory. Their artistic practice has been exhibited and performed throughout New England, including at the BCA Mills Gallery. This dual perspective—as both artist and cultural strategist—shapes Rivera Ríos's approach to institutional leadership and creative collaboration.

Rivera Ríos was selected following a national search conducted in partnership with executive search firm DRG Talent. The process engaged BCA staff, artists, campus partners, board members, civic stakeholders, and the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture, reflecting a strong alignment around Rivera Ríos's artistic vision, collaborative leadership style, and commit-

ment to community-centered cultural practice.

"Shey is an extraordinary artistic leader whose work reflects a deep commitment to artists and creative communities. Their appointment marks an exciting moment for Boston Center for the Arts as we build greater alignment across artistic leadership, programming, and the campus experience. This work strengthens BCA as a vital platform for artists and a cultural convener within Boston's creative landscape."

— KRISTI KEEFE, CEO, Boston Center for the Arts

"I feel deeply honored to serve as the first Artistic Director of BCA and help lead this exciting new chapter. As a cultural anchor, BCA has made the commitment to lead with artist-centered vision. Now more than ever, we must strengthen artists and arts communities, so we can build visionary futures together."

— SHEY RIVERA RÍOS, Artistic Director, Boston Center for the Arts

"With BCA's dedication as an

arts-driven organization, Shey brings the creativity, energy, and experience that our entire ecosystem will benefit from. Together we look forward to Shey's contribution to elevating the Boston artistic community."

— JENNIFER PINCK, Board Chair, Boston Center for the Arts

As Artistic Director, Rivera Ríos will guide the artistic direction of BCA programming and partnerships while strengthening the organization's role as a civic and cultural anchor in Boston. The position includes curatorial leadership, artist support initiatives, cross-sector partnerships, and the cultivation of a vibrant artistic community across BCA's historic South End campus.

Rivera Ríos will work closely with BCA leadership, artists, and partners to deepen the organization's impact locally while expanding connections across regional, national, and international networks.

Rivera Ríos will begin their tenure as Artistic Director on March 23.

## Budget

Continued from page 10

wealth would permanently decouple from these tax credits, preventing them from going into effect.

The \$1.8 billion bill is funded in part by \$1.3 billion from excess Fair Share surtax funds to invest in public transportation and education. Highlights include:

- \$885 million towards transportation:
- \$740 million towards the MBTA
- \$525 million for the Deficiency Reserve
- \$125 million for the Workforce & Safety Reserve
- \$60 million for physical infrastructure with a focus on the core subway system
- \$20 million for low-income reduced fares
- \$10 million for water transportation infrastructure
- Other transportation items include:
- \$50 million for snow and ice costs
- \$25 million for Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) workforce development
- \$30 million to fund the Sus-

tainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) Credit

- \$30 million for MassDOT Service Investments
- \$417 million towards education:
- o \$150 million towards Special Education Circuit Breaker costs
- o \$150 million to fund Early Education Child Care costs
- o \$38.7 million for the EEC income eligibility waitlist
- Includes \$8 million for child care for providers and \$7.5 million for the loan forgiveness program for providers
- o \$20 million for Green School-Works program to help schools with clean energy upgrades
- o \$18.3 million for Financial Aid Supplements
- o \$20 million endowment Match for UMass and other state colleges and universities
- o \$5.1 million for Tomorrow's Teachers Loan Forgiveness program
- o \$5 million for ESOL Services Waitlist

The bill also allocates \$507 million from the General Fund:

- \$300 million for the Group Insurance Commission (GIC)
- \$54.4 million for sheriffs, representing half of the deficiency

o Requires reporting on the

expenses of proposed usage of the funds

- \$41.6 million for DTA case-workers
  - \$10 million for FIFA Boston for World Cup related expenses
- The bill also includes the following outside sections:
- Food Donation Tax Credit: Establishes a food donation tax credit for farm businesses based on the amount of food donated to a nonprofit food distribution organization. The credit is capped at \$5,000 annually per individual.

- Sustainable Aviation Fuel Credit: Allows taxpayers to take a credit against the tax imposed on fuels used for aircraft propulsion and, subject to limitation, requires the amount of credit per gallon of sustainable fuel to increase by \$0.015 for each additional 1 percent reduction in life-cycle greenhouse gas emissions above 50 percent. The credit is capped at \$10 million total for all cumulative tax credits over a fiscal year.

- Ratifies eight Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs)

The bill passed the House of Representatives 150-3 and now goes to the Senate for consideration.

## Swan Boats opening day set for April 18

Special to the Times

Mayor Michelle Wu, the Boston Parks and Recreation Department, and the Paget family will host the first ride of the season on the iconic Boston Swan Boats as they open at the Boston Public Garden Lagoon on Saturday, April 18, at 10 a.m.

2026 marks the 149th season for the Swan Boats, a beloved tourist attraction and iconic symbol of Boston and the Public Garden. The oldest and smallest boat in the fleet just celebrated its 116th season, while the newest was launched in 1993. The swan on the boats is made from either copper or fiberglass, depending on the age of the boat, and encloses a paddle mechanism that is used to propel the boat through the water.

Launched in 1877 by Irish immigrant and shipbuilder Robert Paget, the Swan Boats continue

to be owned and operated by the Paget family. Mr. Paget designed the Swan Boats after attending the opera Lohengrin in New York City. At the end of the opera, the hero crosses a river in a boat drawn by a swan. In 2025, the Swan Boats were added as a site on the Boston Irish Heritage Trail.

Fully loaded, each Swan Boat weighs three tons and is powered by the driver using a foot-propelled paddle wheel. The Swan Boats are built on oak-framed pontoons sheathed in copper, just as they were initially constructed in 1877. After being stored in a safe place for the winter, the boats will return to the Public Garden Lagoon in the spring, with Mayor Wu celebrating the first ride of the season.

For more information, visit [boston.gov/swan-boats](http://boston.gov/swan-boats).

## OBITUARIES

All obituaries and death notices will be at a cost of \$195.00 per paper. Includes photo. No word limit. Please send to [obits@reverejournal.com](mailto:obits@reverejournal.com) or call 781-485-0588

# Massachusetts House passes the PROTECT Act

SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

The Massachusetts House of Representatives passed the PROTECT Act, landmark legislation led by State Representative Judith Garcia and State Representative Andy Vargas, Chair of the Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus, in partnership with the Caucus. The bill establishes clear statewide standards governing how state and local systems interact with federal immigration enforcement, strengthening due process protections while ensuring public safety and trust in the Commonwealth's institutions.

Originally filed by Representative Garcia and Representative Vargas, the PROTECT Act delivers a practical and legally sound response to growing concerns across Massachusetts, particularly in communities like Chelsea, where residents have raised alarm about the impact of federal immigration enforcement in courthouses and the broader justice system.

"This legislation is a direct response to what I have seen and heard as the State Representative for Chelsea and Everett," said Representative Judith

Garcia. "Residents shared urgent concerns about what was happening in our courthouses, including fears about showing up for their own cases. I met with families who were directly impacted and visited the Plymouth correctional facility, where I spent hours speaking with individuals who had been detained. Their experiences played a critical role in shaping this bill.

Nine months ago, I was appointed to serve on an immigration task force charged with developing a response that is both legally sound and grounded in the authority we have at the state level. From the beginning, my focus has been clear: we cannot control federal immigration policy, and we cannot pursue blanket approaches that fall outside our jurisdiction. But we do have a responsibility to ensure that our state systems, especially our courts, operate safely, fairly, and with integrity.

I was proud to co-lead the filing of the PROTECT Act alongside Representative Vargas to deliver a bill that is both practical and enforceable. This legislation establishes clear standards for what happens in our courthouses, protects due process,



Representatives of the Black and Latino Caucus joined Chair of Ways and Means and Speaker Ron Mariano after the vote.

and ensures that all residents can access our justice system without fear. For communities like Chelsea, Everett and across the Commonwealth, this is about restoring trust, upholding the rule of law, and making sure our institutions work for everyone."

After constituents raised concerns last year, Representative Garcia called for an investigation into courthouse conditions. The Trial Court confirmed the increasing challenges facing court operations as a result of federal immigration enforcement activ-

ity.

The Trial Court submitted a letter of support for this legislation emphasizing the high number of ICE arrests within their courthouses over the past 15 months. In 2025, there were at least 614 arrests within courthouses across the Commonwealth. Since the start of this year, they have documented another 137 courthouse arrests by ICE. They expressed how prohibiting ICE arrests without a judicial warrant within the courthouse will allow the judicial branch to operate free from external interference and ensure that courthouses remain safe and accessible to all court users.

"We are grateful for the leadership and swift action of our legislature on the PROTECT Act. These efforts build back trust and sense of safety in our community. The PROTECT act ensures that families in Chelsea feel safe and supported. It reinforces established constitutional rights. It does not weaken public safety. It strengthens it. We will continue moving forward, building a strong commonwealth that protects all of our residents," said Chelsea City Manager Fidel Maltez.

"We were extremely happy to be in the State House witnessing this great day when the House passes the PROTECT Act," said Gladys Vega, President & CEO of La Colaborativa. "This bill was drafted and based on feedback from our communities. This bill will limit ICE's presence in our courtrooms and ensure that witnesses and victims can continue to come forward and participate in our judicial system with no fear. We are also extremely grateful for reforming

the certification process of the U and T visas, which will help many in our community cooperate in investigations of crime and human trafficking. This legislation is very needed for cities like Chelsea and Gateway Cities, and we urge the Senate to pass it quickly."

"Since the beginning of President Trump's second term, ICE and Border Patrol agents have continued to carry out aggressive enforcement actions that have created fear and uncertainty in communities across Massachusetts," said House Speaker Ronald J. Mariano (D-Quincy). "That's why this legislation is so important, as it takes steps to ensure that all residents are treated equally under state law and helps protect the trust between communities and law enforcement. I want to thank Chairman Michlewitz, Chairman Cahill, Representative Garcia, Chairman Vargas, and the Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus for their leadership and dedication to this issue."

"By passing the PROTECT Act, we will create a statewide standard for governing interactions between state and local systems and federal immigration enforcement," said Representative Aaron Michlewitz (D-Boston), Chair of the House Committee on Ways & Means. "This legislation ensures uniform protections and fundamental civil rights for all residents, regardless of immigration status."

"This legislation affirms that due process is not a courtesy extended at the government's discretion, it is a constitutional

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## Concerns

Continued from page 1

The project aims to raise a one-story structure at 3716-3724 Washington St. that is currently rented by Forest Hills Pizza and Forest Hills Dental. Both are located across from the Forest Hills T stop.

Stephen Harvey, senior project manager in the planning department for the City of Boston, held the meeting to get feedback from the JP community on the proposal, which includes a six-story, mixed-use building with two first-floor retail units and 35 residential units.

The proposed project “directly aligns with key planning and policy initiatives” that aim to create communities where people can “live, work, and thrive” in neighborhoods closer to public transit, according to information from the company’s review application and details from the MBTA’s multi-family zoning initiative.

Harvey explained that eight of the units have an area median income ranging from 70% to 80%, impacting the costs of living in and around Tower Street.

George Lee, an attendee at the meeting, said JP is a mix of low and high-income residents and that the proposal’s median income numbers are “very high” compared to what JP renters make.

“I think the developer really needs to get a lot more solid on [affordability] and come back for another planning department meeting,” Lee said.

The proposed site would also overshadow the traditional buildings along Washington Street that reflect a connection to the neighborhood’s history and its longtime residents, said M. Mendez, who also attended the virtual meeting.

“The building [as proposed] needs to respect the traditional red brick aesthetic, Mendez said. “The building is just too high and too dense.”

VinCo Properties, the South End real estate development company that is overseeing the project, plans to add public en-

hancements through sidewalk widening and street tree planting, Vince O’Neill, the company’s founder and president, explained in the meeting.

“If the neighborhood has to make some compromises and sacrifices, the affordable units have to be for working people,” Mendez said. “They should not be for singles that are going to take the T to go to Google or to work at Amazon.”

Musau Dibinga, executive director of OrigiNation Cultural Arts Center whose business is on the strip, expressed frustration over the congestion a new development would cause and about how the city notified the public about the project.

She said she heard about the meeting through her landlord, adding that she wished the city had talked with other business owners like herself instead of only the owners of Forest Hills Pizza and Forest Hills Dental.

The pizza shop owner declined to comment for this article, and the dental office is permanently closed.

OrigiNation, which serves more than 150 students weekly, has been offering dance, leadership and employment training in JP for almost eight years, Dibinga explained.

She also said that Washington Street is a narrow and “congested” road and that construction, with cranes taking up critical on-street parking spots, would only make things worse for the students as they enter and exit the center.

Dibinga said she supports efforts to address the housing shortage but opposes the proposed development because it does not match the “fabric of the community”.

“I want everyone to feel comfortable and have a home,” Dibinga said. “The management company has to be aligned with what we want in the neighborhood.”

West, who owns Brady and Fallon Funeral Home, which would be behind the proposed site, told the meeting participants that his business conducts more than 300 funeral services a year and that the commotion



The front of OrigiNation Cultural Arts Center, on Washington Street.

Photos by Alev Harry Gustafson

from any construction would be disruptive to grieving and vulnerable families who attend the services.

“The noise, the dust, the vibration, the constant traffic, make it impossible to hold dignified services for a funeral service that’s been in existence since 1875 in Jamaica Plain,” West said at the meeting.

Not everyone at the meeting opposed the project.

Jesse Kanson-Benanav, executive director of Abundant Housing, expressed his support for the proposal and defended officials at VinCo Properties, which he said had attended multiple Forest Hills Neighborhood Association meetings to hear from the public.

Kanson-Benanav said he believes it’s a “reasonable project” that can address the housing shortage in JP because of its proximity to the Orange Line.

The way to address [the housing shortage] is by building more homes, and I think we need to do it in a sustainable way that doesn’t encourage more and more people to drive,” Kanson-Benanav said.

*This story is part of a partnership between the The Mission Hill Gazette and the Boston University Department of Journalism’s Newsroom program.*



Musau Dibinga, executive director of the OrigiNation Cultural Arts Center inside one of the dance studios.

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Please include address and telephone number for verification purposes. Anonymous letters will not be published.

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## EDITORIAL

### Happy Passover

Passover, which begins at sundown this Wednesday (April 1) and ends at nightfall next Thursday (April 9) celebrates the biblical story of the Exodus, when the Israelites were freed from slavery after the 10th plague on Egypt (each of which was more devastating than the last).

God spared the Israelites' firstborn by having them mark their doorposts with lamb's blood, which informed God's Angels of Death to "pass over" the Israelites' homes. This final plague, which claimed the Pharaoh's own firstborn son, demonstrated God's power and ultimately compelled Pharaoh to give the Israelites their freedom.

Passover commences with the First Seder, which is a special dinner that includes the recitation of the Kiddush, the Motzi, and other blessings in Hebrew. The story of Passover is retold during the Seder and the youngest person at the table recites, "The Four Questions" (Mah Nishtanah) that provide the answers to the primary question: "Why is this night unlike all others?"

The Four Questions highlight the unique rituals of the evening:

On all other nights we eat either leavened or unleavened bread. On this night, why do we eat only unleavened matzah (a bread made with flour and water that is baked quickly to prevent it from rising)?

Answer: To remind us of the haste with which our ancestors left Egypt.

On all other nights we eat all kinds of herbs. On this night, why only bitter herbs (maror)?

Answer: To remind us of the bitterness of slavery.

On all other nights we do not dip our herbs even once. On this night, why do we dip them twice?

Answer: It reminds us of the tears shed (dipping karpas in salt water) and the mortar used by our ancestors (dipping in charoset).

On all other nights we eat sometimes sitting and sometimes reclining. On this night, why do we all recline?

Answer: To remind us of how free people relax and dine.

We wish all of our friends and readers of the Jewish faith a Happy Passover (Chag Sameach)!

### Happy Easter

This Sunday is Easter Sunday, the holiest and most significant day in the Christian faith, when Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which occurred two days after his crucifixion on Good Friday. Our friends of the Eastern Orthodox faith will celebrate Easter on Sunday, April 12, according to the Julian calendar.

Christians believe that Christ died to redeem us from our sins. His resurrection represents the victory over death and sin, a testament to the power of God and a promise of eternal life, offering hope that they too, can have eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ.

We wish all of our Christian friends and readers a very happy and joyful Easter.

*The Independent Newspaper Group reserves the right to edit letters for space and clarity. We regret that we cannot publish unsigned letters. Please include your street and telephone number with your submission. The Independent Newspaper Group publishes columns, viewpoints and letters to the editor as a forum for readers to express their opinions and to encourage debate. Please note that the opinions expressed are not necessarily those of The Independent Newspaper Group. Text or attachments emailed to editor@reverejournal.com are preferred.*

## DPH advises extending RSV immunizations for infants for an additional month

SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) issued a clinical advisory to health care providers recommending that respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) monoclonal antibody immunizations continue to be administered to eligible infants through April 30, 2026, in response to ongoing RSV activity across the state and throughout the region.

RSV monoclonal antibody immunizations are typically administered from October through March. The current RSV season, however, began later than usual, and it is continuing further into the spring. Surveillance data show sustained RSV activity in Massachusetts and surrounding states, prompting the extension of the immunization window beyond the usual March 31 endpoint.

"RSV continues to circulate at meaningful levels later into the spring than we typically see," said Public Health Commissioner Robbie Goldstein, MD, PhD. "Public health guidance must reflect the reality of the moment. Extending access to these preventive tools is about matching data and risk with proven measures that can prevent and protect our youngest residents from the most severe effects of this illness."

RSV, a common respiratory virus, is a leading cause of hos-

pitalization among infants in the United States. While RSV often begins as a mild, cold-like illness, it can lead to serious conditions such as bronchiolitis and pneumonia. This illness can be particularly problematic for very young infants and those with underlying medical conditions that make them especially vulnerable to the disease.

In the clinical advisory, DPH urged clinicians to assess the RSV immunization status of infants and encourage monoclonal antibody protection for those who are eligible and have not yet received the immunization during the current season.

Infants younger than 8 months of age should receive RSV monoclonal antibody immunization if their mother was not vaccinated during pregnancy, if maternal vaccination status is unknown, or if they were born within 14 days of maternal vaccination. Certain children aged 8 to 19 months are at increased risk for severe RSV disease – including those with chronic lung disease or prematurity, severe immunocompromise, cystic fibrosis, or other qualifying conditions – and should also receive RSV immunization.

"RSV remains the leading cause of serious respiratory tract infection in infants, and too many young children still are at risk of preventable hospitalization," said Larry Madoff, MD, Medical Director of DPH's

Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences. "We have a safe, effective way to reduce that risk, and extending access now will help to protect more infants while RSV continues to circulate. We will continue to closely monitor RSV trends and will adjust our approach based on real-time data and what we are seeing in communities across the Commonwealth."

This extension applies only to infant monoclonal antibody immunization for the 2025-2026 RSV season. The seasonal window for maternal RSV vaccination – September 1 through January 31 – remains unchanged and should not be extended, as maternal vaccination timing cannot be adjusted once pregnancy has progressed.

In addition to infant protection, RSV vaccination is recommended for older adults. Adults aged 75 and older and those aged 50 to 74 with certain underlying conditions should receive a one-time RSV vaccine dose. Unlike infant immunization, RSV vaccination for older adults is not seasonal and can be administered year-round.

For more information, visit the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Respiratory Illness Dashboard and review current American Academy of Pediatrics guidance on RSV prevention.

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

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# Project Bread CEO Erin McAleer rolls burritos for a cause at Anna's Taqueria

On Thursday, March 19, Project Bread partnered with Anna's Taqueria to host a successful community fundraiser at the restaurant's Brookline location. The event brought together supporters, community members, and local leaders for an evening dedicated to raising awareness and funds to combat food insecurity across Massachusetts.

Project Bread President & CEO Erin McAleer joined the Anna's team behind the counter, rolling burritos and engaging directly with guests, adding a unique and interactive element to the evening. A portion of all in-person entrée sales during the event was donated to the 2026 Walk for Hunger, helping to support Project Bread's statewide efforts to connect families to reliable food resources and advocate for policies that make nutritious meals more accessible.

McAleer, alongside Anna's Taqueria Marketing Director Laurel O'Keefe, spoke with attendees about the growing urgency of addressing food insecurity, as hundreds of thousands of families across Massachusetts continue to face challenges affording food. The event highlighted the importance of community partnerships in advancing solutions, from direct support services like Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline to long-term policy advocacy.

The event also underscored Anna's Taqueria's ongoing com-



PHOTO COURTESY PROJECT BREAD

*Pictured (left to right) are Project Bread President and CEO Erin McAleer wraps burritos to support the nonprofit's 2026 Walk for Hunger alongside Anna's Taqueria Manager, Jose Lopez, in Brookline on Thursday, March 19. A dollar from every burrito sold supports Project Bread's year-round, statewide work helping families keep food on the table.*

mitment to community impact and demonstrated how local businesses can play a meaningful role in supporting food access initiatives. The restaurant team will continue its support by participating in Project Bread's upcoming Walk for Hunger, the organization's signature community fundraiser and one of Massachusetts' most enduring anti-hunger events.

Registration is now open for The 58th annual Walk for Hunger, taking place Sunday, May 3 on Boston Common. This one-day, family-friendly event will bring together thousands of participants for a 3-mile loop

featuring food, entertainment, and activities for all ages. The Walk continues to serve as a powerful platform for turning compassion into action, supporting Project Bread's statewide efforts to advance food security and expand access to nutritious meals for children and families.

In addition to individual participants, anti-hunger organizations across the Commonwealth are invited to join through Project Bread's co-fundraising program, The Commonwealth, which enables partners to raise funds for their own missions while contributing to a broader collective impact.

## PROTECT Act

*Continued from page 12*

right," said Representative Andy Vargas (D-Haverhill), Chair of the Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus. "This bill ensures that our courts function, that trust in our communities is preserved, and that the promise of due process is upheld for all."

Following the filing of the PROTECT Act in January, House leadership convened discussions with legislators and stakeholders, including immigration advocates, law enforcement officials, district attorneys, sheriffs, union leaders, civil liberties organizations, and representatives from the Attorney General's Office, the Healey-Driscoll Administration, and the Trial Court.

**Key Provisions of the PROTECT Act**

**Limits on Law Enforcement Restricts state and local involvement in federal civil immigration enforcement, including limiting when immigration status can be questioned and restricting the use of local resources.**

**Courthouse Arrest Protections**  
Requires a judicial warrant or order for civil immigration arrests in courthouses and limits arrests in courtrooms.

**Detention and Legal Access**  
Establishes uniform standards in correctional facilities, including access to legal counsel, language services, and transparency in custody status.

**Worker Notification**  
Requires employers to notify employees within 48 hours of

federal immigration inspections.

**U and T Visa Certification Reform**

Improves and streamlines the certification process for victims of crime and human trafficking.

**Bail Considerations**  
Allows courts to consider the likelihood of deportation when making bail determinations to preserve case integrity.

**State Facilities and Public Guidance**  
Authorizes restrictions on enforcement in nonpublic state facilities and requires multilingual public guidance.

**Enforcement**  
Empowers the Attorney General to enforce compliance through civil action.

The bill passed the House of Representatives 134-21 and now moves to the Senate.

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## CITY PAWS

# Planning a move?

BY PENNY & ED CHERUBINO

While we have not moved in many years, we think about how difficult it can be to move with companion animals. When animal-loving friends are planning a move, we're happy to help by sharing the tips we've found over the years.

### Finding a Pet-Friendly Home

Unless you're shopping for a single-family home, you have to find a pet-friendly building or landlord. Even places that allow some animals may have weight restrictions, a limit on the number of animals you may have, require an interview process, or require you to obtain permission from the building owners.

Ask about these conditions when you work with a realtor and inquire about the details if a friend tells you about a possible listing. To aid in this process, you should be prepared to supply good references from former neighbors or landlords and, if

needed, offer a pet deposit.

### Planning Moving Day

People coming and going, open doors, things out of place, excitement, and a change of routine can add up to a very stressful day for you and your dogs or cats. While you're busy coordinating the move and protecting your household goods, you may not pay as much attention to safeguarding your animals. You don't want to add an escapee to the stress of moving day.

Your animal's specific personality and behavior will help you determine the approach to take. It may be better to board highly excitable pets at a professional facility or with a trusted friend or pet sitter for the day.

If your cat or dog will be around for the move, consider keeping them in a room that can be closed off. Some people suggest a bathroom, but we say a bedroom. First, you and anyone else helping with the move will probably need to use the bath-

room, and every time that door opens, it will give your cat or dog a way out.

A bedroom, on the other hand, can have a sign on the closed door alerting everyone that your pet is inside and they are not to open the door. When the rest of the home is empty, you can go in, put your animals in carriers or on leashes, and let the movers load the bedroom furniture last.

At the new location, your bedroom will be the first to come off the truck and be set up. You can then put the animals in that room while the rest of the new home is arranged.

### Moving Tips

- Order new tags if the phone number or address on your pet's tags will change.
- Change your contact information with the registry for your pet's microchip and with the local dog license database.
- Update your veterinary records, or obtain copies of your pet's medical records, if you will



These kitties had time to adjust to their crate before moving day.

be changing animal hospitals.

- Leave your carrier or crate out in the weeks before the move if your pet is not used to it, and put some treats in it from time to time to make it a more attractive spot.

• Don't forget medications, food, water, and relief breaks for your critters on moving day.

- Provide a litter box or puppy pads in the sanctuary room, or

arrange regular relief walks for your dog.

- Plan meals around a long drive to a new home if your pet is a queasy traveler.

• Make certain the new home is pet-proofed before you allow a dog or cat to explore.

Do you have a question or topic for City Paws? Email Penny@BostonZest.com with your suggestion.



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## COMMUNITY COWORKING

### AT NORTHEASTERN CROSSING

Northeastern Crossing is the university's public community space that is free to the public and available for community-based organizations and groups.

Organizations and individuals are invited to utilize NU Crossing as a workspace during specific hours throughout the week. Sign up on Eventbrite to use this free space with wi-fi, snacks, coffee, printers, and collaboration!



Northeastern Crossing is regularly open from 9am-5pm, Monday through Friday, and work spaces are available when other groups have not already booked the space.



This is a shared space, if you need to take meetings, please bring headphones or speak with the staff on site about available private spaces.



Hours are subject to change each week based on space availability.

**Questions? Contact Community Relations & Programs Manager, Monée Vance at:**

 [mo.vance@northeastern.edu](mailto:mo.vance@northeastern.edu)  617.992.0407



**Register on Eventbrite!**