



DECEMBER 28, 2023

# THE BEACON HILL TIMES



T H E R E A R E N O T I M E S L I K E T H E S E T I M E S

## '23 Looking back at the year on Beacon Hill

By Dan Murphy

• On Jan. 4, the Beacon Hill Civic Association Zoning and Licensing Committee hosted a virtual meeting to discuss the ill-fated Ono Bistro, which was poised to take over the basement-level space at 89 Charles St., formerly occupied by Artu. The proposed tapas establishment then met with a largely unfavorable community response, and the applicant subsequently abandoned its plans for the restaurant.

• On Jan. 13, "The Embrace" - the long-awaited memorial to Martin Luther King Jr. - was unveiled during a ceremony on the Boston Common. The memorial was initiated via a partnership between the City of Boston and



MAYOR'S OFFICE PHOTO BY JEREMIAH ROBINSON

"The Embrace" memorial on the Boston Common was unveiled on Friday, Jan. 13.

Embrace Boston.

• In February, Rep. Jay Livingstone was named the House Chair of the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

• In February, the Charles River Esplanade finished in eighth place in the category of Best Riverwalk in USA Today's latest 10Best Readers' Choice Travel Awards. Over the course of four weeks, votes were tallied for the 20 nominees in the Best Riverwalk category,

which were chosen by an expert panel from the newspaper.

• On Feb. 13, Lauren Lapanto was named lead librarian of the West End Branch Library, where she had previously served as children's librarian before becoming the branch librarian in the South End.

• On Feb. 15 and 16, 2023, Park Street School (PSS) Elementary School students (Kindergarten - Grade 6) presented engaging Sci-

(YEAR IN REVIEW Pg. 6)

## Wu announces First Night public safety preparations

Special to the Times

Mayor Michelle Wu joined City leadership to share the City's preparations for First Night, Boston's annual New Year's Eve celebration. The free and family-friendly event is moving to the newly refurbished City Hall Plaza, and will feature performances, ice sculptures, fireworks, and more. The City is a partner of the New Year's Eve event, which is formally run by Boston Celebrations, Inc. and managed by Conventures, Inc. All parties are taking steps to ensure public safety as Boston celebrates the New Year.

"First Night is a beloved tradi-

tion in Boston and beyond, having created delightful experiences for neighborhood residents and visitors from around the world," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "Our newly renovated City Hall Plaza is the perfect venue to welcome families from all over to ring in the New Year. I encourage all our residents to celebrate safely as we welcome 2024."

First Night will feature more than 13 hours of free programming on the recently renovated City Hall Plaza. The event has moved to City Hall from its usual hub in Copley Square due to the

(FIRST NIGHT SAFETY Pg. 5)

## BHAC denies garage door for Jordan Mansion

By Dan Murphy

On a controversial application for the Eben Jordan Mansion at 46 Beacon St., the Beacon Hill Architectural Commission voted unanimously to deny the installation of any garage door on the building's rear façade while approving as submitted the repaving of the front brick sidewalk during the commission's monthly hearing held virtually on Thursday, Dec. 21.

Mainsail Management purchased the five-story, Italian

Renaissance Revival townhouse earlier this year from the Unification Church for \$20.5 million. The 50,000 square-foot building, which has undergone numerous transformations and been modified via an array of additions over the years, is poised to be redeveloped into eight, large dwelling units.

During last week's hearing, Guy Grassi, the project architect who was also on hand for the BHAC's Nov. 16 virtual hearing when the commission first reviewed the

extensive application for the full brownstone restoration of 46 Beacon St., presented three new alternatives for creating a "hidden door system" to access the building's proposed internal garage, which would accommodate somewhere between seven and 14 vehicles. (The interior architectural plans for the garage are still incomplete, he said, so the number of vehicles remains undetermined.)

The entrance to the garage

(BHAC Pg. 2)



The Eben Jordan Mansion at 46 Beacon St.

D. MURPHY PHOTO

## BHAC (from pg. 1)

would be created by enlarging and combining two existing penetrations in the building's rear (north) façade facing Spruce Court, a small private way, while removing a brick pier between the two openings - one of which was originally a window that has been infilled to create a door, said Grassi. To access the new garage, the project proposes the creation of a granite curbcut going into the building, flanked by brick sidewalks on both sides.

Although the applicant hasn't completed feasibility studies for any of the 'hidden door' options yet, in all three alternatives, the approximately 13-foot-wide, steel-frame door would operate with hydraulics and be equipped with a steel armature, said Grassi. The 5,000-6,000-pound door would swing inwards against the wall on the west side. Reused masonry from a brick pier and reused veneer masonry would be built into the structure's exterior to nearly obscure the door in a closed position from visibility from a distance on a public way (i.e. 75 feet away on Spruce Street), said Grassi.

At its Nov. 16 hearing, the commission denied without prejudice a portion of the application for 46 Beacon St., which proposed creating an "overhead," sectional garage door that could be rendered to resemble a pair of gates when in a closed position; this option, along with all three alternatives for the proposed 'hidden door' design, was rejected by the commission at its Dec. 21 hearing per its determination then to not allow any new garage door opening on Spruce Court.

On hand for this application at the Dec. 21 hearing were Commission Chair Mark Kiefer, Vice Chair Arian Allen, and Commissioners Maurice Finegold, Ed Fleck,

Ralph Jackson Curtis, Kenemy, Alice Richmond, and Sandy Steele. (Commissioner Annette Given was on hand earlier in the hearing and weighed in on all other applications before the last matter, 46 Beacon St., when she recused herself from the deliberation and signed off for the evening.)

During public testimony at the Dec. 21 hearing, a number of neighbors expressed a range of concerns with anticipated impacts of the proposed garage door - some of which fell outside the commission's immediate purview, which applies only to external changes visible from a public way or park, such as the Boston Common or the Charles River Esplanade; their concerns included potential damage to the cobblestone on Spruce Court caused by vehicles accessing the garage, as well as how the project could potentially change the nature of Spruce Court as a quiet, private way, especially when considering that the garage door could be open for as long as an hour each day.

Some neighbors balked at Grassi's assertion that the project necessitates on-site parking to make it feasible in light of the expected high selling prices for its dwelling units.

Liz Downing asked why the project couldn't be reimagined to comprise 14 to 16 dwelling units but no parking. "I fail to see the problem with that solution," she said.

Others in opposition to the project asserted that creating the proposed door via enlarging and combining two existing penetrations in effect create a new opening in a building façade in direct violation of BHAC guidelines.

Rep. Jay Livingstone also voiced his opposition to the proposed garage door, according to

Nicholas Armata, BHAC staff.

In contrast, the project garnered written support from more than 40 respondents, including City Council President Ed Flynn.

Outgoing City Councilor at-Large Michael Flaherty, who was making his final appearance as an elected official at the hearing, also offered his support for this application.

Councilor Flaherty said he believes the proposed garage could go a long to helping towards alleviate the "parking crunch on Beacon Hill's crowded streets." After visiting the site a few days earlier, he said he concluded that the door would be "barely visible from Spruce Street." The perceived benefits would far outweigh any drawbacks anticipated from the project, he said, which could perhaps serve as a "catalyst" for future redevelopment projects in the neighborhood.

In another matter, the commission voted to ratify a violation for the unapproved installation of two unapproved light fixtures at 29 Branch St., as well to approve the installation of a single new light fixture in their place. This determination came with a proviso that the applicant install the new light fixture through the mortar in the brick, rather than through the conduit. The applicant also agreed to remove a utility box located on the left-hand side of the wall. Commissioner Fleck, who was not on hand to hear the entire matter, abstained from voting on this application.

The commission unanimously approved an application for new signage for 25 Willow Boutique - a new business expected to open in January in the space formerly occupied by Beacon Hill Framery upstairs at 73 Charles St. The proposed signage, which replace signage for the old business and reuse existing hardware, would comprise a carved-mahogany circular blade sign, measuring 30 inches in diameter, and a carved-mahogany wall sign, said Emma Walsh, proprietor of 25 Willow Boutique.

On an application for 11 Louisburg Square, the commission unanimously approved the proposed work, which included the replacement of the handrails on either side of the front door with a simpler design; the removal of the existing doorbell and street numbers to replace them with a more appropriate door hardware; and the installation of an EV (Electric Vehicle) charging port in the sidewalk. This determination came with the proviso that the cover

plate for the new charging port be rendered to resemble the one found at 6 Louisburg Square, rather than the cover plate at 18 Louisburg Square.

On an application for 22 Revere St., the commission unanimously approved proposed work, including replacing the door hardware (i.e. the doorknob and street numbers); adding a kickplate; and painting the front door black (in kind).

Likewise, the commission unanimously approved as submitted an application to replace an exterior door at the side elevation of 127 Mt. Vernon St.

On an application for the American Meteorological Society headquarters at 45 Beacon St., the commission unanimously approved as submitted the replacement of a set of existing flagpoles with a set of existing flagpoles; this determination came with provisos that existing masonry be reused in the mortar joints, or new hardware be screwed into mortar joints; and that details of the mounting hardware be remanded to staff.

The commission also unanimously approved an application to repaint the front door at 7 Chest-

nut St. black, which came with a request that the applicant consider another historically appropriate paint color.

On an application for 1 Otis Place, the commission unanimously approved the proposed installation of a new, ceiling-mounted light fixture, with a "faux black bronze finish."

The commission also unanimously approved as submitted an application for 31 Chestnut St., with proposed work including the installation a new intercom system with a brass cover in the same location as an existing one; the installation of new door hardware, except for the doorknob, which would remain; and the replacement of the existing hardware in kind. This determination came with a proviso that a more traditional thumb-latch be used; and that details of its placement on the door be delegated to staff.

Moreover, an application for a new roofed deck at 54 Pinckney St. scheduled for the hearing was removed from the agenda at the request of the applicant.

Likewise, an application for 76 Revere St. to paint the front door Codman Claret was also withdrawn by the applicant.

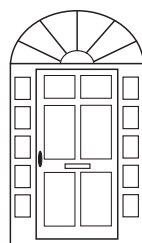


D. MURPHY PHOTO

The proposed future home of 25 Willow Boutique at 73 Charles St.

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## NEIGHBORHOOD ROUNDUP

### COFFEE HOURS FOR CITY'S BEACON HILL-BACK BAY NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISON

Maggie Van Scoy, the city's neighborhood liaison for Beacon Hill and Back Bay, will hold Coffee Hours on Friday, Dec. 29, from 10 to 11 a.m. at the West End Branch Library.

### 'ART FOR A WOMAN'S SOUL' PROGRAM COMING JAN. 11 TO WEST END BRANCH LIBRARY

The Friends of the West End Public Library are sponsoring a free program, "Art for a Woman's Soul," on Thursday, Jan. 11, from 5:30-7:30 pm in the Community Room at the West End Branch Library at 151 Cambridge St.

At this time, Mikki Zeitouni will present a 10-minute meditation to release the day's stress followed by a fun gathering for women to do art and socialize.

There is seating for 20 people and registration is required.

R.S.V.P. and sign up early by emailing Mikki at [mikkizeitouni@gmail.com](mailto:mikkizeitouni@gmail.com).

### UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE VILNA SHUL

The Vilna Shul at 18 Phillips St. will offer "Exploring Sephardi Culture" on Wednesday, Jan. 10, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Explore the history of Sephardic Jews through music, film, and literature. Experiment with the ancient Jewish language of Ladino, spoken by Jews in Spain and throughout the Ottoman Empire beginning in the 15th century. No background experience is required.

Additionally, The Vilna will offer "American Jewish Women in

Television" on Wednesdays, Jan. 10 and 17, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

During this course, which costs \$120 per participant, attendees will analyze the ways in which contemporary American television is establishing a new take on Jewish female identity that challenges the stereotypes of Jewish femininity proliferated on television since its inception. Register online at [www.vilnashul.org](http://www.vilnashul.org).

For more information on The Vilna Shul, visit [www.vilnashul.org](http://www.vilnashul.org) or call 617-523-2324.

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There is seating for 20 people and registration is required.

R.S.V.P. and sign up early by emailing Mikki at [mikki.zeitouni@raveis.com](mailto:mikki.zeitouni@raveis.com).

### UPCOMING EVENTS SPONSORED BY WEST END MUSEUM

Join the West End Museum for an author talk with Dan Dain as he walks us through his new book, "A History of Boston" on Thursday, Jan. 25, at 6 p.m. at The Hub on Causeway Community Room at 52 Causeway St.

Learn about how certain policies have caused urban success and failure throughout Boston's history, and how the West End neigh-

borhood has been impacted by these cycles. Dan will talk about this history and its implications for Boston's future. There will be time at the end for a Q&A session.

Tickets cost \$10 each and can be purchased at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-history-of-boston-with-daniel-dain-tickets-750906440377>.

Also, the WEM will sponsor its Boston Trivia Night on Wednesday, Jan. 31, at 6:30 p.m. at Causeway Boston at 65 Causeway St.

Put your Boston history knowledge to the test at our second trivia night, held at Causeway Restaurant and Bar. Sign up with your friends and form a team or join one on the spot. The winning team will win a prize from the WEM.

Tickets cost \$10 each and can be purchased at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/boston-trivia-night-tickets-756224025417>.

### SECOND BACK STREET NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT MEETING TO BE HELD VIRTUALLY ON FEB. 1

The Esplanade Association will hold its second Back Street Neighborhood Project Meeting to discuss ongoing safety projects at Esplanade entrances on Back Street. The meeting will take place via Zoom on Thursday, Feb. 1, at 6 p.m.

During this gathering, EA representatives will review progress made to-date, hear neighborhood feedback, and discuss proposed plans for additional safety improvements. Your presence and insights will greatly contribute to the success of the meeting, and the project.

Register for the meeting via zoom at <https://bit.ly/BackStMeeting>.

To learn more about the project, visit [esplanade.org/crosswalks](http://esplanade.org/crosswalks);

### BEACON HILL BELLRINGERS RETURN TO LOUISBURG SQUARE ON CHRISTMAS EVE



D. MURPHY PHOTOS

The Beacon Hill Bellringers offered a concert of Christmas standards, featuring caroling and bellringing on Christmas Eve, Sunday, Dec. 24, on the steps of 17 Louisburg Square. This beloved annual holiday tradition in the neighborhood dates back to 1924, when Margaret Shurcliff began bell-caroling with family and friends on Christmas Eve around Beacon Hill.

and to learn about other pathway safety initiatives, visit [esplanade.org/pathways](http://esplanade.org/pathways).

### FREE LESSONS IN AMERICAN MAHJONG OFFERED AT WEST END BRANCH LIBRARY

The Friends of the West End Library will be offering lessons in

American Mahjong to new and experienced players at no cost.

The group meets on Wednesdays at 1:30 p.m., on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month in the Community Room of the West End Branch Library, 151 Cambridge St.

To sign up or for more information, email Audrey Tedeman ([artedeman@gmail.com](mailto:artedeman@gmail.com)) or Julia Forbes ([jmaforbes@gmail.com](mailto:jmaforbes@gmail.com)).

## Boston Public Health Comm. encourages vaccination as respiratory virus cases rise

Special to the Times

Recent data analyzed by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) shows low vaccination rates and an increase in cases of respiratory viral illness in Boston. BPHC recommends people protect themselves and their communities from getting sick, especially as they travel and gather with loved ones.

According to data from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), twice as many people have been hospital-

ized with the flu or COVID-19 in Boston compared to October. BPHC also measures virus levels in wastewater in Boston to track transmission of infection and has noted significant increases in the amount of COVID-19, Flu, and RSV. Compared to two weeks ago, the amount of COVID-19 in wastewater across the city of Boston is 23% higher, the flu virus is 23% higher, and RSV is 34% higher.

Staying up to date on vaccines

for respiratory viruses, such as COVID-19, flu and RSV is an important strategy to reduce the risk of severe illness and hospitalization. Using DPH data, BPHC found only 15.7% of people in Boston have received the updated COVID-19 vaccine. The data also show only 33.8% of people in Boston have received a flu vaccine this season.

"Vaccination is the best way to prevent severe illness and hospitalization from COVID-19, flu

and RSV, and it is not too late to protect yourself this season," said Dr. Bisola Ojikutu, Commissioner of Public Health and Executive Director of the Boston Public Health Commission. "We encourage residents to take advantage of opportunities for free walk-in COVID-19 vaccination and testing as well as flu shots."

To make it easier for people to get vaccinated ahead of the holidays, BPHC is holding a vaccine event at the Bruce C. Bolling

Municipal Building in Roxbury on Friday and Saturday, December 22 and 23. With a winter wonderland theme to kick off the holidays, the vaccine event will offer free COVID-19 and flu immunizations, giveaways, face painting, treats, and an opportunity to meet Santa. (See flyer attached.) For RSV vaccination, people should reach out to their healthcare provider to determine eligibility.

Standing COVID-19 and flu

(BPHC Pg. 4)

# EDITORIAL

## HAPPY NEW YEAR

We often quote a verse from Alfred Lord Tennyson's "Ring Out Wild Bells" when we write our annual New Year's editorial.

But after re-reading the poem in its entirety, we are printing the whole thing, because it sums up -- better than we ever could express -- our feelings about 2023 and our hopes for 2024.

Although it was published in 1850, its verses are timeless. Indeed, one could apply every stanza to something going on in the world today.

So we hope you take the time to read it and enjoy it, as we did the other day:

-----

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light;  
The year is dying in the night;  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.  
Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:  
The year is going, let him go;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.  
Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
For those that here we see no more,  
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
Ring in redress to all mankind.  
Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
And ancient forms of party strife;  
Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
With sweeter manners, purer laws.  
Ring out the want, the care, the sin,  
The faithless coldness of the times;  
Ring out, ring out thy mournful rhymes,  
But ring the fuller minstrel in.  
Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
The civic slander and the spite;  
Ring in the love of truth and right,  
Ring in the common love of good.  
Ring out old shapes of foul disease,  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;  
Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.  
Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

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We wish all of our readers a Happy and Healthy New Year.

# Mayor Wu announces 2024 Civic Summit for community leaders, members

Special to the Times

Mayor Michelle Wu announced the Civic Summit, an event focused on uniting neighbors, civic leaders, and non-profit advocates in a dynamic forum featuring panels with local leaders and advocates. The Civic Summit, organized for the first time by the Mayor's Office of Civic Organizing, will be held Saturday, January 13, at the Howard Thurman Center for Common Ground at Boston University. This event will feature a fireside chat with Mayor Wu, a networking tea hour, and five additional sessions hosted by community leaders. Up to 200 community members can register for the free event online at [www.boston.gov/civic-engagement/civic-summit-2024](http://www.boston.gov/civic-engagement/civic-summit-2024).

"Boston has always been a leader among cities because of the civic leaders in our neighborhoods and communities. The City of Boston is excited to connect and learn from all our civic leaders at this Civic Summit, which will convene those who know our neighborhoods best to share resources and best practices to empower our residents," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "I'm thankful everyday for the strong civic leadership that drives Boston, and I look forward to seeing everyone at the summit."

The Civic Summit is designed to foster connections to share knowledge and ignite inspiration for positive change within the diverse communities in Boston. The theme for this year's summit is "Community Over Everything." The City of Boston hopes that attendees will represent every corner of Boston to network and to identify opportunities to connect and collaborate after the summit.

"I am so excited to breathe new life into the Civic Summit," said

Nathalia Benitez-Perez, Director of the Mayor's Office of Civic Organizing. "My hope for this year's summit is that it serves as a crucible of knowledge, forging insights that empower present and future civic leaders to translate wisdom into tangible actions within their communities."

"I believe knowledge is power. I am really thrilled about the upcoming Civic Summit," said Margaret Farmer, Co-Chair of the Jeffries Point Association. "I look forward to connecting with other community members and learning more about how city government works, so I can better advocate for my neighborhood."

The Civic Summit will offer a fireside chat featuring Mayor Wu facilitated by Jeneé Osterheldt, Boston Globe's Deputy Managing Editor For Culture, Talent, and Development, and Founder of A Beautiful Resistance.

Featured sessions include:

- Empowering Change: How to Fund Your Inspiration led by Eric Leslie, Founder and Lead Organizer of Union Capital

- Becoming a Civic Leader - Training the Next Generation of Leaders featuring panelists Lee Pelton, President and CEO of The Boston Foundation; Matthew Broude, Co-founder of The Queer Neighborhood Council; Commissioner Kristen McCosh, The Disability Commissioner for the City of Boston; Brianna Bourne, Boston University Class of 2024

- EmpowerED: Leveraging Social Media for Community Impact led by Emily Schario, Head of Content for Boston Globe's B-Side

- Sustainable Cities: Empowering Communities for a Greener Future, a fireside chat with Oliver Sellers-Garcia, Boston's first Green

New Deal Director and a cabinet-level Senior Advisor to Mayor Michelle Wu, and Jaye Meakem, Boston Harbor Now's Community Engagement Manager

"The Civic Summit was planned to empower neighborhood community leaders and individuals in Boston who have a desire to make a difference in their community, but don't know where to begin," said Brianna Millor, Chief of the Community Engagement Cabinet. "This is going to be an incredible opportunity for constituents to be in the same space and to get City Hall out of City Hall."

This year's Civic Summit is a collaborative effort between community partners, City staff, civic leaders, local businesses, and residents to help shape an event that will be empowering and transformative for all attendees. The City of Boston is excited to work with Anais Summer Day, a local woman-owned event planning company led by Anais Ramos. Ramos is the lead event planner for the Civic Summit. Side Presents, a Boston-based creative production company, will be the Civic Summit's featured emcee. Boston University is the lead partner of the Civic Summit. Boston University and The Boston Foundation are event supporters.

"Boston University is honored to host the City of Boston's Civic Summit, in support of Mayor Wu's commitment to fostering community engagement and collaboration," said Kenneth W. Freeman, President Ad Interim of Boston University. "The Howard Thurman Center for Common Ground with its mission to connect people through creative, shared experiences is a fitting venue for this

(CIVIC SUMMIT Pg. 5)

## THE BEACON HILL TIMES

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## SEND US YOUR NEWS

The Times encourages residents to submit engagement, wedding and birth announcements, news releases, business and education briefs, sports stories and photos for publication. Items should be forwarded to our offices at 385 Broadway, Revere, MA 02151. We also encourage readers to e-mail news releases and photos to [deb@reverejournal.com](mailto:deb@reverejournal.com).

## BPHC (from pg. 3)

vaccine clinics remain at the Bruce C. Bolling Building and Boston City Hall:

- Boston City Hall – 1 City Hall Square, Room 115

- § Open Mondays from 7 am - 1 pm and Wednesdays from 12 - 5 pm.

- § Holiday Hours:

- Monday, January 1 - CLOSED

Follow the recommended respiratory virus safety steps to reduce your risk:

- Stay home when sick.
- Consider wearing a mask:
- If you must leave the house

while sick.

- If you are going to be in crowded outdoor spaces.

- And/or, if you are at a high risk of severe illness.

- Have COVID-19 rapid testing kits available at home to test if you have symptoms of COVID-19.

- Visit walk-in and by-appointment testing sites throughout the City.

- Seek treatment from a trusted healthcare provider if you test positive for COVID-19 or flu and are at a high risk for severe disease.

- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20

seconds.

- Regularly disinfect and clean high touch surfaces.

Older adults, adults aged 60 and older, children younger than 5 years old, pregnant people, and people with chronic medical conditions are among those at higher risk for severe illness, hospitalization, and death.

BPHC has several resources to help people stay healthy ahead of the holidays, including COVID-19 test kits and health education materials in 12 languages. Visit [boston.gov/bphc-infectiousdisease](http://boston.gov/bphc-infectiousdisease) to learn more.

## THE PRUDENTIAL CENTER LIGHTS UP THE NIGHT FOR BOSTON HARBOR NOW



This past Tuesday (December 19), the Prudential Center illuminated the Boston skyline with vibrant blue and orange lights in support of Boston Harbor Now and their transformative work around Boston's waterfront and the Harbor Islands as part of their 31 Nights of Lights celebration.

The event highlighted Boston Harbor Now's commitment to crafting a waterfront that is both visually captivating and inclusive. Notably, leaders from Boston Harbor Now had the honor of participating in a ceremonial switch-flipping at the Prudential Mall.



## Greater Boston bikeshare system plans to add 750 ebikes to growing fleet

Special to the Times

The cities of Boston, Cambridge, Somerville and Everett, the town of Brookline, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts ("Blue Cross") and Lyft today announced plans to integrate 750 next-generation ebikes into Greater Boston's popular Bluebikes program and the renewal of Blue Cross' title sponsorship through May 2031.

The rollout will begin with 50 ebikes hitting the street this week; an additional 700 will join the fleet in subsequent months.

The new seven-year agreement between Blue Cross and the municipal owners further cements a dynamic public-private partnership for sustainable urban transportation. Blue Cross will continue its commitment to promoting the overall health and well-being

of Massachusetts residents by supporting the municipal owners of Bluebikes in driving system growth and accessibility through initiatives including station expansions, system enhancements and the integration of ebikes.

"Today marks an exciting milestone as we usher in the next wave of transportation in Greater

(BIKESHARE Pg. 8)

### CIVIC SUMMIT (from pg. 4)

forum. We're pleased to play a part in facilitating conversations reflecting diverse viewpoints and experiences as we work to build a more inclusive and vibrant community."

"Our work at the Boston Foundation has taught us time and again that the best solutions are those that are driven by and responsive to the knowledge and insights of community members

and leaders," said M. Lee Pelton, President and CEO of the Boston Foundation. "We appreciate Mayor Wu for creating this opportunity to listen, learn and share ideas for making Boston a more equitable city."

The Civic Summit is free and open to the public with registration. A light breakfast and lunch will be served. For more information and to register visit [boston.gov](http://boston.gov).

[boston.gov/civicsummit](http://boston.gov/civicsummit).

The Mayor's Office of Civic Organizing is committed to collaborative partnerships and programs that encourage proactive community engagement, awareness, and service in our neighborhoods. Follow the Mayor's Office of Civic Organizing on social media @bostoncivicorg and visit [boston.gov/civicsummit](http://boston.gov/civicsummit) to register and learn more about the Civic Summit.

### FIRST NIGHT SAFETY (from pg. 1)

park's reconstruction. New this year, there will be programming inside Boston City Hall, comedy at the ImprovAsylum, and six hours of free carousel rides on the Greenway.

The Boston Police Department will be present at First Night to support this family-friendly event. Additionally, Boston Police are reminding attendees not to consume alcohol or marijuana in public spaces or prohibited private spaces, not to fly drones at any First Night activities, to dress accordingly for the weather, and to report any suspicious activity.

"Families participating in the Official First Night celebrations, as well as residents celebrating in our neighborhoods, can expect to see a strong police presence," said Commissioner Michael Cox, Boston Police Department. "We are working with our public safety partners to make sure that this family friendly event is safe and secure for all in attendance. If you see something concerning or need to report a party or disturbance, please report it to an officer nearby or call 911."

A parade from City Hall Plaza to the Boston Common at 6:00 p.m. will lead up to the Family Fireworks over the Common starting at 7:00 p.m. Midnight Fireworks over Boston Harbor presented by Meet

Boston will cap off the night. More information on programming for Sunday, December 31, can be found at [firstnightboston.org](http://firstnightboston.org).

"We are again proud to help organize this proud Boston tradition, and excited to celebrate in this year's home of City Hall Plaza," said Dusty Rhodes, organizer of First Night. "We're appreciative of the many organizations that help support this annual event, and we're excited to put forth an enjoyable event for Boston's residents and visitors alike."

The public is reminded that it is illegal for private citizens to use, possess, or sell fireworks, and that illegal fireworks pose significant dangers to the safety of residents and their property.

Boston EMS will be deploying additional personnel at dispatch operations and in ambulances across the city to support emergency medical needs on New Year's Eve.

"Whether you are celebrating at First Night events or another venue, please keep in mind that many illnesses and injuries can be avoided through sensible measures. Dress appropriately for the weather, have a transportation plan, and be a good friend, making sure everyone gets home safely," said Boston EMS Chief of Department, Jim Hooley.

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YEAR IN REVIEW (from pg. 1)

ence topics to parents, faculty and staff, peers and other PSS students during the school's dynamic 2022-2023 Science Fair exhibition.

• On March 1, the Music Research Library opened at 42 Joy St., apparently marking the return of a record store to Beacon Hill for the first time in more than 40 years. The independent business got its start in Providence, R.I., about seven years ago before relocating to Boston.

• On April 11, the Gibson House Museum honored the French Library at "À la Belle Époque," the museum's 26th annual



AMY WILSON PHOTO  
Barbara 'Bobby' Moore, winner of the Beacon Hill Civic Association's 26th annual Beacon Award.

benefit at the St. Botolph Club.

• On April 28, Kenzie Bok stepped down as District 8 City Councilor to assume her new role as administrator of the Boston Housing Authority.

• In May, Historic New England began the process to reimagine its Otis House campus on Cambridge Street as a self-described "community cultural anchor."

• On May 12, the public got its first look at a project that envisions the creation of a "West End Green Corridor," which would connect the Rose F. Kennedy Greenway with the Charles River Esplanade, during a presentation in the Hub House community room.

The West End Civic Association's Green Space Committee partnered with the landscape architecture department at UMass Amherst on the project, which solicited ideas from the community on a proposed green corridor running from Leverett Circle (the Science Park T station) down Nashua Street, Lomasney Way, Merrimac Street, and New Chardon Street. The process also looked at two major parks, including completing the Greatest Neighborhood Park on Nashua Street, as well as the proposed Merrimac Plaza, which will be part of the Hurley Building redevelopment project.



D. MURPHY PHOTO

The garden gazebo at 15 Chestnut St. – one of the gardens featured on the Beacon Hill Garden Club's 94th annual Hidden Gardens of Beacon Hill Tour on May 18.

• On May 14, the Friends of the Public Garden again partnered with the Boston Parks Department to host Duckling Day - an annual Mother's Day tradition that pays tribute to Robert McCloskey's classic children's book, "Make Way for Ducklings" - in the Public Garden.

• On May 15, Barbara W. Moore, affectionally known as "Bobby," received the 26th annual

Beacon Award for her "sustained and significant contribution to the Beacon Hill community" during the Beacon Hill Civic Association's 101st annual meeting at the Somerset Club.

• On May 18, the Beacon Hill Garden Club's 94th annual Hidden Gardens of Beacon Hill Tour returned to the neighborhood. The sold-out event comprised 11 Hidden Gardens, as well as three additional "Ribbon Gardens," which were restricted or only viewable from the street.

• On May 22, Beacon Hill Cleaners was among the 30 recipients honored by the city as 'Legacy Businesses' at the inaugural Legacy Business Ceremony and Reception.

The business had continuously operated at 151 Charles St. under the ownership of Ledung Tran and her husband, Hai Tran, since opening in 1991 until early January, when the business was temporarily displaced by their landlord due to structural issues related to the building next door.

(YEAR IN REVIEW Pg. 7)

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COURTESY OF FORMER CITY COUNCILOR KENZIE BOK'S OFFICE

Le Dung Thi Tran, co-owner of Beacon Hill Cleaners (center), with her son, Long Tran (at left), and former City Councilor Kenzie Bok (right).

**YEAR IN REVIEW** (from pg. 6)

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- On May 22, Beacon Hill Cleaners was among the 30 recipients honored by the city as 'Legacy Businesses' at the inaugural Legacy Business Ceremony and Reception.

The business had continuously operated at 151 Charles St. under the ownership of Ledung Tran and her husband, Hai Tran, since opening in 1991 until early January, when the business was temporarily displaced by their landlord due to structural issues related to the building next door.

Beacon Hill Cleaners reopened soon after receiving the award.

- On June 3 and 5, Rose Standish Nichols was the subject of "I Give You My Home: The Rose Standish Nichols Story" - an original, one-woman opera that came to the Nichols House Museum, her former family home, for five performances.

- On June 8, the Beacon Hill Art Walk returned, with more than 100 local artists plying their wares in the neighborhood's alleyways, courtyards, and gardens, along with musicians performing live music throughout the day.

The annual event is traditionally held on the first Sunday in June and dates back to the 1990s.

- On June 22, the public got its first look at details of the proposed Charlesbank Landing on the Esplanade, including a timeline for the project, as well as several alternatives for its multi-purpose recreational space, during a public meeting held at the West End Branch Library, as well as virtually.

- On July 18, Margret "Mag-



MAYOR'S OFFICE PHOTO BY MIKE MEJIA  
*Sharon Durkan is seen upon being sworn in as the new District 8 City Councilor during a special ceremony on Tuesday, Aug. 15, in the Public Garden.*



COURTESY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON  
*Margaret "Maggie" Van Scoy, the city's neighborhood liaison for Back Bay, Beacon Hill, Fenway-Kenmore, and Mission Hill.*

gie" Van Scoy assumed the role of the city's neighborhood liaison for Back Bay, Beacon Hill, Fenway-Kenmore, and Mission Hill.

- On Sept. 13, representatives for the Nite Lite Café, which is poised to take over the basement-level space at 89 Charles St. formerly occupied by Artu, appeared before the city's Licensing Board at its Sept. 13 virtual hearing. The proposed new restau-

rant would share the same name of a long-shuttered North End bar, which was the site of a reputed Mafia double-murder in 1966.

- On Sept. 24, the Beacon Hill Civic Association held its annual Fall HillFest, which featured games and food for children and their families, as well as live entertainment.

- On Sept. 23 and 24, the Beacon Hill Business Association's annual Beacon Hill Sidewalk Sale returned to Charles Street.

- On Oct. 17, a bill sponsored by Rep. Jay Livingstone to expand the boundaries of the Beacon Hill Historic District garnered the support of several community leaders during a public hearing of the Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government at the State House.

The proposed legislation (H.4076, "An Act enhancing the Historic Beacon Hill District"), which mirrors a home-rule petition that was passed unanimously by the Boston City Council and then signed by Mayor Michelle Wu earlier this year, would enlarge the district to include all of the North Slope via the addition of an approximately 40-foot-wide area running from Charles Circle to Bowdoin Street along Cambridge Street on the Beacon Hill side not currently isn't included in the district. This omission apparently came in response to concerns that including the entire North Slope in the Historic District could impede the city's plans for the Engine Company 4 and Ladder Company 24 fire station, which subsequently opened in 1965 at 200 Cambridge St.

Rep. Livingstone's bill would also give the Beacon Hill Architectural Commission (BHAC) the specific authority to levy fines for violations of the Historic District's architectural guidelines for the first time in its history.

- On Nov. 7, District 8 City Councilor Sharon Durkan cruised to an easy reelection victory in the city's municipal election.

- On Nov. 15, the 28th "Gardens & Greens" fundraiser was held at Hampshire House to support the cost of decorating the neighborhood's approximately 1,100 lamp-posts for the holidays.

- On Dec. 7, the Beacon Hill Business Association's annual Beacon Hill Holiday Stroll returned to the neighborhood.

For the occasion, Charles Street between Cambridge and Beacon

streets was again closed off to traffic, allowing for holiday shoppers to stroll through its shops, restaurants, and offices while enjoying refreshments and music performances, including by the Brass Quartet and the Back Bay Ringers.

The event also included the annual tree lighting - this time at the corner of Charles and Cambridge streets - and was preceded by festivities for youngsters at Hill House on Mt. Vernon Street, where Santa was on hand to take photographs with local children.

- On Dec. 10, the Nichols House Museum for the second time presented a performance by acclaimed musicians as part of the annual Beacon Hill Holiday House Tour festivities.

At that time, pianist Joe Mul-

holland, joined by renowned bassist Bruce Gertz, performed at the King's Chapel Parish House at 64 Beacon St. during the reception for Nichols House

- On Dec. 14, Mayor Michelle Wu, the Mayor's Office of Housing, and the Boston Public Library (BPL) announced that the City of Boston's Public Facilities Commission had tentatively designated the development team of Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH) and Caste Capital to redevelop the West End branch of the Boston Public Library on Cambridge Street.

The renovation is slated to include a new, two-story branch library and 119 income-restricted units of housing above the library.

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D. MURPHY PHOTO

Music Research Library at 42 Joy St.

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# Wu and PowerCorpsBOS celebrate graduation of third cohort

Special to the Times

Mayor Michelle Wu celebrated the graduation of PowerCorpsBOS' third cohort. PowerCorpsBOS is a green jobs program that creates workforce development opportunities for young adults, particularly from Boston's environmental justice communities, in fields that address pressing environmental challenges in Boston. The 29 graduates spent the past six months learning about various green industries and skill sets, including urban forestry and energy efficient building maintenance.

"PowerCorps is essential in our work to invest in our young people, expand opportunity and build a Green New Deal city," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "This pro-

gram provides crucial pathways through skills and job training to our young people - ensuring that our green workforce is accessible to all. Congratulations and thank you to this year's empowering graduating class for their commitment to strengthening Boston's foundation for a clean, resilient future!"

Led by the Worker Empowerment Cabinet in partnership with the Environment Department, PowerCorpsBOS is a "learn and earn" program that pays Boston's young adults ages 18-30 to participate in hands-on training and provides them with career readiness support, and connections to employers in the green industry. Priority populations for the pro-



The third graduating cohort of the PowerCorpsBOS program, a green jobs program focusing on workforce development opportunities.

gram are marginalized groups, residents from environmental justice communities, as well as returning citizens, court-involved residents, youth who have experienced homelessness or housing instability, and youth who have been in foster care.

"I am incredibly proud of our Cohort 3 graduates for dedicating the last six months to improving themselves personally and professionally while serving their communities," said Davo Jefferson, Executive Director of PowerCorpsBOS. "It has been a privilege

to witness first hand the positive impact PowerCorpsBOS has had in changing the trajectory of the lives of Boston's young adults. Thank you to the employer and community partners who have

(POWERCORPSBOS Pg. 12)

## BIKESHARE (from pg. 5)

Boston with the introduction of state-of-the-art e-bikes," Boston Mayor Michelle Wu said. "Partnerships such as our Bluebikes alliance with Blue Cross are crucial in ensuring our residents have access to healthier, more sustainable, and affordable transportation options. We look forward to continued collaboration with Blue Cross and all our municipal partners as we elevate our bike share system."

"Bluebikes have become an integral part of so many communities in and around Boston, and we are thrilled to continue supporting the system," said Blue Cross President and CEO Sarah Iselin. "We're looking forward to the next chapter of partnership with the cities and towns through the renewal of our Bluebikes sponsorship. Biking is truly one of the best ways to get around, benefiting the

environment as well as our mental and physical health. And adding ebikes to the Bluebikes system is an important step toward making biking more accessible to more people."

The new collection of ebikes is expected to grow the overall Bluebikes fleet to 5,000 bikes across 500 stations by next summer. Funding for the initial purchase of the ebikes came from a combination of municipal investment from Boston and Cambridge, state funding, federal funding by the Boston Area Metropolitan Planning Organization and support from Blue Cross's sponsorship of the bike-share system. Together, Boston, Cambridge, Somerville, and Blue Cross will provide support for affordable user costs of ebikes for Bluebikes members.

The state's largest health plan became Bluebikes' title sponsor in 2018. Since the inception of the Bluebikes partnership, the municipal owners - in conjunction with Blue Cross - have made investments, received grants and fostered station sponsorships to accomplish system milestones, including:

- Expanding the system from four to 13 municipalities, representing a 225% increase
- Supporting a 333% growth in the number of available Bluebikes and a 150% expansion in the number of Bluebikes stations
- Bolstering the income-eligible program
- Surpassing 22 million rides taken

"The City of Cambridge is proud to support more affordable,

sustainable, and healthier forms of transportation and extend what has been a win-win public-private partnership," said Cambridge City Manager Yi-An Huang. "Bluebikes have become a critical part of Cambridge's public transportation system and I am excited that the system is becoming even more accessible through the addition of ebikes to the Bluebikes fleet, which will open up the system to more older adults, people with disabilities, and others who may find traditional bikes hard to pedal. It will also create more opportunities for individuals seeking to maximize their time and access to our busy communities, while reducing traffic congestion."

Lyft's ebike was named one of TIME's 100 Best Inventions of 2022. It features a long-lasting battery with a 60-mile range, a user-friendly interface LCD screen, a smoother ride and numerous safety upgrades. Massachusetts legalized Class 1 ebikes, which have no throttle and a maximum speed of 20 MPH, as part of the Transportation Bond Bill last year. Unlike traditional pedal bikes, ebikes aren't permitted on sidewalks; they can be used on shared paths and bike lanes. Riders must follow all traffic laws and regulations and must bike in the same direction of traffic except on specially marked streets. Riders must always yield to pedestrians, maintain a safe speed and remain aware of all street users of all abilities.

"Somerville takes great pride in our regional, public-owned Bluebikes system, which is already one

of the most successful bikeshare systems in North America," said Somerville Mayor Katjana Ballantyne. "Bikeshare is public transit, and I believe that affordable, pedal-assist ebikes can improve travel choices for people across the metro region."

"Bluebikes is getting our newest ebike, which has cutting-edge features that riders love," said Caroline Samponaro, VP of Public Policy, Lyft. "These ebikes make it easier than ever for people to reach jobs, family, and friends with sustainable, climate-friendly transportation that gets cars off our roads. I want to thank Mayor Wu, all the Bluebikes municipal owners, and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts for their continued investment and partnership in Bluebikes. Without them, Bluebikes wouldn't be the tremendous success it is today."

The municipal owners have prioritized access and affordability for the new Bluebikes ebikes, which will be available at \$0.10 per minute for Bluebikes members, \$0.25 per minute for Adventure Pass holders, and \$0.07 per minute for low-income residents enrolled in Bluebikes' Income-Eligible Program. Income-eligible riders are provided a reduced annual fee for Bluebikes. Earlier this year, Boston also announced the Boston Bikes Pass, which is a Bluebikes membership offered only to City of Boston residents at a reduced annual rate of \$60. Learn more discounted Bluebikes rates at <https://www.boston.gov/departments/boston-bikes/discounted-bluebikes>.

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# Local talent headed to City Hall Plaza for New Year's Eve Celebration

Special to the Times

First Night Boston is proud to announce its full schedule of performances for New Year's Eve, which will fill City Hall Plaza and surrounding venues in the hours leading up to 2024. Musicians, comedians, performers, and artists from near and far will perform across in Boston's downtown, with the stage, lights, and ice in City Hall Plaza serving as the event's centerpiece. The full schedule is included in this release.

Beginning at 11:11 a.m., artistic and musical performances kick-off at the Main Stage with Hyde Park-based Sweet Harmony. The Boston Saxophone Quartet will begin indoor programming at Boston's City Hall's Civic Pavilion at 12:00 p.m. with its Noteworthy Scholars program, and arts and crafts presented by Greater Boston Chinese Cultural Association will fill the second floor of City Hall at 1:00 p.m. Arts and crafts include calligraphy for New Year's blessings, translating names into Chinese, face painting, and more.

On City Hall Plaza, the Main Stage rocks on with local acts Ava & Cam, Paco, Boston Music Project, and Tristan and Delaney blending new and old beats for the growing crowds. The Ice Sculpture Gallery, featuring iconic Boston landmarks will be sparkling for all to enjoy.

The carousel on the Greenway offers free rides from 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m., and at 2:00 p.m., Improv Asylum makes its First Night debut with the first of three afternoon shows at its Hanover Street location. The audience-interactive and lightning-fast improv is designed for the whole family and goes until 4:40 p.m. In the Back Bay, the breathtaking Organ Concert in the First Church of Christ Scientist also begins at 2:00 p.m.

The microphones rattle atop City Hall Plaza as the sun sets with performances from local artists including Koliba, Lizje, and Maddi Ryan. Koliba is bound to turn heads by blending traditional and modern West African rhythms, reggae, ska, zouk and more. Colombian-American Lizje's captivating blend of Latin Jazz and pop music keeps the energy high while Maddi Ryan returns her talent to First Night for the third straight year.

Boston Mayor Michelle Wu will lead a speaking program at 5:45 p.m. before the First Night Parade brings hundreds of performers to Boston Common for the 7:00 p.m. fireworks display. As the countdown continues, the tempo at City

Hall picks up with Sons of Levin and LaQuandra Seymore performing short sets, before Guess Method, Nancia, and Ayla Brown & Rob Bellamy put their local roots and vibrant sounds on display.

Headliner Sammy Adams flexes some Boston muscle when he takes the stage at 11:30 p.m. As a second fireworks display glows above Boston Harbor at midnight, New England will ring in 2024 with Adams in the spotlight. Boston-born, the platinum-selling rapper, singer, and songwriter caps more than 13 hours of free entertainment, light shows, ice sculptures, and other family-friendly programming that is completely free for thousands of visitors.

More than 200,000 guests are expected to attend First Night Boston 2024. For more information and to support First Night with a donation, the public is invited to visit [www.firstnightboston.org](http://www.firstnightboston.org).

The full performance schedule is as follows, as of Dec. 19, and is subject to minor changes.)

**Church of Christ Scientist**  
250 Massachusetts Ave.

**First Church of Christ, Scientist - The Mother Church Extension**  
11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., 11:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Enjoy free admission to the How Do You See the World? experience + Mapparium globe, a tour of The Mother Church at 1 p.m., and visit the Christian Science Reading Room from 11:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

**First Night Organ Concert**  
2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Soul-touching performances from organists upon one of the world's ten largest organs

**City Hall Civic Pavilion**  
1 City Hall Sq. (Entrance Congress St.)

**Boston Saxophone Quartet**  
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Performing with Boston-area students and rising saxophone stars, BSQ is an experienced quartet of talented instrumentalists

**The Lied To's**  
2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

The Lied To's, made up of musicians Doug Kwartler and Susan Levine will play soulful beats indoors at City Hall Plaza

**City Hall Second Floor**  
1 City Hall Sq. (Entrance near Congress St.)

**Arts and Crafts Presented by Greater Boston Chinese Cultural Association**

1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Arts and crafts for all to enjoy with Greater Boston Chinese Cultural Association

**Improv Asylum**  
216 Hanover St.

**Improv Asylum**  
2:00 p.m.- 4:40 p.m.

Three back-to-back audience-interactive and lightning-fast improv shows for the whole family

**Boston Common**  
139 Tremont St.

**Frog Pond Skating Spectacular**  
6:00 p.m.- 7:00 p.m.

Figure skating show produced by The Skating Club of Boston

**City of Boston Family Fireworks**

7:00 p.m. - 7:15 p.m.

A spectacular Fireworks display over the Boston Common

**City Plaza Main Stage**  
1 City Hall Sq.

**Sweet Harmony**  
11:11 a.m. - 11:51 a.m.

Performance and singing dance troupe from Hyde Park

**Ava & Cam**  
12:10 p.m. - 12:40 p.m.

Live music including Pop, Rock, and Country songs by this impressive duo

**Paco's Band**  
1:00 p.m. - 1:40 p.m.

Paco and his band performing some of your favorite 50's and 60's hit oldies music

**Boston Music Project**  
2:00 p.m. - 2:40 p.m.

Creative youth development program highlighting students unleashing their musical creativity

**Tristan and Delaney**  
3:00 p.m. - 3:40 p.m.

A performance by Mass-born Delaney and Alabama-born Tristan; two successful smalltown kids who are performing a glimpse into the past

**Koliba**  
4:00 p.m. - 4:40 p.m.

Bringing together musicians from two continents, Koliba will perform a blend of traditional and modern styles including West African rhythms, Hi Life, Reggae, Ska, Zouk, and more

**LIZJE**  
5:00 p.m. - 5:45 p.m.

Columbian/American artist drawing inspiration from her diverse cultural background, performing her unique and innovative sound that sets her apart

**Maddi Ryan**  
6:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Performance by the up and coming singer/songwriter from just North of Boston

**Sons of Levin**  
7:20 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Inspired by classic rock bands, Sons of Levin sings homage to previous great rock and roll acts while delivering their own take on the jam/rock scene

**LaQuandra Seymore**  
8:10 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Performance by Massachusetts native singer and songwriter whose repertoire spans many genres and resonates with many ages.

**Guess Method**  
8:50 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Dance-inducing Indie-Funk powerhouse by the group, hailing from the Boston area

**Nancia**  
9:50 p.m. - 10:05 p.m.

Performance by Boston's best R&B artist, including singing, dance, and energy

**Ayla Brown & Rob Bellamy**  
10:30 p.m. - 11:10 p.m.

Massachusetts natives, and married couple will perform their own songs together

**Sammy Adams**  
11:30 p.m. - 12:30 a.m.

Event headliner performance by platinum selling rapper, singer, and songwriter

**Boston Harbor (Long Warf)**  
212 Northern Ave.

**Boston Harbor Fireworks**  
12:00 a.m. - 12:20 a.m.

Breathtaking fireworks display over the Boston Harbor, brought to you by Meet Boston.

First Night Boston is a 501 (C) (3) non-profit organization that funds the annual New Year's Eve celebration in the city of Boston. The city-wide celebration features

(FIRST NIGHT Pg. 11)

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# Healey proposes regulations to strengthen resilience from coastal and inland flooding

Special to the Times

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) today issued draft regulations to strengthen wetlands and stormwater resilience by providing flood control and preventing storm damage to shorelines and infrastructure from the impacts of climate change. The proposed regulations will help protect areas vulnerable to sea-level rise and storm surge, promote nature-based solutions to flooding, streamline certain permitting processes, and use updated precipitation data to inform decision-making.

The regulations are proposed under the Wetlands Protection Act and the Massachusetts Public Waterfront Act. MassDEP will accept comments on the draft regulations until March 1, 2024.

“Data tells us that inland and coastal flooding are two of the biggest threats to Massachusetts. The storms we saw this summer showed us that there is no time to waste,” said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rebecca Tepper. “These updates strike a balance to preserve and protect development along our waterways. These changes also present Massachusetts with another opportunity to lead – we’re promoting the most cutting-edge nature-based solutions along our coastlines.”

“We cannot continue a ‘business-as-usual’ approach if we want to build more resilient communities,” said MassDEP Commissioner Bonnie Heiple. “With these regulations, we’ve integrated the latest science and green infrastructure techniques to mitigate climate change impacts and protect residents, municipalities, and businesses from costly rebuilding efforts. MassDEP is grateful for the engagement of stakeholders

and agencies in developing this proposal and looks forward to continued feedback on these regulations.”

## Community Resilience

The proposed Wetlands regulations would protect the coastal floodplain, which hosts nearly \$55 billion in structures, of which about \$40 billion is residential, \$12 billion is industrial, and \$2.5 billion is commercial. Of the nearly 2.5 million people living within the 78 coastal communities in Massachusetts, approximately 55 percent live within Massachusetts-designated Environmental Justice Block Groups, representing communities of color, low-income populations, and/or communities facing language barriers.

## Coastal and Inland Flooding Resilience

The proposed Wetlands regulations will promote resilience by creating performance standards to protect the natural buffering function of wetlands and floodplains and help prevent damage to both the natural and built environment. The standards will require elevation of new development in areas of the coastal floodplain where most storm damage occurs and minimize new development in the most vulnerable area of the coastal floodplain where waves are higher than three feet. The regulations encourage nature-based approaches to improve resilience, such as restoration of salt marshes, coastal dunes, and barrier beaches on the coast, as well as inland wetlands. Updated stormwater management standards will reduce stormwater pollution to water bodies throughout the state, helping to improve the water quality of our rivers and streams.

The regulations are designed to

be flexible for homeowners and families. Single-family homes and housing development with four or fewer units are exempted from the stormwater requirements of the Wetlands regulations and new housing developments with five to nine units per lot must meet new standards only to the extent possible.

Updates to Waterways regulations – which protect and promote public use of tidelands and other waterways in Massachusetts and are commonly known as “Chapter 91” – require license applications to consider projected sea-level rise for certain projects and encourage relocation of building mechanical systems away from the ground floor.

## Incentives for Nature-Based Solutions

The Wetlands regulations promote Green Site Design, which uses natural solutions – like trees and buffer zones – to manage stormwater, instead of more expensive detention basins and other traditional infrastructure. By using nature to address stormwater runoff and pollution, developers will receive Green Site Design credits and will substantially reduce the need to build and maintain more costly stormwater management systems.

## Updated Precipitation Data

The proposed Wetlands amendments use up-to-date data sources to evaluate precipitation – replacing the 1961 data that is currently used with 2019 data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Storms have been increasing in intensity with climate change so that today’s storms deliver more precipitation than they did 60 years ago. Using outdated

data to design stormwater systems means pipes that are too small to carry increased volumes of water – resulting in overflows and flooding. The switch to data that are more reflective of current conditions will prevent resulting damage to buildings and bridges, scouring of riverbanks, and other problems.

## Streamlined Permitting

The proposed regulations streamline certain permitting processes. The Wetlands regulations are updated to align with the EPA Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System General Permit and the Transportation Separate Storm Sewer System Permit to improve consistency and protect surface waters, including wetlands, from stormwater runoff pollution. The Waterways regulations allow modifications to licenses for identified smaller structures (primarily small docks and piers) to account for sea-level rise and maintaining public water access.

## Regulatory Process

These regulatory updates are among the 142 priority actions for state agencies to direct under the ResilientMass Strategy released in November 2023. The Strategy was developed to address the impacts of climate change, such as flooding from precipitation, high heat, and coastal flooding and erosion. ResilientMass identified inland flooding as the most significant climate hazard in Massachusetts.

The proposed amendments were developed over several years in close consultation with a broad range of stakeholders, including more than 10 sessions with stakeholder groups, more than 25 presentations, and meetings with various groups and interested parties.

MassDEP is accepting public comment on the draft regulations

until 5 p.m. on Friday, March 1, 2024. Virtual information sessions and public hearings on both sets of regulations will be held throughout January and February; more details are available here. For more information on the Wetlands Regulations, turn here. For more information on the Waterways Regulations, turn here.

## Validators:

“The Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions (MACC) is pleased that MassDEP is publishing important updates to the Wetlands Protection Act,” said MACC Executive Director Dorothy A. McGlinchy. “These proposed regulations, along with the climate related goals established by the Healey-Driscoll Administration, will help minimize impacts from severe storms in a changing climate. Additional urgency and coordination will be needed in our continued fight to preserve wetlands, open space, and biological diversity. MACC supports the Conservation Commissioners who are on the front lines of protecting our precious resource areas.”

“The urgency of these regulations is underscored by this week’s major rainstorm causing extreme flooding, power outages, damage to homes and businesses and most tragically, a death. How we manage water has profound implications on not only our environment, but also public health and safety,” said Charles River Watershed Association Executive Director Emily Norton. “We are pleased that these proposed regulations offer so many improvements in terms of updated precipitation models, stricter rules around building in floodplains, more consistency for developers and municipalities between state and federal rules, and more. We do not have the luxury of moving slowly when it comes to climate resilience, so kudos to MassDEP and the Healey-Driscoll Administration for acting now to protect our communities and natural spaces from the impacts of our changing climate.”

MassDEP’s mission is to protect and enhance the Commonwealth’s natural resources – air, water and land – to provide for the health, safety and welfare of all people, and to ensure a clean and safe environment for future generations. In carrying out this mission, MassDEP commits to address and advance environmental justice and equity for all people of the Commonwealth; to provide meaningful, inclusive opportunities for people to participate in agency decisions that affect their lives; and to ensure a diverse workforce that reflects the communities we serve.

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**FIRST NIGHT** (from pg. 9)

family-friendly traditions such as a parade down to Boston Common; hand-crafted ice sculptures; performances from local musicians and artists, and of course, the highly anticipated “First Night Countdown” to the New Year, that kicks off the much-anticipated spectacular midnight fireworks display over Boston Harbor. Boston City Hall, and other locations

will offer family-friendly entertainment options. All First Night Boston activities are free and open to the public. For more information and a list of events, visit [www.firstnightboston.org](http://www.firstnightboston.org).

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# Attention to Detail

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY PENNY CHERUBINO

## THIS WEEK'S ANSWER



The fence detail in the last clue is on 34 Beacon Street. In 1909, Charles Little moved to this townhouse. In 1913, he and partner James Brown incorporated the publishing firm of Little Brown and Company. Among the most famous books they published was Louisa May Alcott’s *Little Women*, which has a special significance at this time of year.

Do you have a favorite building or detail you would like featured? Send an email to [Penny@BostonZest.com](mailto:Penny@BostonZest.com) with your suggestion.

## THIS WEEK'S CLUE



## Real Estate Transfers

BUYER 1	SELLER 1	ADDRESS	PRICE
<b>BACK BAY</b>			
Hodilay House T	Edgerly Development LLC	134 Arlington St	\$2,400,000
202 Beacon Street Nt	202 Beacon Street LLC	200-202 Beacon St #1	\$13,450,000
202 Beacon Street Nt	202 Beacon Street LLC	200-202 Beacon St #	\$13,450,000
Patel, Neil V	398 Beacon St Nt	398 Beacon St #1A	\$6,999,000
Slanetz, Phoebe G	Elaine M Sullivan RET	180 Commonwealth Ave #21	\$988,500
Boston388a LLC	388a Comm Avenue Hldg LL	390 Commonwealth Ave #108	\$1,040,000
Soziporra LLC	Gallagher, Amelia J	370 Marlborough St #7	\$1,005,000
Zhang, Bei	Bergholtz, Nancy A	423 Marlborough St #1	\$880,000
<b>BEACON HILL</b>			
Ostreich, Stephanie	Scmidt, Evan	31 Brimmer St #8	\$495,000
45 Temple Street 101 Nt	dmd Owner LLC	45 Temple St #101	\$4,250,000
<b>BAY VILLAGE/SOUTH END/KENMORE</b>			
Kawai,	Xie, Fang	2 Avery St #17E	\$1,945,000
Taylor, Richard H	Lau, Christina	80 Broad St #501	\$1,090,000
Monica A Matthews RET	Mcaf Winthrop LLC	240 Devonshire St #5908	\$3,850,000
Seifert-Gerney, Jennifer	Millennium Place 202 LLC	580 Washington St #202	\$1,915,000
J & Irina Kulinets Ft	Kravet, Sara L	580 Washington St #	\$1,425,000
Cancer Killers LLC	Zheng, Didy L	188 Brookline Ave #25D	\$1,330,000
Claremont Park Two Rt	Lent, Jeffrey D	11 Claremont Park #2	\$2,975,000
Lin, Ya-Chun	Nicholson, Katharine	38-40 Saint Botolph St #44	\$730,000
Leitir Moir LLC	Real Estate Boston LLC	12 Stoneholm St #2	\$92,500
Cvap Holdings LLC	Lamattina, Kara	40 Traveler St #	\$1,215,000
Osch, Martinus V	Benzie, Patrick E	5 Union Park	\$10,525,000
April Agger Callahan RET	Andrade, Jeffrey V	P19 Union Park #3	\$961,852



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## NE/WE NSC HOSTS ARTFUL MEDITATION WORKSHOP

The Action for Boston Community Development, Inc. (ABCD)

North End/West End Neighborhood Service Center (NE/WE NSC) was pleased to offer an artful meditation workshop to Amy Lowell seniors to kick off the holiday season. Artful Meditation Workshops was created in 2018 as a way to help Consultant Jan Gadson Louissaint deal with the trauma of surviving breast cancer. Each silk flower arrangement she created brought joy and encouraged her healing. Silk floral arrangements and workshops have proven to help participants learn new skills, decrease social isolation, and experience creativity and a sense of joy.



Shown above and right, members work on their floral arrangements.



Shown left, Julia Power, Acting Director at ABCD with Artful Meditation Workshop leader Jan Gadson Louissaint.



COURTESY PHOTOS

Workshop attendees with their creations.

The group enjoyed making holiday arrangements in mason jars while Motown music played in the background. There was time for meditation, mindfulness, and reflection, accompanied by music and light refreshments. Spe-

cial thanks go to the City of Boston's Age Strong Commission for funding this project through an Expanding Engagement grant.

"Flowers don't tell, they show." – Stephanie Skeem

## POWERCORPSBOS (from pg. 8)

made this work possible. Together, we will continue to provide our young people with these critical career pathways into the green industry."

"Being a Green New Deal city means we must move forward priorities that fall at the intersection of racial and economic justice—that open doors for our residents—to join us in the fight against climate change and the preservation of our green spaces," said Reverend Mariama White-Hammond, Chief of Environment, Energy and Open Space. "I am grateful to the PowerCorps graduates for dedicating themselves to learning these critical skills that will positively impact our communities for years to come."

PowerCorpsBOS offers two training pathways in Urban Forestry (UF) and Building Operation Systems (BOS). The Building Operations track was created in partnership with Roxbury Community College (RCC) and A Better City (ABC). Twenty-three graduates completed the UF track which covers the planting, maintenance, care and protection of tree populations. These participants assisted 101 acres of public land, removed 197 bags of invasive material, worked with 18 service project partners, planted 52 trees, pruned 21 trees, underwent eight hours of tree climbing training and eight hours of chainsaw training, earned three college credits from UMass Mount Ida in Arboricul-

ture, and talked to 78 employees in the private and public industry.

Six graduates completed the BOS track which provided training for jobs that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in large buildings by learning skills to maintain building operations at peak efficiency. The curriculum included topics ranging from conducting energy audits to maintaining electrical, HVAC, and plumbing systems. The participants earned several industry recognized certifications including a Building Operator Certification

(BOC), Fundamentals in Energy Efficient Building Operations (FEEBO), Building Performance Institution (BPI) Certificate, and a Green Building Professional - Operations and Maintenance (GPRO) certificate.

"PowerCorps has been a life changer for me and led me on a path to a bright future," said PowerCorps graduate Ricky Bradley-White. "I have sharpened my skills and earned certifications that will help me secure a meaningful quality job. This experience was

more than I have ever expected and was worth every moment. I highly recommend this program to anyone who lives in Boston and is looking for a career change."

"PowerCorps Boston has done so much for me throughout these past six months," said PowerCorps graduate Daquan Dixon. "Everything I have learned has been a tool to unlock my true potential. I got the opportunity to experience things I never could have imagined. The program has taught me that the tools are there;

it's up to you to reach out and grab them."

PowerCorpsBOS plans to increase the program duration from six months to ten months to offer participants a more comprehensive and immersive experience and enhance the depth of the program's curriculum. The new schedule will align with the traditional college academic calendar and seeks to capitalize on peak hiring seasons in the green industry. Learn more about PowerCorpsBOS at [boston.gov/powercorps](http://boston.gov/powercorps).

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