



FEBRUARY 9, 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

## Beacon Hill Chocolates hit the sweet spot

By Marianne Salza

Chocolate is a form of art. It is a delicacy: exquisite, titillating, and comforting. Self-proclaimed chocoholic, Paula Barth, owner of Beacon Hill Chocolates, has created a legacy of fine chocolates at her 91 Charles Street shop, inspired by her lifelong passion for the rich confection.

“What we’re selling is a luxury. Chocolate is beautiful and a special treat,” said Barth, who considers herself to be a chocolate ambassador. “I love chocolate. People appreciate it. I feel like I bring something unique to Beacon Hill. That’s what keeps me going.”

Although there are massive assortments of chocolates sold during Christmastime, stock volumes and web orders are astronomical leading to Valentine’s Day. It is the busiest time of year for Beacon Hill Chocolates, which offers traditional, heart-shaped



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BEACON HILL CHOCOLATES

A look inside Beacon Hill Chocolates at 91 Charles Street.

boxes in every size for loved ones to fill with a selection of chocolate

hearts available in 25 flavor combinations.

“We cover every aspect of Valentine’s Day in reds and pinks galore. We have Valentine nonpareils and heart-shaped lollipops,” Barth exclaimed. “Our biggest retail day of the year is the 13th, typically.”

Barth also recommends her classic, hand-crafted decoupage gift boxes.

“They’re pretty, unique, and collectable,” added Barth. “It’s a different option if you don’t want to be predictable.”

Beacon Hill Chocolates offers artisan chocolates, year-round

(CHOCOLATE Pg. 2)



A sample of Beacon Hill Chocolates' special treats.

## Charles Street building owner sues next-door neighbor

By Dan Murphy

The owner of the building at 151 Charles St., which was previously home to Beacon Hill Cleaners, is suing the owner of the adjacent building at 149 Charles St., alleging that illegal basement excavation work there resulted in structural deficiencies at the building next door, which led to an emergency evacuation at that address.

Universal Hub, a local online news source, first reported that the owner of the building at 151 Charles St. filed a lawsuit in Suffolk Superior Court on Jan. 31 against the owner of the neighboring building at 149 Charles St., which was previously home to the Beacon Hill Pub, for alleged illegal digging in its basement that led to structural damage next door.

After some of the supports at



D. MURPHY PHOTO

The neighboring buildings at 151 (at left) and 149 Charles St.

151 Charles St. were damaged and its foundation compromised during the construction next door, tenants there who hadn’t already

(LAWSUIT Pg. 2)

## City releases revised working draft of RFP for West End Branch Library redevelopment

By Dan Murphy

The city has released a revised working draft of the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the redevelopment of the West End Branch Library site to include an affordable housing component, along with a new library branch.

“The core goal of the community vision is to strongly encourage development proposals for a mixed-use development that includes a world-class public library as well as affordable rental housing above the library,”

according to the draft.

Proponents “must include a community core and shell space of approximately 17,500 to 19,000 usable square feet on either the ground floor or the first two floors of the development” at 151 Cambridge St., according to the document, with the space provided to the Boston Public Library at cost via a long-term lease. (The city will maintain ownership of the land itself, however.)

The BPL commissioned a com-

(LIBRARY Pg. 3)

## CHOCOLATE (from pg. 1)

gelato, churned in Boston, private tastings for eight or more, specialty gifts, and custom orders. The boutique commissions exclusive pieces, and curates a collection of truffles in traditional and unexpected flavors such as ginger, Arabica coffee, Grey Goose Vodka, green tea, chai, mint, bacon, and chili.

“What I like that is surprising is dark chocolate and lavender. The piece we have is a purple butterfly. People pick it because it’s so pretty,” described Barth. “What people don’t pick is the lemon rosemary. That has the most surprising reaction. It’s delicious; but unless I talk about it, and convince someone to try it, they will never go with the rosemary piece.”

Barth traveled the world in search of premium ingredients for her shop. She has established relationships with master chocolatiers in Switzerland, Italy, Brazil, and the United States. She continuously discovers new products and tours factories where the chocolates are produced. Most recently, Barth frequented Belgium and France.

Beacon Hill Chocolates, founded in April 2006, combines history and elegance.

“We’re traditional in décor, and what we’ve established. When we first opened, I wanted it to be like an old-world, European chocolate shop. I wanted to develop something quaint for residents,” Barth explained. “We’ve stuck to our core principles.”

Barth, originally from New York, has had a sweet tooth since she was a little girl munching on M&M’s and Snickers. She can-



PHOTO COURTESY OF BEACON HILL CHOCOLATES

Besides candy, Beacon Hill Chocolates also has a full supply of other Valentine gifts.

not comprehend when she meets someone who does not enjoy eating chocolate. When she moved to Beacon Hill in 2003, Barth was astonished that there were no chocolate shops.

“When my husband and I first moved to Boston there was no chocolate at my fingertips,” said Barth, stunned. “I had accustomed myself to having chocolate every day.”

Although Barth had no desire to own a retail store, she felt the need for Beacon Hill residents – most notably herself – to have quality chocolate available to savor on a whim. Barth first opened Bea-

con Hill Chocolates on Pinckney Street; and three years later relocated to Charles Street.

“I was fortunate enough to have the resources to do it myself,” said Barth, who had become familiar with selling pastry items to chefs while working in the New York food distribution industry. “I did not have a business plan. It was all intuition. It grew and flourished. It’s a labor of love.”

Now Barth, an avid tennis player, lives in Miami, Florida, and manages Beacon Hill Chocolates remotely. She allows herself one piece of chocolate to indulge her mid-afternoon craving; but when working on-site at her boutique, Barth nibbles on chocolate all day.

“Chocolate sustains me. It’s me treating myself. I eat a lot of almond bark to justify my intake. At least I’m getting protein with the almonds,” chuckled Barth, who has been commuting to Beacon Hill for 14 years.

“It’s like my baby. Seventeen years have passed, and we have established ourselves in Boston and throughout the country,” recollected Barth. “It’s become a landmark now. What we have created is something special. Tourists and residents can rely on us. Our chocolate is phenomenal.”

Contact Beacon Hill Chocolates at (617) 725-1900, visit [www.BeaconHillChocolates.com](http://www.BeaconHillChocolates.com), or explore display cases of artisan chocolates Monday – Saturday, 10am-6pm, and Sunday 11am-5:30pm. Greet Paula Barth at her shop February 7-14th to share in her love of chocolate and learn about her suggestions.

## LAWSUIT (from pg. 1)

vacated the building were forced to move out when their floors became warped, and their windows and doors no longer closed properly, according to the lawsuit.

In the lawsuit, the plaintiff, Charles and Cambridge Corner LLC, a subsidiary of the Egeria Group, an Amsterdam-based capital management firm which owns 151-151A Charles St., accuses the defendants, 147 Charles Holdings LLC, Brahma Development LLC, and JJ Hardscape, Inc., of causing damage that resulted in lost rent at the four-story, six-unit building.

(Beacon Hill Cleaners, which had occupied the first-floor retail space at 151 Charles St. since January of 1991, received a letter dated Jan. 3 from the Boston law firm of Ruberto, Israel & Weiner P.C. sent on behalf of the drycleaner’s landlord, Charles and Cambridge Corner LLC, that informed the business they must vacate the premises by the end of business on Friday, Dec. 6; Egeria also claims in its lawsuit that four of the six residential units above the drycleaners ended their leases on Oct. 31 of last year due to the problems next door, while Egeria ordered the two remaining tenants out of the building on Jan. 3 after their engineer concluded the building was structurally unsafe.)

The lawsuit alleges that contractors at 149 Charles St. went beyond permitted work to renovate the basement by instead excavating the space to a depth of 5 feet without the supervision of a structural engineer and without the approval of the city’s Inspection Services Department.

ISD had issued a stop-work order for 149 Charles St. last August, according to the lawsuit, but that order was later rescinded after the contractor told an investigator the excavation work was undertaken to create “test pits” for engineers, rather than to increase the ceiling height in the basement.

On or about Sept. 19 of last year, tenants at 151 Charles St. reported to the property manager they had experienced sudden and severe warping of floors, as well as cracking in plaster and bathroom tiles, while their doors and win-

dows could no longer open and close properly, according to the lawsuit.

The lawsuit further alleges “sudden and severe shifting of portions of the building at 151 Charles” happened within a span of just a few hours and at the same time as the excavation work at 149 Charles St. was underway.

ISD immediately issued another stop-work order for 149 Charles St., according to the lawsuit, but that too was removed after an engineer submitted a one-page report dated Oct. 6 deeming the work as “safe.”

ISD issued a third stop-work order for 149 Charles St. on Jan. 13, according to the plaintiff, but their lawsuit asserts that “cracking in walls, displacement of doors and windows, and sinking of floors” has persisted at 151 Charles St.

The plaintiff is seeking a jury trial to demand that the defendant not only pay damages estimated at \$1,177,200, but also to ensure that the defendant doesn’t do any additional work at 149 Charles St. until they submit suitable “remediation plans” to the plaintiff’s engineers.

Thomas Curran, the attorney representing 147 Charles Holdings LLC and Brahma Development LLC, said on Friday, Feb. 3, that he and his clients have received a copy of the lawsuit, but they had yet to be served.

“I’m not going to discuss the specifics of the lawsuit, and we’ll allow it to play out in court,” said Curran, “but we will say that we deny all allegations made by the plaintiffs, and we will demonstrate their allegations are based on unsupported speculation and not on any real evidence, and that our experts paint a very different picture of what may or may not be causing the issues that 151 Charles St. are alleged to have been experienced.”

Curran said he and clients would “let the legal proceedings play out in court,” adding that they would file “responsive filings,” likely towards the end of the month.

ISD couldn’t be immediately reached for comment.

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**LIBRARY** (from pg. 1)

prehensive Programming Study for the West End Branch Library in October of 2021, which proponents are strongly encouraged to reference when conceiving their proposals for the site.

The document states that input from neighborhood residents and neighborhood civic associations has consistently underscored a desire to see housing across a range of unit sizes and income levels, particularly housing targeted towards seniors and families.

“This site may be a particularly good fit for families, as children will greatly benefit from the resources offered at the library branch, and only 9.8 [percent] of households in the immediate area currently have children under age 18, as compared to 22.4 [percent] citywide,” according to the document.

Proposals should include a mix in unit sizes, ranging from studios to three-bedrooms to meet the needs of the targeted households, according to the document.

Likewise, proponents are also encouraged to file proposals that exceed the minimum housing affordability requirements in accordance with a strong opinion voiced by the community on this matter.

A preference would therefore be given to proposals that include a high percentage (up to 100 percent) of income-restricted housing; that offer “deeper levels of affordability,” with the number of units for low-income (50 percent of AMI [Are Median Income]) or extremely low-income (30 percent of AMI) exceeding the minimum requirements set by the Mayor’s

Office of Housing; and affordability across multiple income levels (i.e. ranging from 30-100 percent of AMI), to meet the needs of different households, according to the document.

Depending on the number of housing units built, between eight and 11 “Faircloth” units could be federally subsidized through a unique partnership between the proponent and the Boston Housing Authority (BHA), according to the document.

While the rental costs for the eventual project have still yet to be determined, the BHA has suggested rates for underwriting purposes based on its published subsidized rental rates, including \$944 for a studio/efficiency; \$1,025 for a one-bedroom; \$1,228 for a two-bedroom; or \$1,495 for a three-bedroom.

Since the existing library is set back from the street, projects should include plans for a new landscaped area combining green space and an urban plaza in front of the library, according to the document.

The document also instructs proponents to consider their respective project’s scale, height, and density in the context of Cambridge Street, where many existing and planned buildings stand between 80 and 100 feet tall. Since the height limit now set for the project is 65 feet, it’s anticipated that the selected developer would seek a variance to exceed this height, according to the document.

But the document also states: “Careful consideration must be given to the impacts of the proposed building on the neighboring



*The West End Branch Library.*

D. MURPHY PHOTO

First Harrison Gray Otis House, which directly abuts the site and is 45 feet tall, as well as the Old West Church next to the Otis House. Proposals should make clear how the new building massing and footprint will relate to the Otis House, and note any impacts, if any, on the Old West Church.”

Given the size constraints of the project site, as well as its close proximity to public transit and the prohibitive cost of building below-grade parking, no parking provisions will be required for this project, according to the document.

New bike racks to accommodate up to seven guests visiting the library will be required as sidewalk furnishings per the proponent’s obligation to reconstruct the entire sidewalk at the project site, however.

All proposals will be reviewed by the city using a three-part process. After meeting the city’s Minimum Eligibility Criteria, each proposal’s General Evaluation Criteria would then be evaluated by the Mayor’s Office of Housing. A Selection Committee would then assign a composite rating to each

proposal to determine the selected proponent.

The issue date and the submission date for the RFP have still yet to be determined by the city.

The revised draft RFP can be found at the bottom of the city’s project website at <https://www.boston.gov/buildinghousing/west-end-library-housing-public-assets>. The Mayor’s Office of Housing is accepting public comments on the document until Monday, Feb. 13, via email to Joe Backer, MOH senior development officer, at [joseph.backer@boston.gov](mailto:joseph.backer@boston.gov).

**BEACON HILL ARCHITECTURAL COMMISSION**

The Beacon Hill Architectural Commission will hold its monthly public hearing on Thursday, February 16, 2023, at 5 p.m.

Attention: This hearing will only be held virtually and NOT in person. You can participate in this hearing by going to our online meeting or calling 1-929-205-6099 and entering meeting id # 973 8413 0172. You can also submit written comments or questions to [BeaconHillAC@boston.gov](mailto:BeaconHillAC@boston.gov).

The public can offer testimony. Discussion Topics  
1 Design Review App # 23.0498 BH 15 Revere Street

Proposed Work: Replace existing store glass with thermo-pane glass with a spacer bar covering

the gaskets. All trim remains the same.

APP # 23.0565 BH 60 Mount Vernon Street

Proposed Work: Add single granite step to existing granite sill.

APP # 23.0563 BH 60 Mount Vernon Street

Proposed Work: Install new shutters.

APP # 23.0585 BH 19 Revere Street

Proposed Work: Install new intercom.

APP # 23.0586 BH 1 Chestnut Street

Proposed Work: Install two new commemorative plaques identifying the home as where both

Corretta Scott King and Henry

Kissinger resided during their time in Boston.

2 Administrative Review/Approval App # 23.0578 BH 50 Beacon Street: At penthouse level, replace 17 non-historic windows, keeping the existing wood jambs, sills and brick moldings.

Spruce Street elevation: eight total, 1 over 1, arched top windows, Spruce Street elevation has six total 6 over 6 and one total 4 over 4. Branch Street has two total 6 over 6. Replacements will replicate existing window grid patterns, true divided lights, wood and double hung.

APP #23.0544 BH 37 Chestnut Street: Repoint brick facade in kind, remove and restore existing

shutters.

APP # 23.0462 BH 38 Lime Street: Replicate and replace all existing shutters, color and finish to match existing.

APP # 23.0564 BH 60 Mount Vernon Street: Install storm windows

APP #23.0535 BH 48-52 PHILLIPS STREET: Repoint brick facade in kind.

APP #23.0534 BH 19 SOUTH RUSSELL STREET: Repoint brick facade in kind.

3 Ratification of 1/19/2023 Public Hearing Minutes and 12/12/2023 Public Subcommittee Minutes

4 Staff Updates

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# EDITORIAL

## NO CHILD SHOULD LIVE IN DEEP POVERTY

We wish to voice our support for a bill sponsored by State Senator Sal DiDomenico, the Assistant Majority Leader of the Massachusetts Senate, that seeks to accelerate the timetable for lifting children in our state out of what is known as Deep Poverty.

The Act to Lift Kids Out of Deep Poverty would raise the maximum cash assistance grant by 25% a year until it reaches half of the federal poverty level. Families living below half the federal poverty level are considered to be in Deep Poverty. Under Senator DiDomenico's bill, grants would increase each year and would keep pace with inflation as the poverty level goes up.

Senator DiDomenico has been instrumental in leading the charge in the legislature to raise the grant levels three times for a total increase of 32% beginning in January, 2021.

According to the Massachusetts Budget & Policy Center, almost 80,000 children in our state live in Deep Poverty, a situation that not only is unconscionable in 2023, but that also is counterproductive to the future of our society.

We urge the legislature to pass this bill immediately to ensure that no child in our state lacks food, clothing, and the other basic necessities of life.

*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.*

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## GUEST OP-ED

### Tired of hearing about China? Stop the cash flow

Dr. Glenn Mollette

Do you get tired of hearing about China? Now we have floating surveillance balloons over our country. We are yet to know for sure what this is about but time will tell. China is probably scouting out the next land or business purchase. They may have come up with an easy way to determine which military bases have available adjacent land. It doesn't matter if it's for sale they can come up with enough money to buy the property. All they have to do is to keep piling up the money from everything they sell to the United States.

Alarms went off in Washington when the Fufeng Group, a Chinese agricultural company, bought 300 acres of land and set up a milling plant last spring in Grand Forks, N.D. The plant is a 20-minute drive from an Air Force base that, according to North Dakota Sen. John Hoeven, hosts a space mission that "will form the backbone of U.S. military communications across the globe." Source WSJ

Ten years ago Smithfield

Foods was purchased by China's leading pork producer, Shuanghui International Holdings Ltd. (now called WH Group Ltd.), for \$4.72 billion.

Keep in mind China has 1.5 billion people. This requires a lot of people to feed. China would love to gain as much of our farmland as possible to gain more control of our food production. This is one area where China really needs us. Our agricultural exports to them increased by over 27% from 2020 to 2021. They would need us if they can gain control of our farmland. It's also a plus for them if they can have it close to our military bases. This provides a two-fold benefit for them. In the middle of the cornfield, they can watch everything we are doing or even attempt to thwart what we are doing

The U.S. trade summary reveals the depth of our trade with China.

In 2021, U.S. exports to China were \$151.1 billion, a 21.4% (\$26.6 billion) increase from 2020; U.S. imports from China were

\$506.4 billion, a 16.5% (\$71.6 billion) increase; and the trade deficit with China was \$355.3 billion, a 14.5% (\$45.0 billion) increase from \$310.3 billion in 2020.

China was the United States' third-largest trade partner in 2021.

In 2021, 8.6% of total U.S. exports of \$1.8 trillion were exported to China and 17.9% of total U.S. imports of \$2.8 trillion were imported from China.

Mechanical Appliances, Sound Recorders and TV sets were the most traded commodity sectors. In the last five years, U.S. exports of those commodities show an upward trend from \$25 billion in 2017 to \$36.1 billion in 2021. The percentages of imports of those commodities from China out of total imports from the World are impressive with 37.0% in 2017 and 29.3% in 2021.

In 2021, U.S. exports of Agricultural Products to China continue to show an upward trend. In 2021, U.S. exports of Agriculture Products were \$31.6 billion, an

(Op-Ed Pg. 5)

# Wu announces call for artists to redesign neighborhood signs

Mayor Michelle Wu announced the launch of the Neighborhood Sign Redesign program in partnership with the Office of Arts & Culture, the Department of Property Management, and the Department of Innovation and Technology. Across Boston, neighborhood signs welcome residents and visitors to the diverse communities that make up the City. The City of Boston is seeking artists to redesign these signs. Artists are invited to submit up to three conceptual designs based upon a template provided by the City.

"Our neighborhood signs are often the first thing residents and visitors see when they cross into different areas throughout Boston," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "I'm excited for this program to empower our residents to create welcoming, creative signs to reflect the unique, vibrant neighborhoods and communities they live and work in."

"This is an exciting, new opportunity to recognize that Boston's arts community is embedded in every neighborhood of Boston," said Kara Elliott-Ortega, Chief of Arts and Culture. "Whether someone is a longtime resident of a neighborhood or a visitor seeing a neighborhood for the first time, they'll be greeted by vibrant, inspiring artwork that reflects the talent and creativity of our city. We look forward to supporting local artists in this new initiative and creating new opportunities to celebrate their work!"

"Boston is home to many talented artists. This is such a great opportunity to continue to financially invest in artists' practices while beautifying our neighborhoods," said Brianna Millor, Chief of Community Engagement.

"Boston is a city of amazing neighborhoods rich in culture, creativity, and filled with diversity. We are proud to take every opportunity to promote our artists, including engaging them in developing our neighborhood welcome signs. I'm very much looking forward to seeing their talents displayed across our city," said Dion Irish, Chief of Operations.

Artists must be at least 18 years old and must live or work in the City of Boston to participate. Preference will be given to artists who live or work in the neighborhood where each sign is located. Selected artists will receive a \$1,000 stipend for their artwork. This program is funded in part by an investment from the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to aid in Boston's local recovery and will support local artists.

Submitted artwork should align with the City of Boston's Curatorial Vision. The Curatorial Vision for the City of Boston is to foster the creation and collection of artworks that reflect the people, ideas, histories, and futures of Boston, the traditional homeland of the Massachusetts people and the home of the neighboring Wampanoag and Nipmuc peoples. The City aims to commission and approve artworks that engage communities and directly respond to, enrich, and enliven the urban environment.

The deadline for artists to submit designs is March 3, 2023. The City will select artists by mid-March and will work collaboratively with them to refine final designs.

Interested artists can apply and learn more at [boston.gov/sign-redesign](http://boston.gov/sign-redesign).

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### OP-ED (from pg. 4)

increase of 27.5% (\$6.8 billion) from \$24.8 billion in 2020.

In 2021, China remained the major source of U.S. imports of Textile Products. In 2021, U.S. imports of \$50.3 billion of Textile Products from China constituted 32.6% of the total U.S. imports of Textile products.

Additionally, in 2021, China remained the major source of U.S. imports of Furniture, Bedding, Lamps, Toys, Games, Sports

Equipment, Paint, and other Miscellaneous Manufactured Items. In 2021, the U.S. imports of \$68.5 billion of Miscellaneous Manufactured Items from China constituted 53.2% of total U.S. imports of those commodities. Source: Government info data

What can we do about China? Try to buy products not made in China. You have to shop but it's possible. Shrinking the cash flow to China is crucial to reducing

their growing economic and military power. By all means, please do not sell them your land.

Glenn Mollette is the publisher of *Newburgh Press*, *Liberty Torch* and various other publishing imprints; a national columnist - *American Issues* and *Common Sense* opinions, analysis, stories and features appear each week in over 500 newspapers, websites and blogs across the United States.

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# Boston Public Schools add electric buses to its fleet

Special to the Times

Mayor Michelle Wu celebrated the arrival of the first two electric school buses to the Boston Public Schools (BPS) school bus fleet. An additional 18 buses will arrive in the coming weeks and are expected to be in use following the February school vacation. This is a major milestone in creating a Green New Deal for the City of Boston, leading to immediate health and quality-of-life improvements for Boston students, workers, and residents, while advancing climate action. Mayor Wu joined BPS Superintendent Mary Skipper, Green New Deal Director Oliver Sellers-Garcia, BPS Director of Transportation Dan Rosengard, bus driver trainers, and community members at the Readville bus yard in Hyde Park to see how these electric buses



Boston Mayor Michelle Wu (speaking), joins Superintendent Mary Skipper, Green New Deal Director Oliver Sellers-Garcia to celebrate the start of school bus fleet electrification.

are being integrated into the fleet. “I’m grateful to the many people who have been instrumental

in getting Boston to this point and helping us demonstrate the many overlapping benefits of moving to a green economy and ensuring that our kids and our workforce are at the center of that transition,” said Mayor Michelle Wu. “Today is one of many steps we are taking to make Boston a Green New Deal city and to move with the urgency that our communities and residents deserve. From cutting down on emissions from every part of our education infrastructure – where our students learn and how they get to class – to preparing our next generation of workers to build and sustain cleaner, greener infrastructure for all of us, we’re so excited about where this will lead Boston.”

“Our children deserve to learn, grow up, and play while enjoying clean air and experiencing a healthy environment free of air pollution,” said Boston Public Schools Superintendent Mary Skipper. “When these buses hit the road, they will operate with zero emissions and significantly lower noise levels than their diesel-fuel counterparts. So when you see the buses with the green bird with a plug logo on each side, be sure to wave and smile as they and the children inside represent our great city’s future.”

“As a City, we know we must prioritize the development of electric vehicle infrastructure to sup-

port the future of green mobility in Boston to advance our Green New Deal for all of our residents,” said Green New Deal Director Oliver Sellers-Garcia. “I’m grateful to Boston Public Schools for their leadership in making critical climate investments while supporting the health of our communities and growing our green workforce trained with these skills.”

The BPS Department of Transportation carefully selected the first routes – 111 trips, across 42 schools – to run electric school buses based on a variety of factors, including distance from the dispatch yard charging station, total length of route, and the expected traffic patterns along the route, with a preference for stop-and-go traffic rather than highway driving. Additionally, the cold weather deployment was factored into route selection to ensure power supply for battery conditioning and bus heating. Routes travel through nearly all of Boston’s neighborhoods.

BPS is finalizing installation of 20 charging stations at the Readville bus yard, utilizing increased charging capacity that was added with support from Eversource. Each electric bus will have a dedicated charger and be charged every day. The total time to charge each bus is about three to four hours. The learnings from this first phase of electric school bus deployment will support the City in designing and implementing future electric school bus fleet expansion.

Prior to integrating the 20 buses into the fleet, BPS is training driver trainers, drivers, mechanics, operations staff, and emergency responders to ensure familiarity with the bus design and operation. During the upcoming February vacation, drivers will test routes to ensure they are comfortable driving the new buses in advance of students boarding later this month. An estimated 2,561 students across 42 schools will be riding the 20 buses each school day. BPS currently has 620 buses on the road each day.

Boston’s Green New Deal works to address climate change with positive co-benefits including creating good jobs, enhancing public health, and transforming structures to promote racial and economic justice. School bus electrification will protect children from diesel particulate matter, eliminate tailpipe emissions, address air quality and noise concerns around school pick-up and drop-off, and offer a healthier work environment for bus drivers and monitors. The City of Boston is fostering the Green New Deal

by leveraging funding to invest in solutions that improve the lives of Bostonians and catalyze the transition to a just, green City.

In April 2022, Mayor Wu first announced that up to 20 electric school buses would be deployed during the 2022-23 school year. These electric buses will replace existing diesel buses. These buses were funded through the BPS operating budget and the federal American Rescue Plan Act. Mayor Wu previously shared the goal that BPS will work to replace additional big buses each year, and then move to replacing smaller buses until the entire fleet is electrified by 2030.

Additionally last spring, the Public Works Central Fleet Maintenance Division introduced the first ever train-the-trainer class for fleet mechanics from the Public Works Department (PWD) and BPS on how to safely service and repair electric vehicles at Madison Park Technical Vocational High School. To date, eight mechanics from the PWD and two from BPS have completed the course and continue to take online classes to keep pace with the ever-changing technology. Beginning in the fall of this year, electric vehicle maintenance will be added as part of the core curriculum for seniors participating in Madison Park’s automotive program.

This celebration will lay the foundation for the future of the Boston Public Schools bus fleet. The City intends to use federal funding from the Environmental Protection Agency and Inflation Reduction Act to further expand the number of electric buses in the fleet and enhance training for staff.

The City has been making progress on its commitment to installing electric vehicle (EV) charging stations throughout Boston’s neighborhoods for both municipal use and residents. The City currently operates 66 LV II EV charging plugs across 14 municipal parking lots. There are plans to add an additional 18 LV II EV charging plugs, and four high-speed LV III DC fast chargers this year. This investment in public charging, along with the City’s EV readiness policy for new development and right-to-charge rules for condominium residents provide a foundation for the rapid, equitable electrification of transportation in Boston. The City also continues to electrify its vehicle fleet, adding charging plugs where City vehicles are garaged, prioritizing EVs in its replacement cycle, and adding its first all-electric street sweeper last year.

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# Mass Humanities announces 2023 funding opportunities through grants

Special to the Times

Mass Humanities, the Commonwealth's leading funder of humanities programs, announced upcoming opportunities for its 2023 grant season.

In 2022, the Northampton-based foundation awarded more than \$1 million in grants to non-profits, supporting free public events, oral history projects, and community conversations and media partnerships. This year, Mass Humanities seeks to increase its impact through the Expand Massachusetts Stories initiative, and its long-running Reading Frederick Douglass Together program.

Applications and guidelines are available at [massshumanities.org](http://massshumanities.org).

"We believe the work of Massachusetts residents to reimagine our stories provides a pathway to reinvigorating our democracy at the local, state, and national level," said Brian Boyles, Executive Director of Mass Humanities. "These vital programs amplify the diverse ideas, stories and conversations that continue to make the Commonwealth a global leader in ideas and the fight for equality."

Mass Humanities grants opportunities for the 2023 season include:

- **Expand Massachusetts Stories** (Up to \$20,000)—At this pivotal time, Massachusetts needs new voices and fresh narratives to meet our challenges. We support organizations that embrace this historical moment as an opportunity to bring communities together to reimagine stories, revitalize traditions, and ignite new ideas for the future. Expand Massachusetts Stories (EMS) grants support projects that collect, interpret, and share narratives about the commonwealth, emphasizing the voices and experiences that have gone unrecognized or have been excluded from public conversation. As part of the EMS grant program, Mass Humanities will also offer Advancing Equity Track grants to 15 applicants whose projects are led by people from historically excluded communities, and whose organizations meet additional criteria. The Advancing Equity Track applications open on Monday, Feb. 6, with Letter of Inquiries due on Monday, March 20. Applications for the EMS Open Track opens Monday, March 20, with applications due on Monday, May 22.
- **Read Frederick Douglass Together Grants** (Up to \$2,000)—Each year, Mass Humanities orga-



In 2022, the Southeast Asian Coalition was an Expand Massachusetts Stories (EMS) grant recipient, one of 42 organizations across the state that received a Mass Humanities EMS grant.

nizes and funds free events where communities gather to read and talk about Frederick Douglass' influential address, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?" The most celebrated orator of his day, Douglass' denunciations of slavery and forceful examination of the Constitution challenge us to think about the stories we tell and do not tell, the ideas that they teach or do not teach, and the gaps between our actions and aspirations. To quote Douglass: "We have to do with the past only as we can make it useful to the future." Applications are open now and grants are made on a rolling basis each month.

An online webinar for anyone interested in applying takes place on Feb. 16 at 1pm. A video of the webinar will be shared on [massshumanities.org](http://massshumanities.org).

Last year Mass Humanities awarded more than \$713,000 in grants to 42 organizations across the Commonwealth through

the Expand Massachusetts Stories grant program with support from the Barr Foundation. Of the 42 grantees, 62% had people who identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) among their project leadership; 60% of the organizations funded had operating budgets under \$500,000; and 48% had operating budgets under \$350,000.

More than 25 organizations hosted Reading Frederick Douglass Together events across the state. Each event features a group of diverse people gathering to read portions of the Douglass' Fourth of July speech. The readings provide the opportunity for communities to discuss race, democracy, and our responsibilities to the past and how we might find ways to strengthen our future together.

Mass Humanities grants are made possible in part by a partnership with Mass Cultural Council, the state arts agency, and by the National Endowment for the

Humanities.

To learn more about Mass Humanities grant opportunities

contact Katherine Stevens, Director of Grants and Programs, at [grants@masshumanities.org](mailto:grants@masshumanities.org).

Mass Humanities, a non-profit foundation based in Northampton, creates opportunities for the people of Massachusetts to transform their lives and build a more equitable commonwealth through the humanities. Since its founding in 1974, the organization has provided millions of dollars to support thousands of humanities projects across the Commonwealth. Established as the state-based affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), Mass Humanities is an independent programming and grant-making organization that receives support from the NEH and the Massachusetts Cultural Council and private sources. For more information, visit [www.masshumanities.org](http://www.masshumanities.org) or connect on social media at:

Facebook.com/masshumanities  
Twitter.com/masshumanities  
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# Wu announces members of Reparations Task Force

Mayor Michelle Wu on Tuesday announced the ten individuals that will serve on the newly formed Reparations Task Force, created to study the lasting impact of slavery in Boston. The formation of this task force follows Mayor Wu signing a 2022 City ordinance, sponsored and led by Councilor Julia Mejia and co-sponsored by Councilors Tania Fernandes Anderson and Brian Worrell, to study the impact of slavery in Boston. Mayor Wu joined members of the City Council, Reparations Task Force, and Equity and Inclusion Cabinet at the African Meeting House to announce the establishment of the task force.

"For four hundred years, the brutal practice of enslavement and recent policies like redlining, the busing crisis, and exclusion from City contracting have denied Black Americans pathways to build generational wealth, secure stable housing, and live freely," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "Our administration remains committed to tackling long standing racial inequities and this task force is the next step in our commitment as a city to advance racial justice and build a Boston for everyone. I'm grateful to the City Council, advocates and task force members for their critical work to strengthen our communities and ensure that Boston documents and addresses the historical harms of slavery and its continued impact on our Black residents."

"As the lead sponsor of this ordinance, I want to thank Tanisha Sullivan of the NAACP for inviting our office to lead this effort and to Dr. Kamara and Yvette Modestin for their leadership in drafting the ordinance," said Councilor Julia Mejia. "We are extremely proud of the work we did alongside the



MAYOR'S OFFICE PHOTO BY JOHN WILCOX  
Mayor Michelle Wu (at podium) participates in the Reparations press conference at the Museum of African American History on Beacon Hill.

community and look forward to monitoring the processes moving forward"

"The forming of this reparations task force is an important step in the ongoing process of bringing justice to the Black community of Boston," said Councilor Tania Fernandes Anderson. "This is so both for the historical legacies of anti-Black racism going back to the enslavement of kidnapped Africans, to the current manifestations of structural and systemic white supremacy that are embedded and entrenched within the political and economic status quo."

"This is a major step forward for the City of Boston," said Councilor Brian Worrell. "I would like to thank the Mayor and my City Council colleagues for helping bring this important conversation to the top of the agenda. Since the late Senator Bill Owens began this journey, we are proud to now have a diverse group of people working towards a solution that will address

past injustices in this City. As the representative of one of the most diverse districts in Boston, I look forward to bringing new opportunities to the district and fixing previous disenfranchising to build up what makes Boston diverse."

The members of the task force are community leaders in law, academia, community organizing, and education and represent diversity in age, gender, and discipline to fully encompass the Black experience in Boston. The task force's duties will include leading research on the historical impact of slavery in Boston and exploring ways the City can provide reparative justice for Black residents. Over the next 18 months, the task force members will convene and work on proposing recommendations to Mayor Wu for reparative solutions for the descendants of enslaved persons.

The individuals appointed to the task force include:

- Chair Joseph D. Feaster, Jr., Esq., Attorney, former President of

the Boston branch of the NAACP, current member of City's Black Men & Boys Commission

- Denilson Fanfan, 11th grader at Jeremiah E. Burke High School

- L'Merchie Frazier, Public historian, visual activist, and Executive Director of Creative and Strategic Partnerships for SPOKE Arts

- George "Chip" Greenidge, Jr., Founder and Director of Greatest MINDS

- Dr. Kerri Greenidge, Assistant Professor of Studies in Race, Colonialism, and Diaspora at Tufts University

- Dr. David Harris, Past Managing Director of the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice

- Dorothea Jones, Longtime civic organizer and member of the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan Oversight Committee

- Carrie Mays, UMass Boston student and youth leader with Teen Empowerment

- Na'tisha Mills, Program Manager for Embrace Boston

- Damani Williams, 11th grader at Jeremiah E. Burke High School

"I am honored to be asked by Mayor Wu to chair this Reparation Task Force and serve with such distinguished people," said Joseph D. Feaster, Jr., Chair of Reparations Task Force. "We are looking forward to determining recommendations for how we reckon with Boston's past while charting a path forward for Black people whose ancestors labored without compensation and who were promised the 40 acres and a mule they never received."

The task force will be housed within the City of Boston's Equity & Inclusion Cabinet and work closely with Lori Nelson, the City's Senior Advisor on Racial Justice. In the coming weeks, the City and

task force will launch a request for proposal (RFP) to select a research partner to study the legacy of slavery in Boston and produce a report on its impact. The results of the report will inform recommendations brought forth by the task force. For more information about the task force, visit [boston.gov/reparations](http://boston.gov/reparations).

"This is a historic moment for Boston, for this nation," said Mariangely Solis Cervera, Chief of Equity and Inclusion. "We are creating an opportunity to intentionally address harms of the past and embed racial equity into the fabric of our city. I am thankful for the leadership, expertise, and lived experience this task force brings to the table and I look forward to working beside them."

"This important initiative will center the truth, acknowledgment, and reconciliation that history once ignored," said Lori Nelson, Senior Advisor on Racial Justice. "The task force will give us the chance to fully engage and challenge policies that have harmed and marginalized Black people in Boston for generations. I am eager to collaborate with the task force with the goal of repairing and restoring injustice to move our city forward."

This action builds on Mayor Wu's work to acknowledge historic harms and build an equitable Boston for all. Last year, Mayor Wu established the Office of Black Male Advancement and the Commission of Black Men and Boys to create initiatives to improve outcomes for Black men and boys. The Office of Economic Opportunity and Inclusion has made strides to increase supplier diversity to include more businesses of color in City contracting and to close the racial wealth gap across the city.

## CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

### North Washington Street Bridge construction look-ahead through February 18

This is a brief overview of construction operations and impacts for the North Washington Street Bridge Replacement Project. MassDOT will provide additional notices as needed for high-impact work and changes to traffic configurations beyond those described below.

#### Scheduled Work

- Erection of steel begins on Feb. 14 (weather permitting)
- Installation of bridge deck formwork at North Abutment
- Installation of utility conduits on bridge structure
- Installation of steel support and bolting
- Installation of marine wooden

fender

- Installation of sidewalk steel and formwork

#### Work Hours

- Most work will be done during weekday daytime hours (6:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

#### Contraflow Pilot

- The MassDOT-implemented contraflow pilot will continue to be in effect during evening peak traffic (3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.), Monday through Friday.

- Traffic monitoring will be in place to determine if the contraflow traffic setup is effective in improving traffic flow.

- Police details, lane markings, temporary barriers, traffic cones,

signage, and other tools will be used to control traffic during set up and operation of the contraflow.

#### Travel Tips

For everyone using the temporary bridge, please help share the space: walk to the right, walk bikes, and be mindful of people coming from both directions, if walking in a large group.

Drivers should take care to pay attention to all signage and move carefully through the work zone. Police details, lane markings, temporary barriers, traffic cones, signage, and other tools will be used to control traffic and create safe work zones.

The Tudor Wharf Walkway

(under the bridge next to the water in Paul Revere Park) will be intermittently closed for safety during construction operations, with access provided via the Water Street underpass. The Boston Harborwalk under the bridge and eastern/harborside bridge sidewalk remain closed until rebuilt.

The contractor is coordinating with the TD Garden and local police to provide awareness and manage traffic impacts during events. For your awareness, the following TD Garden events are scheduled during this look-ahead period:

- BRUINS: Feb. 11 at 3:30 p.m. and Feb. 18 at 5:00 p.m.

- CELTICS: Feb. 10 at 7:30 p.m., Feb. 12 at 2:00 p.m., and Feb. 15 at 7:30 p.m.

- ALL OTHER EVENTS: Feb. 9 at 3:00 p.m., Feb. 13 at 4:30 p.m., Feb. 17 at 7:30

Stay up-to-date and informed by following the @MassDOT twitter account and Mass 511 for real-time updates, visiting the project website, or emailing us with any questions.

You can also sign up to receive project updates via email.

Project website: [Mass.gov/north-washington-street-bridge-replacement](http://Mass.gov/north-washington-street-bridge-replacement)

Project email: [NorthWashingtonStreet@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:NorthWashingtonStreet@dot.state.ma.us)

# BWSC selected as Biden-Harris “Get the Lead Out” inaugural partner

Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC) has been chosen to participate in the Biden-Harris administration’s “Get the Lead Out” Partnership, comprised of over 100 state and local officials, water utilities, labor unions, and other organizations committed to advance and accelerate lead pipe funding and replacement. Boston Water and Sewer Commission recently was an invitee to and participant in the White House Summit on Accelerating Lead Pipe Replacement hosted by Vice President Kamala Harris, during which the Biden-Harris administration announced new actions and progress to deliver clean drinking water, replace lead pipes, and remediate lead paint.

BWSC Chief Engineer John P. Sullivan, P.E., was honored to represent the agency at the summit and participate in the Partnership’s launch.

“BWSC looks forward to joining this collaboration, which will be essential in creating new innovative practices and approaches and wider awareness throughout the country to effectuate the elimination of lead service lines in older properties,” said Sullivan.

BWSC also will contribute its own significant expertise and experience removing lead service pipes to the Partnership’s collab-

orative efforts, as over the past three decades the agency has been a national leader in successfully removing lead pipes.

“As a result of the hard work of the men and women of BWSC who work tirelessly to prioritize lead pipe removal, in 2022 BWSC replaced over 300 lead service lines in Boston,” said BWSC Executive Director Henry F. Vitale.

The Get Out the Lead Partnership will further incentivize BWSC to remove Boston’s remaining lead service pipes, whose locations are largely identified but whose removal requires knowledge and cooperation on the part of their property owners. Executive Director Vitale said that, during this initiative, the Commission will:

- Increase its public awareness campaign through targeted outreach and inspections to property owners where the service pipe material is unknown;

- Increase efforts publicizing BWSC’s Private Lead Incentive Replacement Program which provides owners with up to \$4,000.00 towards the cost of removal of the private lead service lines; and

- Advise all consumers of the dangers of lead in drinking water and inform them of steps to take to avoid lead exposure.

At the source of supply, Boston’s drinking water, which is pro-

vided by the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA), is lead-free when it leaves the reservoirs. Neither MWRA’s, nor the Boston Water and Sewer Commission’s water distribution mains contain lead. Replacement of lead service lines is an important public health issue because lead can enter the drinking water when the water remains unused for long periods of time and water service pipes and household plumbing containing lead dissolve into the water. Excessive amounts of lead in the body can cause serious adverse health effects including damage to the brain, red blood cells and kidneys.

The greatest risk is to infants and young children, whose physical growth and mental development can be impaired by lead contamination. Also vulnerable are pregnant women, whose fetuses can be harmed by lead.

For more information about lead in drinking water and to find out how to test tap water for lead, Boston residents may contact the Commission at the Lead Hotline at (617) 989- 7888. Customers may also visit the Commission’s website at [bwsc.org](http://bwsc.org) with any questions and obtain free brochures about lead in drinking water.

Boston is home to New

England’s oldest and largest water, sewer and stormwater systems, which are owned, maintained and operated by Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC). Established in 1977, BWSC provides portable water and sewer services to more than one million people per day. BWSC is also the leading organizer of We Are All Connected, a campaign to raise public awareness about the importance of protecting and preserving Boston’s waterways. For more information please visit: [www.bwsc.org](http://www.bwsc.org).

## NEIGHBORHOOD ROUNDUP

### BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENTS

Looking for ways to celebrate and learn about Black history in the Mystic? Check out these opportunities and community events happening around the watershed:

- Explore the works of Medford Poet Laureate Terry E. Carter. We were excited to see Terry E. Carter, GreenRoots and environmental justice featured in the newest installation at the Mystic Mural Project (pictured above) — a 22-year-long mural project near Blessing of the Bay in Somerville sponsored by the Somerville Arts Council and led by artist David Fichter.

- Learn more about the Royall House & Slave Quarters in Medford, MA: “As one of the only remaining freestanding quarters where enslaved people lived and worked in the North, the museum bears witness to their lives, to the intertwined stories of wealth and bondage in pre-Revolutionary Massachusetts, and to the resistance and political and legal activism of enslaved and free Black people in the eighteenth century.”

- Visit the Museum of Science’s Black History Month celebration, spotlighting influential Black scientists and engineers — including local figures like Lewis Howard Latimer (1848 –1928), the inventor, electrical engineer, and patent draftsman born in Chelsea, MA.

- Follow the West Medford Community Center as they share Medford’s Black history and uplift

Black entrepreneurs, creators, and artists.

- Check out the Chelsea Black Community’s great series of events and community activities throughout Black History Month!

### HILL HOUSE’S ANNUAL WINE DINNER

Hill House will be hosting its annual Wine Dinner on Thursday, March 30, at Beacon Hill Bistro at 25 Charles St. Cocktails will be served at 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 7:30 p.m. Tickets and sponsorships are available at <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=E22709&cid=28>.

### BHCA’S WINTER SOIREE COMING, FEB. 11, TO THE NEWBURY BOSTON

The Beacon Hill Civic Association’s 50th annual Winter Soiree takes place on Saturday, Feb. 11, at 8 p.m. at The Newbury Boston at 1 Newbury St.

“Dress to impress” for the event featuring dancing, an open bar, and a silent auction.

Individual tickets cost \$250 each and can be purchased at <https://bhcivic.charityproud.org/EventRegistration/Index/10958>. (Please note that these tickets are non-refundable.)

For more information, email the Civic Association at [info@bhcivic.org](mailto:info@bhcivic.org) or call us at 617-227-1922.

### THE VILNA SHUL’S MUSEUM NIGHTS ON BEACON HILL SERIES RETURNS FEB. 15 TO OLD NORTH CHURCH

The Vilna Shul’s Museum Nights on Beacon Hill series returns Wednesday, Feb. 15, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. to Old North Church at 193 Salem St. in the North End.

Guests will meet at the church for light refreshments, followed by a private tour of the museum’s gallery space with the museum’s Executive Director, Nikki Stewart. In this guided tour, guests will learn about the experiences of early Black congregants, both free and enslaved, who historically sat in the gallery. Guests will also get an up-close look at Old North’s 1759 pipe organ and the 17th century carved angels flanking it. The tour weaves together the stories of the many people whose labor and contributions shaped Old North into the place it is today. (Please Note: Participants should be comfortable climbing stairs.)

The series continues on Thursday, March 16, with a tour of the Nichols House Museum; on Thursday, April 20, at the Boston Athenaeum; and on Wednesday, May 17, at the Otis House.

Tickets are \$25 each and can be purchased at <https://app.donorview.com/Event>.

Visit [vlnashil.org](http://vlnashil.org) for more information.

## FEMA awards over \$1.3 million for winter storm plowing costs

The Federal Emergency Management Agency will be sending more than \$1.3 million to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to reimburse the City of Boston for some of the costs of clearing snow after Winter Storm Kenan in January 2022.

Kenan caused record or near record snowfall in four counties in Massachusetts. This created an immediate threat to the health and safety of the public and improved property, requiring emergency response and protective measures.

The \$1,351,689 Public Assistance grant will reimburse the City of Boston for 22,777 overtime hours worked by employees and for contracting for plowing services between Saturday, Jan. 29 and Monday, Jan. 31, during which time it had to clear 785 lane miles continuously.

The city also had to clear parking lots, building entrances and walkways at 73 fire station, 121 public schools, 25 libraries, five municipal facilities, 35 Boston Center for Youth and Families Community Centers, 16 stations

for 26 Boston EMS ambulances, and the harbor.

President Joe Biden’s disaster declaration made federal funding available to commonwealth, tribal and eligible local governments, and certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis for emergency work and the repair or replacement of damaged facilities in Bristol, Norfolk, Plymouth and Suffolk counties, and for the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe.

FEMA has awarded almost \$25 million in Public Assistance grants to state and local governments for the disaster to date.

“FEMA is pleased to be able to reimburse the City of Boston for the costs incurred recovering from Winter Storm Kenan,” said FEMA Region 1 Regional Administrator Lori Ehrlich. “Re-opening highways for public safety vehicles required extraordinary measures deserving of federal assistance.”

FEMA’s Public Assistance program is an essential source of funding for states and communities recovering from a federally declared disaster or emergency.

PLEASE VISIT [WWW.BEACONHILLTIMES.COM](http://WWW.BEACONHILLTIMES.COM)

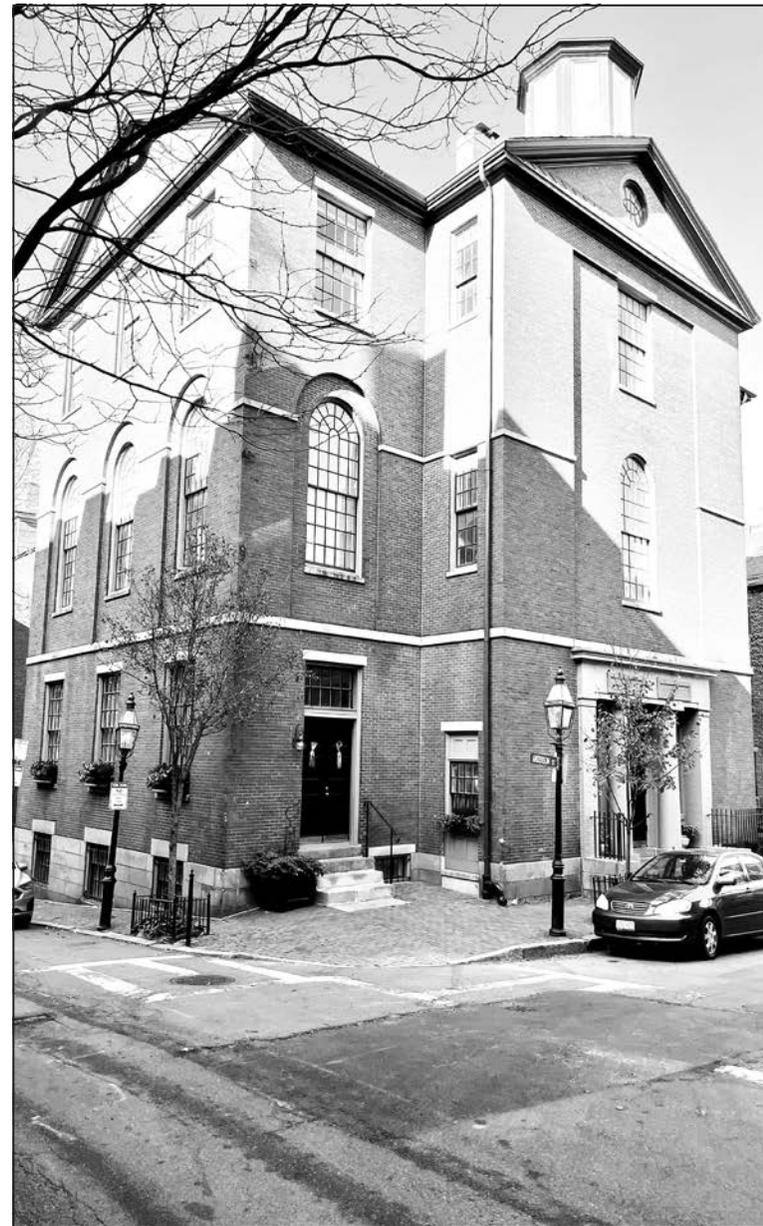
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| Tseng, Allan S                       | Bethune, James D         | 70 Fenway #43            | \$570,000    |
| Saf Boston LLC                       | Tsai Tsung-Hsing Est     | 87 Gainsborough St #306  | \$610,000    |
| Saf Boston LLC                       | Tsai Tsung-Hsing Est     | 87 Gainsborough St #401  | \$540,000    |
| Saf Boston LLC                       | Tsai Tsung-Hsing Est     | 90 Gainsborough St #303E | \$490,000    |
| Saf Boston LLC                       | Tsai Tsung-Hsing Est     | 95 Gainsborough St #204  | \$525,000    |
| Saf Boston LLC                       | Tsai Tsung-Hsing Est     | 103 Gainsborough St #307 | \$610,000    |
| Bradley, Brendan O                   | 161 West Canton LLC      | 161 W Canton St          | \$5,945,000  |
| Larivee, Brien J                     | Jafry Ft                 | 77 Worcester St #4       | \$1,780,000  |
| <b>WATERFRONT/DOWNTOWN</b>           |                          |                          |              |
| Qu, Ruochen                          | Miller Ft                | 2 Avery St #22H          | \$1,678,000  |

# Attention to Detail

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY PENNY CHERUBINO

## THIS WEEK'S ANSWER



The date 1824 in the last clue is on 65 Anderson Street. Reader James Higgins asked if the concrete plackets might have been added to cover an inscription. This was the Phillips School and is a stop on the Black Heritage Trail. It became one of the first integrated schools in Boston in 1855.

Correction: In the January 23 issue I used the wrong street for the answer. The lions head is on 45 Revere Street not 45 Phillips Street. Thank you to the reader who took the time point it out.

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

## THIS WEEK'S CLUE



## SERVICE DIRECTORY

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But Jeffrey Galpin did more than survive polio. He went on to a list of achievements in medical research—including being the principal investigator in applying the first gene therapy for HIV/AIDS.

Dr. Galpin actually credits his own incurable condition for giving him the focus that made him so passionate in his research. His story leaves us with two of the most contagious messages we know. Don't give up, and remember to give back. If Dr. Galpin's story inspires just one more person to make a difference, then its telling here has been well worth while.



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# Steering committee to advise on reforms to Article 80 development review process

Mayor Michelle Wu announced on Friday the members of a steering committee of real estate and civic leaders to advise on reforms to Article 80 of the Boston Zoning Code being undertaken by the Mayor's Office and the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA). She announced her intention to create the committee during her State of the City speech last week as one piece of a comprehensive set of reforms to improve the planning and development process so Boston can meet its housing and economic growth needs.

Article 80 refers to a section of the Boston Zoning Code adopted in 1996 to establish a more extensive review process for development proposals of more than 20,000 square feet or more than 15 dwelling units. Mayor Wu is undertaking the first comprehensive review of the process after nearly three decades to ensure greater predictability and consistency.

"I'm grateful to these leaders for lending their expertise and working with us to improve our processes," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "From reforming planning and updating our zoning code, to streamlining development review and strengthening compliance, we are taking action to set Boston on a course for sustainable growth so

all our communities are included in the city's opportunities."

"Working with this group will be integral to comprehensively reforming planning and development in our communities," said Chief of Planning Arthur Jemison. "I am confident that those selected will bring a unique perspective and help the BPDA reform this process in a way that improves the process and delivers more resilient, affordable, and equitable development across the city."

The steering committee will include:

- Joseph Bonfiglio, Business Manager of the Massachusetts and Northern New England District Council since 2009. The Council comprises more than 25,000 represented workers, including laborers working in numerous aspects of the general construction trade.

- Anthony D'Isidoro, President of the Allston Civic Association. Among many other community roles, Tony also serves as Board President of the Veronica B Smith Multi-Service Senior Center, Inc., a member of the Allston Multimodal Project task force and Harvard Allston task force, and has served on a number of Impact Advisory Groups. He is a product of the Boston Public Schools both as a student and teacher, a small business owner, and author of a

weekly community newsletter. As a community leader, organizer and activist, D'Isidoro advocates with the belief that empowering people can achieve great things to ensure a community that works for everyone.

- Fernando J. Domenech, Jr., President of DHK Architects, where he has worked on community-based urban housing. Domenech has focused primarily on affordable housing for over thirty years, specifically on the revitalization of inner city neighborhoods through creative planning, imaginative urban design and architecture.

- Colleen Fonseca, Executive Director of the Builders of Color Coalition, where she is responsible for leading the development and expansion of programming to increase access and diversity in Boston's commercial real estate sector. Prior to her role with BCC, she served as a Senior Advisor to Mayor Jorge Elorza on COVID Recovery and as the Director of Workforce Development and Economic Opportunity for the City of Providence. She currently sits on the Real Estate Finance Association (REFA) Board of Directors.

- Beyazmin Jimenez, Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Culture for the Planning and Real Estate Department at Northeast-

ern University. Jimenez is an urban planner and pro-housing organizer, formerly the Board President for Abundant Housing MA, an organization she co-founded in 2018. Her experience in housing policy and community development has led her to support resident engagement efforts at Madison Park Development Corporation in Roxbury, and lead statewide housing programs at CHAPA. She holds a Master's in Urban Planning from Boston University.

- Matthew Kiefer, land use attorney at Goulston & Storrs. Kiefer's practice focuses on obtaining site control and development approvals from public agencies for complex urban projects. He co-chairs the firm's Climate Change Resilience Task Force. Kiefer serves on the Advisory Board and Management Committee of ULI Boston; he is the immediate past Chair of the Boston Municipal Research Bureau, which supports best practices in municipal governance; and he co-chairs the Council of Advisors of Historic Boston, a non-profit redeveloper of historic buildings.

- Steve Samuels, Founder and Chairman of Samuels & Associates, a Boston commercial real estate developer, property manager, and leasing company. Samuels serves on the Board of Trustees at

The Park School on Building & Grounds Committee in addition to his Board of Trustees role at Emerson College.

- Kairos Shen, Executive Director of the Center for Real Estate at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Prior to joining MIT, Shen worked at the then-BRA for 22 years, first as Boston's Chief City Planner, and then as the Director of Planning. He worked on the development guidelines for the Rose Kennedy Greenway, the planning for the South Boston Waterfront Innovation District, the refurbishment of Fenway Park, and the revitalization of Nubian Square.

- Kirk Sykes, Managing Director of Accordia Partners, LLC, a Boston based real estate investment and development company. He also serves on the Boston Civic Design Commission and is the Real Estate Executive Council Chairman for the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City. Sykes was formerly the head of an urban real estate investment fund called Urban Strategy America Fund, L.P. He was the Chairman of The Federal Reserve Bank of Boston Board.

## CITY PAWS

### Sniffing our stress

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

Have you ever heard the expression that fear or stress comes down the leash from a person to the dog on the other end? A recent study out of Queen's University Belfast School of Psychology found that a dog may respond to the smell of stress from their human companion.

The Washington Post quoted one of the study's authors, Clara Wilson. "In real-life settings, dogs probably use a variety of contextual signals such as our body language, tone of voice, or breathing rate to help them understand a situation," Wilson explained. "The study results provide firm evidence that odor is also a component that dogs can pick up on," she said.

#### Service Dogs

This ability to sniff out stress allows dogs to perform essential tasks for someone with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). In addition to alerting the person

served to the beginning of an episode, these dogs can be trained to respond with protective behaviors. For example, a dog might position itself in front of a person to guard personal space or behind a person offering the security of someone watching his back.

Some dogs wake a person from nightmares and offer non-judgmental support and comfort. And, as is often the case with any dog, service dogs can act as social ice-breakers, making it easier for someone with social anxiety to get out, interact with family and friends, and even meet new people.

In this case, remember, you should never approach a working service dog without the handler's permission. Speak to the person, not the dog, and ask before interacting with the animal.

#### Your Turn!

Now that we know that your dog can sniff out stress and will often try to comfort a stressed human, it's our turn to learn to

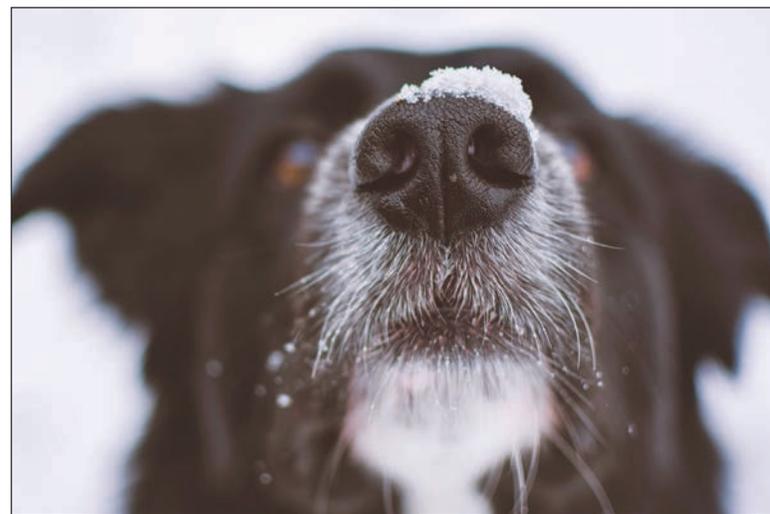
sniff out a dog's anxiety and find ways to help lessen it.

Most people respond when a dog vocalizes stress or fear by whining, whimpering, barking, or growling. However, many of us are not as attuned to a dog's body language signs of stress.

Writing for The American Kennel Club, Abbie Mood identified important body language alerts. "Stress signs to look for include whale eye (when dogs reveal the whites of their eyes), tucked ears, tucked tail, raised hackles, lip-licking, yawning, and panting. Your dog might also avoid eye contact or look away."

With our fearful little Westie, we've also experienced a dog who will freeze and shut down when confronted with an anxiety trigger. And many of us have seen a thunderstorm or fireworks cause our dogs to pace with fear.

Sniffing out stress can be a symbiotic service between you and your dog. Sometimes your dog may sense your tension before you



Research has shown a dog's nose can detect stress in organic compounds emanating from your breath and sweat. (Photo by Tadeusz Lakota)

do and help you take steps to bring it under control. As you increase your skill at noticing when your dog is stressed, you can develop ways to provide some relief.

As it happens, interacting with your dog by stroking, playing, or even going for a walk is a proven way of calming a person. Your dog may have his own way of trying to comfort you by leaning against you, sitting next to you, or trying to protect you.

And, once you discover specific stress triggers for your dog, you can begin to do what you can to remove, avoid, or desensitize the dog to those things. Or, at the very least comfort your dog when you can't do anything else.

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

# Mark your calendars: the Earth Day Charles River Cleanup is back!

Registration is now open for the 24th Annual Earth Day Charles River Cleanup on Saturday, April 22. Each year, the Charles River Cleanup brings together over 3,500 volunteers to improve the

parks, forests, playgrounds, and paths and keep the Charles River clean, safe, and beautiful for all.

The Charles River Cleanup builds on a national effort as part of American Rivers' National

River Cleanup, which, to date, has removed over 32.5 million pounds of trash from America's waterways. Since 1999, Charles River Cleanup volunteers have gathered each Earth Day to pick up litter,

remove invasive species, and assist with park maintenance along all 80 miles of the Charles River and the 1,100 acres of Emerald Necklace parkland surrounding the Muddy River, a tributary of the Charles.

Volunteers have a long-lasting impact—the Charles River Cleanup empowers ordinary river lovers to give back to their communities in a tangible way, forge new connections with nature and each other, and become life-long stewards of our river.

"Each year, we are so humbled by the extraordinary efforts of our community to care for our beloved Charles River," says Emily Norton, Executive Director of Charles River Watershed Association. "Thanks to the generosity of time and effort of our volunteers, we are able to transform our parks and forests, restoring our river's ecosystem for people and wildlife alike."

"Litter not only poses a threat to the environment but also makes the parks less welcoming. Through this important annual event, thousands of pounds of trash are removed from the parks and shoreline. Volunteers are able to see first-hand their impact upon the environment, all while fostering a connection to their community and urban parks," says Charles River Conservancy Executive Director Laura Jasinski.

"The Muddy River, which runs through the Emerald Necklace, carries Boston and Brookline's stormwater to the Charles River, critically linking the Necklace's park health to that of the Charles River watershed," says Karen Mauney-Brodek, President of the

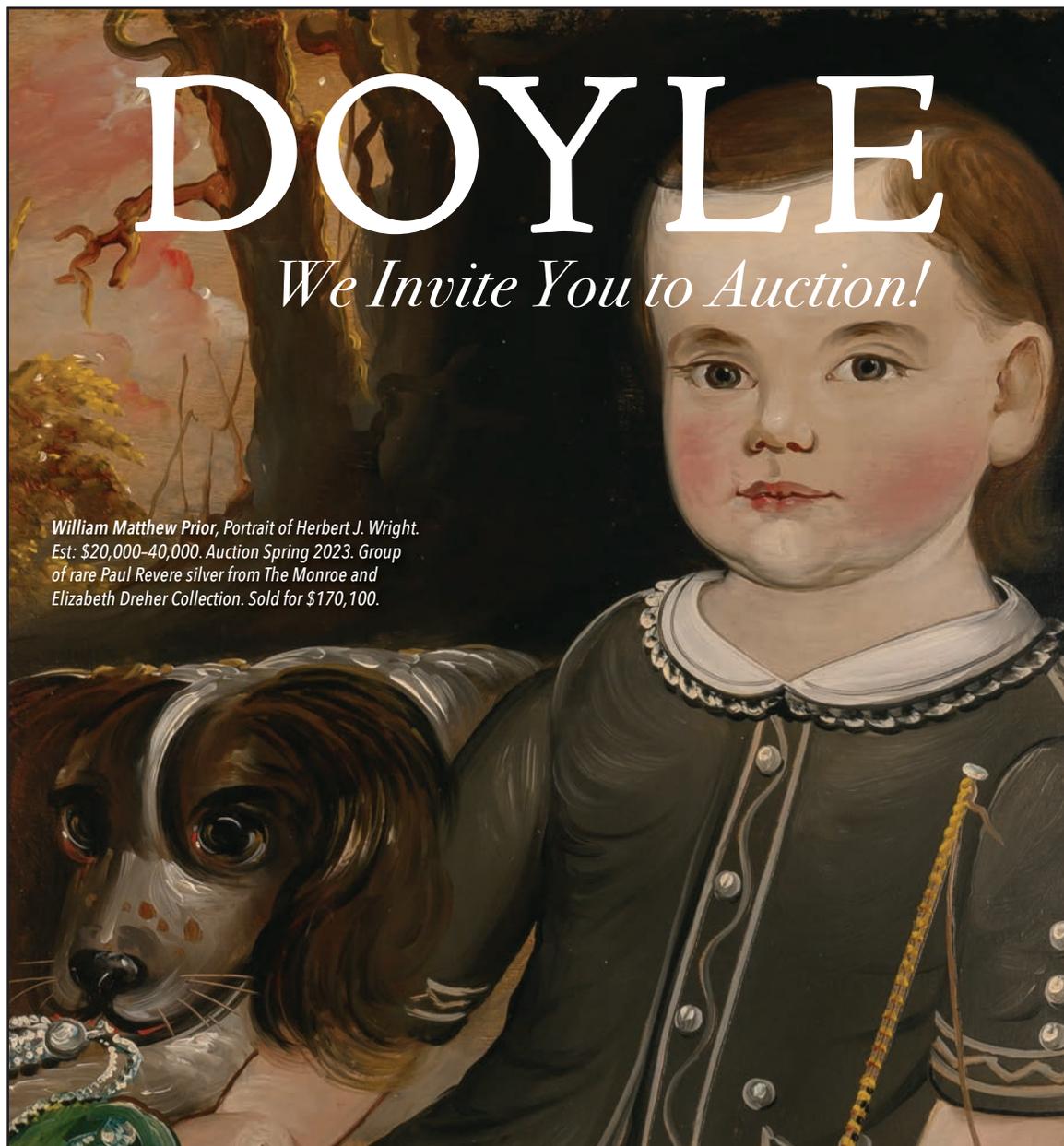
Emerald Necklace Conservancy. "We are thrilled to be celebrating our 15th annual Muddy River Cleanup in partnership with the Charles River Cleanup. These much-anticipated Earth Day cleanups remind us how interconnected our urban ecosystems are. Please come join us, take care of and celebrate our green and blue spaces!"

"We are thrilled to once again participate in the Annual Earth Day Charles River Cleanup. It is a day that reminds us of how important it is to maintain our parks and public spaces while also bringing the community together. This volunteer effort is vital to the management of litter and debris in the Esplanade" said Samuel Englert, Programs & Partnerships Manager at the Esplanade Association.

"The Waltham Land Trust is proud to have been participating in this amazing watershed-wide effort for over a decade. To see so many people removing litter and invasive plants from along the Watch City's riverbanks makes my heart swell with happiness!" said Sonja Wadman, Executive Director of Waltham Land Trust.

Learn more and register for the Charles River Earth Day Cleanup at [charlesrivercleanup.org](http://charlesrivercleanup.org).

The Charles River Cleanup is organized by the Charles River Conservancy, the Charles River Watershed Association, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, the Esplanade Association, and Waltham Land Trust in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation and Sen. Will Brownsberger.



William Matthew Prior, Portrait of Herbert J. Wright.  
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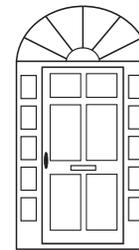
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