

Fenway News

COVERING THE FENWAY, AUDUBON CIRCLE, KENMORE SQUARE, UPPER BACK BAY, PRUDENTIAL, LONGWOOD, AND MISSION HILL SINCE 1974 • VOLUME 47, NUMBER 6 • MAY 28 - JUNE 25, 2021

THE RAPIDLY CHANGING FACE OF THE WEST FENS

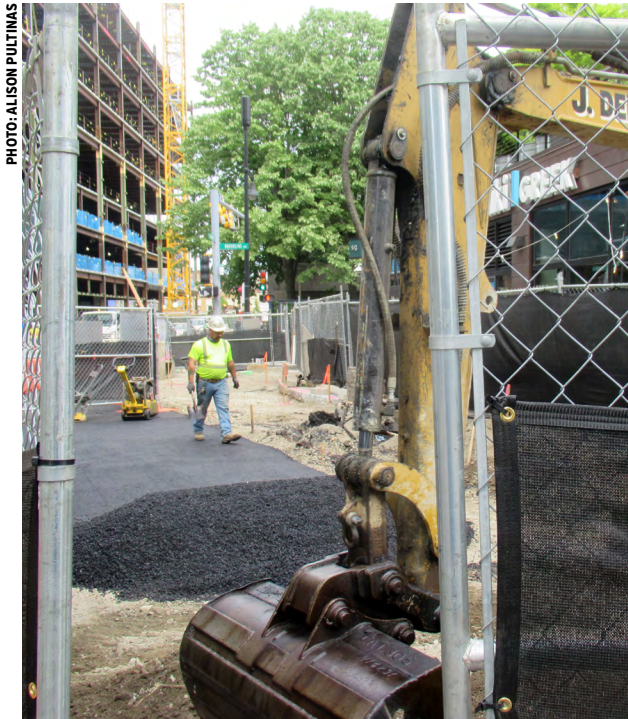


PHOTO: ALISON PULTINAS

At left, contractors add a lane to Kilmarnock Street at Brookline Avenue. As part of City approvals for the 201 Brookline project, seen under construction across the intersection, Samuels & Associates agreed to several traffic-mitigation measures, including the new lane. It also committed to build a multi-use path along the Green Line from Fenway Station to Fullerton Street and to re-stripe Fullerton for a bike lane from the path to Brookline Ave. A block away, at Boylston and Park Drive, Star Market has begun demolishing the old Gulf station (at right), an eyesore that had sat vacant since the company paid nearly \$17 million for it in 2016. Rather than added parking, the sale formed the first step of a redevelopment plan: Samuels announced earlier this year that it plans to develop the entire parcel after moving Star to a larger space in a building behind 201 Brookline on the current Bed, Bath & Beyond site. Special zoning status means the developer could add a building as tall as the Pierce, across the street, to the Gulf site.



PHOTO: CHARLES MARTEL

Area Colleges Gear Up for Fully In-Person Classes This Fall

BY KELLY GARRITY

After the COVID-19 pandemic moved classes and activities online last year, Boston colleges and universities are looking to get back to a more normal experience this fall.

Many schools in our coverage area—including Boston University, Berklee College of Music, Emmanuel College, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (MCPHS), Northeastern University, Simmons University and Wentworth Institute of Technology—have already announced that they will require vaccinations for any students planning to return to campus. Some—BU, Emmanuel, MCPHS and Northeastern—have even set up vaccination clinics for students living on campus.

Requirements for faculty vaccinations have so far been less stringent than those for students. None of the Colleges of the Fenway have announced a vaccination requirement for faculty or staff, nor have Berklee, BU, or Northeastern. Though some, including Wentworth and BU, have strongly encouraged staff to get vaccinated. According to guidance from the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, employers can require vaccinations for employees but must grant exceptions to those unable to receive the vaccine because of medical conditions or seriously held religious beliefs.

Because of vaccination requirements, many schools have announced their goal to reopen for fully in-person learning and extracurricular activities by the fall.

“As vaccine distribution increases, we are assuming that by fall all members of our community (students, staff, and faculty) who wish to be vaccinated against COVID-19, either will have already been vaccinated or can be vaccinated at Boston University, once they arrive in Boston before the start of the semester,” wrote BU President Robert A. Brown in a March 12 letter to students and parents. “The expected efficacy of the vaccines and comprehensive immunization will make possible the full return to learning in our classrooms, studios, and laboratories without the social distancing protocols that have been in use since last September.”

Simmons University President Lynn Perry Wooten announced in a March 26 statement that Simmons plans to have students return in person as well. “We are excited to return to in-person teaching and learning that enables students and faculty to engage together in the classroom,” she said. “We expect that social distancing guidelines will be modified, allow-

ing us to increase classroom occupancy, and resume valued in-person learning experiences.”

Northeastern shortly followed suit. “We expect to be back fully in-person at regular occupancy, including fully in-person teaching, and normal occupancy in residence halls and dining facilities,” said Ken Henderson, Northeastern’s chancellor and senior vice president for learning, in an April 6 statement.

“All state universities will offer a traditional schedule of in-person classes in addition to online and hybrid options for both residential and commuter student populations,” said the Massachusetts State College Council of Presidents, the decision-making body for all state colleges, including MassArt, in a statement released April 26.

On May 3, Emmanuel’s President Janet Eisner said in a statement that Emmanuel, “is planning for a full resumption of face-to-face classes for the Fall 2021 semester, as well as a full slate of co-curricular activities and events and a return to near-normal capacities in the residence halls.”

“It is clear that vaccinations are a powerful tool in combating COVID-19, and requiring vaccines will protect our Community and ensure that MCPHS does its part to help our nation move toward herd immunity,” said MCPHS President Richard J. Lessard in a letter to the MCPHS students.

According to Wentworth’s website, the university is also, “preparing a fall semester experience that begins to restore the pre-pandemic normalcy that we all enjoyed.”

On May 17, the Baker administration announced that Massachusetts would lift COVID-19 restrictions, including masking requirements for unvaccinated individuals and capacity limits, starting May 29. Hours later, Acting Mayor of Boston Kim Janey announced that Boston would lift restrictions in accordance with the state’s guidance.

Though some colleges and universities have yet to announce masking and social-distancing requirements for the fall, Northeastern has already announced its protocol. On May 19, the university announced that it would no longer require masks for vaccinated students and faculty, both indoors and outdoors on campus, with the exception of inside the University Health and Counseling Services office and areas where masks are required by law. Henderson said the university would not require unmasked individuals to show proof of vaccination and will instead rely on the honor system to enforce the new protocol.

Kelly Garrity is a journalism student at Northeastern University

CIVIC AGENDA

- **MON, JUNE 14:** Remote public meeting on phase 3 of the Landmark Center redevelopment (201 Brookline/401 Park), which includes new construction and relocation of the Fenway Star Market. Registration (required) and meeting link at bit.ly/Landmark6-14.
- **THU, JUNE 17, 6:30PM:** Led by the Fenway Community Center and the Fenway Quality of Life Alliance, nine neighborhood groups (including *The Fenway News*) have organized a Fenway-focused mayoral forum that will take place over Zoom. The six leading candidates form the most diverse field of mayoral aspirants in the city’s history. Learn more, register, or suggest questions for the candidates (prior to June 7) at <http://fenwaycommunitycenter.org/FenwayMayoralForum>

Fenway CDC Hosts Briskly Paced Annual Meeting

BY RUTH KHOWAIS

On April 29—its 48th anniversary—the Fenway Community Development Corporation (Fenway CDC) held a virtual annual meeting.

Executive Director Leah Camhi outlined the organization’s accomplishments for the past year, which include advocacy for affordable housing, the Fair Foods food-distribution program, organizing to support restoration of the #55 bus, and advocacy for the home rule petition. She also highlighted the group’s proposal to erect a 27-unit rental building on a vacant parcel at 72 Burbank St., with 100-percent affordable housing.

The CDC presented community-service awards to community activists John LaBella and Kristen Mobilia and to Lifeboat-Boston, a food pantry that provides free groceries for anyone in Boston in need and operates weekly pickups out of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church on Peterborough Street.

A highlight of the event was the keynote speech by Chuck Collins, director of the Program on Inequality and the Common Good at the Institute for Policy Studies and author of *The Wealth Hoarders: How Billionaires Pay Millions to Hide Trillions*. Collins spoke about the affordability crisis in Boston and shared strategies for creating greater equity. “There are larger economic forces destroying cities,” Collins said, grouping these disruptive forces under the label “the wealth inequality effect.”

The Fenway CDC, he said, has had to wrestle with these invisible giants in the form of global wealth that often hides in offshore tax shelters, including private equity companies looking for places to “park their wealth.” These companies, Collins explained, invest in short-term rentals, such as Airbnb, that take units out of the housing market. Collins said these shell companies and trusts are buying our neighborhood and their legal structure makes it hard for us to know who the real owners are. They also “park their money” in luxury real estate. Collins mentioned the recently opened One Dalton Place as an example. There, he said, one-third to one-half of units are owned by “anonymous shell companies.”

How do we protect residents of the Fenway, Mission Hill, and other neighborhoods from the wealth inequality effect? One proposal promotes the idea of levying a two-percent tax on the transfer of residential units that cost more than \$2 million; other cities, including Concord and Nantucket, already have such a surcharge in place. If we had such a tax, Collins said, it would have generated \$7 million to \$8 million in revenue just at One Dalton Place, money that could have been used to fund affordable housing elsewhere in the city. He also said that the state legislature needs to approve a home rule petition allowing a tenant option of purchase. The latter would enable residents to have first choice on buying a rental unit when it went on the market. Collins said that a tenant option exists for mobile homes in Massachusetts—specifically the rented lots they occupy in mobile home developments—but not apartments or condos.

The meeting ended with a raffle for a gift card and copies of Collins’s book. Ruth Khowais lives in the West Fens.

Restaurants Ease Out of Pandemic

Taking advantage of regulations that let restaurants expand their outdoor serving areas into parking spaces during the pandemic, Sweet Cheeks Q opened an eating deck last month on Boylston Street in the West Fens (upper photo). The street expansions became possible because of emergency state legislation but will expire several weeks after the Commonwealth lifts a state of emergency this month. The legislature has just begun considering a year-long extension of the street takeovers. Around the corner (lower photo), Time Out Market at 401 Park came out of “hibernation,” the term of art for money-saving wintertime shutdowns that swept the restaurant industry during the pandemic.



DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

BY ALISON PULTINAS



58 Burbank Street

There’s a new twist in the saga for 58 Burbank, a small narrow lot with a boarded-up, single-story commercial structure of unknown vintage.

On May 18, the Zoning Board of Appeal (ZBA) approved real estate investor Patrick Haydon’s seven-story residential building. The building will feature an owner’s penthouse apartment, which will be 2,300 square feet and take up two and half stories. Floors two to five will have small one-bedroom units—three are technically considered micro. The first floor will feature “work pods” and a conference room to be shared with the Fenway CDC staff, which has offices next door.

Multiple zoning exceptions were requested—usable open space is insufficient, floor-area ratio is excessive, off-street parking and loading and rear-yard setback are inadequate—but, attorney Marc LaCasse said the height did not represent a violation. According to underlying zoning, the allowed height is 75 feet.

Previous plans for the site fell apart for different reasons. When Marc Roos and Mike Meskin owned the property, the ZBA approved their proposal for a four-story apartment building in 2004, but the project never started. Later owner Ty Gupta, also known as Tarun Gupta, received a \$4 million mortgage from Wellesley Bank

in 2019. City assessing records list him as the current owner. Unpaid property taxes have been a problem for all the various investors in recent years.

Former Fenway News volunteers remember working out of the building when Northeastern University owned it. According to East Fens resident Mat Thall, the newspaper, the Fenway CDC and STOP (Symphony Tenants Operating Project) all used the structurally deficient building at no charge beginning in the late 1970s. Several efforts to get Northeastern to donate the property to the community, specifically one of the groups that used it, proved unsuccessful.



Midtown Hotel

Northeastern undergraduates will continue to occupy rooms at the Midtown Hotel in the 2021-22 school year, but the building is still slated for demolition to make way for National Development’s large rental building. Demolition will begin soon after the students vacate the building. The Boston Civic Design Commission appears ready to give the project its approval at its June meeting. The most recent BCDC subcommittee meeting accepted a revised design for the Huntington Avenue facade and substitution of a South End-style pocket park to compensate for the loss of a historic rowhouse at 1 Cumberland

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.

PIG IN A POKE? BUYER PICKS UP CONDO AT KENMORE SQ. AUCTION



Speculators bid on a Kenmore Square property sight-unseen on May 13. Jeffrey Mann of Paul Saperstein Auctioneers solicited bids from pre-qualified buyers for a one-bedroom condo at 464 Comm. Ave. in the Braemore. The winning bid, at \$621,000, came from the man pictured on the right holding his phone.



Virtual Public Meeting

Landmark Center Redevelopment - Phase 3

Monday, June 14
6:00 PM

Zoom Link: bit.ly/Landmark6-14
Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864
Meeting ID: 161 604 3586

Project Description:

Article 80 Virtual Public Meeting in connection with the proposed Notice of Project Change for Phase 3 of the Landmark Center Redevelopment Project in the Fenway neighborhood, and the associated proposed Amended and Restated Development Plan for Planned Development Area No. 36 - Landmark Center (401 Park Drive and 201 Brookline Avenue) which were filed with the BPDA on April 30th and May 3rd, respectively.

Please register in advance for this meeting through the link provided above. Chinese interpretation will be provided for this meeting. Should you require interpretation in a language other than Chinese, please contact Aisling Kerr (Aisling.Kerr@Boston.gov) to submit your request.

mail to: **Aisling Kerr**
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201
phone: 617.918.4212
email: aisling.kerr@boston.gov

**Close of
Comment
Period:**
6/18/2021

Ballpark Graduations Come on Cusp of Full Reopening

PHOTO: STEVE WOLF



The pandemic brought new uses to Fenway Park, one of the few structures in the City that could host large gatherings with six feet of physical distancing among everyone in attendance. In the November elections the ballpark served as a polling station, and for February and March it became a mass-vaccination site. Last month brought a new role—college graduations. Northeastern and Bentley University held commencements, and on May 23, Suffolk University graduates entered through Gate B for their school's ceremony.

REPORT FINDS PRIVATE FUNDRAISING WORSENS BPS INEQUITIES

BY ALISON PULTINAS

A report from the grassroots Boston Public Schools (BPS) parents group Quality Education for Every Student (QUEST) revealed troubling data on private fundraising for public schools in April. The report detailed alarming inequities across the system.

The data showed that nearly one-fifth of Boston's schools have separate nonprofit arms for raising money. Perhaps not surprising, schools with more economically disadvantaged

meeting on private fundraising and the questions it raises about equity across schools. The meeting will take place Wednesday, June 2, at 6pm (register at tinyurl.com/37884bfy).

QUEST's report, available at www.questparents.org, used data from a 2018 legally mandated districtwide audit of individual schools required after an IRS investigation found irregularities in how accounts for extracurricular activities were managed. The Ernst & Young audit looked at five years of data; QUEST then compared the private funding for 125 schools, and two Fenway schools topped the list.

Boston Latin School had close to \$60 million in accounts managed by the Boston Latin School Association. Boston Arts Academy came in second among BPS schools—its nonprofit arm, Boston Arts Academy Foundation (BAAF), raised \$14,161 per pupil in 2018.

And in 2021, there was lots of hubbub around the Arts Academy's Honors Gala at donor Ernie Boch Jr.'s mansion on May 1. NBC Boston and Boston society photographer Bill Brett documented the event and the day after, a full-page advertisement ran in the *Boston Globe* thanking corporate sponsors (the *Globe* donated the ad). Developer Steve Samuels, who sponsored a \$25,000 donor match in last year's fundraising round, received a Civic Responsibility award at the event.

Created in 1999, BAAF has extensive staffing and lots of success stories. Its website boasts that "BAAF is strengthening the school's long-term financial sustainability through a comprehensive Building Our Future campaign to build its endowment and reserves. Funding supports

what makes BAA unique, including expanded programming."

Like the exam schools, the Arts Academy is a selective and highly desirable option for high school in the public system. When it opened in 1998 as a pilot with more autonomy than traditional facilities, the plan for private fundraising to supplement the standard BPS foundation budget was inherent in the concept. In her book *The Hardest Questions Aren't on the Test*, founding head-of-school Linda Nathan described the school's mission as being a laboratory and a beacon for artistic and academic innovation.

Former BPS Superintendent Lois Harrison-Jones said in a 1994 interview that if pilot schools were successful, their programs would be duplicated in regular public schools and translate into systemwide improvements. Nathan advocated for robust arts education for all schools—a goal perhaps not attainable without private funding and extended school time?

At Boston Latin, the BLS Associa-

tion funds positions with naming rights for donors—for example: the Leven Director of Athletics and the Viterbi Director of Technology. Like the BAAF, it maintains downtown offices outside of the school building, yet the BLS website links to the group.

Marshall, the BPS parent and QUEST activist, says BPS should be tracking all information about private funding if the district is serious about providing equity across the system. His group collated the data from the 2018 audit and, he says, is constantly asked for solutions. But that's not the group's mandate. He wants the wider community to brainstorm and BPS administration to take on these challenges: Why do some schools have so much more than others? Is this fair? Is this the problem or simply a symptom of inequities across the system? School districts in other cities are dealing with the same inequities, he says; QUEST plans to share examples at the June 2 meeting.

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.

PHOTO: ALISON PULTINAS



The Arts Academy, under construction on Ipswich Street, with the MGM Music Hall in the foreground

students raise much less money than those with students from wealthier families.

Travis Marshall, a BPS parent and QUEST activist, spoke at an April 28 Boston School Committee hearing. He believes in public funding for public schools and said that unchecked private fundraising creates and exacerbates inequities across the system.

Last year at budget time, School Committee member Jeri Robinson asked how private fundraising was factored into individual schools' budgets. The superintendent's office said that BPS does not collect and report on data for fundraising for individual schools.

QUEST will hold a virtual public

NOT QUITE TO-YOUR-DOOR SERVICE—BUT CLOSE!



PHOTO: STEVE WOLF

The concentration of BU dorms—once private apartment buildings—in Audubon Circle at Buswell Street prompted one enterprising UPS Store to secure City permits so it could park a tractor trailer on Park Drive for 10 days and open a pop-up store selling packing boxes and accepting shipping orders from students leaving for the summer.

FENWAY MAYORAL FORUM



JOHN BARROS



ANDREA CAMPBELL

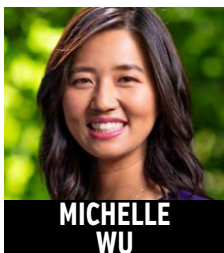


ANISSA ESSAIBI GEORGE

JUNE 17
6:30PM



JOHN SANTIAGO



MICHELLE WU

Acting Mayor
Kim Janey
is not yet
confirmed.

LEARN MORE, REGISTER, OR
SUGGEST QUESTIONS AT [HTTP://FENWAYCOMMUNITYCENTER.ORG/FENWAYMAYORALFORUM](http://FENWAYCOMMUNITYCENTER.ORG/FENWAYMAYORALFORUM)

HOSTS



CO-SPONSORS



PHOTO: STEVE WOLF



DEADLINE NEARS FOR BEAUTIFICATION FUNDS

Although it won't cover planting wisteria in your Victory Garden plot (where we spotted this beauty last month), The Boston Planning & Development Agency has up to \$100,000 to fund temporary or permanent beautification projects in the Fenway. The funds come from Red Sox payments for the use of public air rights above Lansdowne Street. Applicants for Fenway Park Demonstration Project funds must submit a plan to the BPDA that describes how the proposed project would use the funding to produce the greatest measurable impact in the community. Projects must be fully accessible to the public. Download an application here and submit it by Wednesday, June 9, at 5pm.

Reduced 55 Bus Service Returns June 20

The fight to save the 55 bus was successful, and the MBTA now promises that it will restore service on June 20. The bus will run at a reduced frequency, from 10am to 3:30pm every day and continue a shortened route that terminates at Copley instead of Park Street. Final schedules will be available online in early June. No word yet on what a fall schedule might look like. In other bus-service news, the MBTA's Better Bus project will hold a public meeting to describe its planning for reinventing bus routes to improve service for riders. Visit www.mbta.com/events/2021-06-08/bus-network-redesign-public-meeting for more information.

DESIGN WEEK WALKING TOUR FOCUSES ON CHRISTIAN SCIENCE PLAZA REVAMP



PHOTO: ALISON PULTINAS

In a Design Week walking tour sponsored by the Boston Preservation Alliance on May 1, landscape architect John Amodeo of IBI Placemaking explained IBI's design for renovating the Christian Science Plaza. IBI shortened the Reflecting Pool, made it considerably shallower (to reduce water use), and resurfaced the pool's basin with granite pavers. The plan focused on enhancing pedestrian access from Mass. Ave. to Dalton Street and better defining plaza edges at the Children's Fountain corner with new seating, landscaping, lighting and signs.

Artists' Plantings Reframe, Foreground Experiences of Communities of Color

PHOTO: ALISON PULTINAS



Two new outdoor installations, opening June 22, continue the Museum of Fine Arts' deep dive into broader context for and new analysis of Cyrus Dallin's sculpture "Appeal to the Great Spirit." Museum Director Matthew Teitelbaum began this process publicly two years ago on Indigenous Peoples' Day.

Artist Elizabeth James-Perry—identified in a media release as an enrolled citizen of the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head-Aquinnah—envisioned planting mounds of corn and beans surrounding the statue. By late September, the corn should have grown close to 12 feet high, creating a screen around the pedestal and the stallion that Perry describes as a reclamation of Boston as Indigenous land.

A second garden on the east lawn near the Huntington Ave. entrance will expand Ekua Holmes's 2018 "Sunflowers for Roxbury" project. "Radiant Community" will feature between 2,000 and 3,000 sunflowers of four different species. It's part of the Roxbury Sunflower Project, which each year distributes thousands of sunflower seeds across the neighborhood to symbolize the community's strength and beauty. The project's Tumblr site, roxburysunflowerproject.tumblr.com, has images and explains that "Sunflowers represent, among other things, resilience, self-determination, and the ability for a community to evolve and emerge while staying grounded in its history and traditions."

The Museum has scheduled a virtual event focusing on the installations on June 22 at 5pm, "Planting Together: Conversation with Ekua Holmes and Elizabeth James-Perry." Visit www.mfa.org/event/planting-together-conversation-with-ekua-holmes-and-elizabeth-james-perry for details.

From Cars to Labs, 109 Brookline Ave. Tracks Economic Evolution

BY ALISON PULTINAS

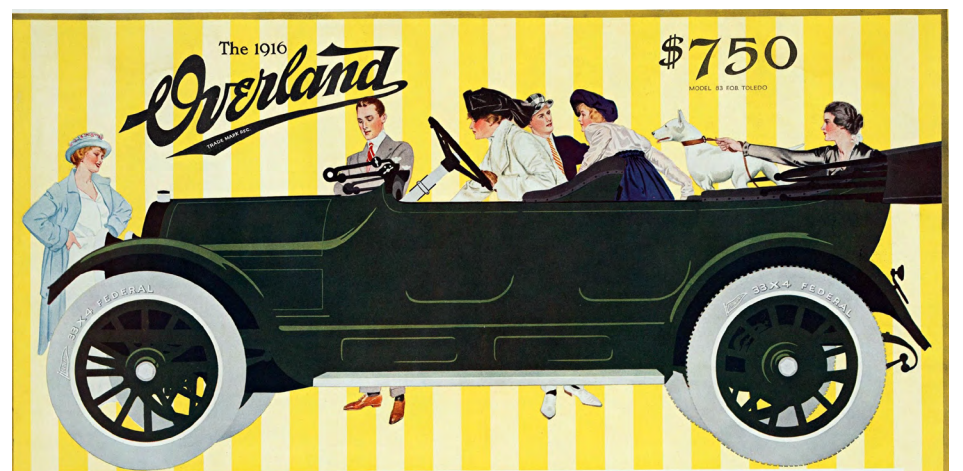
Eddie Carmody, project manager for the Boston Planning & Development Agency, is in charge of the public review process for the proposed lab project at 109 Brookline Ave. and 20 Overland Street. Carmody met in May with the Citizens Advisory Committee and the general public, and comments on the project notification form are due June 1, although that deadline might be extended.

The current proposal will cater to one of the hottest sectors of the Boston economy today, life sciences research. The existing brick-and-concrete buildings, which date to 1915-1916, also served one of the hottest sectors of its day: automobiles. Although

the buildings have undergone multiple renovations for a variety of uses—office space, storage, art school, warehouse, research lab, telecommunications infrastructure, restaurant (remember Aku, Aku?) and, for a period in the 1920s to 1930s, US Post Office facility with an entry on Burlington Avenue—they began life as facilities for Midwestern manufacturer Willys-Overland Motors, housing a showroom and repair garage for Overland cars. Overland Street's name suggests the significance of the original facility.

The proposal for a 10-story lab would demolish 109 Brookline, renovate 20 Overland, and build above the Burlington alley.

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.



A Willys-Overland advertisement from 1916

THE LIBRARY IS OPEN in June!



Leave a book



Visit by 31 Burbank St.
near Symphony Park &
Edgerly Rd.

Take a book



What is a Little Free Library?

Little Free Libraries are book-sharing boxes that are available for everyone to use and exchange books freely in the neighborhood.

THE FENWAY LITTLE FREE LIBRARY

Thank you to the 2020 Fenway Park Demonstration Community Benefits fund & the BPDA



STREET CLEANING & TRASH PICK-UP

TRASH & RECYCLING PICK-UP

- **BACK BAY:** Monday and Thursday
- **FENWAY:** Tuesday and Friday
- **MISSION HILL:** Tuesday and Friday

STREET CLEANING (APR.-DEC.)

Fenway streets get cleaned 12-4pm on the first and third Wednesdays of each month (odd-numbered side) and the second and fourth Wednesdays (even-numbered side). More info at 617-635-4900 or www.cityofboston.gov/publicworks/sweeping.

The DCR cleans state-owned roads along the Back Bay Fens on this schedule:

- **SECOND THURSDAY**
8:00am-12:00pm: The Riverway

• SECOND FRIDAY

- > 8:00am-noon: The Fenway from Ave. Louis Pasteur to Westland (includes inside lane) + Forsyth Way
- > 12:00-3:00pm: 8 to 54 The Fenway (includes inside lane) + Boylston + Charlesgate East + Charlesgate Extension

• THIRD TUESDAY

- > 8:00am-noon: Park Drive from Boylston St. to Holy Trinity Orthodox Cathedral (includes inside lane) + upper Boylston Street
- > 12:00-3:00pm: Park Drive from Holy Trinity to The Pierce, then from D Line overpass to Beacon Street

Visit www.mass.gov/doc/fenway/download

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

A LOT HAPPENED IN OUR NEIGHBORHOODS SINCE THE LAST ISSUE, INCLUDING...

ICYMI In its annual “Best Places to Live” issue, the *Globe’s* Sunday magazine crowned Mission Hill the best “mid-price neighborhood” in Boston. The article confirmed something residents have said for years: MH ain’t the bargain it used to be. Home prices have spiked by 48.5 percent in just five years. 🐡 The new Mass Pike on-ramp from Newbury Street opened, an early phase in development of the Pike’s Parcel 12 air rights site. The new ramp eliminates a death-defying configuration that forced merging drivers to join speed-crazed Pike traffic just seconds after leaving a city street. Parcel 12 project will absorb the land under the old ramp. 🐡 Following the lead of local colleges in May, 16 BPS high schools will hold graduation ceremonies at Fenway Park June 7 to 21. Area schools using the ballpark will include Boston Arts Academy, Boston Latin School, Dearborn STEM Academy, Fenway High School, and John D. O’Bryant School of Math and Science. 🐡 The Boston Public Library announced that it will begin a limited reopening of multiple branches, including Copley Square, in June. 🐡 Northeastern and the Nahant Board of Selectmen got into a PR pissing match in advance of the May 15 town meeting. Board members put an item on the meeting warrant to authorize taking a Northeastern parcel on East Point by eminent domain. According to *The Lynn Item*, NU received the land from the federal government in 1966 but only announced plans to develop it in 2018, stirring widespread resident opposition. The Town values the parcels at \$2 million, but the university called that a lowball figure and warned that if the case gets dragged into court, a loss would put the Town on the hook for an additional \$250,000 per month to cover the cost of construction delays. The Town wants to turn the site into a wildlife sanctuary. 🐡 Related Beal landed a flashy anchor tenant for One Kenmore, under construction in the eponymous square: wearable-tech startup Whoop (basically FitBit, but fancier). The company currently works out of offices on Boylston Street in the West Fens, but its 121,000SF lease will quadruple its work space. Whoop also plans to double its workforce to 1,000 by the time it moves in, according to the *Globe*. 🐡 In an article in *Commonwealth* magazine, developer Jon Rosenthal says the BOWER apartments (in the recently completed first phase of the Fenway Center next to Yawkey Station) have become the first multifamily building in Boston to win LEED Gold certification. A building can *qualify* for a LEED rating without getting *certified* to confirm claimed sustainability features. 🐡 Amazon announced \$1 million in donations to help Boston arts organizations recover from the pandemic, including a \$150,000 “anchor donation” to Boston Arts Academy. 🐡 Barely a week after announcing one of its largest-ever donations—\$50 million from the family of a former patient to fund research on pancreatic cancer—Dana Farber Cancer Institute launched an ambitious \$2 billion fund-raising campaign. Or, ICYMI should say, launched it publicly, since the “quiet” stage of the campaign began in 2017, according to a *Globe* story. 🐡 The City’s Air Pollution Control Commission lifted a restriction on the garage at the Hilton Boston Back Bay that limited parking only to hotel guests. APCC staff confirmed that the permit still forbids general commercial parking in the 256-stall garage. 🐡

‘Some Pictures Just Take Themselves’



...And some headlines write themselves. West Fens resident (and FN board member) Steve Chase took this photo and, responding modestly to a compliment, gave us a headline.

COMMUNITY meetings

TUESDAYS: Mission Hill Main Streets **SMALL BUSINESS CONFERENCE CALL.** Join Mission Hill Main Streets every Tuesday for its weekly small business conference call featuring reopening guidance, support services, and resources available to small businesses, as well as a Q&A session. Register in advance at <https://bitly.com/smallbizbos>. 3pm.

FRIDAYS: The Legal Services Center at Harvard Law School hosts weekly **VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS** in partnership with the Boston Public Library. The LSC provides advice and referral information about civil legal issues, including but not limited to housing law and tenants’ rights, disability rights, Social Security and public benefits such as SNAP, veterans benefits and military-record corrections, divorce, custody and child support questions, LGBTQ+ concerns, tax issues, consumer loan and small claims court problems, and criminal record sealing or expungement. 10am to 12pm. For Zoom information, visit <http://bit.ly/LSCBPL>.

TUE, JUNE 8: The BPDA hosts a **VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE BROOKLINE AVENUE COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE** in connection with the proposed Notice of Project Change for Phase 3 of the Landmark Center Redevelopment. (Also see the BPDA meeting scheduled for June 14). The meeting will be remote, but you must register at www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_ySdhpcSuQBqjE6QMLkNxPg to

receive a follow-up email with instructions for joining. 6-8pm.

WED, JUNE 9: The BPDA hosts a virtual community meeting about **13 ALLEGHANY STREET**, a parcel located in the Mission Hill Community Garden. Comment period will close on June 23, 2021. Comments should be emailed to Morgan.E.McDaniel@Boston.gov. Register at bit.ly/3hdi5d5 to receive the Zoom link. 6-8pm.

THU, JUNE 10: Join the Fenway CDC for its monthly **ORGANIZING COMMITTEE MEETING** from 6pm to 7:30pm on Zoom. Contact Cassie White at cwhite@fenwaycdc.org for the link.

MON, JUNE 14: The BPDA hosts a **LANDMARK CENTER VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING** on the Notice of Project Change for Phase 3 of the Landmark Center Redevelopment Project. The proposal would add two buildings and the new location for the West Fens Star Market. The meeting will be remote, but you must register at www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_qsgCNdSISBOmsFe7FKSYhQ to receive a follow-up email with instructions for joining the meeting. 6pm to 8pm.

THU, JUNE 17: State Rep. Chynah Tyler hosts **FENWAY OFFICE HOURS**. Ask questions about the legislation, get assistance with accessing government services, and discuss neighborhood issues. Register at bit.ly/3u5ICwR to receive confirmation and the meeting link.

Farmers Markets

The first strawberries of the season are available this month. Also look for cucumbers, cauliflower, and snap peas.

ROXBURY CROSSING T STATION (ORANGE LINE)	
Tuesday & Friday	11:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m.
COPLEY SQUARE	
Tuesday & Friday	11:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.
SOUTH END: 500 HARRISON AVENUE (AT SOWA ARTS MARKET)	
Sunday	11:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.



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S O X B O X			
Fri, May 28	7:10pm	Sat, June 12	4:10pm
Sat, May 29	4:10pm	Sun, June 13	1:10pm
Sun, May 30	1:10pm	Mon, June 14	7:10pm
Tue, June 8	7:10pm	Fri, June 25	7:10pm
Wed, June 9	7:10pm	Sat, June 26	7:15pm
Thu, June 10	7:10pm	Sun, June 27	TBD
Fri, June 11	7:10pm	Mon, June 28	7:10pm

The Era When Women Stormed Into Photography

BY RUTH KHOWAIS

The Museum of Fine Arts has been featuring women artists in an exhibit entitled “Women Take the Floor” since 2019. The exhibit includes seven thematic galleries. The most recent addition to this exhibit is a roomful of 30 photographs by women made during a pivotal period when large numbers of women began pursuing photography as an artistic medium and a profession.

“Women Photographers 1965-1985” addresses themes of identity, landscape, domestic life, street scenes, and political action. Many of the photos are portraits.

In 1965, the women’s movement was in full swing: Betty Friedan’s book *The Feminine Mystique* had just become a bestseller, and the Equal Pay and Civil Rights Acts had been newly written into law. The women’s movement inspired the photographers in this exhibit. Many were essentially self-taught, driven by a desire to express themselves.

When *Rolling Stone* hired Annie Leibovitz in 1970, few female photographers worked for magazines. By 1973, she had become *Rolling Stone*’s chief photographer. Featured in this exhibit is her dynamic portrait of Patti Smith in a New Orleans warehouse surrounded by flaming barrels of kerosene.

There is also Diane Arbus’s dramatic 1968 black-and-white photograph of wealthy Boston socialite Brenda Diana Duff Frazier, debutante of the year in 1938. In the photo, Francis dresses in an elegant manner to recreate her past glory.

Ming Smith was the only female member of the all-black Kamoinge Workshop in New York during the 1960s and 1970s. In her photos, such as “Amen Corner Sisters,” she recorded the vibrant street life of Harlem.

One of the most interesting photos, because it looks like a painting, is “Gray Horse and Car Radio Antenna” by Barbara Norfleet, an unsettling collision of nature and technology. Norfleet, who has taught at Harvard and curated a photographic archive at the Fogg Art Museum, created a series of photos with animals in human settings to symbolize the effects of population growth and climate change.

The exhibit also highlights recently acquired works by lesser-known photographers working in Argentina, Mexico, Chile, and Canada. These artists include Argentina’s Adriana Lestido. After her



Gray Horse and Car Radio Antenna” by Barbara Norfleet.

husband went missing under the brutal dictatorship of Jorge Rafael Videla, Lestido started documenting the women who demonstrated every week outside the country’s presidential palace. Her black-and-white photo “Mother and Daughter from Mothers of Plaza del Mayo” offers a striking example.

Paz Errazuriz, who is Chilean, actively pursued photography under the repressive dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, a time when it was dangerous for a woman to walk down the street carrying a camera. Equally dangerous was her choice to document some of the country’s most vulnerable and marginalized people. The photo “Mercedes and Evelyn,” from 1983, comes from a series Errazuriz produced about sex workers living in a red light district.

American-Canadian photographer Lynne Cohen is known for her photographs of empty interiors, including living rooms, public halls, laboratories, offices, and showrooms. Her photos as seen in this show are usually devoid of human presence.

“Women Photographers 1965-1985” runs through November 28. Head to the Art of the Americas Wing, level 3. To get to Gallery 335, walk through one of the main rooms of Women Take the Floor, which features some amazing paintings.

Ruth Khowais lives in the West Fens.

GARDNER THEFT: NO STONE UNTURNED, FEW QUESTIONS ANSWERED

BY STEVE WOLF

If you’ve lost track of the twisty tale of the 1990 Gardner Museum break-in, don’t worry: so has everyone who’s investigated it. More accurately, everyone has a theory but can’t prove it’s the right one. So (semi-spoiler alert) don’t go into the very polished Netflix documentary, *This Is A Robbery: The World’s Greatest Art Heist*, expecting to come out knowing whodunnit.

That aside, there’s lots to admire. From the start you feel you’re in capable hands. Filmmaker Colin Barnicle and his team vividly employ animation, re-enactments, grainy TV news clips, eyewitness interviews, moody music, and other tools to recreate the theft. Episode 1 (of four) focuses on the museum’s history and the heist itself. It also explores each piece’s significance, from minor Degas sketches to the marquee canvases *Christ in The Storm on the Sea of Galilee* (Rembrandt’s only seascape) and *The Concert* (one of just 35 Vermeers in existence).

The series flags a bitwhen it turns to whodunnit (and how) in the following episodes. Initial ideas—the IRA? Italian Mafia? Pot-smoking security guard? Notorious art thief?—quickly crash and burn. Episode 4 gives us the FBI’s theory, by far the most fleshed-out. Valiant work with animated maps, diagrams, and straight-talking journalists (including the *Globe*’s Shelley Murphy and Steve Kurkjian, who covered the story) keeps the narrative moving, but it’s still a hot mess of wise guys whose grubby doings open a window onto a grittier, ungentrified Boston now fading away. The thick accents and endless mugshots make you wonder if you tuned into a Ben Affleck crime caper by mistake.

Even without closure, the story remains fascinating—maybe even *because* we have no answers (although the FBI now claims it knows who did it). If you get lost along the way, just enjoy the ride, admire the craft, and learn a thing or two you didn’t know before. The series leaves you thinking we may still learn the full story when someone, some day, points the way to the Gardner’s lost treasures. Steve Wolf lives in the West Fens.

EATS BEAT

On May 20, the *Boston Globe* reported that New York-based Blue Ribbon Restaurant Group will take over the leases for Eastern Standard, Island Creek Oyster Bar, and the Hawthorne in Kenmore Square. The group operates restaurants in New York, Las Vegas, Miami, and Los Angeles. Two concepts for their Boston operations will be similar to those they’ll replace: the Eastern Standard space will remain a brasserie, and the Island Creek space will maintain

a seafood focus. The Hawthorne will become a sushi restaurant. The announcement rings down the curtain on a contentious and unusually public struggle between Garrett Harker, who led the group that built the three earlier (and much-loved) restaurants, and his landlord, Urban Meritage. Time Out Market reopened on May 13. Returning restaurants include Michael Schlow’s Italian Kitchen, Cusser’s Roast Beef & Seafood, Bisq, Taqueria el Barrio, Anoush’ella, and Union Square Donuts (because, you know, maple-bacon donuts).

Let’s Call These Artists Paint Box Heroes



BY ALISON PULTINAS

MassArt senior Mellina Illinger’s plein-air work on six utility boxes in Mission Hill began on May 13. Her illustrative images with colorful backgrounds adorn boxes at Hanlon Square/Brigham Circle, with others located further down Tremont Street toward Roxbury Crossing. She won the commissions through the City’s Paint Box program.

Illinger’s process begins with a coat of Kilz primer, on which she sketches an outline of the design. She finishes the design with fast-drying exterior acrylic paints. She hoped to complete the six designs in a few short days with support from Elizabeth DiCicco, director of Campus and External Exhibitions at MassArt. Paint Box guidelines allow artists to include their signature on the boxes—helpful for new graduates with dreams of future commissions.

The annual Paint Box program is sponsored by the City’s Arts and Culture department. Mission Hill Main Streets and MassArt worked together to choose the particular locations and the artist.

It’s not too late to apply for this year’s funding round; deadline for proposals is May 31. Artists receive a \$500 stipend per box, with \$200 on approval (for the cost of supplies) and \$300 paid upon completion of the work. Visit <https://cityofbostonartsandculture.submittable.com/submit/193405/paintbox-2021> for details.

Last year’s selections included four boxes in the Fenway. One of those has been completed, at Evans Way and Huntington Avenue. Locations at Boylston Street and Mass. Ave. and St. Botolph Street and Mass. Ave are still waiting for their artists. Kristin McGeehan of the Arts and Culture department said the department plans to update a new online map of the box murals in early June, with the finalized locations for this year’s projects as well as those awarded in 2020.

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.

June

CALENDAR

Fri, 5/28

MULTIDISCIPLINARY SUMMER PERFORMANCE IN THE BACK BAY FENS. 12 and 12:30pm. Boston Conservatory at Berklee, in partnership with the Emerald Necklace Conservancy and MF Dynamics, will host an outdoor performance by Boston Conservatory dance, music, and theater students across from 81 Park Drive. **FREE**

Fri, 5/28, 6/4, 6/11, & 5/18

MISSION HILL HEALTH MOVEMENT WEEKLY WALKING GROUP. Meets at 1534 Tremont St. at 10am. Call (617) 427-6919 for more information.

Tue, 6/1

BOSTON MAYORAL CLIMATE & CLIMATE JUSTICE FORUM. A coalition of more than 40 Boston climate, environmental, climate justice, and community groups co-sponsors

this forum at 6:30pm. Register at bit.ly/BostonMayoralClimateForum.
Wed, 6/2, 6/16, & 6/30

FENWAY FAIR FOODS. Fair Foods welcomes community residents to get a bag of fresh fruits and vegetables for \$2. Holy Trinity Orthodox Cathedral, 165 Park Drive, Boston MA 02215. 3–6pm. Contact Jasmine Vargas at jvargas@fenwaycdc.org or (617) 213-2295 for additional information.

Wed, 6/2

Fenway CDC hosts **CPR TRAINING** as part of its Healthy Habits Program. Join this virtual workshop co-hosted with the American Heart Association and Make BLS Basic to receive your own “CPR Anytime” kit. 5:30pm to 6:30pm. To sign up, contact Jasmine Vargas at jvargas@fenwaycdc.org or (617) 213-2295.

Thu, 6/3

Join the Boston Public Library for an online discussion of **ANOTHER ROUND**, winner of the 2021 Academy Award for Best Foreign-Language Film. Watch the film on Kanopy.com (free to BPL card holders), then join a Zoom discussion. Register at <https://bpl.bibliocommons.com/events/60abb71453a5bd4500c95922>. 7pm.

Sat, 6/5

Join the Emerald Necklace Conservancy for **BIRDING IN THE EMERALD NECKLACE**. 8a–10am. This tour in Franklin Park will focus on the basics of bird watching. Register at <https://www.emeraldnecklace.org/event/birding-in-the-emerald-necklace/>. **FREE**

Through Mon, 6/7

In Copley Square along Boylston Street. Outdoor show by the **BOSTON PRESS PHOTOGRAPHERS ASSOCIATION**. Award-winning images from the annual BPPA

contest will be mounted on 10 large cubes. The exhibit moves June 7 to Judge Gourdin Park in Nubian Square, across from the police station.

Tue, 6/8

Join the Boston Public Library for an online author talk with **MICHAEL LIU** about **FOREVER STRUGGLE: ACTIVISM, IDENTITY, AND SURVIVAL IN BOSTON'S CHINATOWN, 1880-2018**. Register at <https://bpl.bibliocommons.com/events/60886c5d51b41a3a00e7a1e1>. 6pm.

Wed, 6/9

Emerald Necklace Conservancy Tour of the Muddy River Restoration. 2:30–3:30pm. Join the Conservancy on a tour of Phase 2 of the Muddy River Restoration in the Back Bay Fens restoration area with the US Army Corps of Engineers and Charter Construction. Register at <https://www.emeraldnecklace.org/event/tour-of-the-muddy-river-restoration-2/>.

Sat, 6/12

PRESIDENT'S WALKING TOUR OF THE EMERALD NECKLACE. 9am–1pm. Join the Emerald Necklace Conservancy for the fourth annual walkthrough of the entire Emerald Necklace. This is a six-mile walk from Franklin Park to Charlesgate Park. Register at <https://www.emeraldnecklace.org/event/presidents-walking-tour-of-the-emerald-necklace/>.

Thu, 6/17

FENWAY MAYORAL FORUM. The most diverse set of candidates for mayor in Boston's history want your vote this fall. Nine local groups have joined to present an online forum, where the major candidates will answer Fenway-specific questions. Learn more, register, or suggest questions at <http://fenwaycommunitycenter.org/FenwayMayoralForum>. 6:30pm to 8:30pm.

Thu, 6/24

Join the Ward 4 and Ward 5 Democratic Committees for their **2021 Boston At-Large Candidate Forum** at 6:30pm. *Globe* reporter Meghan Irons moderates the discussion hosted on Zoom and open to the public. RSVP at tinyurl.com/Bos2021AtLarge.

Sat, 6/26

Webinar: Traditional Indigenous Use of Plants. 10–11am. Take a virtual nature walk with the Emerald Necklace Conservancy in this presentation on the traditional uses of both indigenous plants and the invasive species that became staples in Native communities. Register at <https://www.emeraldnecklace.org/event/traditional-use-of-plants/>.

@ THE CENTER

Due to the pandemic, the Fenway Community Center now hosts both virtual and in-person activities. Find links and more information for everything at fenwaycommunitycenter.org.

- Tuesdays, 6pm: **NAVIGATORS USA.** Progressive scouting for all.
- Wednesday, 8pm: **GAME NIGHT.** Play Drawful and other online games suitable for all ages.
- Thursday, 8pm: **GAME NIGHT.**
- Wednesday, 6pm: **GUIDED MEDITATION.**
- Friday, June 18, 7pm: **PAINT NIGHT.** Paint along with Claudia! No matter your artistic ability, you'll enjoy creating your own work of art. It's the perfect way to relax at the end of the week, too.

SENIOR EVENTS

The Senior Center does not yet have a set date for reopening its physical space. Visit www.operationpeaceboston.org to learn more about our programs and check out the PSC calendar for in-person outside events. All events listed below are virtual. To receive Zoom links and call-in numbers, please email Mallory Rohrig at mallory@operationpeaceboston.org.

- June 8 at 12:30pm: **NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY PERFORMANCES**
- June 10 at 11:30am: **COFFEE AND CONVERSATION WITH CITY COUNCILOR KENZIE BOK**
- June 22 at 1pm: **FAVORITE CITIES, TRAVEL STORIES WITH CONNECTED FOUNDATION**
- June 29 at 1pm: **PRESENTATION BY THE EMERALD NECKLACE CONSERVANCY**

N

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