



THE

Fenway News

COVERING THE FENWAY, AUDUBON CIRCLE, KENMORE SQUARE, UPPER BACK BAY, PRUDENTIAL, LONGWOOD, AND MISSION HILL SINCE 1974 • VOLUME 49 NUMBER 4 • MARCH 31 - APRIL 28, 2023

‘Walkshop’ Shines Light on Longwood Place Shadows

BY LESLIE POND

The spring equinox is usually a time of celebration, but area residents chose this year’s equinox to highlight deep concerns about new shadows on the Emerald Necklace from the proposed Longwood Place development.

Despite vigorous opposition from residents and community organizations—including a petition that called for further reducing building heights and garnered nearly 2,600 signatures—the Boston Planning and Development Agency Board voted on Jan. 19 to establish a Planned Development Area

Commission Votes To Send PDA To Mayor

Ignoring strong resident opposition, the Boston Zoning Commission voted to approve a PDA for the 1.7-million-square-foot Longwood Place project on March 29, as we went to press. Commissioner Mike Nichols cast the sole dissenting vote. Assuming mayoral sign-off, Skanska reps estimated it would send designs for three buildings to the BPDA for Article 80 review in about a year. Construction on the first building, if approved, could start in 2026.



PHOTO: ELENA SAPORTA

At the Carleton Street Footbridge, walkshop participants listened to the Emerald Necklace Conservancy’s Jack Schleifer explain likely impacts of shadows from the Longwood Place development. The 1.7 million square-foot complex would throw up to five hours of new shadow on Emerald Necklace parks.

The proposal by developer Skanska USA consists of five buildings on the Simmons University residential campus at 305 Brookline Ave. The two tallest buildings would rise to 295 feet and 267 feet. The original proposal had the tallest building at 320 feet high. After resident advocacy and the urging of District 8 City Councilor Kenzie Bok, Skanska reduced its height by 25 feet.

(PDA) for the proposal. A PDA overrides existing zoning and allows a developer to sidestep size, height, and other restrictions.

On March 20 (the equinox) about 20 people from the Fenway and Brookline, including long-time environmental advocates, participated in a walkshop along the Riverway section of the Emerald Necklace. Local experts discussed potential impacts of shadows on the park and landmarks.

A coalition of community and park advocates, including Fenway Civic Association and Fenway Garden Society, sponsored the walkshop, and Emerald Necklace Conservancy’s Board of Park Advisors Elena Saporta and Steve Wolf organized it. City officials were invited, though none attended.

Understanding the potential for new shadows starts with Skanska’s 15-minute shadow studies, submitted as part of its PDA request. A staff ecologist from Skanska’s design consultant Sasaki has stated that the project would cast fewer than two hours of new shadows on the Emerald Necklace on the spring equinox. This is already a violation of the BPDA’s 2003 Longwood Medical Area interim guidelines, which state that “no project will be approved if it casts any new shadow for more than one hour on March 21st on the Emerald Necklace...” The BPDA’s

webpage states that these guidelines “continue to be in effect.”

According to a detailed analysis of the same shadow studies, new shadows would persist for much longer than two hours. This analysis shows that on March 21, new shadows would cover 11 acres of the Emerald Necklace for a total of 5.25 hours: from 7:15 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. on the Riverway section and 4:00 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. on the Back Bay Fens.

On Dec. 21 (the winter solstice) new shadows would darken the Emerald Necklace for a total of 6.75 hours across 10 acres. Shadows would cover a smaller area in summer. Although the shadow studies were for the original proposal, the 25-foot height reduction of the tallest building is not expected to decrease new shadows significantly.

For the walkshop, organizers demarcated the area of new shadows from this analysis by tying chartreuse ribbons around tree trunks.

As pointed out during the walkshop, when you’re on the path next to the Carlton Street Footbridge and looking across the Muddy River, the tallest structure you see is a 70-foot-high B.U./Wheelock building. The 340-foot Pierce building nearby provides a point of reference for envisioning how the proposed buildings would overshadow the Emerald Necklace along the Riverway.

Of major concern are the impacts on people and habitat for plants and wildlife.

Many who enjoy sunshine for recreation or commuting along the Riverway in the early morning, or the Back Bay Fens in the late afternoon, would be subject to the new shadows. In addition, residents expressed concern about safety on the renovated Carlton Street Footbridge, expected to re-open this summer, and the historic Chapel Street Bridge, which would sit under the new shadows and likely be icy for longer in the winter.

The impact of new shadows on plant and tree health is another key concern. Jack Schleifer, field operations manager at the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, summarized research on the impacts of long periods of

shade on the health of soils, plants, and water.

Impacts include reduced soil temperatures that affect seed germination and root establishment, among other factors essential for plant health. “Shade would be an added stressor on urban trees already subject to a long list of challenges,” Schleifer says, including disease, drought, road salt, extreme heat, stormwater runoff, air and ground pollution, restricted space for roots, improper care, and several others.

Mayor Michelle Wu has emphasized sustainability and the importance of community and appointed cabinet members charged with “protecting air, water, climate, and land resources” and preserving “the integrity of Boston’s historic resources.” However, the walkshop organizers feel that the administration has ignored community members striving for a balanced solution to the shadow issue. They argue that the City needs to hit pause on approval of the PDA and examine more carefully the impacts of shadows on historic public parks.

Leslie Pond lives in the West Fens.

@ THE CENTER

The Fenway Community Center is now open six days a week. An * indicates limited capacity; visit <https://fenwaycommunitycenter.org> for more details.

- Tue, April 4 & 18, 5:30pm: **BEGINNER YOGA with Hands to Heart Center***
- Sat, April 15, 11:30am: **COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP with Northeastern Off-Campus Engagement and Support**
- Sat, April 22, 11:30am: **PAINT BRUNCH with Lydia Jane***
- Mon, April 24, 6:00pm: **PRESENTATION ON FENWAY HISTORY with Anthony Sammarco***

SENIOR EVENTS

To attend, RSVP to Tracey or Sara at (617) 536-7154. For more information about Operation PEACE programs and senior programming, visit www.operationpeaceboston.org. Some events take place at the Peterborough Senior Center (PSC), and others at the Fenway Community Center (FCC).

- Tue, April 4 at 12pm: **SPRING COLLAGES at PSC**
- Tue, April 19 at 12pm: **NUTRITION WORKSHOP at PSC**
- Wed, April 26 at 12pm: **KNITTING AND CROCHETING at PSC**
- Thursdays at 11:30am: **COFFEE AND CONVERSATIONS at FCC. Dementia presentation on April 20; stress-management workshop on April 27.**

8 MONTHS, NO REVIEW MEANS BACK TO SQUARE ONE FOR VIEW-CORRIDOR GROUP

BY ALISON PULTINAS

In May 2022, 37 Mission Hill residents petitioned the Boston Landmarks Commission for an amendment to the 2005 City Landmark Designation for the Mission Church complex (see the June 2022 *Fenway News*).

The amendment would create a protection zone that could preserve historic view corridors to the basilica at 1545 Tremont St. The height of two proposed developments currently under Article 80 review—1558 Tremont St. and 80-100 Smith St.—would compromise the view.

Petitioners submitted signatures, the required maps, photographs, and a narrative. Commission Director Rosanne Foley also asked them to provide a list of parcel owners within the proposed zone.

Months went by with no response. In December, Foley emailed to say that the amended petition would soon be presented to the full Landmarks Commission for initial review.

Then, in January, she apologized in an email to the petitioners, “I finally found some time to devote to this petition...my

recommendation to you that this should be submitted as an amendment to the original petition was incorrect. It actually needs to be a new petition.” Her message continued, “we would not be able to accept the petition as it is now written in draft form. If you were to show us that this Protection Area meets our enabling legislation—‘any area designated by the commission...as an area which is contiguous to and constitutes an essential part of the physical environment of any architectural conservation district, landmark or landmark district’—we may be able to accept it.”

Mission Hill Community Alliance president Martin Beinborn, originally from Germany, compares the presence of the Mission Church in the neighborhood to Cologne Cathedral, a similar ecclesiastical structure. Beinborn supports requiring a height-restriction zone similar to one in Cologne.

Even logos and images used by local organizations and businesses reflect the prominence of views of Mission Church, amplified because of the surrounding topography. Whether a new petition will be



PHOTO: ALISON PULTINAS

Open windows at St. Alphonsus Hall next to the Smith Street ballfield.

submitted has yet to be decided; there is no word yet from spokesperson Gary Walling.

On Feb. 28, the Boston Civic Design Commission took its first look at the 80-100 Smith Street project, focusing on both the surrounding context and long-range views. The project will now undergo design subcommittee reviews.

The two proposed developments bookend the former Mission Grammar

School at 90 Smith St. and would replace historic St. Alphonsus Hall at 80 Smith and the former convent at the corner of St. Alphonsus and Smith. More than a dozen years ago, 90 Smith was converted to office space for the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. The 2005 historic designation includes all the existing buildings.

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.

CRASH SHOWS MASS. AVE. IS STILL RISKY FOR BIKE, E-BIKE RIDERS

BY ALISON PULTINAS

On the afternoon of March 8, Jacob Egelberg was riding his e-bike on Mass. Ave, returning to the Northeastern campus from his biochemistry co-op job in Cambridge. Egelberg was involved in a

crash, flying off his bike and into a pole at the corner near Symphony Hall.

It's possible a couple driving a Volkswagen Tiguan turning right from Mass. Ave. onto Huntington hit Egelberg, or that he had accelerated to get out of their way. Egelberg wasn't sure what happened, and the police report didn't assign blame. The driver did stop and said he had not hit Egelberg; witnesses also weren't sure.

D-4 Boston Police and EMS responded quickly.

The intersection at Mass. Ave and Huntington is a critical crosstown connection and busy with cyclists. The City's transportation department installed flex posts between the travel and bike lanes on Mass. Ave, but just as in the July 2022 crash that killed cyclist George Clemmer, the vehicle involved was making a right turn across the bike lane.

Egelberg, who lives on Symphony Road, stayed three days at Boston Medical Center recovering from a partial lung collapse and a subdural hematoma. A poem he wrote about his experience will appear in our May 2023 issue.

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.



PHOTO: ALISON PULTINAS

Riding an e-bike south along Mass. Ave., Egelberg's encounter with a car sent him flying into the light pole with the "Huntington Ave" sign at left.

SOX BOX

Sat, April 1	4:10pm	Sun, April 16	1:35pm
Sun, April 2	1:35pm	Mon, April 17	11:10am
Mon, April 3	7:10pm	Tue, April 18	7:10pm
Tue, April 4	7:10pm	Wed, April 19	7:10pm
Wed, April 5	1:34pm	Thu, April 20	1:35pm
Fri, April 14	7:10pm	Fri, April 28	7:10pm
Sat, April 15	4:10pm	Sat, April 29	4:10pm

City Council Digs Into New Tree-Protection Ordinance

BY ALISON PULTINAS

The Boston City Council recently restarted its review of a comprehensive draft tree-protection ordinance, first proposed last August. On March 13, Councilor Ricardo Arroyo chaired a four-hour Government Operations Committee hearing with Parks Department staff, Environment Chief Mariama White-Hammond, and members of the public providing testimony.

The hearing introduced Todd Mistor, director of the City's new Urban Forestry Division, who spoke about his role carrying out the recently completed Urban Forestry Plan, a 20-year road map for preserving and increasing tree canopy citywide.

The plan represents an aspirational vision, but it also includes concrete strategies, including creation of the Forestry Division with added staff.

Related to the ordinance, Chief Hammond made it clear that the City has set an ambitious goal of targeting both public and private trees. However, the immediate plan focuses on expanding City powers over trees on all publicly owned property. The Council will defer drafting language covering trees on private land to later in the year.

Current tree-protection regulations only cover trees located in the public right of way—

that is, street trees. No regulations apply to other public land, even City parks.

Chief Hammond described four "buckets" for the City's ambitious process: trees on public land; trees on private land already developed; trees on private land not built on yet, and creation of a tiered system of fines and mitigation.

Mistor spoke about the department's intent to act pre-emptively rather than reactively, particularly when it comes to maintaining young street trees. The Urban Forestry Plan says that 38% of new street trees did not survive for seven years. Max Ford-Diamond, Boston's tree warden, called construction impacts the number-one killer of trees. Contractors doing work in critical root zones damage trees, making them more vulnerable in storms.

David Meshoulam of Speak for Trees testified that the new ordinance should not be the only tool for protecting trees. He wants the Urban Forestry Division to align tree protection with BPDA permitting and involve other City departments.

The Government Operations Committee will address the ordinance at an in-person follow-up working session for councilors on April 20 at 10 am in the Piemonte Room in City Hall.

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.

DASHBOARD

TRASH & RECYCLING PICK-UP

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

STREET CLEANING

Street cleaning (and towing) resumed on April 1. For more information, check the City's web page with temporary transportation information, <https://bit.ly/2KJ3TXV>.

KAJI ASO STUDIO CONCERTS

"SPRING CONCERT"
SUNDAY, APRIL 9 | 2:00PM

Sumie Kaneko
Koto, Shamisen and Voice



FREE • IN-PERSON • OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
KAJI ASO STUDIO, 40 ST. STEPHEN STREET
RSVP to administrator@kajiasostudio.com

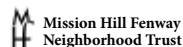
"MELODIES IN BLOOM"
SATURDAY, APRIL 22 | 7:00PM

Chihiro Asano
Mezzo-soprano
Ziang Xu
Pianist



KAJI ASO STUDIO Institute of the Arts
2023 Concert Series
Enjoy music in a gallery atmosphere.
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ART, TECHNOLOGY, AND PLACE

Fenway Augmented

aug•ment
verb make (something) greater by adding to it

Saturday, April 8 @ 10am
Northeastern Crossing
1175 Tremont Street

Limited seating

To sign up or for more info,
email bitsandflow@gmail.com



IN MEMORIAM

Jack Delmond

With a twinkle in his eyes and a joyous smirk, Jack Delmond embraced life to its fullest. An active Victory Gardener, Jack lived in the Fenway for many years. He died of heart failure on Jan. 28.

A true "Renaissance man," Jack grew up in Brooklyn's Williamsburg neighborhood, graduating in 1950 from Stuyvesant High School, a competitive exam school. Jack attended Queens College, obtained a BA in anthropology from Adelphi University, and received an MBA from the University of Massachusetts in 1983. While in grad school, he served as president of the UMass Graduate Student Senate.

At UMass, Jack also led the People's Gay Alliance (now the Pride Alliance) and DJ-ed at gay and lesbian events. He met and married fellow student, Jacques (Jay) Gagne, in 1982, more than two decades before the legal recognition of gay marriage in Massachusetts.

After graduation, the couple moved to Boston, where Jack worked for BlueCross/BlueShield. Always the showman, he did everything from appearing in Footlight Club productions to inspiring and orchestrating coordinated costumes created by a small group of friends in Prov-



incetown's Carnival parade. The group won first prize for a walking contingent in the parade for three years running.

Jack spent long hours in his Fenway Victory Garden encouraging young gardeners to try new plants and listening to their life stories. His interest in gardening led him to earn a graduate

certificate in landscape design and start a landscape-design company with friends. Later he shifted careers again to become an antiques dealer.

When opportunity arose in 2000, Jack and friends opened an antique store, Yesterday's Treasures, in Provincetown. A self-taught artist his entire life, Jack began selling his paintings there, as well; later the Charles-Baltivik Gallery represented him. After splitting time between Boston and Provincetown for 14 years, Jack and Jay moved full-time to P'town in 2014, taking over Yesterday's Treasures.

Jack is survived by husband Jay Gagne, siblings, extended family and many friends. All will miss Jack's warmth, intelligence, and infectious humor. Donations in his memory can be made to The AIDS Support Group of Cape Cod; Helping Our Women; CASAS Animal Shelter; or the Greater Boston Food Bank.

IN MEMORIAM

Karen Wepsic

On March 18, a memorial service for Karen Wepsic took place in Jamaica Plain. Wepsic died last October.

Karen was a positive presence in the lives of many people and organizations in the Fenway, Mission Hill, and Jamaica Plain. At the memorial, speakers from the Fenway Garden Society, the JP Footlight Club, the Peterborough Senior Center, the MIT Sailing Club, and the Jamaica Plain Pond Association presented a multifaceted portrait of her life and accomplishments.

Karen volunteered at Fair Foods at the Russian Orthodox Church on Park Drive. She was an active gardener with the Fenway Garden Society, a volunteer sailing instructor at MIT, a member of the Senior Center's book club, and an active member of the JP Footlight Club. As a longtime transit advocate with the Arborway Committee, she was an appointed member of the MBTA Rider Oversight Committee. She also volunteered at Hôpital Albert Schweitzer in Haiti.

And that's just her volunteer work. Professionally, Karen was a scientist who



worked on the staff at Harvard Medical School's Department of Biochemistry from 1978 to 2012.

Born in Brooklyn in 1938, Karen moved with her family to Elmont, Long Island, where she attended Sewanhaka High School. After

graduation she attended Cornell, from which she graduated with a degree in chemistry.

That launched her on a long science-oriented career, starting as a lab assistant at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute in 1959. She obtained a PhD in biophysics from Yale in 1967. For her thesis she used radioactive thymidine to demonstrate that chromosomal DNA could replicate while in circular form.

That thesis was published while she was attending the MGH School of Nursing, from which she graduated as an RN in 1968. At MGH, she worked in the recovery room. She continued working at MGH after the birth of her son Eric, whom she raised in Jamaica Plain.

Karen leaves her son, two grandchildren, and many friends in the Fenway, Mission Hill, and Jamaica Plain.

RUTH KHOWAIS

WITH VOTES COUNTED FOR PARKER/TERRACE PARCEL, MISSION HILL AWAITS A DECISION

BY ALISON PULTINAS

Although the results of a vote to choose the developer for a vacant City-owned parcel in Mission Hill between Parker and Terrace streets are now posted at <https://tinyurl.com/3xcs9pdx>, the Mayor's Office of Housing has not an-

nounced a final selection.

Three developers made presentations to the community in February. The Z Capital/Mission Hill Neighborhood Housing Services (MHNHS) application received letters of support from residents, local organizations, and institutions.

An application by Oxbow.DVM.JGE also garnered multiple petitions and letters of support from neighbors who praised use of the Parker Street parcels for community gardens and open space while locating all new housing on Terrace Street.

The Habitat for Humanity proposal proved less popular. Some comments mentioned the seemingly slow pace of construction at the group's current Mission Hill project—a two-family being built with

volunteer labor on Parker Street—and questions about Habitat's experience building multifamily residences.

City Councilor Kenzie Bok expressed strong support for the Z Capital/MHNHS proposal in a letter, citing both the private developer's experience with net-zero infill projects and MHNHS's long history of community engagement and building affordable housing on difficult sites.

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.

N Northeastern
City and Community Engagement

Community Grants Application

- ▶ Submissions are due by Monday, April 10, 2023, by 5 p.m. EST
- ▶ Any Boston-area community organization, NGO, or school that has connected with Northeastern University students, employees, or professors in the last three academic years is eligible to apply
- ▶ We will focus on funding Fenway, Mission Hill, Roxbury, and South End community organizations, nonprofits, and schools
- ▶ Organizations without CCE sponsorships in the 2022-23 academic year will be prioritized
- ▶ The Northeastern University Office of City and Community Engagement will provide grants of up to \$3,000 each
- ▶ On March 23rd and 27th, two optional Zoom info sessions will explain the grants and nominations process



***Note:** If you have any questions regarding this application, please feel free to contact David Brade, Associate Director of Community Development Initiatives with CCE.

Email: d.brade@northeastern.edu
Phone: 617.373.7061

To apply, please scan this QR code and fill out the form with the required information

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FENSVIEWS

Will Massachusetts Lead on Child Care and Early Education?

BY JONATHAN COHN

In Massachusetts, we like to pride ourselves on our history of Number Ones and firsts. But here's one statistic we shouldn't be proud of: according to the Economic Policy Institute, we have the highest childcare costs of any state in the country.

The \$20,913 average annual cost of infant care in Massachusetts is more than half of what a full-time minimum wage worker earns in a year, and more expensive than tuition at our public colleges and universities. For many families in Greater Boston, especially

those with multiple children, the cost is even higher. These costs are prohibitively expensive for low- and middle-income families, who are forced to choose between making ends meet and saving for the future or affording childcare.

Governor Maura Healey has spoken about the need to address the high cost of living in Massachusetts, and if she wants to take this problem head on, fixing our childcare system will be essential. The Boston Ward 4 Democratic Committee is a proud endorser of the Common Start legislative framework, which offers such a model. The coalition has brought together parents, early educators, care providers, and community stakeholders to develop a vision for what sustainable and affordable childcare infrastructure would look like. The framework, reflected in two bills filed on Beacon Hill, would help stabilize childcare providers to ensure high-quality care,

Investments in childcare and early education are not only good for the economic security of parents: they are also highly beneficial for children. High-quality early-education programs get results. Children benefit with enhanced resiliency and employment opportunities over their lifetimes. Providing children with high-quality early education and childcare is one of the most effective ways to further a child's success in grades K-12 and beyond—and that pays off in the long run. To quote Mayor Michelle Wu, "The greatest investment we can make in our future is to support and center our young people."

Our delegation in Congress—Sens. Ed Markey, Elizabeth Warren, and Rep. Ayanna Pressley—have all been outspoken about the need to strengthen childcare infrastructure. Locally, State Sens. Lydia Edwards and Liz Miranda have signed onto the Common Start proposal this session. With a Republican House and a narrowly Democratic Senate, ambitious policy is difficult in DC. But in Massachusetts, where we have a robust Democratic majority and a new Democratic governor, we should be able to think big about how we improve the well-being of all and set an example for other states.

Let's make this the session where we get it done.
Jonathan Cohn chairs the Ward 4 Democratic Committee.

GUEST OPINION

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I Got Lucky In Boston's Housing Market, But Can Others?

BY RUTH KHOWAIS

In the 1980s my neighborhood in Boston was changing. That was the year "condo conversion" became a new phrase in our vocabulary. I'd lived for eight years in a rented apartment in the Fenway and was one of the last rent-controlled tenants in the building, paying a modest and affordable rent.

In August 1988, I received a notice to quit. This meant that I was being evicted because the landlord, American Development Group, was planning to turn my apartment into a condominium. The grounds for the eviction were "owner/occupancy."

I consulted some real estate folks and found out that ADG could only evict me for one of two reasons: 1) I hadn't been paying my rent (which I had), or 2) they'd found a person who wanted to buy the apartment as an owner-occupant and who would live there. The management company claimed that they had such a

person, J. G., who was planning to buy my apartment

and live there. (Of course, I could have bought the condo but it was unaffordable on my middle-school-teacher's salary.) The name sounded familiar to me. I checked around and discovered that J. G. lived in my building. He was a student at Berklee School of Music and worked part-time as a maintenance worker for the management company. He did not have a phone or a car. The apartment he lived in was owned by his boss. How could he afford to buy a condo?

One day during a phone conversation with the secretary at the management company I mentioned J. G. "Oh, him," she said. "He doesn't have a pot to piss in." I wrote this quote on my calendar for that date. I engaged a lawyer, Harvey Shapiro, who specialized in tenant issues.

As part of the eviction process, we went to housing court. My lawyer subpoenaed J. G.'s bank records and income tax statement. J. G. —who'd cleaned up nicely for the hearing, having cut his long scraggly hair and worn a suit—didn't bring the subpoenaed material. When it was time for my interview with the judge, I told him about my conversation with the management company's secretary. The judge said, "Can you bring that calendar in?" At the time *L.A. Law* was a popular TV show, and I felt like I was living in an episode of it.

Five years later, in 1993, the bank that held the mortgages for my apartment and seven others in my building folded. The FDIC (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation) took them over. I had no idea what this meant. I called Harvey Shapiro, who said two sentences that changed my life. He said, "The FDIC is not interested in making a profit; they are interested in liquidation. Make them an offer, and make it very low." I took his advice and was able to purchase my condo and also help two neighbors in the building purchase theirs.

When I compare both the rents and condo prices today, I see this: If I hadn't been able to purchase my apartment, I'd be couch surfing, or living with roommates, or barely scraping by. I'd be choosing among paying rent and buying food or medicine.

People I know in my age group are struggling to pay rent, since it goes up hundreds of dollars each year, or are waiting for several years on a list to get a subsidized apartment.

In 1993, I couldn't foresee what it meant to own your own apartment. But what I know now it means is security.

A recent article in *The Boston Globe* reported that fewer people, including those with middle-class salaries, can afford to buy a home—whether house or condo—in Boston, and rents are skyrocketing. Now that I'm semi-retired and living on a limited income, buying a condo today would be impossible.

Many years after the fact I ran into Mr. Shapiro at a neighborhood meeting. He didn't know who I was or remember the advice he'd given me. He had no idea that because he helped me acquire a condo that today would be unaffordable, I had a secure place to live for the rest of my life. I'll always remember what I said to him then, "But you changed my life forever!"

Ruth Khowais lives in the West Fens.

GUEST OPINION

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EATS BEAT

• That was fast! Cambridge vegan pioneer **Plant Pub** took over the former Boston Beerworks site on Brookline Avenue less than a year ago, then closed at the end of February. Several restaurant-chatter websites spotted

a liquor-license transfer from Plant Pub to South Boston's **Loco Taqueria** and **Oyster Bar**. No word yet on an opening date.

• At the other end of Lansdowne Street, Vineyard favorite **Back Door Donuts** has opened inside of **Loretta's Last Call**. General Manager Tyler Heineman told the *Globe* Food section that the doughnut shop, originally a spinoff of Oak Bluffs' **Front Bakery Cafe**, only sells freshly made treats. May we suggest the

apple fritter? Heineman says the shop sold 60,000 of them last summer in Oak Bluffs.

• Watch for a change at **Eventide** in the West Fens, as the former lobster-roll bar transforms itself into a sit-down restaurant. Expect doors to reopen in April.

• Just over the Pike (literally) **Pescador**—the new seafood spot in the Hotel Commonwealth—has launched a once-monthly special dinner. **Ceviche Bar Takeovers** will match a local chef with Pescador's own chef and focus on "a multi-course, international menu of crudo, ceviche, and more!" **Jamie Bissonette** of **Toro** and **Coppa** led off the series in March.

• **TimeOut** market has a new gelato stand, **Table Caffé**, brainchild of Jen Royle, chef at the North End's **Table**.

THE Fenway News

Serving the Fenway, Kenmore Square, Audubon Circle, upper Back Bay, lower Roxbury, Prudential, Mission Hill, and Longwood since 1974

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WRITERS: Ed Ballo, Alison Barnet, Mary Ann Brogan, Will Brownsberger, Helen Cox, Tracey Cusick, John Engstrom, Stan Everett, Lisa Fay, Marie Fukuda, Katherine Greenough, Steve Harnish, Ruth Khowais, Leslie Pond, Alison Pultinas, Mallory Rohrig, Mat Thall, Chris Viveiros, Steve Wolf

PHOTOGRAPHERS: Steve Chase, Patrick O'Connor, Alison Pultinas, Steve Wolf

CALENDAR: Ruth Khowais, Alison Pultinas, Steve Wolf

PROOFREADERS: Mary Ann Brogan, Steve Chase, Helen Cox, Ruth Khowais, Leslie Pond, Alison Pultinas

BUSINESS MANAGER: Janet Malone

DISTRIBUTION: Della Gelzer, Aqilla Manna, Lauren Dewey Platt, Reggie Wynn

The Fenway News is published monthly by the Fenway News Association, Inc., a community-owned corporation dedicated to community journalism. If you'd like to volunteer to write, edit, photograph, distribute, or sell ads, please contact us at

The Fenway News,
PO Box 230277, Astor Station
Boston, MA 02123
fenwaynews@gmail.com
www.fenwaynews.org

SUBSCRIPTIONS \$30/YEAR
(\$20 FOR LIMITED INCOME)

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"Comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable."

The founders of The Fenway News adopted this motto to express their mission of exposing and opposing the dangers the neighborhood faced in the early 1970s—rampant arson, predatory landlords, and a destructive urban renewal plan. If the original motto no longer fits today's Fenway, we remain committed to its spirit of identifying problems and making our neighborhood a better and safer place to live.

> NEXT ISSUE <

Our next issue will appear on **Friday, April 28.**

> DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS <
The deadline for letters, news items, and ads for our next issue is **Friday, April 21.**

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COMMUNITY MEETING ROUNDUP

Utility Relocation Marks Start of Symphony Station Overhaul

BY ALISON PULTINAS

The MBTA held an open house for the Symphony Station reconstruction project on March 16 at Symphony Towers West. T staffers Heather Hume, Matt Conover, Leo Murphy, Andrew Henson, and consultant Judd Galloway positioned themselves around the community room with posters. Participants could meet with them one-on-one.

Following the Boston Marathon, contractors will begin moving pipes and the conduit that holds telecommunications and electrical lines at the Huntington/Mass. Ave. intersection. They need to complete this work before construction of new head houses with elevators and emergency stairs can begin.

That work won't start until spring 2024, when the Green Line station closes, but the excavation will affect traffic. Vehicles,

pedestrians, cyclists and the #1 bus will detour around the construction sites.

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.

Elected Officials Do The Talking At FCA Annual Meeting

BY RUTH KHOWAIS

The 61st annual meeting of the Fenway Civic Association (FCA) took place on March 22 at the PATH-A1 conference room at 1325 Boylston St. About 50 people attended, including State Sens. Will Brownsberger and Lydia Edwards; State Reps. Jay Livingstone and Dan Ryan; and City Councilors Kenzie Bok, Tania Fernandes Anderson, and Ruthzee Louijeune.

After refreshments and socializing, FCA president Tim Horn reviewed 2022's highlights. These included advocacy for the #55 bus and the Muddy River dredging project; activism against creation of new park shadows; Fenway Cares food distribution;

concerts in Ramler and Symphony parks; and coordination of Fenway Porchfest alongside the Fenway Alliance and the Fenway Community Development Corporation. The organization also received \$300,000 in state budget earmarks and \$72,000 from the Fenway Park Demonstration Project for restoration of the John Boyle O'Reilly monument and \$40,000 from the Red Sox Foundation to support Fenway Cares.

Board member Mary Jo Pymm presented the election results: Willied Hessian was elected as the new assistant treasurer, replacing Alex Sawczynec. Re-elected board members included Tim Horn, president; Matthew Brooks, vice president; Sheri Olans Wright, John Bookston, Pymm, Kathy McBride, and Karen Wolff. The actual election was conducted by mail during the membership-renewal drive.

Instead of presenting a keynote speaker, the group invited the elected officials present to deliver comments on their current work for 10 minutes each.

City Councilor Kenzie Bok spoke about the need for public facilities in the Fenway; the importance of the Back Bay Fens Pathways project, which will improve accessibility in the park; traffic problems on Hemenway Street, which she said is used as a cut-through; and the #55 bus. "We have made progress" on the bus, she noted, "but the changes have not actually been implemented."

Rep. Livingstone noted that the Fenway is often overlooked and mentioned support for the #55 bus.

Sen. Brownsberger listed three top concerns: housing, the T, and climate. Brownsberger said that he believes the T will get to the right place eventually. He noted MassDOT's planned reconstruction of the Storrow Drive/Bowker interchange, which will cost several hundred million dollars, highlighting one marquee benefit—daylighting the Muddy River at the Charles.

New-to-our-district Councilor Anderson described her job as connecting communities. The new state representative for several

blocks of the West Fens, Dan Ryan, introduced himself and said that he was getting to know the Fenway.

Sen. Edwards, who represents part of the East Fens, chairs the Housing Committee, and said that she is passionate about housing.

This was the first in-person annual meeting for the FCA in three years, and attendees enjoyed socializing and taking in the expansive views of the Fenway, Kenmore Square, and downtown from the 10th floor.

Community Meeting Analyzes Longwood Place Shadows

BY RUTH KHOWAIS

In a community meeting held at the Fenway Community Center on Feb. 27—just after our last issue went to press—the Fenway Civic Association (FCA) presented information about the proposed Longwood Place development.

The proposal would dramatically remake a 5.8-acre site at 305 Brookline Avenue, replacing five-story dorms owned by Simmons University with about 1.7 million square feet of housing, offices, lab space, ground-floor retail, community space, and parking. At issue is the amount of shadow the development would cast on the nearby Emerald Necklace.

Tim Horn, FCA president, pointed out that the *Longwood Medical And Academic Area Interim Guidelines*, released by the Boston Redevelopment Authority in 2003, forbid approval of any project that casts new shadows for more than one hour on March 21 on the Emerald Necklace. Horn pointed out that rather than one hour, shadows from Longwood Place would cover parts of the park for more than five hours on March 21, clearly violating the guidelines. See page 1 for more information.

There are many good things in the project, said Steve Wolf, a member of the Emerald Necklace Conservancy Board of Park Advisors. Opponents, he said, recognize the development's potential benefits, so "our focus has been the shadows and the height."

Ruth Khowais lives in the West Fens.

City Wants Vicinity Energy to Cut Carbon Footprint of Steam Supply

BY ALISON PULTINAS

New infrastructure will accompany the proliferation of labs in the Fenway. Private power company Vicinity Energy has filed for steam-line permits that would let it run 3,000 feet of new pipes from Brookline Avenue to Lansdowne Street, down Lansdowne to Ipswich Street, and following Ipswich onto Boylston Street and terminating at Mass. Ave.

Pipes would cross the Muddy River above the Stony Brook culvert on MassDOT's easement on the north side of Ipswich. This would avoid impacts on the historic Boylston Street Bridge. Contractors have dug multiple test pits along the route to determine the best locations for avoiding existing infrastructure.

Vicinity, which has plants on Kneeland and Scotia streets and in Kendall Square, is not a traditionally regulated utility. It primarily serves large commercial buildings, especially hospitals and college campuses.

On Jan. 26, March 2, and March 16, Chief of Streets Jascha Franklin-Hodge, chair of Boston's Public Improvement Commission (PIC), led hearings to review the project. Unlike other utility companies, Vicinity has no presumptive right of access to the public right of way, giving the PIC a larger-than-usual oversight role and responsibility to ask the right questions.

Vicinity's Dan Kennedy said that the buildings under construction at 109 Brookline Ave., Fenway Center, and Parcel 12 at Mass. Ave and Boylston Street will all be customers. The timeline calls for two years of construction, divided into phases so as not to conflict with baseball season. Excavation will take place both in roadways and beneath sidewalks, and begins this month with trenches and manholes at Boylston Street and Mass. Ave.

The three hearings were occasionally confrontational, but the PIC voted to approve the plan on March 16.

Controversy surrounds the approval of a fossil-fuel-based system, which conflicts with Mayor Wu's decarbonization mandates for new development.

At the hearings, Franklin-Hodge redirected the discussion with Vicinity's representatives to focus not on roadway and sidewalk impacts but on the question of how the project will benefit the city, insisting on getting their commitments on public record.


At the March 2 hearing, Franklin-Hodge demanded to know what percentage of steam delivered to the new developments would come from Vicinity's planned electrified boilers in Kendall Square. An unsatisfactory response from Vicinity representatives triggered a third hearing. On March 16, Kevin Hagerty, Vicinity's chief operating officer and deputy chief executive officer, said the company would commit to 50 percent electrified energy by 2024. The Scotia Street plant—used primarily for peak loading, especially in the heating season—will not get the e-steam technology for this project, but could possibly in the future.

An earlier hearing (Feb. 2) with Boston's tree warden reviewed Vicinity's request to remove two or three zelkova trees on the Lansdowne sidewalk near Fenway Park's Green Monster seating. The Red Sox also asked that the pipe work move 10 feet further into the street to avoid impacts on the ballpark's foundation.

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.

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STELLAR KEYNOTE PANEL

SPECIAL REMARKS BY BOSTON MAYOR MICHELLE WU	PANEL MODERATOR BOSTON CITY COUNCILOR KENZIE BOK	EMILY JONES <i>Senior Program Officer, LISC Boston Green Homes & Green Jobs Initiative</i>
	PANELISTS	BRIANNA MILLOR
	COCO ALINSUG <i>Fenway Health Outreach & Enrollment Manager and Lynn City Councilor</i>	<i>Chief of Community Engagement, City of Boston</i>

**THURSDAY, APRIL 27 | 5:45-8:00PM | ST. CECILIA'S CHURCH
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The Arts

May Stevens Mixes Activism, Contemplation In 'My Mothers' Show

BY MARY ANN BROGAN

The May Stevens exhibit at the MassArt Art Museum (MAAM) empowers our human connection and how we approach the depth of ordinary experience.

Stevens graduated from the Massachusetts School of Art (now MassArt) in 1946 and died at the age of 95 in 2019. She grew up in a working-class family in Quincy and learned firsthand the subtle hold of racism and male predominance in the world she faced as a young woman.

She embraced the opportunities that arose following World War II, using

her art to support civil rights, combat racism, support the antiwar movement in

Vietnam, and augment common threads of humanity. As is the case with many artists, each series of Stevens's artwork highlights various themes.

The exhibit at MAAM, entitled "My Mothers," will stay up through July 30. It includes the series "Ordinary/Extraordinary," which juxtaposes Stevens's working-class, Irish Catholic mother Alice Stevens and

Rosa Luxembourg, a Polish Marxist activist whom Stevens considered her spiritual mother. The paintings explore the humdrum of aging and the day-to-day world of her mother as she faded into a realm of dementia.

In the dual portrait of her mother and Luxembourg, Stevens highlights the commonalities of both women as they gaze separately, yet together, each with a sense of resignation of life in the moment and a future that is uncertain. Stevens was perhaps also portraying her own life through the embodiment of Alice and Rosa. The exhibit is thoughtfully curated and invites the viewer to reflect on his or her own world.

Mary Ann Brogan lives in the East Fens.



PHOTO: MARY ANN BROGAN

SMALL-BUDGET GROUPS WIN CULTURAL COUNCIL GRANTS

BY ALISON PULTINAS

Last June the Red Sox Arts Fund awarded \$300,000 to the City of Boston's Arts and Culture Department to administer. In a memorandum to the City Council accepting the funds, Mayor Michelle Wu wrote that "The grant would fund programs supported by the Boston Cultural Council with a portion directed specifically to Fenway-area groups or artists."

In mid-March the BCC announced 160 recipients of small grants to arts organizations with budgets of less than \$2 million. Of those grants, ranging between \$2,000 and \$5,000, 22 went to organizations connected to the Fenway—although in some instances, a connection isn't

obvious. The 22 grants, totaling \$78,500, went to:

- [bitsandflow], \$5,000
- ANIKAYA/Akhra, Inc., \$3,500
- Boston Choral Ensemble, \$5,000
- Boston Dance Theater, \$3,500
- Boston Landmarks Orchestra, \$2,000
- Civic Symphony Orchestra of Boston, \$3,500
- Company One Theatre, \$2,000
- Design Museum Boston, \$2,000
- Fenway Community Center, \$3,500
- Horizon Ensemble, \$5,000
- International Women's Writing Guild, \$3,500
- Kaji Aso Studio Inc., \$3,500
- Longwood Symphony Orchestra, \$3,500
- Play On Music Festival, \$5,000

- Project STEP, \$2,000
- The Cantata Singers, \$2,000
- The Fenway Alliance, \$3,500
- Puerto Rican Festival of MA, \$5,000
- TransCultural Exchange, \$5,000
- Turkish American Cultural Society of New England, \$5,000
- Urbanity Dance, \$2,000
- VOICES Boston, \$3,500

Councilor Kenzie Bok recently said that strategies for distributing the balance of the Red Sox grant are still under discussion.

A public ceremony for awardees is tentatively set for May 10 at Artisans Asylum in Brighton, one of the arts organizations on the larger awardee list.

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.

Haiku Contest Opens

Kaji Aso Studio has announced its annual haiku contest. Visit <https://www.kajiasostudio.com/copy-of-2021-haiku-contest-winners-an-1> to learn more and enter. Deadline is Saturday, April 15

April CALENDAR

Tue, 4/4

Ocean conservationist and environmental advocate **ALEXANDRA COUSTEAU** will converse with Boston Public Library President David Leonard for the Lowell Lecture Series. 6pm. Virtual event; register at <https://bpl.bibliocommons.com/events/63ce9dbf3969f558730156f2>.

Tue, 4/6

As climate change accelerates and drought and rising sea levels become more common, millions of people in affected regions must relocate to seek safety. Who are these folks? How might the United States aid them. How might the U.S. be affected by the migration? Join the **BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY** for this timely discussion. 6pm. Hybrid event; register at <https://bpl.bibliocommons.com/events/63fe11203a5dd6d316317fcf>.

Sat, 4/8

The [**BITSANDFLOW**] PRESENTS "FENWAY AUGMENTED." [bitsandflow] hosts a creative workshop where community members can come together, share stories and ideas, and collaborate to re-imagine and revitalize the Fenway neighborhood. 10am–2pm, Northeastern Crossing, 1175 Tremont Street. Email bitsandflow@gmail.com to sign up or with questions.

COMMUNITY meetings

WED, APRIL 12 & 26 The Boston Transportation Department hosts **BETTER BIKE LANES OFFICE HOURS**. Better Bike Lanes aims to transform Boston's streets to better serve people walking, rolling, or riding bikes by linking up the bike network and bringing safer streets to every neighborhood. Questions or comments? Schedule a 15-minute phone call or video chat, 3–7pm with the project team. Learn more at <https://www.boston.gov/calendar/better-bike-lanes-office-hours-0>.

THU, APRIL 13 The Boston Parks and Recreation Departments hosts the **BACK BAY FENS PATHWAYS MEETING SERIES**. This meeting focuses on the War Memorial,

the O'Reilly Monument, and the new Evans Way Bridge. Contact Lauren Bryant at lauren.bryant@boston.gov or (617) 961-3019 for more information.

WED, APRIL 26 Join the Muddy River Restoration Project Maintenance and Management Oversight Committee (MMOC) for its **ANNUAL MEETING**, which coincides with the near-completion of the historic Muddy River Restoration Project. MMOC will also celebrate the birthday of Frederick Law Olmsted. 6pm at the Museum of Fine Arts. Learn more at <https://www.muddyrivermmoc.org/the-mmoc-announces-its-annual-meeting-save-the-date/>.

FENWAY CORNERS HEARING ON APR. 4

On April 4, the Boston Civic Design Commission is expected to vote on Fenway Corners, the massive development proposed for the blocks near Fenway Park. The focus at this early stage of the multi-phase project is the massing and height of proposed buildings on Jersey, Van Ness, and Lansdowne streets and Brookline Avenue.

The developers are WS Development working with the Fenway Sports Group and the D'Angelo family, who own the '47 brand and the souvenir store on Jersey Street.

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Eat Here!

Independent eateries do so much to define our community, so we collaborated with the Mission Hill Fenway Neighborhood Trust to raise their profiles with our **Eat Here!** campaign. Through May we'll run

a full page listing about 80 locally owned restaurants. When you **Eat Here!** you help local businesses thrive and continue making the Fenway, Mission Hill, and Audubon Circle special places to live.

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Bobo Cafe

137 Mass. Ave.
(No phone or URL available)

Dumpling Palace

179 Mass. Ave.
(617) 266-8888
<https://www.dumpling-palace.com/>

Energize

265g Mass. Ave.
(857) 317-3868
<https://energizeboston.com/>

Ginger Exchange

250 Huntington Ave.
(617) 867-9999
www.gingerexchange.com/symphony/

Haju Kitchen

175 Mass. Ave.
(617) 982-7118
haju-kitchen.business.site/

Ichiban Yakitori

144 Westland Ave.
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ichibanboston.net/

Love Art Sushi

1 Haviland St.
(617) 982-6953
loveartsushi.com/

Mumbai Spice

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symphonysushi.com/

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www.bashojapanesebrasserie.com/

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www.pizzeriaregina.com/fenway.html

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www.rodthaifenway.com/

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Tasty Burger

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Thaitation

129 Jersey St.
(617) 585-9909
www.bostonthaitation.com/

Thornton's Fenway Grille

100 Peterborough St.
(617) 421-0104
www.facebook.com/thorntonsfenwaygrille/

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84 Peterborough St.
(857) 250-2062
<https://wowtikka.com/>

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Audubon Boston

838 Beacon Street
(617) 421-1910
www.audubonboston.com/site/

Bar 'Cino

1032 Beacon Street
(617) 608-3220
barcino.com/brookline/

Futago Udon

508 Park Drive
(617) 505-6157
www.facebook.com/Futago-Udon-564602680690873/

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1009 Beacon Street
(617) 655-8443
www.gigglingricethai-togobrookline.com/

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lillysgourmetpasta.com/

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Solid Ground Cafe

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squealingpigpubs.com/boston/

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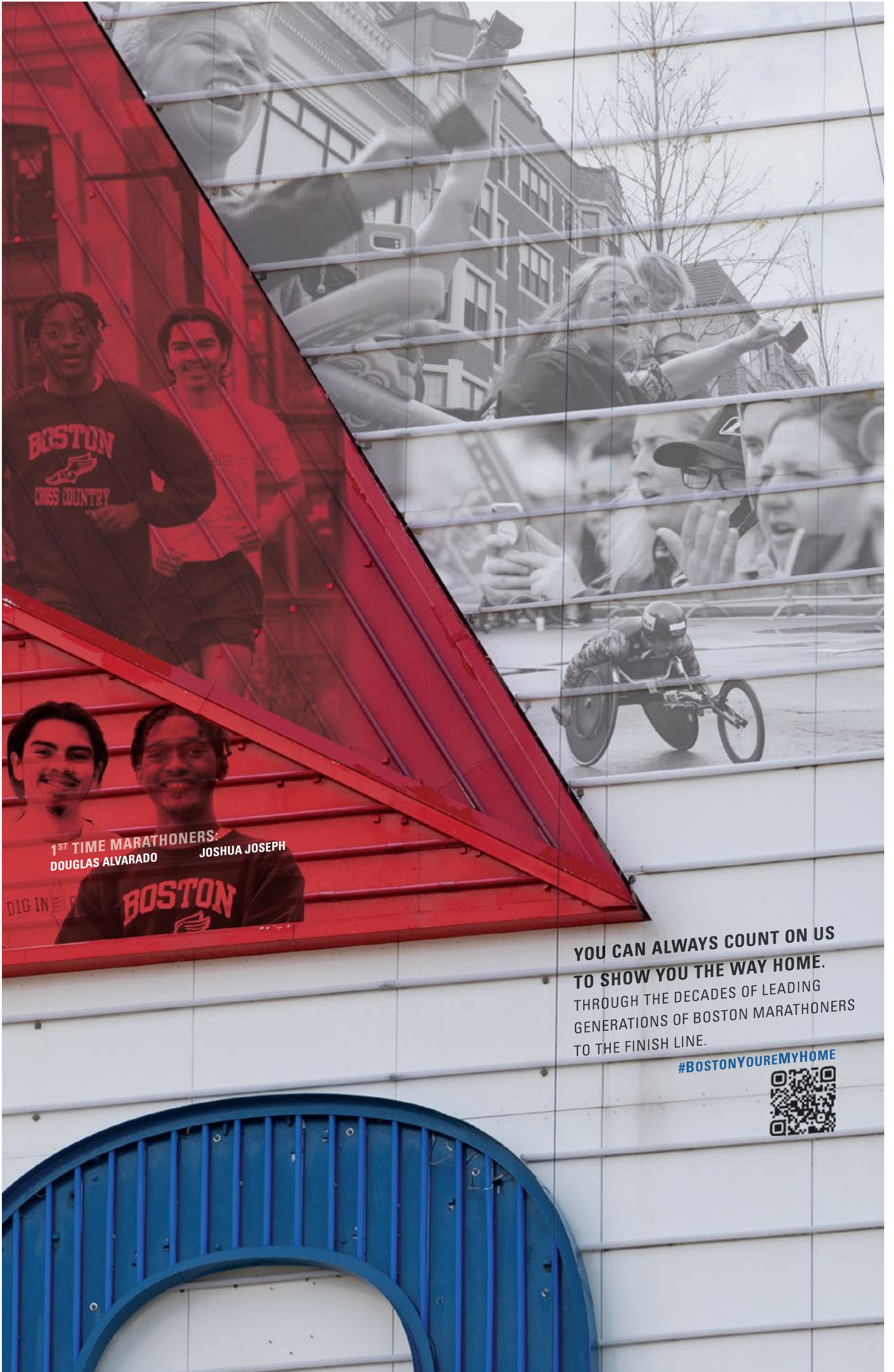
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What's This?

This ad arrived too late to run in the April print edition. We've added it to the online edition, as we occasionally do, because it involves a public meeting of particular interest to residents of Mission Hill and the Fenway.

Meeting link: bit.ly/Wentworth0418

IMP website: bit.ly/Bostonplans-Wentworth-IMP

Project manager: nick.carter@boston.gov



Virtual Public Meeting

Wentworth 2023-2033 IMP

April 18, 2023
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Zoom Link: bit.ly/Wentworth0418
Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864
Meeting ID: 160 630 5785



Project Proponent:

Wentworth Institute of Technology

Project Description:

The BPDA is hosting a virtual Task Force Meeting meeting for the proposed Institutional Master Plan ("IMP") filing for Wentworth Institute of Technology, a university located in the Mission Hill neighborhood of Boston. The purpose of the meeting is to provide an overview of the IMP, and discuss the potential impacts and mitigation for the project. The meeting will include a presentation followed by questions and comments from the Task Force.

Wentworth is currently guided by its Institutional Master Plan approved by the Boston Planning and Development Agency ("BPDA") in 2011, as amended and extended in 2020 for two years (the "Prior IMP"). With the Prior IMP set to expire in March 2023, Wentworth is has submit this Institutional Master Plan Notification Form ("IMPNF") to the BPDA to commence the review process for the upcoming Wentworth 2023-2033 Institutional Master Plan pursuant to Section 80D-8 and 80D-5(2) of the Boston Zoning Code (the "Code")

mail to: **Nick Carter**
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201
phone: 617.918.5303
email: nick.carter@boston.gov
website: bit.ly/Bostonplans-Wentworth-IMP

**Close of Comment
Period:**
5/5/2023

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Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary