



THE

# Fenway News

HYPERLOCAL NEWS FOR THE FENWAY, AUDUBON CIRCLE, KENMORE SQUARE, UPPER BACK BAY, PRUDENTIAL, LONGWOOD, AND MISSION HILL SINCE 1974 • VOLUME 50 NUMBER 11 • NOVEMBER 1 - NOVEMBER 29, 2024

## WHAT WILL WE DO WITHOUT THORNTON'S?

BY RUTH KHOWAIS

**O**n Oct. 14, Thornton's Fenway Grille, located on Peterborough Street, permanently closed, surprising and saddening residents.

"After almost 33 years in the Fenway neighborhood," read an announcement on the restaurant's Instagram feed, "we're sad to announce that we'll be closing our doors this afternoon. Thank you to our neighbors, friends and family for making Thornton's so special." A sign on the door also thanked customers for their support.

Thornton's was a popular brunch and beverage spot for West Fens residents and known as a go-to place before and after Red Sox games. It served classic American fare, including favorites like cheese fries, wings, and burgers.

Although no reason was listed for the sudden closure, neighborhood residents believe that owner Marty Thornton wants to retire.

*Ruth Khowais lives in the West Fens.*



PHOTO: RUTH KHOWAIS

## Abutters Raise Questions About East Fens Proposal

BY ALISON PULTINAS AND STEVE WOLF

**E**ast Fens residents got a first look at plans for redeveloping 38 The Fenway—a 19th-century yellow-brick and limestone building in a National Register historic district—during a remote meeting for abutters on Oct. 16. The owners, husband and wife Mark Ehrman and Chee Kwong filed plans earlier this year with the City's Inspectional Services Department and received a rejection letter because of violations related to floor area ratio, roof structure, and building height.

Plans call for tripling the building's volume with two new floors, a roof deck that extends to the front façade, and a six-story rear addition that includes four parking spaces. A presentation at the meeting showed two additional spaces behind the building, creating "triple tandem parking" in the words of resident Tom Bakalaris.

Built as a single-family home—and twin to 36 The Fenway—the building has fallen into extreme disrepair, explained Justin Byrnes, an attorney for the couple. Samuel and Elenore Bogoch were the longtime owners of both 36 and 38. A plaque outside 36 reads "The Foundation for Research on the Nervous System," alluding to its use as lab and office space. 38, zoned as a lodging house in the 1940s, has sat vacant for years, possibly since 1984 when it was cited for multiple code violations. Samuel Bogoch died in 2022. That year Elenore sold 38 to KERFRT II LLC (but she continues to own 36).

The planned renovation would yield



PHOTO: STEVE WOLF

**The proposed renovation would only affect the right half of the building at 36-38 The Fenway.**

five apartments, said project architect David Freed of Choo & Co. Ehrman and Kwong intend to occupy the penthouse duplex, which comprises more than 3,200 square feet. The other units would be rentals.

Responding to questions, Ehrman insisted that 38 would not follow the path of nearby 28 The Fenway, a short-stay rental property. He told the meeting that he and his wife have never converted any properties for short-stay use (such as through Airbnb).

The presentation drew skepticism from

about 20 residents, along with relief that the property would return to use as housing. Resident Mat Thall asked why the plan didn't create more but smaller units, some of which would be income-restricted under City rules (the current plan does not reach the threshold for including affordable units).

Residents expressed apprehension about possible rental to undergraduates. Several also worried that the added stories would throw shadows onto the Back Bay Fens. Ehrman and Kwong's lead attorney, John Pulgini, promised that a shadow study could be done quickly. At 65 feet, the proposed building remains just under the height limit of the parcel's zoning.

Several neighbors questioned how the project would handle parking and construction traffic. Other concerns involved the look of the corrugated metal-and-glass design for the new floors and the addition. The project team repeatedly offered to work with abutters, with Pulgini offering to provide his cell phone number and email address for comments and concerns.

The small project does not qualify for Article 80 review, so the City requires no further public process. However, because the site sits in a Greenbelt Protection Overlay district, it will need approval by the Boston Parks Commission. Also, a Neighborhood Design Overlay designation will trigger a review by the Planning Department. Brittany Comak, spokesperson for the department, described that process by email. "We would conduct design review after the project has received any necessary zoning variances.

We would also direct the applicant to submit the plans to the Boston Landmarks Commission," saying her department typically coordinates its comments with those from the Commission.

Siggi Jonson, community engagement specialist in the Office of Neighborhood Service, ran the meeting, ending it abruptly after an hour because he had a second meeting to attend.

*Steve Wolf lives in the West Fens.*

*Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.*

## VOTE! NOV. 5

**If you haven't already voted by mail or during early voting, Election Day is here. Vote for President, U.S. Senator, U.S. Representative, court clerks, and five state ballot initiatives.**

- **USE A DROPBOX:** If you requested a mail-in ballot, take it to a dropbox by 8pm on Tue, Nov 5 at the **Parker Hill Library (1437 Tremont St.)** in Mission Hill or at **City Hall**. Check the City's map for other dropboxes at [tinyurl.com/waxt69np](https://tinyurl.com/waxt69np)

- **VOTE IN PERSON** on Tue, Nov 5. Find your polling location at [www.sec.state.ma.us/WhereDoIVoteMA/WhereDoIVote](https://www.sec.state.ma.us/WhereDoIVoteMA/WhereDoIVote)

## CIVIC AGENDA

### BPDA BOARD HEARING ON OUR LADY'S GUILD HOUSE RENOVATION, THU, NOV 13, 5:30PM

The BPDA board votes on the Fenway CDC's Small Project Review application to redevelop 20 Charlesgate West (formerly Our Lady's Guild House). Renovation would upgrade 140 substandard single-room units to 86 larger affordable units. Attend in person or register to view or testify remotely at <https://bit.ly/Nov14BPDABoardMeeting>. (The link says 3:30pm, but the public hearing begins at 5:30.)



PHOTOS: ANNIELLY CAMARGO FOR THE FENWAY ALLIANCE



### DOORS OPEN WIDE

**19 cultural institutions welcomed an estimated 12,000 visitors, including Mayor Michelle Wu (upper left), who helped kick off The Fenway Alliance's Opening Our Doors day on Oct. 14. Clockwise from above: people line up outside the MFA; a young arts fan gets her face painted at the YMCA; Northeastern's Eon Dance Troupe performs at the BYSO Youth Center for Music; and MassArt students pour aluminum into molds made by OOD participants at the school's museum. Find more photos on page 7.**



# FENSVIEWS

## Celebrating Helen Cox For 50 Years of Insight And Inspiration

BY MARY ANN BROGAN

As we look back on our last 50 years, *The Fenway News* would like to pay special tribute to a grand lady of The Fenway, Helen Keene Cox, aka the “Mayor of Fenway.” Helen holds a special place in the heart of this newspaper and the community.

As a relative newcomer of “only” 20 years in the neighborhood, this writer remembers going to various talks or meetings and wondering about the woman who always spoke, got called on by public officials, and had something worthwhile to say—no fluff allowed. Helen is now 93 and doesn’t miss a beat.

Helen has long been an advocate for those who have few opportunities to speak for themselves. The Fenway CDC

### GUEST OPINION

“Unsung Heroines of Massachusetts” presentation in

2014—sponsored by the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women—showed that many grassroots movements benefiting the Fenway and beyond happened because of her leadership. The list of awards and recognition for her contributions could go on indefinitely, but they don’t measure the depth of her caring and commitment for the underserved.

The oldest of nine children, Helen was raised in Chelsea. Her mother was born in Mexico City and her father hailed from Rhode Island. Helen is very proud of her Mexican heritage and with a twinkle in her eye, speaks of her fondness for spicy food. She is also a proud aunt to 88 nieces, nephews, and grands, the youngest having just been born. Helen graduated from Boston University with a bachelor of arts in English. She acquired a teaching certificate, but her real calling has always been giving a hand up to someone experiencing injustice or with less opportunity. She accepted a

position with the Department of Public Welfare, now known as the Department of Transitional Assistance, which provided a conduit for pursuing her primary interest. Helen especially loved working with parents to provide information and training, allowing them to find their own solution to a problem. She remembers her 30-plus-year tenure with the Commonwealth with fondness. It paved the way for even more involvement with *The Fenway News* and other worthy organizations around the neighborhood.

As she thinks about her history with our community paper, Helen reflects on one of her early goals: “I always yearned for a place in *The Fenway News* for people to submit a small phrase” that might have implications for deeper issues or needs. She wrote a monthly column, “Odds and Ends in the Fens and Fringes” from Nov. 1975 through Dec. 1976. Some examples of how she pursued her goal include: “Getting ready for Xmas? Why not buy your gifts at our Bazaar?” (sponsored by Fenway seniors); “Blood supply low at Xmas-time”; “Free Home Nurse Training”; “If your three- or four-year-old is driving you to distraction...enroll him/her in the ABCD program at the Huntington Ave. YMCA”; and “Elderly teeth cleaning for \$1.00 [in the] Family Dental Program [at] Forsyth Dental Center.”

Symbolically, “odds and ends” or “fringes,” reflect parts of the core and center of a community. It’s where the essence of a community lies. Helen appreciates the presentation of smaller things that find and solve real issues people face day to day. She looks beyond the surface or the fringes. Injustice has always stirred her energy in finding solutions and gives purpose to her actions.

Helen cherishes a quote from Martin Luther King: “Injustice anywhere is injustice everywhere.” She has always felt that this reflects the heart and purpose of *The Fenway News*. Thank you, Helen, for being our beacon of light as we enter our next 50 years.

*Mary Ann Brogan lives in the East Fens.*

## Ignore Process Fatigue: Comments Still Matter In Article 80 Update

BY ALISON PULTINAS

After eighteen months of focus groups, consultant reports, and draft summaries, are residents burned out by the Planning Department’s intensive outreach on proposed changes to Article 80 development review? The simultaneous public processes for the “Squares and Streets” rezoning and the “Design Vision” draft report, coming up for public review this month, add to the fatigue.

### OPINION

But don’t give up. The Article 80 Modernization Action Plan deserves attention at a critical moment for

development review in the city. Article 80 defines zoning for large projects citywide. Yet residents in many neighborhoods argue that in its current form, large-project reviews looks a lot like “spot zoning,” with multiple mechanisms used to win approvals for projects that flout underlying regulations. Those charges have dogged the massive Longwood Place project, approved in early 2023, and 2 Charlesgate West, approved last July.

The Planning Department’s goal for “modernization”—a predictable and transparent review process—sounds reasonable. In the department’s words, a successful process advances citywide goals of affordability, resiliency, and equity; aligns with the planning

vision for the area; is transparent, clear and easy to engage with; and embraces growth while creating a predictable process.

But residents should dig deeper and ask:

- Who defines the planning vision for an area? Residents? And how does that happen?
- Are predictability and growth goals residents have asked for?
- Does transparency matter in the absence of trust?

At the Roxbury Crossing farmers market on Oct. 16, Kristiana Lachiusa, Planning Department deputy director of community engagement, explained that staff will sort feedback received by the Nov. 20 deadline into three categories—effective engagement, consistent standards, and coordinated review—and consider revising the draft plan based on comments. However, ambiguity remains. Who makes the final call? The mayor or the department’s new director, Kairos Shen? Where are the checks and balances in the process?

Comments on the proposed changes are due November 20. Visit [bostonplans.org/projects/improving-development-review-process-article-80](http://bostonplans.org/projects/improving-development-review-process-article-80) for more information and to submit comments and/or complete a short survey. And please share your comments with us at [FenwayNews@gmail.com](mailto:FenwayNews@gmail.com). We’ll publish what we receive in a future issue.

*Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.*

## PAINT + ELBOW GREASE = NEW PLAZA AT DICKSON PARK



[Left to right] Artist Maitlyn Lang and volunteers Julian, Richie, Rachel, and Victoria took a break from painting the new pedestrian plaza between Harry Ellis Dickson Park and the Whole Foods on Westland Avenue [above right].



### Tree Survey Reaches The Fens and Charlesgate

As we reported in our last issue, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy launched a tree inventory in the Fens in October as part of its rolling evaluation of all trees in the Emerald Necklace parks. The evaluation takes seven years to complete and entails cataloging, assessing, and pruning all trees within 1,100 acres of parklands. Here, an employee of Davey Tree, the arborists carrying out the survey, measures a trunk’s circumference to assess the value of pruning and, if so, identifying the pruning method best suited to the species, location, and safety of park users.

## 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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### “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. While the Fenway has changed since then, we remain committed to the spirit of identifying problems and making our neighborhood a better and safer place to live.

> NEXT ISSUE <

Our next issue will appear on **Friday, November 29.**

> DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS <  
 The deadline for letters, news items, and ads for our next issue is **Friday, November 22.**

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## Review of Proposed New Cancer Hospital Shifts Into Higher Gear

BY ALISON PULTINAS

The first week of October brought a flurry of public meetings for the joint plan for a new hospital proposed by Dana Farber Cancer Institute and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center at 1 Joslin Place. The appointed community task force met Oct. 7, a Boston Civic Design Commission discussion and vote occurred on Oct. 8; and the BPDA Board approved new institutional master plans for both hospitals on Oct. 10.

Just days later, the proponents' consultants submitted a Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) to the state's Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEA). Open for public comment until Nov. 22, that document is, thankfully, almost 900 pages shorter than the earlier draft version. Find project details, including the FEIR filing, at [eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/EEA/MEPA-eMonitor/project/7ff4cd82-52f2-415d-b964-a30e03b8bfd1](http://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/EEA/MEPA-eMonitor/project/7ff4cd82-52f2-415d-b964-a30e03b8bfd1).

In contrast to the speedy City review, the state Department of Public Health slowed down the approval time line for Dana Farber's Determination of Need (DON) application. It requested an independent cost analysis for the hospital's 300 new beds. The DON Program office will reopen its review once it receives the analysis. DON regulations for health care facilities aim to balance increased costs from capital expansions with added value and healthcare access for patients.

The reviewers will determine whether the proposed \$20 million in mitigation and community benefits in addition to the construction costs are considered. At the Oct. 10 BPDA Board hearing, the benefits listed included reconstruction of the public park at Joslin and multiple transportation-related projects affecting Brookline Avenue and Pilgrim Road. The list also included new traffic signals on the Riverway at Netherlands Road and a \$100,000 study of a possible new D Line station in Brookline on Netherlands Road.

At the Task Force meeting, City Councilor Sharon Durkan stated that DFCI has already set aside \$500,000 for local organizations. The Oct. 10 board details "a commitment in the amount of \$500,000 to provide financial support to one or more community programs in the Mission Hill and Fenway neighborhoods

or another appropriate entity as determined by the District Councilor and Planning Department during Article 80B Large Project Review of the One Joslin Pl. Proposed Institutional Project." Evidently, the DFCI Task Force is not involved with those decisions.

State environmental reviewers received a letter in September, jointly signed by Alternatives for Community & Environment, the Conservation Law Foundation, and the Massachusetts Public Health Association, that focused on a lack of electric shuttles and potential increased traffic from the four-level garage planned for the new building. Both DFCI and BIDMC run their own buses but also rely on the Longwood Collective's frequent shuttle service. The letter also included a request for measurable mode-shift goals for reducing single-occupant vehicle travel by the proposed hospital's staff. The FEIR response to the letter includes promises to increase communication with Alternatives for Community & Environment and a commitment to evaluating the feasibility of an electrified fleet.

At the Task Force meeting on Oct. 7, Nicole Obi and Alyssa Benafew-Ramos of the Black Economic Council asked when community benefits will be discussed. They suggested that DFCI increase diversity of its suppliers and vendors, using the state's benchmarks as a guide.

At the BCDC hearing, Commissioner Shaina Gillies Smith spoke passionately about the park aspect of the project. She agreed with consultants on the idea of removing adjacent parking slots but thinks the extra space should be used to widen the park, not to create another travel lane on Joslin Place.

The two entities behind the project will divide the parcel separately. BIDMC already controls the site (current occupant Joslin Diabetes Center is an affiliate). The plan calls for BIDMC to own underground levels and the first floor, and DFCI to have the upper floors of the 14-story building.

The projected schedule for the project—should it win state approval—includes further review of the building plans, including three proposed overhead street bridges. Demolition of the existing Joslin facility could potentially start in 2026, followed by a four-year construction process.

*Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.*



Actually, we did. *The Fenway News* has hit its 50th anniversary, and that calls for a party.

**We'd love for you to come.**

On **Wednesday, Nov. 13**, join us at Kings Back Bay as we celebrate our grassroots history and honor community icon—and tireless promoter of the paper—

**Helen Cox.**

Enjoy great food, see friends, take a dip into our history, and help us celebrate **the oldest community-run paper in Boston.**

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**WEDNESDAY, NOV. 13**  
**6:30–9:00PM**  
**KINGS BACK BAY**  
**50 DALTON ST.**

## 55 BUS ROUTE RESTORES STOP



*A postscript/correction to our October MBTA story: After many complaints about removal of the 55 bus stop a block farther down Boylston Street, reconstruction of the Boylston/Mass. Ave. intersection did include a new island for riders on the inbound trip. Former District 8 staffer Kennedy Avery and the 55 Coalition deserve credit for their persistence on the issue.*

# Fixit Clinic at the Fenway Community Center

BY LESLIE POND

On Saturday, Oct. 5, the Fenway Community Center hosted its first Fixit Clinic. Over the course of three hours, 14 community members brought malfunctioning items, and several expert volunteers repaired at least 16 items. Items included a fan, watches, an umbrella, and a radio. The City of Boston's Environment and Public Works departments, together with Jonathan Kronen, an associate professor of engineering at Brandeis, organized the event. This is the second year of the City's Fixit Clinics, which also occur at public library locations.

"Repairing items allows us to reuse them instead of adding to the waste stream. This can cut down on carbon emissions from transportation and waste incineration," says Alice Brown, director of environmental quality. "Fixit Clinics serve to build a culture of repair in Boston. For objects that weren't fixed, many folks got a diagnosis for next steps or an alternative strategy."

Peter Mui, an MIT alum, founded Fixit Clinics in 2009 in Berkeley, California, and advocates for the Right to Repair movement. The idea behind Fixit Clinics is that with some coaching and provided with the appropriate tools, people can learn how to diagnose issues and disassemble and repair items themselves (although the experts tend to handle the more complex repairs).

Kronen got involved with Fixit Clinics in 2017, after completing his PhD in sustainable solid waste systems. "I was looking for ways to put my research expertise into practice," he says. "Fixit Clinics empower people to consider repair instead of replacement and demonstrate that much more in our world is



Marcos Rodriguez, Kas Sivaguru, and Ramon L work on diagnosing why the author's boombox no longer functions.

fixable than we might think. Oftentimes what seems to be a catastrophic failure can be fixed surprisingly easily. It just takes a bit of time and the willingness to jump in. You'll also get to experience the joy of bringing something that you value come back to life."

In 2024 alone, Kronen has helped support 25 Fixit Clinics in 11 cities and towns and seven Boston neighborhoods. In addition, he supported community repair events that do not have the Fixit Clinic brand, such as Repair Cafés, textile mending workshops, events at maker spaces, and knife sharpening "fix it first" workshops, among others.

Volunteer Ramon L. says, "I love taking time for these clinics. It feels good to connect with and help people, and it's good for the environment." Another benefit is that he continues to learn and build skills.

For more info, visit [fixitclinic.blogspot.com](http://fixitclinic.blogspot.com) and [repaircafe.org/en](http://repaircafe.org/en). Check out [boston.gov/events](http://boston.gov/events) for future Fixit Clinics. The next clinic takes place Saturday, Nov. 2, from 10am to 1pm at the Hyde Park branch of the

Boston Public Library (details at [boston.gov/calendar/fix-it-clinic-8](http://boston.gov/calendar/fix-it-clinic-8)). Beyond these clinics, additional options include tailors that repair and

alter clothing, and businesses that repair shoes, bikes, watches, jewelry, and more for a fee. *Leslie Pond lives in the West Fens.*

## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

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

More Than Words, with bookstores in the South End and Waltham, will reopen the Boomerangs store in Central Square by Dec. 1—and, according to a *Globe* report, may also reopen the JP store. MTW helps youth aged 18-24 move out of the prison system, foster care, or homelessness by training them in workplace skills and hiring them in its stores. Fenway Health closed

all three Boomies after several years of deficits and because

they weren't part of its core work. The health center

inherited the stores, launched during the AIDS crisis,

when it absorbed AIDS Action in 2013. **The Boston Athletic Association will help the Reggie Lewis Center**

**raise \$1.3 million over the next four years, donating**

**\$700,000 directly and providing charity runner bibs**

**for the next four Boston Marathons. The pledge gives a**

**big boost to the Center's plan to raise \$5 million over five**

**years to upgrade facilities and expand programming.** ICYMI doesn't

spend a lot of time checking news from Cambridge, but a recent study

released by the city's redevelopment agency would affect us on this side

of the river. The study identifies the Grand Junction railroad bridge—that

graffiti-covered span across the Charles near the BU Bridge—as the key to

a long-dreamed-of new transit line between North Station and the future

West Station in Allston. The report looked at the nut and bolts of making

the idea a reality in the form of a crosstown route running electric trains

every 15 to 20 minutes. Stops would include Kendall Square, MIT, and

(just spitballing here) BU. **Speaking of BU, grad students there voted**

**overwhelmingly to accept a new three-year agreement and end a months-**

**long strike. The contract raises annual stipends to \$45,000 (a big bump),**

**extends all stipends to 12 months; includes a range of benefits for new**

**parents; offers transportation subsidies; and covers health insurance.** Emmanuel College formally installed its new president, Beth Ross, a long-

time administrator at the school.

*Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.*



# DESIGN PROPOSALS PROMISE A SLEEK NEW EVANS WAY BRIDGE

BY ALISON PULTINAS

As Boston Parks project manager Lauren Bryant promised last May, the public finally had the opportunity to see what Miguel Rosales—Boston's best-known contemporary bridge designer—envisioned for the new Evans Way Bridge. On Oct. 9, Bryant hosted a well-attended virtual meeting for Rosales to show three steel-and-concrete options for feedback from park advocates and residents.

Labeled a linchpin to the Back Bay Pathways system, reconstruction of the Evans Way Bridge—taken down more than 40 years ago due to disrepair—does not yet appear in the City's capital budget. That can't happen until the designers produce technical drawings, which Rosales estimated would occur next summer. It has advanced as a side project to improvements proposed by Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture under the department's Back Bay Fens Pathways project.

Despite a lack of funding, design work and exploratory borings for the bridge received resources through a 2022 Community Preservation Act grant. Two members of the Emerald Necklace Conservancy's Board of Park Advisors, Joann Robinson and Elena Saporta, prepared the grant application. The application highlighted the importance of restoring the bridge connection, both as part of a cultural loop walking route and a link for the Mission Hill neighborhood to Clemente Field and the Fens. Previously, the ENC offered \$750,000 in matching funds. Bryant and ENC's Karen Mauney-Brodek both expect any allocation in the capital budget will require additional private fundraising to cover the \$1.2 million cost.

In his Oct. 9 presentation, Rosales—designer of the swooping Fanny Appleton pedestrian/bike bridge connecting Charles Circle to the Esplanade—emphasized projected high volumes of users. The future



These renderings show three potential designs for a new Evans Way Bridge at an Oct. 9 meeting. Participants in the meeting voiced greatest interest, although it wasn't unanimous, for "Concept 2," shown in the middle rendering.

span will measure only 10 feet wide, the width of an average city sidewalk. According to the meeting notes posted on the project website ([boston.gov/fens-pathways](http://boston.gov/fens-pathways)), "the structure will be capable of supporting vehicles for emergencies. Bicycles will not be allowed on the bridge or in Back Bay Fens."

Meeting attendees expressed differing opinions about bike riding in the park. ENC volunteer Sarah Freeman warned against making "cyclists second-class citizens." Although the paths around the edge of the park do accommodate bicycles, they need repairs. The DCR has said it will create a bike lane on Agassiz Road, and, as Richard Voos pointed out, a Forsyth Way bike connection to Jersey Street is also in the planning stage. West Fens resident Steve Wolf noted that, "it's the food-delivery, battery-operated bikes that pose the most danger to pedestrians."

Of the three designs presented, several speakers supported one with an arched support structure whose profile (shown in the middle rendering) recalls iconic Olmsted-era bridges. Bryant mentioned that the Parks Department has concerns about the bridge abutments' becoming shelters for unhoused people.

Zick and Bryant identified the next step as a vote on 30-percent-design drawings at a Boston Landmarks Commission hearing this fall. The Commission's design review subcommittee meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 4pm; the next two take place Nov. 26 and Dec. 10.

The Conservation Commission has its own review process. Reconstruction of the pathways could begin next spring, but when funding for the bridge will appear in the City's capital budget remains very much up in the air.

*Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.*

## FARMERS MARKET USHERS IN BARKTOBER

PHOTOS: MARYANN BROGAN



Following a pup parade around the block, pets (and their people) strutted their stuff on the red carpet at Barktoberfest. The October 20 event closed out the first season of the Charlesgate Farmers Market, but market organizers hope to make it an annual tradition. Barktoberfest—the portmanteau name mashing up dogs, Germany’s famed Oktoberfest, and Halloween—raises funds to help homeless and disadvantaged pets, and communities across the U.S. now celebrate it. Music and vendors enhanced the atmosphere at the event, sponsored by the Muddy River Initiative, the market organizer, and Pawsh Dog Boutique at 31 Gloucester St.

## NEWSLINES

### Amending Park-Frontage Ordinance to Save 2 Charlesgate Plan

On Oct. 28 The Boston City Council reviewed Dist. 8 Councilor Sharon Durkan’s proposal to amend the City’s park-frontage ordinance in order to allow the noncompliant proposal for 2 Charlesgate West—already approved by the BPDA board—to move ahead. The Government Operations Committee, chaired by Dist. 1 Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata, held the hearing, which included testimony from the public, including Fenway Civic’s Tim Horn and Cornwall’s owner Pam Beale. Durkan stressed the need to adopt the amendment before the Council’s current term ends in December. In an unusual move, Brett Benson of architecture firm Utile sat on an invited panel alongside Liza Meyer, interim parks commissioner, and Diana Fernandez Bibeau, deputy chief of urban design in the Planning Department. Durkan traced the need for an amendment to the 2002 update of West Fens zoning. That update designated the 2 Charlesgate parcels at Boylston and Ipswich streets as “gateway” sites that allowed additional height, but it failed to account for the restrictions in the ordinance. That ordinance generally limits to 70 feet the height of new construction within 100 feet of a park or parkway. 2 Charlesgate, already approved by the BPDA board, would reach 275 feet (the parks/parkways ordinance aside, the project’s height is almost double what’s allowed under the “gateway” zoning.) Meyer stressed that the Parks Department doesn’t favor future amendments, because the ordinance (7.4.10) has worked well in the past. Dist. 9 Councilor Liz Breadon suggested taking a pre-emptive rather than reactive look at the parkway-protection process, given the pace of development in the city.

### Wentworth Eyes Sale of Historic Vienna Brewery Buildings

Boston Landmarks Commissioners reviewed Wentworth Institute’s application to change the terms of the landmark designation for the former Vienna Brewery buildings at Station and Halleck streets. Hearings on Sept. 25 and Oct. 22 featured long discussions about the site, adjacent to the new athletic field complex under construction. This revealed the school’s intention to market the vacant buildings to an outside developer, likely a nonprofit, for reuse. In the meantime, Wentworth says it will invest in stabilizing the historic structures.

### BPDA Board Resumes In-Person Meetings This Month

Beginning at its Nov. 14 hearing, the BPDA board of directors will resume in-person meetings as it moves to a hybrid model that retains a virtual attendance option. After almost four years of remote sessions, the meetings will return to the 9th-floor boardroom at City Hall. In 2020, under Mayor Marty Walsh, the City initially responded to the pandemic by halting all development review. As virtual platforms became more widely familiar in the initial weeks of the shutdown, the public process for development review changed forever. The City’s Zoning Commission, closely tied to the BPDA, continues to hold virtual-only hearings. It has Wentworth Institute’s 2023-2033 master plan on the agenda for its Nov. 20 hearing.

### Simmons Tops Boston-Area Schools for Voter Participation

The ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge has recognized Simmons University for its nonpartisan work to promote democratic engagement, which led to high student-voter engagement in the 2022 midterms. The recognition reflected data from Tuft University’s National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement. ALL IN awarded Simmons a Gold Seal, the organization’s third-highest ranking, for reaching a campus voting rate of 40% to 49%, which placed it first among Boston-area schools. See all 395 schools by rank at the ALL IN website, [allinchallenge.org/seal-awardees/](http://allinchallenge.org/seal-awardees/).

## DASHBOARD

### TRASH & RECYCLING PICK-UPS

BACK BAY	FENWAY	MISSION HILL
Monday and Thursday	Tuesday and Friday	Tuesday and Friday

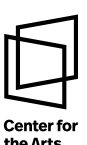
### STREET CLEANING

Street cleaning (and towing) runs through Nov. 30. In the Fenway, you need to check both City and DCR schedules to see when street cleaning takes place. Find City info at [tinyurl.com/s9fyarf8](http://tinyurl.com/s9fyarf8). See the DCR schedule at [tinyurl.com/4usvd8w3](http://tinyurl.com/4usvd8w3).



**CAT MAZZA**  
 NOVEMBER 14, 2024 - APRIL 12, 2025  
 GALLERY 360 & NU CROSSING

Northeastern University  
 College of Arts, Media and Design



# The Arts

## Mission Hill, Audubon Circle Block Parties Bring Neighbors Out to Play



Neighborhood block parties bracketed the month of October this year. At Mission Hill's Back of the Hill Block Party on Oct. 6 (above) neighbors enjoyed soccer and street hockey, cider-making with local apples, and a potluck table laden with homemade and store-bought offerings. On Oct. 26 the scene shifted to Keswick Street for the Audubon Circle Neighborhood Association party. Kids decorated pumpkins as residents of all ages lined the sidewalk for ice cream and cookies from the Cookie Monstah food truck (immediately below). Band Soil 4 Soul played bluesy jazz (bottom) and City Councilor Sharon Durkan dropped by.



## Does the Muddy River Have A Waterfall?

BY LESLIE POND

David Lowrey might have caused some double-takes by passersby on Boylston Street's Richardson Bridge on a fine September day, as he put finishing touches on a painting that brings together a scene in Lowell, where Lowrey grew up, and trees near the Fenway Studios, where he has lived and worked for years.

The painting shows the view from the former showroom of Lowrey's grandfather's car dealership and garage. But Lowrey felt the trees there looked "meager" and decided to "move trees with just his left hand" and replace them with lush ones from the Back Bay Fens. He will gift the painting to a nephew who restores vintage cars, continuing a family tradition dating to 1922 of working in the automobile business.

Lowrey has a deep appreciation for nature, particularly in New England, and he laments how many of us have become more disconnected from nature than ever. By his own estimate, he is one of only two or three *plein air* painters in the Fenway, where previously we had between 15 and 20.

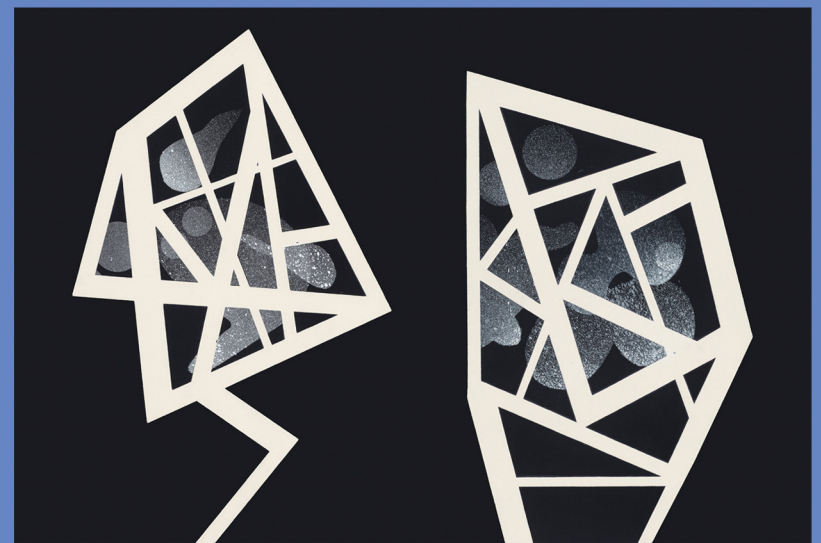
In addition to landscapes, Lowrey's art expresses a passion for 17th-century history and Western European painting. You can learn



more about Lowrey and all the Fenway Studios artists at [fenwayartstudios.org/all-artists](http://fenwayartstudios.org/all-artists) and visit artists, including Lowrey, at the Fenway Open Studios on Sat. and Sun., Nov. 9 and 10 [[fenwayartstudios.org/fall-2024-open-studios](http://fenwayartstudios.org/fall-2024-open-studios)].

Leslie Pond lives in the West Fens.

## Fenway Gallery Celebrates Fenway News at 50 Congratulations!



### MUTUAL INSPIRATION: Printmaking Across Generations

Maya Greenfield  
 Darci Hanna  
 Constance Jacobson  
 Kimberly Jagos  
 Fred H.C. Liang  
 Carolyn Muskat  
 Linnea Pappas-Byers  
 Amanda Ready  
 Peter Scott  
 Lilla Szekely

November 17  
 thru January 12

OPENING RECEPTION  
 Sunday, Nov. 17  
 12-4pm

Fenway Gallery  
 30 Ipswich Street  
 Boston

Open Saturdays and Sundays  
 12-4pm



[thefenwaygallery@gmail.com](mailto:thefenwaygallery@gmail.com)  
 Curator: Darci Hanna /Image: Constance Jacobson

## Gardner Buys Historic Adjacent Apartment Buildings



In October, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum purchased its next-door neighbors, 100-year-old apartment buildings at 11 Tetlow St. (pictured) and 14 Palace Road. Longtime owners the Gilbert family sold the buildings for \$22.8 million. The parcels are possibly the last remaining historic residential properties in the Longwood Area. According to an updated historic survey form filed with the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the building are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places; the form describes their design as notable for its free and inventive ornament. Between them, the two buildings contain 69 occupied apartments.

# The Arts

## 'Jazz Square' Highlights Historic Nexus of Boston Jazz

BY LESLIE POND

The Jazz Square Celebration on Saturday, Sept. 28, marked the official dedication of the intersection of Mass. Ave. and Columbus Ave. as a historical center for jazz. "We know what has been, we know where we are now, and now we need to think about what it looks like for the future of jazz to exist in Boston," said emcee Dgidzor Azaglo.

Of four jazz clubs that were located nearby—and a dozen in Boston—only Wally's Cafe Jazz Club remains open. Founded by Joseph L. Walcott in 1947, Wally's was the first Black-owned nightclub in Boston and hosted famous musicians as well as students from local institutions. Wally's closed for more than two years during the pandemic and reopened in 2022. It remains a family business, now owned by Walcott's daughter Elynor Walcott and managed by her three sons.

Grammy Award-winning musician and Berklee faculty member Terri Lyne Carrington presented Elynor Walcott with the 2024 Jazz Luminary Award "for her indelible mark on the Boston jazz community."

Speakers included City Council president Ruthzee Louijeune; State Representatives Liz Miranda and John Moran; District 7 City Councilor Tania Fernandes Anderson; Bonnie Johnson,



Ceremony emcee Dgidzor Azaglo

host of the *Colors of Jazz* public radio podcast; and Seba Molnar and Moriah Phillips of the Boston Jazz Foundation.

Louijeune and Miranda highlighted their connection to the area as youth tour guides with MYTOWN, an organization that taught young people about the history of Roxbury and South End. Miranda also contrasted what Walcott accomplished by opening

Wally's in 1947 with a bill passed this year by the state legislature to expand the number of liquor licenses in Boston's underserved neighborhoods. Fernandes Anderson highlighted the creation of the District 7 ARTery, an arts corridor and community-revitalization plan extending between Jazz Square and the Grove Hall neighborhood.

Music by the New England

Conservatory jazz band rounded out activation of the space.

Supported by the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture, Jazz Square is a collaboration among the Boston Jazz Foundation, the Claremont Neighborhood Association, The Reckonings Project, Wally's Cafe Jazz Club, Jazz Boston, and Union Church.

Leslie Pond lives in the West Fens.

### Have New Rules on Fenway Concerts Helped?

The Red Sox want feedback about the 2024 concert series from area residents. They want to know if the mitigation action plan—laid out in a 2023 agreement they signed with the City—achieved the desired effects. The survey links to the plan and contains a section for additional comments and suggestions on how to reduce impacts even further. Visit [tinyurl.com/3hthzvs9](https://tinyurl.com/3hthzvs9).

### BUT WAIT! THERE'S MORE OPENING OUR DOORS



PHOTOS: ANIELLY CAMARGO



A future P.R. professional [far left] lends a hand at the Huntington, while New England Conservatory students serenades visitors outside Symphony Hall [near left].

# November

CALENDAR

Now → Sun, 12/1

**SOJOURNERS** launches the Huntington's ambitious presentation of the Ufot Family

Cycle plays by Mfoniso Udofio. (The company famously entered a long collaboration with August Wilson on his American

Century Cycle of plays.) Mixing humor and serious themes, *Sojourners* follows a young Nigerian couple pursuing their educational dreams in 1978 Houston but becoming increasingly entangled in and distracted by American culture. Tue, Thu 7pm; Fri-Sat, 7:30pm; Sat-Sun, 2pm. Tickets \$29-160. More info and tickets at [www.huntington-theatre.org](http://www.huntington-theatre.org).

Now → Fri, 12/13

"**THE ART OF GRIEVING**," an exhibition of art and creative work featuring Marked By COVID, in partnership with the Creativity in the Time of COVID-19 research collective. "Grieving" features works created during, or inspired by, a time of collective grief. It includes a sculpture made of surgical masks and a needlework series depicting slogans written on highway signs in the early days of lockdown. Harvard Medical School Countway Library, 695 Huntington Ave. The public is welcome to visit on Saturdays, 10am-4pm. **FREE**

Sat, 11/2

Former BPL Writer-in-Residence Danielle leads a **WRITING WORKSHOP** for kids 6-12 who want to become writers. 3:30pm. Central Library at Copley Square. Learn more at [bpl.bibliocommons.com/events/670fdb508728d36000fdebe](http://bpl.bibliocommons.com/events/670fdb508728d36000fdebe). **FREE**

## SENIOR EVENTS

For more information, view the calendar at [operationpeaceboston.org](http://operationpeaceboston.org) or drop by between 11am to 3pm for a paper calendar. Call 617 536-7154 to get added to the mailing list.

- Thu, Nov. 7, 12pm: **DECLUTTER! DESTRESS!** Practical decluttering workshop with Lynn Faust
- Tue, Nov. 12, 11:30am: **FILM, "THE WIZ" (1978)**
- Thu, Nov. 14, 12pm: **CONVERSATION WITH STATE REP. JAY LIVINGSTONE**
- Thu, Nov. 21, 12pm: **THANKSGIVING POTLUCK**
- Tuesdays, 2pm: **MUSIC 4 WELLNESS BERKLEE COLLEGE OF MUSIC**

Wed, 11/6

**GREAT DECISIONS WITH DR. ALI BANUAZIZI—MIDEAST REALIGNMENT.**

Despite a reduced presence in the Middle East, the U.S. still has significant national interests there, and the area remains a key arena for global power politics. Can the U.S. continue to defend its interests with a lower level of military and political involvement, or should it recommit to a leading role in the region? Join Dr. Ali Banuazizi, Research Professor of Political Science at Boston College, for a discussion. 6pm. Central Library at Copley Square. Register at [bpl.bibliocommons.com/events/670fd0b8f9b58b2f00de3992](http://bpl.bibliocommons.com/events/670fd0b8f9b58b2f00de3992). **FREE**

Thu, 11/7

The MFA celebrates **DIWALI** with music, dance, art making, gallery tours, and more. On Diwali, Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, and Jains observe this festival by lighting a *diya* (oil lamp) with family and friends to celebrate the triumph of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, and good over evil. All events and activities are included in a pay-what-you-wish admission (\$5 minimum; purchase in person starting at 5pm). 5pm to 10pm. 465 Huntington Ave.

Mon, 11/11

**COMMUNITY DINNER AT HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH.** All are welcome, no RSVP required. Enter from the parking lot. 6-7:30pm. 165 Park Drive. **FREE**

## COMMUNITY meetings

**THU, NOVEMBER 14** The BPDA Board votes on a previously submitted Small Project Review application and 121A tax agreement for **20 CHARLESGATE WEST** (formerly Our Lady's Guild House). Approvals would allow the Fenway CDC to begin redevelopment of 140 substandard single-room units into 86 larger rental units, all affordable. 5:30 in the BPDA boardroom, 9th floor, City Hall, or watch/testify remotely by registering at [bit.ly/Nov14BPDABoardMeeting](http://bit.ly/Nov14BPDABoardMeeting). (The registration page gives a start time of 3:30pm, but the public hearing starts at 5:30.)

## KAJI ASO STUDIO

### INSTITUTE FOR THE ARTS

Flying together celebrating 51 years

## Kaji Aso Studio

### 51st Anniversary Show—“A Spot of Beauty”

Art ✿ Music ✿ Poetry

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IN-PERSON: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9 | 7 PM

ONLINE: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17 | 7PM

## Concert: Linda Chase

Performing original compositions based on Japanese Tanka poetry

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IN-PERSON: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8 | 3 PM

CONCERT WILL BE LIVE-STREAMED

FREE • OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

KAJI ASO STUDIO, 40 ST. STEPHEN STREET

RSVP to [administrator@kajiasostudio.com](mailto:administrator@kajiasostudio.com)

THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS

Mass Cultural Council

BOSTON CULTURAL COUNCIL

Mission Hill Fenway Neighborhood Trust



# Find your flavor in The Fenway

Your dining destination awaits,  
from quick pit-stops to cozy  
sit-down spots, and secret menu  
items to unlock—we've got it all and  
a whole lot of mouthwatering flavor!

**THE  
FEN  
WAY**