



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 12 • DECEMBER 6 - JANUARY 3, 2025

City Seems Unable To Coordinate Distressed-Property Tracking

PHOTO: ALISON PULTINAS



Even with redevelopment plans approved, 112 Queensberry St. remains a symbol of the City's nebulous definition and tracking of vacant or distressed properties.

“distressed.”

Neither 36 The Fenway (see story in our November issue) nor 63 Parker Hill Ave. in Mission Hill (the former Landmark at Longwood assisted living facility, closed in 2022) was on the distressed list. According to the City’s Collecting Division, both properties owe thousands in back taxes.

However, they might show up on a different list managed by the City’s Problem Properties Task Force. That list will be updated soon, said Keith Williams, deputy chief of operations in the Mayor’s Office. The Menino administration created the Task Force to monitor and collect data on code violations, 911, and 311 reports. Quarterly reports are due to the City Council and the mayor.

As Mario Teran explained in an email, the lists of distressed properties and problem properties are separate, although there is sometimes an overlap. In his words, the distressed property list is an external observation of deteriorated or deteriorating properties that have no known plans for renovation at the time of the survey. It is interesting that 601 (or 595-603) Newbury St. was designated as distressed in 2022, even though the BPDA board had approved a proposed compact-living development for the site in 2021. The latest Google Street View is not promising, and there are no active construction permits for the parcel.

The 2022 list included residential buildings like the plywood-covered rowhouse at 482 Commonwealth Ave. in Kenmore Square and, in Mission Hill, a two-family house at 44 Pontiac St. and a single-family house at 175 Heath St. The list also included commercial properties in Mission Hill, such as the historic brewery buildings at 117-123 Heath St., 165 Heath St. (owned by New England Baptist Hospital), and 6-12 Pontiac St.

When the updated Problem Properties list is complete, there should be a link on the City’s website. The list is generated mostly from City departments that track reports of code violations, nuisance calls, criminal activity, and 311 calls.

The Task Force can designate properties

that have drawn four or more complaints or violations in the preceding 12 months. However, Ordinance 9.13-1 requires that the four complaints be filed with the departments that sit on the Task Force—for example, four noise complaints filed with the Air Pollution

Control Commission, four sanitary code complaints filed with Inspectional Services, or four police reports. The Task Force is advisory only and doesn’t issue penalties. The only penalty spelled out in the ordinance is

DISTRESSED PROPERTIES ON PAGE 4 >

Strong Opposition Pushes Planning Board To Delay Vote On 80-100 Smith

SCREENSHOT OF VIDEO RECORDING OF HEARING



On Nov. 12, Boston Planning Department (formerly BPDA) Project Manager Ebony DaRosa announced to the appointed Impact Advisory Group (IAG) that the controversial Mission Hill project for 80 and 100 Smith St. would appear on the agenda for the board’s Nov. 14 meeting, where it would be put to a vote.

Two days later, those who were able to rearranged their schedules quickly to attend the first in-person board hearing since 2020.

Months earlier, the appointed Impact Advisory Group for 80-100 Smith had sent a letter opposing the project. At its last meeting before the board met on the 14th, IAG members had refused to discuss mitigation or benefits. Although not allowed to testify at the board meeting, neighbors had emailed letters to the board and

elected officials.

Former Boston Housing Authority head Kate Bennett (pictured at the meeting) spoke first after the developer’s presentation on the 14th. Bennett asked that the vote be tabled as City Councilor Sharon Durkan and Boston Housing Authority Administrator Kenzie Bok had requested.

Board chair Priscilla Rojas spoke about the obvious lack of trust expressed in the comment letters and asked the development team to negotiate with the adjacent Mission Main community and address concerns. Durkan also offered to schedule a meeting with the IAG before the Dec. 12 board meeting, when the project is likely to return for a vote.

—ALISON PULTINAS, IAG MEMBER

BY ALISON PULTINAS

Vacant, abandoned, distressed, or problem property—are these subjective descriptions or does the City use standardized criteria for defining neglect and assessing a building’s condition and ownership status?

Given recent media coverage of proposals to impose fees on vacant storefronts, what is a reasonable length of time for a landlord to hold out on filling an empty retail space? The City Council’s Nov. 15 Small Business & Professional Licensure Committee hearing, chaired by Councilor Brian Worrell, discussed a carrot-and-stick approach to motivating landlords to fill vacant spaces. The City could both offer incentives, like small grants, and impose vacancy fees. A new ordinance might be in the works.

The issue of vacant residential property is even more critical, given the affordable housing and migrant shelter crisis. Are there actions the City can take? Municipal liens for delinquent property taxes are not uncommon. However, actual tax takings are rare.

The Mayor’s Office of Housing (MOH) formerly kept a public list of distressed properties. Last updated in 2022, the list includes addresses from Mission Hill and the Fenway. Two years later, some buildings from that list remain in rough shape. MOH’s Mario Teran stated there are no plans for a new survey, but did not explain why.

Not paying your property taxes is not the determining factor for being labeled

Marchers, Opponents Collide in Kenmore

PHOTO: X USER SHANNONLARSON



X user @ShannonLarson posted this photo of counter-protesters in Kenmore Square awaiting the “Men’s March” on Saturday, Nov. 16. The anti-abortion march drew a few hundred participants, according to media reports, began at the Planned Parenthood clinic near Packard’s Corner, and continued to the Boston Common. In her post, Larson wrote that “Counter-protesters wore shirts that read ‘Our lives, our futures,’ and held signs with varying messages—some more colorful in language than others, including, ‘Not all ejaculations need last names’ and ‘Alpha males support one another.’”

DANA FARBER, BIDMC UNVEIL DESIGN OF PROPOSED NEW CANCER HOSPITAL

RENDERING COURTESY OF BETH ISRAEL DEACONESS MEDICAL CENTER



On Nov. 20, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center released a rendering of the proposed new cancer hospital it wants to build with Dana Farber Cancer Institute in the Longwood Medical Area. (This Brookline Avenue view looking north shows the facade facing Joslin Place). The hospital would replace a Joslin Institute building currently on the site. Public review of the potential sky bridges, shown in the rendering, just began on Dec. 4 with the Boston Civic Design Commission.

FENSVIEWS

Let's Fix The Hidden Burden of Housing Recertification

BY MYRA SHANE

Every year, low-income residents in Boston and beyond face the daunting and often traumatic task of recertifying for their affordable housing. The recertification process—designed to ensure that those receiving assistance meet eligibility requirements—has become a labyrinth of paperwork, frustration, and unnecessary delays. For many, like myself, this process isn't just inconvenient; it's a barrier to stability, security, and dignity.

As a resident in an inclusionary zoning (IZ) unit, I, Myra Shane, have experienced firsthand the complications that arise from navigating dual recertification processes. IZ requires developers to set aside a portion of new units for low-income tenants. After successfully renewing my Section 8 voucher, I was instructed to undergo the City's IZ recertification process. The timelines did not align. This is not a straightforward process. It is full of redundant and overlapping requirements, as they ask for the same information but in a different way, causing confusion. For tenants like me, who are already living on tight budgets and facing multiple challenges, this extra layer of bureaucracy is more than just a hassle—it's a form of systemic discrimination.

I am not alone in this struggle. Briana Spearman, a resident at

GUEST OPINION

The Pierce in the West Fens through the Cambridge Housing Authority, shares similar frustrations. Briana describes recertification as "lengthy and stressful," a process that takes a great amount of time and energy just to track down the necessary paperwork. Briana points out that being in affordable housing "shouldn't feel like a punishment," yet that is what the process often feels like. "We are hard-working, educated, and respectable individuals that deserve to be treated as such," she said. "Low-income families deal with enough issues."

Shameeka Moreno, another resident in an inclusionary unit and a member of the Coalition for a Truly Affordable Boston (CTAB), echoes these concerns and adds another perspective. As a coalition member, Shameeka has been working alongside advocacy organizations to improve Boston's inclusionary zoning policy to ensure that tenants are not disregarded and displaced. She highlights how the recertification process disproportionately impacts vulnerable residents with disabilities, language barriers, or simply those struggling with life's stresses. Shameeka shares the frustration of having to "constantly jump through hoops" to meet shifting requirements. "If you don't understand the process or can't get the documents they need... it feels very discriminatory and predatory," said Shameeka.

What Briana, Shameeka, and I are describing is not an isolated issue. It is part of a broader pattern that places an undue burden on low-income tenants. The lack of coordination between Section 8 and the City's IZ recertification processes is just one example of a system that is failing to support us. For people who rely on affordable housing to keep a roof over their heads, the recertification process is not just a formality—it is a source of anxiety, instability, and, in some cases, eviction.

In my case, after months of trying to resolve the issue, I was left with little movement from the City. I now have eviction proceedings this month. I have become increasingly concerned that other tenants may be facing similar situations without the support or resources they need to fight back. I feel I have nowhere else to go.

The consequences of this misalignment are real. Tenants are forced to do this year after year or risk losing their homes if they cannot meet every requirement in time. For those with limited access to resources, such as transportation, time, or money, the chances of falling behind are even greater.

This discrimination is not just an inconvenience; it is a public health crisis. Housing instability affects every aspect of a person's well-being—physical, emotional, and mental. Being one step away from homelessness is a daily reality for too many. This systemic issue makes up one part of the poverty and homelessness that too many families in Boston are caught in.

We are actively working with the City of Boston and, specifically, the Mayor's Office of Housing (MOH) to encourage immediate action to address the inefficiencies in the recertification process, and we hope to see improvements soon. We need clear communication between MOH and state processes to create streamlined procedures. We need compassion from them, as we are the people who rely on affordable housing to live healthy lives.

We invite others who have experienced these challenges to come forward. If you've struggled with the recertification process for Section 8 or inclusionary zoning units, we encourage you to contact me at (617) 869-5995. We are collecting stories of tenants ready to stand together and demand change. If you'd like to learn more about the work of the Coalition for a Truly Affordable Boston, visit affordableboston.org.

Affordable housing is a right, not a privilege. The process of determining who can stay housed should not create unnecessary barriers for those facing so many other challenges. It is time for the City to recognize that the burden of recertification should not fall solely on the backs of the people it is meant to support.

Myra Shane lives in the Fenway. She wrote this opinion piece with the support of Briana Spearman and Shameeka Moreno.

Through A Post-Election Lens: Hollowed-Out Parties

BY JONATHAN COHN

On Nov. 17, the Boston Ward 4 Democratic Committee welcomed Daniel Schlozman, co-author of *The Hollow Parties: The Many Pasts and Disordered Present of American Party Politics* for a book discussion, particularly relevant given the election held two weeks earlier.

In the book, Schlozman and co-author Sam Rosenfeld (associate professors of political science at Johns Hopkins University and Colgate University, respectively) offer a sharp, well-structured history of the US party system; analyze why the parties themselves have become weaker; and suggest what can be done to fix this issue. They discuss the "hollowness" of the country's two major parties, as both demonstrate lots of activity (as anyone who turns on the TV news would know) at the same time as the underlying infrastructure of year-round civic engagement has eroded.

They trace the weakening of today's parties since 1970s to two phenomena: neoliberalism and party polarization. *Neoliberalism* refers to an economic paradigm shift that put greater focus on private

provision of public goods, trade liberalization, and deregulation, which weakened labor unions in the US and narrowed the range of viable policy prescriptions.

Polarization reflects the fact that, over the course of successive elections since the 1960s, there has been an ideological sorting of more liberal voters to the Democratic Party and more conservative voters to the Republican Party. An "asymmetric" polarization, however, characterized this period, with Republicans moving farther rightward than Democrats moved to the left. Among other culprits for "hollowness" are the rise of various consultants, media outlets and operatives, and political action committees, all existing outside of the party apparatus and creating sometimes conflicting messages and enabling large donors to exert more sway.

The recent election was on attendees' minds during the discussion. Schlozman explained that voters, after experiencing the highest inflation in 40 years, blamed the incumbent party, as they have in many countries around the world, and he faulted President Joe Biden for inattention

to the work of building party infrastructure. However, he argued that Vice President Kamala Harris's campaign's messaging and advertising in swing states, which emphasized a more populist economic message, likely helped Democrats protect several US Senate seats.

Attendees asked questions about the role of labor unions, public perceptions around immigration, demographic shifts in the electorate and party bases, and whether the 2024 election might indicate more enduring changes or simply temporary swings.

One astute question came from Ward 4 co-chair Carol Lasky: "Will history be kind to Kamala Harris?" Schlozman shared his reflections, but we'll have to wait for future historians to know.

Schlozman and Rosenfeld recently published an article, "The Democrats' Big—and Failed—Bet" in *"Democracy: A Journal of Ideas"* [democracyjournal.org/arguments/the-democrats-big-and-failed-bet/].

Jonathan Cohn is policy director for Progressive Mass and secretary of the Boston Ward 4 Dems.

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

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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, January 3.

> DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS <
The deadline for letters, news items, and ads for our next issue is Friday, December 27.

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Artistry Delivered Profits—And Gave Us Louis Prang Street

BY ED BALLO

Louis Prang Street runs from Huntington Avenue to Evans Way between the School of the Museum of Fine Arts and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. A “colorful” street you could say, as Louis Prang introduced Christmas cards to the United States in the 1870s and he produced them in glorious living color.

Prang was born on March 12, 1824, in Prussian Silesia (present-day Poland), the son of Jonas Louis Prang, a Huguenot (French Protestant) textile manufacturer and Rosina Silverman. He apprenticed to his father and learned engraving, printing, and calico dyeing as well as the chemistry of printing.

By 1848, the young man had gotten involved in the revolutions in the German states. The revolutionaries sought to unify the German states to create a democratic government with guaranteed human rights. Indeed, 1848-49 was a pivotal year of rebellions and revolutions across Europe, with Italy, France, the Netherlands and the Austrian empire embroiled in internal conflicts.

Prang was banned from returning to Prussia and by 1850 had settled in Boston. He found work in the employ of British-born illustrator Frank Leslie, art director for *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion*, which later became *Ballou's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion* (no relation!). Published in Roxbury, *Gleason's* was the *Life* or *Look* magazine of the era. It featured engravings by numerous artists, some of whom would become household names, such as Boston-born Winslow Homer.

The technical and business acumen



Above, the L. Prang & Company building at Roxbury and Gardner streets, about 1887. The building still stands today. Below, an 1883 advertisement for the company's Valentine's Day cards.

that Prang gained in this position allowed him to strike out on his own. In 1856, with partner Julius Mayer, he created Prang and Mayer. They began by producing lithographs and copperplates, specializing in prints of buildings and maps of towns in Massachusetts. In 1860 he bought out his partner and L. Prang & Company was born.

In lithography a separate stone (often fine and smooth limestone) is the printing surface, holding one color in an image with the distinct challenge of aligning each subsequent stone for color registration and gradations. Unlike his contemporaries, Prang used as many as 19 stones for each finished print, thereby creating exquisite nuances of color and brilliance. His use of superior materials and methods

allowed him to deliver an unprecedented level of quality, which resulted in the firm's success. In contrast, Prang's contemporary Currier & Ives, also working out of Roxbury, used only one stone, with additional colors painted onto the image by hand, which was slow and sometimes resulted in uneven quality.

Prang plugged into a burgeoning market of a growing middle class with disposable income and an eagerness to show its taste and sophistication by purchasing the cards and the art prints he produced—while staying on a budget! In 1875, he printed his first Christmas cards and exported them to London, where they were a smashing success. The next year, he sold them throughout the northeastern United States, and by 1881 he had the American market cornered. Prang & Company employed more than 100 women artists and designers, including Maude Humphrey Bogart, mother of the actor!

Ever inventive, Prang continued to explore new avenues. While teaching his young daughter to paint, Prang first observed the need for better art supplies and teaching methods in American schools. He invented the Prang Method of Instruction as an art education program that encouraged students to explore the beauty and aesthetic value of art and to develop their skills of observation. Separate textbooks were developed for each grade, the lessons learned building upon the principles of the previous book.

Unfortunately, cheap imitations flooded the market, competing with Prang's quality. Sales sagged and he closed his card-making operation in 1890. The company merged with Taber to become Taber and Prang and moved to Springfield in 1892. The American Crayon Company acquired the rights to Prang's art materials in 1909 and later merged with Joseph Dixon Crucible Company in 1957, which is now known as Dixon Ticonderoga.

Think of Louis Prang next time you hold a number 2 pencil!

Ed Ballo lives in the West Fens.

His periodic "Urban Detective" column presents small bites of local history to help decipher the city around you and enhance your appreciation of it.



IMAGE: U.S. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS VIA WIKIMEDIA

IN MEMORIAM

Constance (Connie) Leigh

Constance (Connie) Leigh, a resident of the East Fens, died on Nov. 6.

Born in New York, Connie lived and studied in Florida—where she raised two children as a single mother—and Europe. She eventually settled in Boston where she became a senior lecturer at Northeastern University.

Through her love of art and culture, she built a lengthy career as a lecturer in academia.

She volunteered at a women's homeless shelter and at Tufts Medical

Center. A quote from Eleanor Roosevelt sums up Connie's zest and ambition: "Women are like teabags; they don't realize how strong they are until they are in hot water."



Connie was predeceased by her son, Todd Fleischer. She is survived by her daughter Jill Hochberg,

two grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

Donations can be made to Beacon Hill Village, 74 Joy St #3, Boston, MA 02114. A celebration is planned at a later date.

AT MISSION HILL P.O., MARKEY SLAMS USPS SERVICE DELAYS

BY ALISON PULTINAS

The day before Thanksgiving a small crowd assembled in the parking lot facing the Mission Hill Post Office at 1575 Tremont St. Sen Edward Markey's staff had alerted local officials and media that he planned to hold a last-minute press conference about the documented failure of the United States Post Office (USPS) to provide adequate and equitable service.

Nine members of the state's congressional delegation signed two letters sent on Nov. 27 to Postmaster Louis DeJoy in Washington and Inspector Tammy Hall of the USPS. The letters detailed concern about a pattern of facility closures and consolidations, as well as slowed service resulting in delayed and lost mail. As other local elected officials stated at the event, these weren't the first letters sent about the problems.

Representatives from the Letter Carriers Union also spoke and offered explanations of how DeJoy's cost-cutting measures affected mail delivery. Scott Hoffman and Ray Bell of the union cited policies on staffing levels and a recent policy forbidding trucks from leaving USPS Processing and Distribution Centers without a full load of mail, lengthening the time before mail even reaches local post offices for distribution by carriers.

Markey specifically asked that ZIP code level delivery data be tracked and shared. In the past, DeJoy has insisted in response to similar complaints that mail delivery problems were isolated incidents.

Quoting from the letter to DeJoy, "we understand that proper mail delivery is a justice issue; we question whether you do."

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.



City of Boston
Planning
Department

VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING

DEC
10

6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

142-146 ST. MARY'S
STREET

Register: bit.ly/4eFUOe8

Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864

Meeting ID: 160 812 0792



DESCRIPTION:

This is a Public Meeting for the proposed 142-146 St. Mary's Street project located in the Fenway neighborhood of Boston. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the Draft Project Impact Report. The meeting will include a presentation followed by questions and comments from the public.

对于您作为波士顿的居民和利益相关者，本次会议的信息至关重要。与会的语言服务免费。如果您需要这些语言翻译服务，请在12/5/24之前联系 (ebony.darosa@boston.gov)

作為波士頓居民和利益相關者，這次會議中的資訊對您非常重要。我們可以向您免費提供語言輔助服務。如果您要求這些服務，請在12/5/24之前聯絡 (ebony.darosa@boston.gov)

How to Participate Please register for the meeting using the following Zoom link: bit.ly/4eFUOe8 Meeting ID: 160 812 0792 Toll-Free Call-in Number: 833.568.8864

Mail to: **Ebony DaRosa**
Planning Department
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201
Phone: 617.918.4419
Email: Ebony.darosa@boston.gov

< **DISTRESSED PROPERTIES FROM PAGE 1** for the Treasurer’s office to pursue recovery of public-safety expenses associated with an implicated property. However, the ordinance also states that the City’s Corporation Counsel should “commence foreclosure proceedings” for designated properties with delinquent real estate taxes.

Related to vacant commercial property, Mission Hill’s Main Streets program director submits monthly vacancy reports to the Office of Economic Opportunity and Inclusion, headed by Segun Idowu. Main Streets Director Courtney Wright said that her most recent list included Mission Hill properties at 714 and 716 Huntington Ave., and 1439, 1484, 1552, and 1607 Tremont St.

Not included on her list is the former Santander Bank at 2-6 Francis St., which closed in July 2023 or the former Brigham Guest House apartments at 698 Huntington Ave. A topic often mentioned at Mission Hill Community Alliance meetings is the half-demolished building at 812-814 Huntington Ave. There is an approved project for the site, but contractors stopped work almost two years ago shortly after demolition began. However, the property taxes are paid.

Abandoned is another adjective associated with vacant buildings. However, the meaning is not so clear. The boarded-up Kenmore Square rowhouse at 482 Commonwealth Ave. would seem to be a prime example, but the City has no current liens against the property. Abandoned seems to imply that the property is neglected because

the owner disappeared or died.

In the Fenway, paperwork filed for the Fenway CDC’s residential project at 112 Queensberry St.—a former laundromat—describes the building as abandoned. Although vacant, that property did not appear on the City’s distressed list or a listing of outstanding back taxes. Interesting historical note: Boston’s *East West Journal* profiled David Kailin around the time of his 1971 conversion of a welding school/motorcycle repair shop at 112 into Crane’s Call Bakery, a macrobiotic bakery that did not survive the 1970s.

The City’s Operations Department works with the Boston Area Research Initiative to compile databases of vacant properties and stalled development proposals. The Economic Indicators Dashboard posted on the Planning Department’s research division webpage charts quarterly changes for Fenway/Longwood in multiple categories. Inventories, though are just the first step; crafting preemptive strategies might be next.

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.

Another Blow For Restaurant Row: El Pelón Closes

On the heels of the Thornton’s shutdown (November issue), West Fens stalwart El Pelón served its last taco on Peterborough Street Nov. 19. On Instagram the restaurant said it would continue to cater and deliver citywide. In an email to The Fenway News, owner Jim Hoben said “It was a hard decision and so many emotions, but we needed to consolidate [in the Brighton location] to continue, especially after the pandemic and the changes in the restaurant business.” On Instagram, the restaurant expressed “gratitude for all your support throughout the years.” The Fenway location was open for 25 years.

@ THE CENTER

The Fenway Community Center is open six days a week. Visit fenwaycommunitycenter.org for details.

- Sat, Dec 14, 2pm to 5pm: **FENWAY HOLIDAY MARKET**
- Thu, Dec 19, 3pm to 4pm: **SLOW FLOW YOGA**
- Thu, Dec 19, 5:30pm to 7:30pm: **FENWAY HOLIDAY PARTY**, reserve your spot at bit.ly/FenwayHolidayParty.



City of Boston
Planning
Department

VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING

DEC
11

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

36 PARKER HILL AVENUE

Register: bit.ly/4hRB8qy

Toll Free: (833) 568 - 8864

Meeting ID: 160 229 2955



PROJECT PROPONENT:

The Rise at Longwood Development Team

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The Planning Department is hosting a virtual Public Meeting for the proposed 36 Parker Hill Avenue project located in Mission Hill. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the Small Project Review Application (SPRA) that was filed and its potential impacts. The meeting will include a presentation followed by questions and comments from the public.

The Rise at Longwood Development team is proposing a five (5) story building of approximately 30,861 square feet of gross floor area (“GFA”), including thirty-eight (38) residential rental apartments, with a mix of studios and two-bedrooms unit types. The ground floor programming accommodates a shared outdoor courtyard with new catenary exterior lighting, soft seating and pavers, a fitness/yoga studio, indoor/outdoor bike storage and a modest amount of off-street parking. The project also envisions an outdoor roof deck amenity for residents.

Mail to: **Scott Greenhalgh**
Planning Department
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201
Phone: 617.918.4271
Email: scott.greenhalgh@boston.gov

Website:
bit.ly/36-parker-hill-avenue
Close of Public Comment Period:
12/20/2024

NEWSLINES

Fenway CDC’s Ruiz Sanchez Wins MACDC Honor

Congratulations to Leo Ruiz Sanchez, Fenway CDC’s lead community organizer, honored with the 2024 Rising Star Award by the Massachusetts Association of CDCs at its annual meeting, held Nov. 21 in Worcester. Ruiz Sanchez was recognized for his work building coalitions, in particular, the 55 Bus campaign that has advocated for service improvements on a key bus line serving the Fenway.

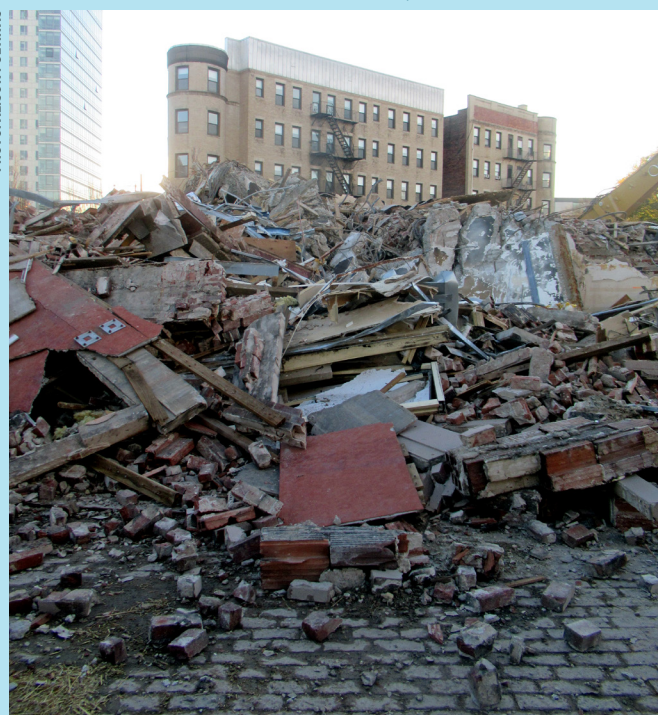
Age Strong Needs Assessment

The City of Boston is conducting its 2024 Age Strong Needs Assessment to learn more about the needs, concerns, and priorities of Boston’s older residents. It will use the results to develop an Age Strong Plan that supports inclusivity and accessibility for people of all ages. Anyone 50 or older who lives in Boston and anyone who cares for an older Bostonian can complete the survey—available in multiple languages—online or in print. The survey states that responses will be kept confidential and will not be shared outside of Age Strong and the state’s Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Find out more or take the survey at boston.gov/departments/age-strong-commission/2024-age-strong-needs-assessment.

In Response to City Comments How Will Northeastern Explain Reduced Housing?

Ahead of the Dec. 10 Northeastern University Task Force public meeting, Planning Department Project Manager Quinn Valcich issued the official scoping determination for the school’s Institutional Master Plan Notification Form (IMP NF), filed last summer. The document includes both Planning Department comments and those of the public. The university must now

PHOTO: ALISON PULTINAS



respond to the determination, answering questions, supplying requested additional information, and attempting to respond to critics. A significant comment from the Planning Department concerns student housing. The proposed 2023 IMP shows a large reduction in the percentage of undergrads the university

expects to house on campus. The figure will fall from 67 percent under the previous 10-year plan to 55 percent. The plan only includes one new residential project, on the White Hall site (shown above during demolition) on Huntington Avenue. Several letters from the public, including current students, expressed concern about the proposed demolition of Matthews Arena. Commenters questioned a plan that would sever the connection with so much Boston history that happened at the arena before Northeastern acquired it.

COMMUNITY meetings

TUE, DECEMBER 10 City Councilor Sharon Durkan hosts **WINTER OFFICE HOURS** in Mission Hill. 9am to 10am. Green Haus, 1520 Tremont St. Reserve a slot at tinyurl.com/256nukds.

TUE, DECEMBER 10 City Councilor Sharon Durkan hosts **WINTER OFFICE HOURS** in the Fenway. 3pm to 4pm. Cornwall’s Tavern, 644 Beacon St. Reserve a slot at tinyurl.com/256nukds.

TUE, DECEMBER 10 The Planning Department hosts a Public Meeting for the proposed **142-146 ST. MARY’S STREET** project. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the Draft Project Impact Report. The meeting will include a presentation followed by questions and comments from the public. Register for the meeting at bit.ly/491bxaw. 6pm. Contact Ebony DaRosa at ebony.darosa@boston.gov or (617) 918-4419 with any questions.

TUE, DECEMBER 10 The Planning Department hosts a Task Force meeting for the **NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL MASTER PLAN (IMP)**. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss ongoing updates through the review of the Institutional Master Plan Notification Form (IMP NF) for the 2025-2035 IMP and the Project Notification Form (PNF) for the Multipurpose Athletics Facility project.

The meeting will include a presentation by the University followed by Q&A and comments by the Task Force members. There will be public comment at the end of the meeting. Register for the meeting at bit.ly/4i3Uade. 6pm. Contact Quinn Valcich at quinn.w.valcich@boston.gov with any questions.

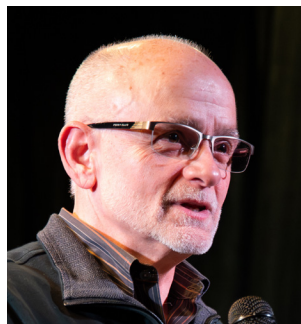
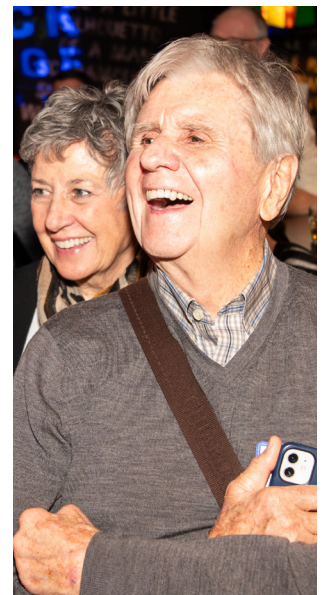
WED, DECEMBER 11 The Planning Department hosts a virtual Public Meeting for the proposed **36 PARKER HILL AVENUE PROJECT** in Mission Hill. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the Small Project Review Application (SPRA) that was filed and its potential impacts. The meeting will include a presentation followed by questions and comments from the public. Register at bit.ly/4hRB8qy. Contact Scott Greenhalgh at scott.greenhalgh@boston.gov with any questions.

THU, DECEMBER 12 Join **FENWAY CDC’S ORGANIZING COMMITTEE**, a group of residents interested in advocating together for affordable housing and other neighborhood needs, will feature housing justice trivia and cookie decorating. Dinner will be provided. Open to all. Contact lruizsanchez@fenwaycdc.org for more information. 6pm to 7:30pm, Fenway Community Center, 1282 Boylston St.

On Wednesday, Nov. 13, *The Fenway News* celebrated its 50th anniversary with 120 close friends at Kings Back Bay. Who doesn't love a night of eating good food and hanging out with friends? Nevertheless, we were astonished by the enthusiasm of the crowd and the palpable feeling of connection in the room as we honored Helen Cox. It was just icing on the cake (did we mention



the cake?) that we surpassed our fundraising goal, for which we owe deep thanks to our sponsors at every level. We continue to be inspired by the expressions of support we heard for the paper. Beyond that, the compliments, embraces, and exclamations of "I haven't seen you in forever!" reminded us that the paper doesn't just cover this community—the paper helps build it. Thanks to everyone.



**PHOTOS BY
ANNIELLY
CARMARGO**
ANNIELLYCAMARGO.COM





HAPPY 50TH ANNIVERSARY FENWAY NEWS



Congratulations, Fenway News, on 50 incredible years of serving our community as Boston's oldest volunteer-run newspaper! We look forward to celebrating many more years of impactful storytelling

Ruthzee Louijeune



Congratulations to Helen Cox and to *The Fenway News* for 50 years of journalism!

Congrats to the Fenway News on 50 years, and to Helen Cox for being an integral part of it.

TRACEY CUSICK



Your coverage of the Riverway, the Fens, and the Muddy River helps us in our work of restoring, protecting and improving the Emerald Necklace parks for all. Thank you!



The Office of City and Community Engagement at Northeastern University is proud to support the Fenway neighborhood. Thank you to the Fenway News for your important contribution to local journalism!

KEEPING IT
LOCAL

50

CELEBRATE 50 YEARS OF THE FENWAY NEWS

AS IS HER CUSTOM, HONOREE HELEN COX HAS A FEW WORDS...

To My Fenway Friends and Neighbors:

First, I want to thank everyone who attended The Fenway News's 50th anniversary event on November 13. It was a thrill to see so many faces, old and new.

Because I was pushed to wrap up my remarks before I was ready to, I didn't get the chance to say some things that night. So I'll say them here.

The paper could not have reached this milestone without the tireless and steadfast work of its board of directors, who are all volunteers. In particular, I want to commend the dedication of board President Ruth Khowais. Ruth never bats an eye when there's a problem with producing the paper; she just jumps in to help solve it. Her attention to detail and unwavering commitment have helped keep our coverage relevant to the interests of our readers.

I'd also like to thank two board members who served on the event committee for our anniversary, Leslie Pond and Carol Lasky. They poured enormous energy and creativity into planning our celebration and making sure it ran smoothly. If you were there on the 13th, you saw what a terrific job they did.

I'd also like to commend the paper's designer, Steve Wolf, who has given The Fenway News a professional look that matches the seriousness of its mission. I wish I had a nickel for every all-nighter he's pulled getting the paper to the printer on time and making it look as polished as it does.

Even though I've named certain board members, I want to thank all the members of the current board, as well as previous board members, editors, and contributors with whom I've worked with over the years. They deserve every resident's thanks for their dedication to community journalism and their constant effort to see that every issue covers our communities accurately and with sensitivity.

This newspaper could never have reached 50 years of age without the dedication of hundreds of volunteers who produce it for their community. It's a labor of love for them and for the neighborhoods we cover. It's impossible for me to imagine the Fenway, Mission Hill, and Audubon Circle without The Fenway News.

Sincerely,

Helen Cox

Thanks for keeping your neighbors informed, involved, and accountable as the neighborhood has changed and grown over the last 50 years.
Here's to the next 50!

CHARLES MARTEL
Grateful reader and resident

Congratulations on
your first 50 years!
Keep up your great coverage of
the Fenway and Mission Hill.

Wentworth
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

On May 22, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson delivered his “Great Society” speech at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. These words fit the Fenway community and the aspirations of its residents like a glove.



**The Great Society...demands
an end to poverty and racial injustice.**



**It is a place where every child can find knowledge
to enrich his mind and to enlarge his talents.**

**It is a place where leisure is a welcome chance to build and
reflect, not a feared cause of boredom and restlessness.**

**It is a place where the city of man serves not only
the needs of the body and the demands of commerce
but the desire for beauty and the hunger for community.**



It is a place where man can renew contact with nature.

**It is a place which honors creation for its own sake and for
what it adds to the understanding of the race.**

**It is a place where men are more concerned with the quality
of their goals than the quantity of their goods.**



**But most of all, the Great Society...
is a challenge constantly renewed.**

**SPONSORED BY A LONGTIME RESIDENT
WHO WISHES TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS**



IN LOVING MEMORY OF



JOSEPH DAVID MATHIEU

former writer and artist for
The Fenway News



MATTI KNIVA SPENCER

longtime contributor to
The Fenway News

JOANNE SCHNARE

Congratulations to Helen Cox, lifelong social justice activist and a Fenway treasure. Wishing *The Fenway News* 50 more years of “comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable.”

COLE HARRISON

Member, Fenway News collective, 1974-1982

Congratulations on 50 years of service to the neighborhood!!

SYMPHONY UNITED NEIGHBORS (SUN)



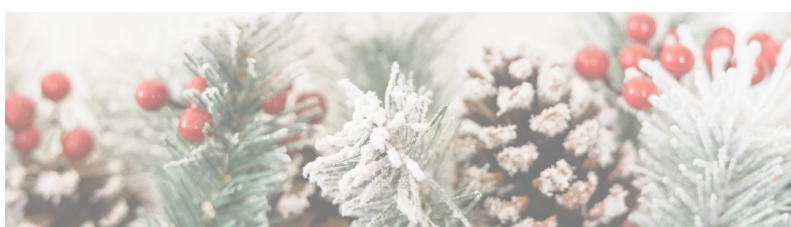
Congratulations to *The Fenways News* on your 50th! Thank you for your continued focus on the community.

STATE REP. JAY LIVINGSTONE

From Audubon Circle to Mission Hill (and the Fenway locations in between), thanks for all you do to support our amazing community.

KRISTEN MOBILIA

WISHING YOU A JOYFUL HOLIDAY SEASON AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR



Minority-Woman Owned & Operated in The Fenway Since 2018

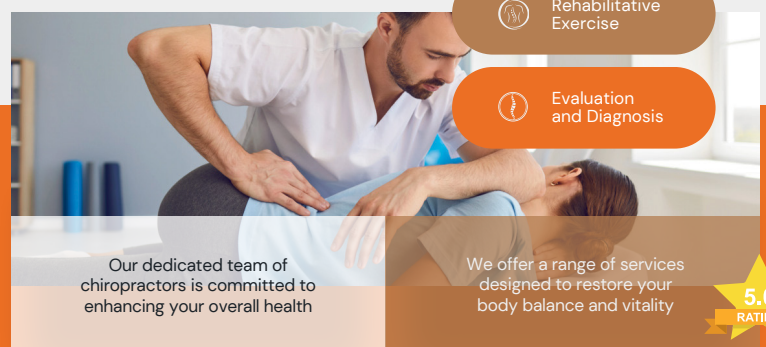
Book Your Session Now



Chiropractic Adjustments

Rehabilitative Exercise

Evaluation and Diagnosis



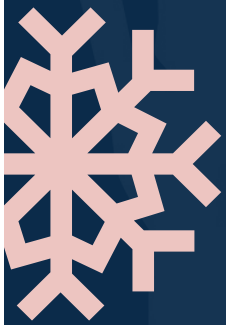
Our dedicated team of chiropractors is committed to enhancing your overall health

We offer a range of services designed to restore your body balance and vitality



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LYRIKBACKBAY.COM

Lyrik



IMAGINE WINTER MAGIC...

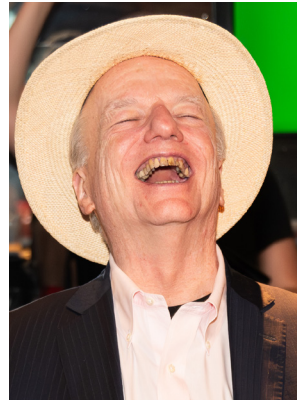
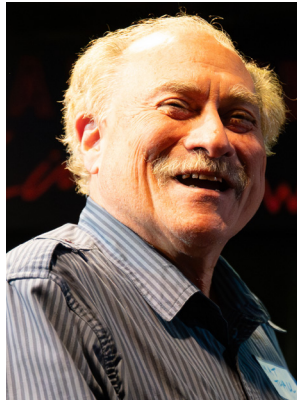
Back Bay's Newest Tree Farm & Winter Greenery Pop-Up

* Full service cut/tie & 2-hour delivery available *

Holiday Cheers at citizenM • Nightly Snowfall in Lyrik Plaza



Samuels &
Associates



Congratulations to the Fenway News for 50 years of community-based reporting! You make our great community stronger!

JOANNE MCKENNA, STEVE HARNISH, SAM HARNISH, AND ANDREW HARNISH

Happy Anniversary from the First Fenway Coöp, home (or hotbed?) of Fenway News founders, past board members, current and past contributors and editors!

FIRST FENWAY COÖP

50 down, 50 to go—looking forward to your 100th anniversary party!

SUZANNE COMTOIS



City of Boston IN CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING November 13, 2024 as "Helen Cox" Day in the City of Boston

- WHEREAS,** Helen Cox has been a transformative leader and steadfast activist in the Fenway for over six decades, contributing to the success of her community; and
 - WHEREAS,** Through her long-standing service as a board member of the Fenway News, as a community organizer, and as an activist, Helen Cox has worked tirelessly to advance social change, promote civic participation, and support the quality of life of residents of Fenway and beyond; and
 - WHEREAS,** Helen Cox's membership on the Ward 5 Democratic Committee has allowed her to serve as a beacon of political leadership, working toward greater political engagement, social justice, and community solidarity; and
 - WHEREAS,** Since 1958, Helen's contributions to the Fenway neighborhood have made a profound impact and built a strong sense of community, earning her the beloved and well-deserved informal title of "Mayor of the West Fenway"; and
 - WHEREAS,** At 93-years young, Helen continues to serve as a vital voice in her community, sharing her extensive knowledge and wisdom, inspiring new generations to continue her work in community organizing, civic activism, and public service; and
 - WHEREAS,** The City Council of Boston is proud to honor Helen Cox for her decades of leadership, her tireless commitment to improving the lives of others, and her enduring legacy in the Fenway neighborhood and beyond; **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**
- RESOLVED:** That the Boston City Council proclaims **November 13, 2024** as "Helen Cox Day" in the City of Boston, to celebrate her extraordinary contributions to the Fenway News, the City of Boston, and to express our profound gratitude for her lifetime of dedication, leadership, and service to the Fenway neighborhood.



By: Ruthye Jones
President of the City Council

Attest: Alex Dantas
Clerk of the City of Boston

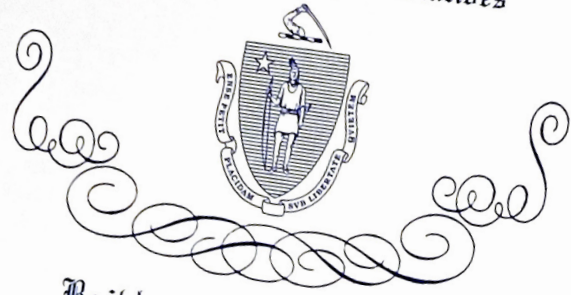
Date: 12-2024

**BOSTON CITY
COUNCIL
RECOGNIZED
NOV. 13 AS
'HELEN COX
DAY'...**

**...WHILE THE
MASSACHUSETTS
HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES
CONGRATULATED
THE PAPER FOR
ITS 50 YEARS OF
SERVICE TO THE
COMMUNITY.**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

The House of Representatives



Be it hereby known to all that:
The Massachusetts House of Representatives
offers its sincerest congratulations to:
The Fenway News
in recognition of
Its Enduring and Essential role of Informing Fenway residents on
Community Affairs and Local News for the Past 50 Years
The entire membership extends its very best wishes
and expresses the hope for future good fortune
and continued success in all endeavors.

Given this 13th day of November, 2024
At the State House, Boston, Massachusetts

by: Ronald Mariano
Ronald Mariano
Speaker of the House

Offered by: Dan Iyob
Dan Iyob
State Representative
Jay D. Livingstone



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

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

Primary care physicians at Brigham & Women's Hospital joined colleagues at Mass General in signing cards in support of a vote on organizing a union. Organizers delivered nearly 300 signed cards to the Boston NLRB office requesting a vote on affiliating with SEIU's Doctors Council. According to the *Globe*, the vote could take place early in 2025. 🗨️ **A woman stabbed in Ramsey Park, just east of Melnea Cass Boulevard, died after being taken to a hospital. Celia Simmons, 65,**



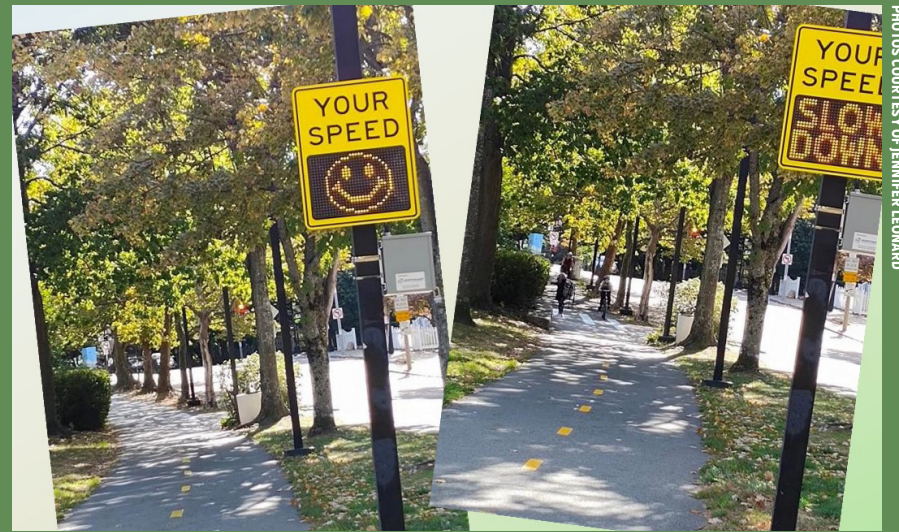
became the city's 21st homicide victim of 2024. 🗨️ BU suspended admissions to graduate programs in multiple fields in the humanities and social sciences while it "reenvision[s] these programs to allow for their long-term sustainability." The move may have come as a result of the recently signed contract that ended a long strike by boosting stipends and benefits for grad students who teach sections and run labs for the university. 🗨️ **Yunchan Lim—studying in New England Conservatory's Institute for Concert Artists program—received the competitive Diapason d'Or de L'année award from the French classical music magazine *Diapason*. The award honors top-flight recordings; Lim won for his recording of Chopin's Études, which snagged the prize in the young artists category. Lim has some experience with awards, having finished first in the 2022 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition at the ripe age of 18.** 🗨️ In food news, TimeOut Market welcomed POE-Lenta, serving soups, sandwiches, and pasta leaning toward the comfort side of the menu. Chef Brian Poe—get it?—created the menu. 🗨️ **ICYMI fervently wishes Fenway Sports Group would stop torturing West Fens residents by announcing concerts ten months in advance. Which they did last month to promote My Chemical Romance's ballpark show next September.** 🗨️ If ICYMI happened to have \$38,000,000 lying around the house, it would definitely sink that money into the 7,800-square-foot penthouse for sale at One Dalton Street. 🗨️

SENIOR EVENTS

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

- Tue, Dec. 10: ARTFUL CRAFTS WITH JAN GADSON LOUISSAINT
- Thu, Dec. 12: HOLIDAY POTLUCK WITH MUSIC FROM NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY
- Wed, Dec. 18: SCREENING OF MOVIE "ELF" AND SECRET SANTA GIFTS
- Thu, Dec. 19: COFFEE AND CONVERSATION WITH AMERICAN RED CROSS

Alliance Touts Improvements Made In Southwest Corridor Park



PHOTOS COURTESY OF FEMINER LEONARD

MassDOT's speed counters in the Southwest Corridor Park

BY ALISON PULTINAS

The Southwest Corridor—the linear state park that runs five miles from Back Bay Station to Forest Hills Station in Jamaica Plain—is managed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation with lots of help from neighborhood volunteers.

The Southwest Corridor Park Alliance (formerly known as the Parkland Management and Maintenance Committee) represents those volunteers and meets virtually every month. At its November meeting, attendees elected a new leadership team, including Sage Carbone, representing the Fenway, and Matilda Drayton representing Mission Hill's portion of the park. Northeastern University's Community Ambassadors also are regular participants in the monthly meetings and volunteer activities.

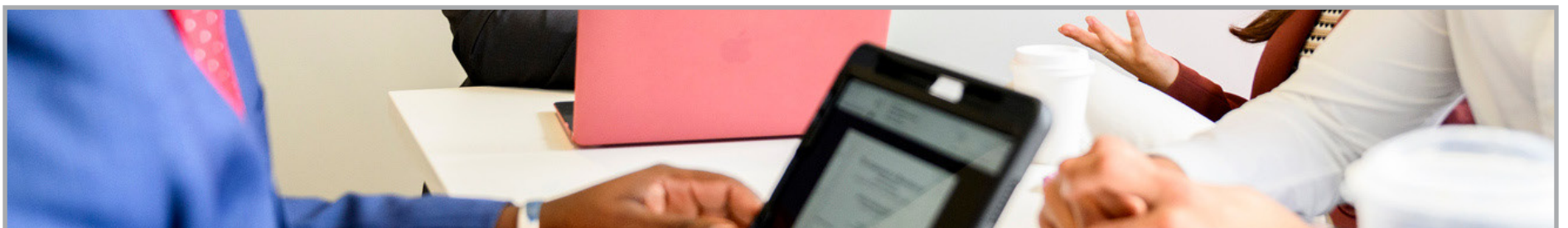
Highlights from the past year include new striping for the bike

path to help control the flow and MassDOT's pilot project for speed counters in Jamaica Plain and near Roxbury Crossing (pictured). The counters are part of a traffic-calming initiative aimed at limiting the speeds of e-bikes, mopeds, and fast cyclists to 15 miles per hour or less.

Community gardens are a major element in some segments of the park and typically take the form of traditionally separated plots. The fenced-in, gated gardens can feel privatized—even, to some people, elitist. In 2024, gardeners from J.P.'s Lamartine/Hubbard Community Garden planted a new communal space outside the fence with flowers, veggies, and herbs free for the taking, creating a new model for the Corridor.

The monthly Southwest Corridor Park Alliance meeting schedule is available at southwestcorridorpark.org.

Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.



Non-Profit & Small Business Development Series

Join Northeastern City and Community Engagement for a series of online and in-person trainings around key topics for non-profits and small businesses.

**December 11th
12:00-1:30pm**

Online Only

Colleges and Universities can be important stakeholders for non-profit organizations and small businesses. Join representatives from across Northeastern University as they share more about opportunities to engage with the student, staff, research, facility, and community resources for organizations and small businesses.

Register Here:



N Northeastern University
City and Community Engagement

The Arts

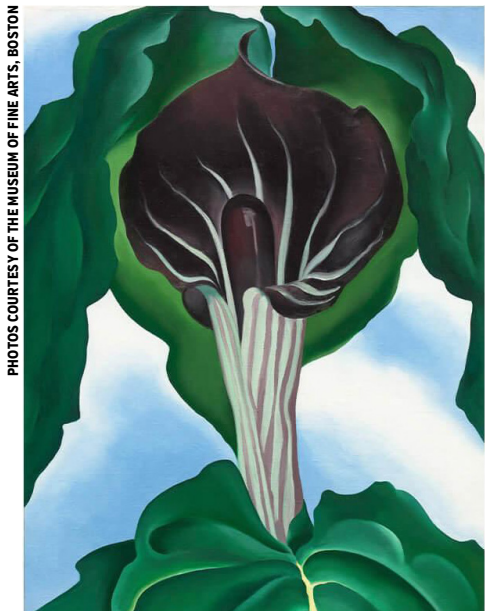
Modernists Georgia O'Keeffe And Henry Moore Never Met—Until The MFA Put Them Together In This First-Ever Show

BY RUTH KHOWAIS

Two giants of early Modernism, Georgia O'Keeffe and Henry Moore, have come together in a new exhibit at the Museum of Fine Arts. Both artists focused on semi-abstract, organic natural forms. Moore specialized in sculptures of the human figure and O'Keeffe celebrated flowers, rocks, bones, and other natural materials. Both artists showed at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1946 and both died at home in 1986, O'Keeffe in the high desert of New Mexico and Moore in his expansive grounds in Hertfordshire, England. They never met.

Featuring more than 150 works, "Georgia O'Keeffe and Henry Moore" includes paintings, sculptures, and drawings, as well as recreations of each artist's studio containing their tools and found objects.

At first it was hard to see why the MFA put the two together. Moore's large sprawling figures don't seem to mesh with O'Keeffe's oil paintings of shells, skulls, and bones. But it turns out that both collected rocks, bones, skulls, and shells and used them for inspiration,



Left: Georgia O'Keeffe's painting "Jack-in-the-Pulpit No. 3," (1930), oil on canvas. National Gallery of Art, Washington, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, Bequest of Georgia O'Keeffe, 1987.58.2. © Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art. Right: Henry Moore, "Reclining Figure" (1959–64). Elmwood. The Henry Moore Foundation: Gift of Irina Moore. Photo: Jonty Wilde.

though in different ways. Both were inspired by the natural world.

While O'Keeffe's paintings depict an actual shell, Moore used the forms of seashells and other natural objects in the curves and indentations found in his compositions. He employed the shell as the basis for "Mother and Child," featured in the exhibit.

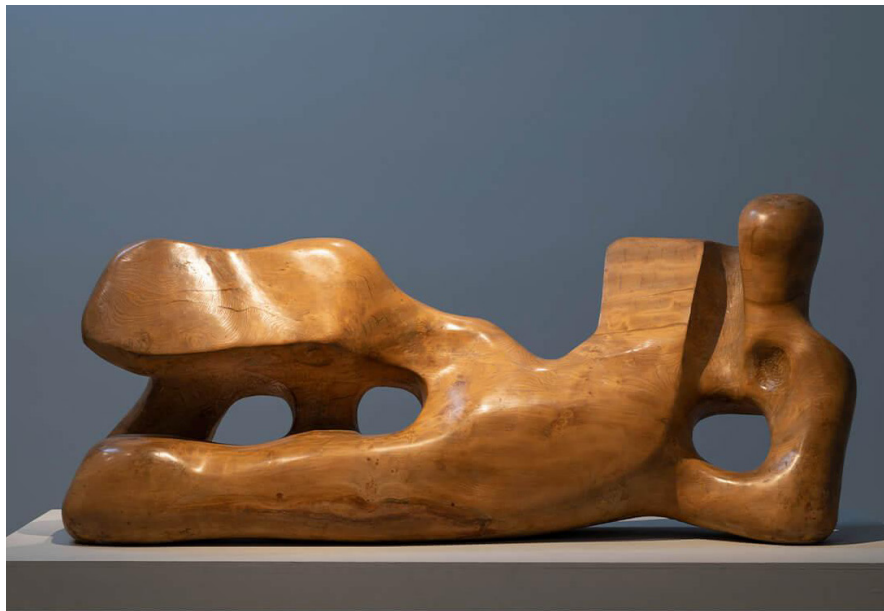
O'Keeffe was fascinated by bones and featured them in her paintings. Moore used bones as sculptural elements.

Both artists were intrigued by the space between objects. In her landscapes, O'Keeffe placed canyons and mesas next to each other—the space between is a feature of the paintings. Moore's sculptures may

divide a figure into two or three parts so that the spaces between becomes part of the sculpture.

Both experimented with layering, enlarging, and nestling shapes. Moore's "Working Model for Upright Internal/External Form" is a cluster of intertwined shapes that nestle together. In O'Keeffe's "Leaf Motif No. 2," a scattering of autumn leaves becomes a collection of recesses complemented by shadows.

One room in the exhibition focuses on balance. Both O'Keeffe and Moore visualized balance either through a composition of two halves or a combination of two visual elements, creating tension between the two



parts. For example, O'Keeffe painted landscapes where the view is divided by canyons or mountains. Moore tried to draw our attention to balance by emphasizing the negative space between two halves of a form.

The exhibition also includes other artists whose work reflects similar motifs and themes. Of note are photographer Edmund Weston and his son Brett, whose photos of shells and tree trunks complement

O'Keeffe's paintings.

O'Keeffe spent her last years in New Mexico—a land she loved—painting bleached skulls and scenes of the Southwest desert. At the same time, an ocean away, Henry Moore removed himself from the bustle of London to the orchards and woods of Hertfordshire, where his colossal bronze sculptures could find a home.

The exhibition runs through Jan. 20 at the MFA. Henry Moore lovers can find two more of his sculptures on the MIT campus and a third one in Harvard Yard.

Ruth Khowais lives in the West Fens.

At One Museum, A Focus On Two Very Different Families

MANET RELIED ON FAMILY AS MODELS BUT TOOK PAINS NOT TO 'ÉPATER LA BOURGEOISIE'

BY STEVE WOLF

The title of the Gardner's "Manet: A Model Family" hinges on a pun. Édouard Manet—whose work opened the door to the Impressionist movement—frequently used relatives as models. The show brings together works featuring his father, mother, wife, son, future sister-in-law (painter Berthe Morisot), and even his father's cousin. A family of models does indeed qualify as a model family.

But the exhibition really wants to pursue the pun's other meaning, focusing on unconventional currents swirling through Manet's family and the effort devoted to presenting it as a model of respectability. Museums rarely ask visitors to keep track of so many people's names, but this show demands it, even opening with a wall-spanning diagram of the Manet family tree.

Scion of a wealthy, socially prominent family, Manet married Suzanne Leenhoff, a Dutch musician who gave his younger brother piano lessons. Their marriage capped a ten-year relationship, and Leenhoff brought to it an out-of-wedlock son, Léon (whom she passed off as her younger brother). Manet may have been Léon's father, but so might his own father, who had an affair with Suzanne. That would make Léon both Manet's half-brother and stepson.

Whatever Léon's parentage, Manet considered him his son, and letters on display suggest genuine closeness in the family. But the exhibit also shows that Manet took pains to present Suzanne in a socially acceptable light. Meanwhile, Manet's mother Eugénie had her doubts about Léon. After the painter's death, the well-connected mother broke his will and got the estate redirected to his niece—whose paternity she could rely on.



"Boy Blowing Bubbles," one of many images Manet painted using his son Léon as a model.

The title telegraphs the show's focus on these behind-the-scenes questions. But what about the art itself? Built largely on the museum's own holdings of sketches, prints, and studies, the show at times feels a bit lightweight. But it needs those works to make its case about the concerns lurking behind the canvases.

And two images do stand out. The first, "Study for Moses Saved from the Waters," casts Suzanne as the Egyptian princess from the biblical story and the infant Léon as Moses. Although the study lacks the heft of an oil painting, it vibrates with emotion: the "princess" gazes at the baby as tenderly as any Renaissance Madonna ever looked at the baby Jesus.

A second arresting picture takes the form of a portrait of Eugénie. Against an overwhelmingly black background, only the faintest strokes of gray suggest light reflecting off a mourning dress. Many contemporary critics derided the kind of loose brushwork Manet used here, but it fired the imaginations of the Impressionists (as did his scandalous "Olympia" and "Luncheon on the Grass," painted within a year of this one). The deep, flat blackness makes the warm tones of Eugénie's hands and stern face

jump off the surface, a trick Manet likely picked up from the Old Masters he admired, especially Frans Hals and Diego Velázquez.

Throughout the show, we encounter multiple images of Léon, most frequently as a child. Manet often placed him in a supporting role in a painting, then zoomed in on him to create a stand-alone etching or print. Some images present Léon as a universalized boy, blowing bubbles or holding a sword. A few show him as a grown man, posed with Suzanne.

This show focuses less on stunning imagery than on the intricately twisting branches of the family tree, giving seemingly straightforward works of art a powerful, invisible charge.

Steve Wolf lives in the West Fens. Both the Manet and Mary Ellen Mark shows continue through Jan. 20.

ENTERING A SUBJECT'S WORLD, MARY ELLEN MARK BECAME A SILENT PART OF THE FAMILY

Across the museum, "Mary Ellen Mark: A Seattle Family, 1983–2014" chronicles a different family a century, an ocean, and many social strata removed from 19th-century Paris. In 1983 *Life* magazine sent the celebrated photojournalist to document Seattle's street kids. During that assignment, Mark befriended 13-year-old Erin Blackwell, who'd run away from the apartment she shared with her alcoholic mother.

Unexpectedly, the two developed a close bond that lasted until Mark's death more than 30 years later. Over those decades, Mark continued to document Blackwell's life. A dysfunctional birth family spurred Blackwell to dream of creating a family without the painful problems she'd known; the show quotes her as yearning for a child she could love and care for. She gave birth to her first child before turning 16, and the show includes an image of her during pregnancy, looking implacably at the camera, her stern street face not fully hiding a sense of vulnerability.

Mark follows Blackwell through early motherhood and an uneasy reconnection with her own mother. In the early 2000s we see her at the head of a large, blended, multiracial family with ten kids. Throughout the portraits, all shot in black and white, Mark never veers from her a matter-of-fact documentary style. Blackwell and her growing family never appear to question the presence of a camera, suggesting the feeling of trust and intimacy between the two women.

—STEVE WOLF

The Arts

ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH? NO, JUST THE BSO AND ELLINGTON



Fenway residents might take the Boston Symphony Orchestra's presence for granted, but when the orchestra plays in Mission Hill, Mission Hill turns out to hear it. Pews were packed when the BSO gave a free community concert on Nov. 8 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help—better known as Mission Church/Boston's Basilica. "A Tribute to Duke Ellington" marked the first time the BSO had performed at the church. Under its Concert for the City initiative, the symphony sponsored the performance in collaboration with the Greater Roxbury Arts & Cultural Center.

New MFA Installation Takes Fresh Approach To First-Nation Figuration



Last month the MFA installed new statues by Alan Michelson on either side of its Huntington Avenue entrance. "The Knowledge Keepers" responds to Cyrus Dallin's "Appeal to the Great Spirit," which has dominated the front lawn since 1912—even though it was created as a temporary work. Hewing to the classically influenced style of his era, Dallin created an anonymous figure on horseback intended to stand for all indigenous peoples. More than a century later, Michelson, a Mohawk member of the Six Nations of the Grand River, offers a radically different take. Dallin gave his figure attributes of Great Plains tribes, like a feathered head dress, but "The Knowledge Keepers" wear the dress of their respective New England tribes. Equally critical, Michelson has portrayed specific people: Julia Marden (left), of the Aquinnah Wampanoag, and Andre StrongBearHeart Gaines, Jr. (right), a Nipmuc descendant. Their clothes reflect their practice of traditional tribal crafts; their heroic poses suggest their roles as transmitters of tribal culture; and their glittering platinum plating points to the future their knowledge will help build. Michelson, says the museum, celebrates Marden's and Gaines's "roles as cultural models. By extension, 'The Knowledge Keepers' seeks to honor and celebrate the beauty, presence, agency, and endurance of the Indigenous nations of Massachusetts."

—STEVE WOLF



December

CALENDAR

Now ↻ Sat, 12/21

Donate new or gently-used clean clothing and footwear during the **WINTER CLOTHING DRIVE** at the Fenway Community Center, hosted in partnership with the Boston Public Health Commission and Fenway Civic Association. New warm winter clothes are especially needed. New undergarments and socks will also be accepted. Drop-off dates and times: Mon–Fri 10am–6pm, with evening hours until 8pm on Wed, 12/11 and Tue, 12/17; Saturdays 10am–2pm on 12/7, 12/14, and 12/21. 1282 Boylston Street (entrance on Jersey St.). fenwaycommunitycenter.org/calendar.

Fri, 12/6, Sat, 12/7, & Sun, 12/8

SENIOR CHOREOGRAPHERS CONCERT: BECOMINGS. The Boston Conservatory at Berklee Dance Division presents its annual senior choreographers' concert. Senior composition majors present 15 new and diverse works on the conservatory mainstage in two separate shows. Fri, 7:30pm; Sat, 2pm and 7:30pm; Sun, 2pm. Boston Conservatory Theater, 31 Hemenway St.

Sat, 12/7

The documentary **GEORGIA O'KEEFE: THE BRIGHTNESS OF LIGHT** offers a rich new take on the painter's evolution as an artist and her influence on 20th-century American art. 2:30pm in Remis Auditorium. Tickets \$12 members/\$15 nonmembers. Details and tickets at mfa.org/programs/film.

Sun, 12/8, 12/15, 12/22, & 12/29

PICKLEBALL LESSONS presented by the Tommy Picklz Foundation. 11am. Madison Park, 75 Malcolm X Blvd.

Sun, 12/8

NEWBURY STREET goes car-free between Berkeley Street and Mass. Ave. for seasonal shoppers, 10am–6pm. **FREE**

Mon, 12/9

- **AURORA BOREALIS: A FESTIVAL OF LIGHT AND DANCE.** A vibrant exploration of the relationship between light and form with a focus on collaboration and experimentation, featuring multiple dance and movement pieces. Boston University Dance Theatre, 915 Commonwealth Ave. 7pm, 9pm. **FREE**
- Are you concerned about climate change and a renter in a building with 15 units or more? Attend the City's **BERDO REVIEW BOARD PUBLIC MEETING FOR TENANTS** to learn more about the Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance, where tenants fit within BERDO, and what resources can help tenants save energy and money. 4:30–6:30pm. Join online at us02web.zoom.us/j/84619737235. More info at Boston.gov/BERDO.
- Celebrate the culmination of the **LIFE WRITING WITH BOSTON UNIVERSITY PROGRAM** at Fenway Community Center with a public reading by participants. 2:45–4:15pm. 1282 Boylston Street (entrance on Jersey St.). fenwaycommunitycenter.org/calendar.

Tue, 12/10

Just in time for holiday spending and planning for a new year, the BPL's Kirstein Business Library & Innovation Center offers a **PERSONAL BUDGETING WORKSHOP** presented by the City of Boston Credit Union. Learn the basics of personal finance, such as establishing and maintaining a budget, debt repayment, credit building and repair, and establishing savings goals. In-person and online. 11am–12pm. Central Library at Copley Square. Register at bpl.bibliocommons.com/events/67229d6b8fc0a328000a54c1. **FREE**

Wed, 12/11

GREAT DECISIONS: CLIMATE TECHNOLOGY WITH DR. EMILY REICHERT. The CEO of the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center discusses how the U.S. and other powerful countries might confront the "common enemy" of climate change. Audience Q&A and time for networking and discussion with other globally-oriented participants in the Newsfeed Café. 6–7:30pm in-person and 6–7pm livestream. Registration required at bpl.bibliocommons.com/events/6737703454a602ae2c398366. Central Library in Copley Square. **FREE**

Fri, 12/13 & 12/20

MISSION HILL ART AND CRAFTS HOLIDAY MARKET. Shop for original artwork and crafts. 11am–5pm. One Brigham Circle, 1620 Tremont St. **FREE**

Sat, 12/14

- **BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS CITYWIDE SCHOOL SHOWCASE.** Hear about all the school options under one roof. 9am–1pm. Bolling Building, 2300 Washington St.
- **HOLIDAY MARKET.** Shop local and support neighborhood artists. 2–5pm. Fenway Community Center, 1282 Boylston St. **FREE**

Sun, 12/15

THE KINGDOM CHOIR burst onto the international stage at the 2018 wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. The London-based gospel choir makes its Boston debut at Berklee Performance Center, 5pm. Tickets \$39-125. Tickets at berklee.edu/BPC/events/the-kingdom-choir.

Tue, 12/17

The Boston Ward 4 Dems invite you to Jingle & Mingle, its **ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY** at Kings Back Bay. Bring a special baked item for the holiday dessert competition. The group is also collecting spices for the BPL Spice Drive.

6:30–8:30pm. \$15/ suggested donation. bostonward4dems.org.

Wed, 12/18

FENWAY CARES FOOD DISTRIBUTION offers free fresh veggies, fruits, grains, and more. A collaboration of six neighborhood non-profits to help address food insecurity, Fenway Cares provides one bag per household on a first-come, first-served basis (limited bags). 3:30pm at both Symphony Park and Fenway Community Center, 1282 Boylston Street (entrance on Jersey St.). fenwaycommunitycenter.org/calendar. **FREE**

Thu, 12/19

The MFA presents **ONE AND THE OTHER**, a violin recital by award-winning violinist Lilit Hartunian in the Linde Gallery. Free with museum admission. 6pm. Details at mfa.org/programs/music.

Tue, 12/31

CELEBRATE FIRST NIGHT 2025. First Night's pandemic-era retrenchment cut most Fenway performance venues—City Hall Plaza now hosts the main stage—but there's still plenty to do nearby. And it's all free.

- The Christian Science Center opens its **MAPPARIUM** for free, 10am-5pm, and the Church extension hosts a **CONCERT** on one of the world's largest pipe organs at 3pm.
- At **TRINITY CHURCH**, Handel+Haydn and the Museum of African American History present an "Emancipation Proclamation Concert" 1-2pm.
- **OLD SOUTH CHURCH** hosts an organ concert on its 1912 Wurlitzer at 3pm and two other (non-organ) concerts at 6:30 and 8:00pm.
- **FIREWORKS** at 7pm over the Common and midnight over the harbor, plus plenty of other entertainment.

For details, visit firstnightboston.org. **FREE**



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Winter all the way



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Cheers for a cause at **The Fenway Chalet**, powered by **Cisco Brewers**. A portion of proceeds will benefit **Fenway Cares** and their mission to provide food access to local families.



Open select dates, visit thefenway.com

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