



THE

# Fenway News

HYPERLOCAL NEWS FOR THE FENWAY, AUDUBON CIRCLE, KENMORE SQUARE, UPPER BACK BAY, PRUDENTIAL, LONGWOOD, AND MISSION HILL SINCE 1974 • VOLUME 51 NUMBER 7 • JUNE 27-AUGUST 1, 2025

## JP Licks' Exit Heads List of Mission Hill Retail Changes

BY ALISON PULTINAS

**F**irst, the good news: Two empty storefronts have been renovated for new retail. Duverge Barbershop at 12 South Huntington Ave. opened in May with Luis Duverge, the owner, wielding the razors and scissors. Meanwhile, Bora Kara and Cengiz Albayrak, owners of Naughty Waffle in Faneuil Hall, expect to open Café La Paz, a coffeehouse at 101 South Huntington Ave. by early July.

In other good news, on June 3 Mayor Michelle Wu hosted a reception for 30 independent businesses selected for the City's annual Legacy Business Awards. The group included Brigham Circle's Penguin Pizza, opened in 2004 by Irish immigrant Dermot Doyne. Pam Carthy—also from Ireland and one of Penguin's first employees—took over ownership in 2020.

Now, the not-so-good news: JP Licks shut down its Brigham Circle

ice cream store on June 19 after 21 years in the location. Closing announcements were taped to the doors just a few days before the 19th, surprising neighbors. Manager Rachel Davis did not share any explanation for the closure but said that all staff were offered positions at other JP Licks locations (16 in all). The Mission Hill space, larger than many of the chain's other storefronts, was known for the spinning teacup decorated as a water lily (pictured) that began life as a carnival ride at Paragon Park

on Nantasket Beach. The location regularly hosted exhibits by local artists and photographers, including at least two on Mission Hill history.

*Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill.*



## A MOTHER'S WORK IS NEVER DONE

The riverbank along Agassiz Road proved a congenial spot for a turtle's nest in early June. A Boston Parks Department employee reported that the agency doesn't typically interfere with turtle nests but has been monitoring other nests in the Back Bay Fens. This appears to be a common snapping turtle; according to the Connecticut Department of Energy and the Environment, her eggs should hatch in 80-90 days—if they don't get eaten by predators.

PHOTO: MARY ANN BROGAN

## FENWAY PARK CONCERT ALERT

REPORT NOISE OR BAD BEHAVIOR  
Help document noise or other problems by calling ALL THREE of these numbers:

CITY LICENSING BOARD ☎ 617-635-4170  
SOX COMPLAINT LINE ☎ 617-226-6424  
CITY PROBLEM LINE ☎ 311

THU, 7/17  
& FRI, 7/18

THE LUMINEERS  
4:30-10:30PM

SAT, 7/19

THOMAS RHETT  
4:00-10:30PM

PHOTOS: LESLIE POND (LEFT COLUMN, TOP AND BOTTOM) AND STEVE WOLF



## Protest Fuses With Celebration As No Kings Joins Boston's Pride Parade

BY LESLIE POND

**C**elebration and protest came together as Boston Pride For The People (BP4TP) held its Pride Month parade and festival in conjunction with the No Kings rally on Saturday, June 14. A light rain fell throughout the parade, but that didn't dampen the joyful spirit or attendance, with participants of all ages. The parade started at Copley Square with staging that stretched along Boylston St. to Gloucester St. and ended at Boston Common, where the peaceful celebration continued with a festival.

The purpose of the parade "is to commemorate the brave LGBTQ+ people who risked their safety to advocate for the lives and humanity of LGBTQ+ people, to celebrate the richness and complexity of LGBTQ+ community, and to continue to advocate for equity and inclusion for LGBTQ+ people, especially those who face intersecting forms of oppression," according to the Boston Pride For The People website.

In a May press release announcing this year's theme, BP4TP announced

that "'Here to Stay' is a message of resilience and defiance in the face of increased political attacks on LGBTQIA+ Communities and People." BP4TP president Adrianna Boulton said, "we won't be bullied, backed into silence, or erased. We've never bowed to hate, and we're not about to start now. We're here to stay."

The No Kings rally added to the spirit of protest. Its website states that June 14 was a "nationwide day of defiance" to "reject authoritarianism" and "in America, we don't do kings. They've defied our courts, deported Americans, disappeared people off the streets, attacked our civil rights, and slashed our services. The corruption has gone too far." No Kings emphasizes its commitment to nonviolent action as a core principle.

June 14 is Flag Day, which commemorates adoption of the U.S. flag in 1777. An estimated 1,500 No Kings rallies that drew millions of demonstrators across the country were counterpoints to a military parade in Washington D.C. that marked the 250th anniversary of the U.S. Army and

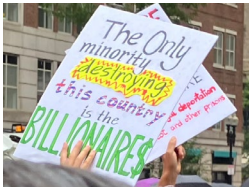
President Trump's 79th birthday. The parade cost an estimated \$45 million, funded by taxpayers.

The nearly 300 groups in the Pride Month parade represented a wide variety of sectors, including organizations that support the LGBTQ+ community, elected officials, schools, unions, environmental organizations, healthcare organizations, churches, and for-profit companies, among others.

Spectators along the parade route waved U.S., Pride, and other flags, cheered enthusiastically, and held high artfully-rendered signs in support of LGTBQ+ people and the No Kings movement. These included the parade slogan "NO KINGS but YAAAS QUEEN!" and many decrying authoritarianism: "No King! No Tyranny! Support the Rule of Law," "USA for all of US KINSHIP NOT KINGSHIP," and "A Diverse America Is a Beautiful America." Others made calls to action: "Protect Trans Kids," "DEMOCRACY is not a Spectator Sport," "Courage is Contagious," and "SPEAK NOW OR FOREVER LOSE THE RIGHT." A few light-hearted signs, including "IF KAMALA HAD WON WE COULD ALL BE AT DRAG BRUNCH," appeared among many more sharply-worded messages.

*Leslie Pond lives in the West Fens.*

At left, scenes from the parade/protest along Boylston Street at (top to bottom) Dartmouth, Arlington, and Clarendon.





# FENSVIEWS

## When It Comes to ICE, Know Your Rights and Take Action

BY CASSIE WHITE

With increased Immigration and Customs Enforcement action in the region and across the country, knowing our rights is more important than ever. No matter your immigration status, knowing your rights empowers you to respond and to protect yourself and your neighbors.

During these chaotic and fearful times, turning toward community is important. Getting to know our neighbors and being in community with one another is a small step toward caring for one another and showing up for each other.

Below I’ve listed immigrants’ rights organizations, resources, and ways to get involved.

If you have any questions or want to get more involved, reach out to Cassie White, director of Policy and Community Organizing at Fenway CDC by email ([cwhite@fenwaycdc.org](mailto:cwhite@fenwaycdc.org)) or phone (857-217-4370).

### WAYS TO TAKE ACTION

- Educate yourself on immigrant rights.
- Donate to an immigrant rights organization.
- Sign a petition to support MIRA’s “Protect Our Immigrant Communities” campaign ([miracoalition.org/petition](https://miracoalition.org/petition)).
- Sign a petition asking Gov. Healey to “Melt the ICE” ([bit.ly/sign-healey-demands](https://bit.ly/sign-healey-demands)).
- Advocate with your elected officials.
- Share this information at home, school, and work.

### RESOURCES

- > **The Massachusetts Immigration & Refugee Advocacy (MIRA) Coalition** has reliable “Know Your Rights” resources, including trainings, flyers, posters, cards (see illustration above). For a free Know Your Rights app, search your app store: “KYR 4 Immigrants” (Android) or “Know Your Rights 4 Immigrants” (Apple). Visit [miracoalition.org/news/know-your-rights](https://miracoalition.org/news/know-your-rights) for more information.



- > **LUCE Immigrant Justice Network of Massachusetts** verifies ICE sightings, supports you in exercising your rights, and shares verified information to protect the community.
  - See ICE? Call the LUCE Hotline: 617-370-5023
  - Volunteer for ICE watch or the LUCE hotline: [lucemass.org](https://lucemass.org)
  - For flyers in additional languages, visit [lucemass.org/resources](https://lucemass.org/resources).
- > **The Boston Immigration Justice Accompaniment Network (BIJAN)** is seeking volunteers to support people impacted by the immigration system. Opportunities include court accompaniment, rides, vigils, fundraising, and more. BIJAN is a grassroots network led by allies and shaped by the voices of those directly impacted by ICE detention. Learn more at [beyondbondboston.org/join](https://beyondbondboston.org/join).

BIJAN can typically offer support such as accompaniment in court or at ICE check-ins, legal referrals, contributions for bond or legal fees, letters of support from the community, rides for families to visit loved ones in detention, logistical assistance with paperwork, and immediate needs such as short-term housing or transportation.

If you or a loved one needs general assistance and/or have any questions, call the BIJAN family hotline at 617-396-7143.

Cassie White is director of policy and community organization at the Fenway CDC.

## THE Fenway News

Published monthly by the Fenway News Association, Inc., run by community members and dedicated to local journalism. Serving the Fenway, Mission Hill, Audubon Circle, Kenmore Square, upper Back Bay and lower Roxbury

**FENWAY NEWS ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
Ahmed M. Abdelfattah • Mary Ann Brogan  
Steve Chase • Mandy Kapica  
Ruth Khowais • Carol Lasky  
Alison Pultinas • Steve Wolf

**BOARD MEMBERS EMERITA**  
Helen Cox • Leslie Pond

### PRODUCTION

**EDITOR** | Kelsey Bruun

**DESIGN/PRODUCTION MANAGER** | Steve Wolf

**CONTRIBUTORS (REPORTING, PHOTOGRAPHY, PRODUCTION):** Ahmed M. Abdelfattah, Ed Ballo, Alison Barnet, Mary Ann Brogan, Will Brownsberger, Steve Chase, Jonathan Cohn, Helen Cox, Tracey Cusick, John Engstrom, Stan Everett, Lisa Fay, Marie Fukuda, Katherine Greenough, Steve Harnish, Ruth Khowais, Carol Lasky, Leslie Pond, Alison Pultinas, Patrick O'Connor, Mallory Rohrig, Mat Thall, Chris Viveiros, Steve Wolf

**BOOKKEEPER** | Janet Malone

**DISTRIBUTION** | Reggie Wynn

### SUBMISSIONS

**SUBMISSIONS** | We welcome letters (please aim for 250 or fewer words), opinion pieces, and photography from people who live or work in our coverage area. Publication of submissions is at our discretion and does not represent endorsement by the paper, its board, or its volunteers.

Contact the paper with submissions or announcements at

[fenwaynews@gmail.com](mailto:fenwaynews@gmail.com) or

**The Fenway News**  
P.O. Box 230277, Astor Station  
Boston, MA 02123

### DEADLINES & ADVERTISING

**NEXT ISSUE APPEARS**  
Friday, August 1

**ISSUE DEADLINE**  
Send letters, news items, and ads by  
Friday, July 25

SUBSCRIPTIONS \$30/YEAR  
(LIMITED INCOME, \$20)  
©2025 FENWAY NEWS ASSOCIATION, INC.

## “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.

FAMILY-OWNED AND -OPERATED  
FOR 50 YEARS—AND COUNTING!

## Mass Ave Locksmith

Lockouts ★ Master Key Systems  
High-Security Key Systems  
Mailbox Keys ★ Keys Made by Code  
Door Closers ★ Deadbolts

125 St. Botolph St.  
**617-247-9779**  
[MassAveLock@verizon.net](mailto:MassAveLock@verizon.net)

Open 9-3, Monday-Friday

## NEW ‘GROVE’ TREES INCLUDE SEVEN DEDICATED TO GERSHWIN

PHOTO: STEVE WOLF



On June 5, the Charlesgate Alliance and Emerald Necklace Conservancy dedicated 14 new trees in “The Grove” section of Charlesgate Park at Beacon Street and Charlesgate East. At left, the Alliance’s Parker James addressed roughly 30 people who gathered for the mid-afternoon ceremony. Seven of the trees have been dedicated to the late Fran Gershwin, who co-founded and for decades led the Muddy River Restoration Project Maintenance and Management Oversight Committee (MMOC). Funds for the trees came from Mass Parks for All, the Gershwin Family, and friends. Relatives and friends delivered remarks, as did State Sen. Will Brownsberger, State Rep. Jay Livingstone, District 8 Councilor Sharon Durkan, and Karen Mauney-Brodek, president of the Emerald Necklace Conservancy.

## Volunteers Pull Trash, Invasives from Near Mothers Rest

As part of the Emerald Necklace Conservancy’s “Day in the Dirt” program for corporate volunteers, about a dozen FactSet employees were found getting into the weeds in the Back Bay Fens the morning of June 9. By the end of their shift, the crew had filled six bags with trash and 14 bags with invasive plants, all collected from the area adjacent to the stairs near the Mother’s Rest. FactSet, a global financial data and analytics company, has volunteered annually with ENC since 2023.

“Day in the Dirt” allows organizations to sponsor private events that support park maintenance goals, including growth of native plants, and help keep public spaces clean and accessible, says ENC Field Operations Manager Jack Schleifer, who oversaw the team’s work. (No donation is required for social or small nonprofit groups who want to volunteer.) “He added, “Without this maintenance, we could easily see these plantings be overgrown by invasive plants or other species that might not have the same aesthetics and wildlife benefits.”

—LESLIE POND



PHOTO: LESLIE POND



# Grants to Local Groups Hit New High As Trust Marks 25th Year

BY ALISON PULTINAS

On June 5, community members took over MassArt’s Design Media Center Lecture Hall to announce recipients of this year’s Mission Hill Fenway Neighborhood Trust awards. MHFNT chair Lauren Dewey Platt noted that this year marked the Trust’s 25th anniversary.

The Trust’s origin story forever connects MassArt with the Fenway and Mission Hill neighborhoods. When MassArt sold its old campus at 364 Brookline Ave. to Beth Israel Hospital in 1992, elected officials—especially State Rep. Kevin Fitzgerald—made sure that the deal for this piece of state property included creation of a fund to benefit abutting communities. (The façade of the old campus remains as part of BIDMC’s Shapiro outpatient center.)

Every year in March, the Trust

accepts applications from local nonprofits for projects and programs that will benefit the neighborhoods. It’s not an anonymous process—the June ceremony brings together representatives of recipients and the board members who evaluated all the proposals. The event is “the icing on the cake,” as Trust member Steve Chase called it, an opportunity for Trust

members and grant recipients to meet in person and to learn about the activities and goals of other local organizations.

During the event, the six Trust members—three from each neighborhood—took turns reading the names of the 21 recipients. The grants totaled \$144,919, the most ever distributed said Dewey Platt.

Several recipients spoke emotionally about the value of in-person community events. “Art, music, and performance gets us through the darkness,” said Kathy McBride of the Fenway. Luisa Harris of Mission Hill talked about living beyond a distracted life and unleashing creativity, while Carmen Rosa Noroña of the Friends of Ramler Park spoke of finding a safe place and the value of the park as an urban oasis.

Kim Willingham, executive director of the Boston Debate League, said that grappling with high-level policy issues teaches the teens her group serves powerful lessons in civil discourse. She also discussed the “Resolved” program, targeted to young men of color, and a new club the League plans for middle-school students at the Tobin School.

*Alison Pultinas lives in Mission Hill. She is also a member of the MHFNT board.*



Supporters of the Peterborough Senior Center surrounded director Tracey Hunt (holding check), at the Trust’s announcement event on June 5.

## 2025 Grant Recipients

### MISSION HILL RECIPIENTS

- **Arts Talks:** \$4,500 for promotional materials and website design update for the 2025 Mission Hill Arts Festival
- **Mission SAFE:** \$13,370 for summer stipends for eight Mission Hill youth
- **Mission Hill Neighborhood Housing Services:** \$4,000 for a public jazz concert series in the Kevin W. Fitzgerald Park
- **Maria Sanchez House:** \$4,000 for summer cultural and artistic programming for seniors from the building and the wider community
- **Mission Hill Women’s Writing**

- **Group:** \$6,820 for a writing coach and printing the Writing Group’s book
- **Boston Self Help Center:** \$7,000 for two power-wheelchair soccer tournaments in 2026 for the Commonwealth Cruisers and the Boston Brakers
- **Back of the Hill CDC:** \$4,180 for 2025 summer concert series in Butterfly Park on Bucknam Street
- **Sociedad Latina:** \$12,500 for youth leaders in the Workforce Development Pathways program
- **Phillips Brooks House Association:** \$4,520 for eight junior counselors, activities, and materials for the 2025 Mission Hill Summer Program for children ages 6 to 13
- **Boston Debate League:** \$5,000 for after-school debate programs at Fenway High School and Edward M.

- **Kennedy Academy for Health Careers**
  - **Boston Building Resources:** \$7,500 for educational hands-on workshops and lectures on home maintenance
- ### FENWAY RECIPIENTS
- **Operation P.E.A.C.E.:** \$10,000 for STEAM-focused 2025 summer academy for Fenway youth
  - **Massachusetts College of Art and Design Foundation:** \$6,000 for outdoor summer cultural programming in 2025
  - **Fenway Civic Association:** \$2,000 for replacement of stolen sound equipment for programs in Symphony Park
  - **National Braille Press:** \$5,000 for Children’s Braille Book Club subscription-based program
  - **Kaji Aso Studio:** \$8,000 for 2025–

- **2026 concert series**
- **Peterborough Senior Center:** \$10,000 for healthy food options, field trips, and social activities for seniors
- **Fenway Community Center:** \$11,600 for a series of art and cultural classes, workshops, and performances
- **Friends of Ramler Park:** \$4,929 for 2025 summertime jazz concerts and lawn care in Ramler Park
- **Boston Comic Arts Foundation:** \$4,000 for a comics and graphic novel production course for Fenway adults to be held at the Fenway Community Center
- **Fenway CDC:** \$10,000 for the Fenway Flea Market and the Harm Reduction Project

## IN MEMORIAM

### Susan St. Clair and Carmen Pola

Two pioneers of Mission Hill’s decades-long history of female leadership in community-led initiatives and neighborhood battles died in recent weeks. Susan St. Clair, 81, lived on Iroquois Street, and Carmen Pola, 86, lived on Hillside Street and later on Calumet. Both were feisty matriarchs who didn’t hesitate to speak up. Their lives intersected occasionally, but they took separate paths as advocates. The neighborhood faced down many threats in the past, and the voices of these strong women resonated and had influence.

#### Carmen A. Pola

Carmen A. Pola died on June 1. Pastor Elizur Vasquez of the Salvation Army held a celebration of life service on June 9 at the Boston Teachers Union Hall in Dorchester. Her daughter Mary J. Pola gave the eulogy.

Carmen’s work life was her community activism. She’d been an organizer since her days in Oakland, California. Carmen moved to Mission Hill in the early 1970s with her late husband Juan Pola, quickly getting involved with multiple organizations and with public housing tenants at Mission Main and Mission Extension.

In 1973 she was named a director of the Parker Hill Fenway Area Planning Council, under the auspices of Action for Boston Community Development. Today the Neighborhood Services Center at 716 Parker St. operates the social services programming associated with the Council.

An advocate for bilingual education, safe and affordable housing, and substance-abuse programs, the list of neighborhood groups she worked with was long, including several she led that had a citywide focus—for example, the Comité de Padres pro Defensa de la Educación Bilingüe, founded in response to desegregation policies that threatened the viability of bilingual education programs in the Boston Public Schools. Some groups she started were incorporated as nonprofits, but others were more informal.

In 1983, Carmen served as Mayor Ray Fynn’s director of constituent services after working on his campaign. In later years, Carmen created the Mission Hill Senior Legacy Project, based at the Tobin Community Center, and raised funds for programs, classes, and events.

Beginning in 2006, Carmen donated files to the Northeastern University Library Archives and Special Collection. Ultimately measuring 16 cubic feet, the files covered more than 25 years of activism.

Carmen also leaves behind a legacy of five children, 15 grandchildren, and six

great grandchildren. The motorcade to her burial at a cemetery in Roslindale, started in Dorchester and was intentionally routed through Mission Hill to give Pola one last ride on Tremont Street.

#### Susan St. Clair

Susan St. Clair died May 4 after several years of illness. Her community activism began in the 1960s with the antiwar movement in her hometown of Brooklyn, New York. Her advocacy continued after her move to Boston in 1970 as a single mom with two children. She lived in a politically involved commune on Schiller Street in Jamaica Plain.



In the 1970s she worked as a licensed practical nurse, and later as a letter carrier out of the Jamaica Plain post office. There, she met John LaRuffa, and they married in 1986.

Susan spoke up at public hearings, wrote letters, and walked the line at the many community protests of institutional expansion and speculator pressures reshaping Mission Hill. As her obituary in the *Boston Globe* noted, she was “one of the few leaders able to successfully shift from fighting against to fighting for.” She served on the board of Mission Hill Neighborhood Housing Services and the Wentworth Community Task Force, and was a founding member of Mission Hill’s former Problem Properties Task Force. She also volunteered with Mission Hill Little League.

Her legacy is formidable, as both a neighborhood activist and the head of a clan. She was the oldest of six, and leaves behind siblings, three children, five grandchildren, and 11 great grandchildren, almost all of whom live in the Boston area.

Family and friends gathered May 9 at Mann & Rodgers Funeral Home in Jamaica Plain to share memories and prayers. Her husband John has suggested that a meaningful tribute to Susan would be donating to support women’s shelters such as Rosie’s Place.

COMPILED BY ALISON PULTINAS

## Fenway News Annual Meeting

Our June 26 meeting—featuring a conversation with *Globe* political reporters Niki Griswold and Emma Platoff—took place the night after this issue went to press. We’ll have a summary in our next issue.



NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLINES

Countway Library Earns Preservation Award

In June, the Boston Preservation Alliance awarded the Harvard Medical School’s Countway Library at Huntington Avenue and Shattuck Street a Preservation Achievement Award. Renovation projects in 2021 and 2023 updated the 1965 interior, but the exterior alterations are the big change for the streetscape. New stairways and accessible ramps on the Huntington façade bridged the moat that previously separated the library from the Mission Hill neighborhood. The renovations also replaced a loading dock with a landscaped plaza. The Preservation Alliance press release cited improvements that reduced greenhouse gas production, healthy materials initiatives, and documentation of building-products disclosures, indoor air quality, and a 35 percent reduction in water use. The public can visit the library on weekends with a government-issued ID. The Gallery of the Center for the History of Medicine on the fifth floor is open during visiting hours, and the first floor also hosts occasional exhibits. The hours are 10am–4pm on Saturdays and 12–5pm on Sundays, although the café and a tiny Harvard Coop gift shop in the atrium are closed those days.

Sidewalk Mopeds Prompt Tutorial On How 311 And 911 Differ

On May 29, representatives of Boston Police District D-4 met with patrons of the Peterborough Senior Center to explain how 311 and 911 differ. Officer John Beauchemin explained that Boston Police have received many 311 calls about moped drivers riding on sidewalks, speeding through the neighborhood, and ignoring red lights. In one week, police stopped nine mopeds and found most unregistered and unlicensed. The department made one arrest. Beauchemin said that bicycles and mopeds may not travel on sidewalks and must obey traffic regulations. He and Officer Luis Diaz explained that 311 is for quality-of-life issues that don’t involve harm or danger to a person, such as graffiti or broken sidewalks. 911 is for an emergency that needs immediate attention. Moped concerns would typically qualify as a 311 call, Beauchemin said, but when in doubt, call 911.

Muddy River Water Got A Smidge Cleaner In 2024

Water quality in the Muddy River got a tiny bit better in 2024, according to The 2024 *Three-Rivers Report* issued jointly by the Charles River Watershed Association, Neponset River Watershed Association and Mystic River Watershed Association. The improvement mostly came down to climate—two years of drought—and might not last. The groups issue an annual report card for the Charles and its tributaries, and the Muddy earned a C+ grade for 2024, up slightly from the C it earned in 2023. The extended drought reduced stormwater runoff, which meant fewer surface pollutants like oil and dog feces made it

into the river. The report warns us not to break out any champagne: “Muddy River grades have fluctuated between a C+ and D- since 2004, which is significantly lower than the main stem of the Charles. A C+ grade still indicates highly degraded conditions,” said the press release. The report suggested that positive forces *might* be at work in the better grade, citing the decades-long Muddy River restoration project and better maintenance of the watershed by Boston and Brookline. As for the drought, our rainy spring means that, as of June 10, all parts of the state except the Cape and Islands were drought-free, according to the Commonwealth.

Construction Start In Sight For Pathways Project

Delayed for more than a year, the rethinking and reconstruction of crumbling pathways and entry points for the Back Bay Fens could break ground before the end of 2025. In an update issued in early June, the Boston Parks and Recreation Department project manager Lauren Bryant said that the project only needs to clear two more hurdles: a permit under Chapter 91, the Commonwealth’s wetlands-protection law, and approval by the City’s Conservation Commission. Once the department has the expected approvals in hand, it will complete construction documents and put the project out to bid. Bryant says the department expects construction to start in the late fall.

Four Groups To Receive Neighborhood Improvement Grants

This spring, Berklee College of Music announced that four Fenway nonprofits will receive funds under the Fenway Neighborhood Improvement Grant program. A total of \$17,000 will be distributed among a collaboration of the Fenway CDC and the Fenway Community Center; the Emerald Necklace Conservancy; the Community Center; and the Fenway Civic Association. The grants will support a range of activities, including free yoga classes, revitalizing public space, the Fenway Free Market, and tree plantings.

Apply For Mayor’s Garden Contest By July 9

The application period has opened for the annual Mayor’s Garden Contest, a citywide celebration of urban gardening. The contest recognizes gardeners who have landscaped, planted flowers, vegetables, trees, and shrubs. Applications are due July 9. For more information, visit [boston.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/Mayors-garden-contest](https://boston.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/Mayors-garden-contest).

• Of the seven sites in the City’s new nighttime food truck program, two are in the Fenway and will be open 10pm–3am on designated nights. Vendors were chosen by lottery. In the Fenway Entertainment District trucks will park at 163 Ipswich St., on the Music Hall side of the street. Vendors: Cool Shade (Fridays)

and Cousins Maine Lobster (Saturdays). At Northeastern (60 Opera Place, midblock) trucks will operate seven nights a week. Lottery winners for this site—some of whom won multiple nights—include El Dugout, Extreme Flavor, Murl’s Kitchen, and Cool Shade. • If it’s Tuesday it must be half-price-taco day at the Loco Taqueria branch on Brookline Avenue in the West Fens. The deal also applies at their Southie spot.

EATS BEAT



LET THE CHIPS FALL WHERE THEY MAY?



Wondering what’s up with the piles of wood chips and mulch along the Boylston Street side of the Victory Gardens? Sai Boddupalli, the recently elected Fenway Garden Society president, provided some insights. He said that materials drop-off and storage can be tricky, citing three key considerations: 1) ensuring that the materials aren’t deposited on the root systems of trees, 2) determining where delivery vehicles can maneuver, and 3) ensuring that all gardeners, including people with limited mobility, have access to a central pick-up location. FGS is also mindful of where long-term storage would be an eyesore and impact tree-planting efforts. For these reasons, the site along Boylston Street isn’t ideal, says Boddupalli, and they have proposed a vacant plot within the Victory Gardens that would meet its criteria. Before the plot can be used for materials storage, however, tree stumps have to be removed. In addition, FGS needs to coordinate with the Boston Parks and Recreation Department’s Back Bay Fens pathways improvement project, for which construction is slated to start this autumn. Boddupalli anticipates that a new storage location would be ready in 2026. The wood chips are used primarily for the pathways between rows of garden plots and to fill in flood-prone areas. Applying mulch around trees and plants offers many benefits, such as conserving water by slowing evaporation from the soil, limiting weed growth, and enriching the soil.

—LESLIE POND

An unspecified structural failure in the stage forced cancellation of the summer’s first two Fenway Park concerts. Some residents expressed relief at the unexpected reduction in concerts [the ownership group had scheduled 11, one short of their limit under an agreement with the City]. The back-to-back shows would have featured Shakira (May 29) and Jason Aldean (May 30). Communications to residents from the Red Sox didn’t mention the cause, but media reports did. According to *Rolling Stone*, the City’s Inspectional Services Dept. spotted the problem on 29th, but a statement from Mayor Wu’s office said that Live Nation made the call to axe the shows. 🗨️ In other Fenway Park news, concession workers there and at MGM Music Hall have lost patience with employer Aramark. They voted resoundingly to give their union, Unite Here Local 26, permission to call a strike, charging that Aramark underpays them in comparison to other ballparks where it operates and has begun eliminating jobs through automation. 🗨️ A new sculpture in Evans Way Park—a totem pole reassembling itself from pieces on the ground—is part of the first Boston Public Art Triennial, which opened last month. Appropriately, the sculpture’s creator, Nicholas Galanin, also has a new show at the nearby MassArt Museum. In a splashy feature in the *Globe’s* SundayArts section, critic Murray Whyte called Galanin “one of the most accomplished Indigenous contemporary artists in the country.” 🗨️ Nationally known architect Graham Gund died, and if you don’t recognize his name, you know his local buildings. They include the addition to the Museum School on the Fenway; the ICA’s former home on Boylston (a reuse project now part of Boston Architectural College); Church Court, the apartments at Mass. Ave. and Beacon Street that incorporate a burned-out church façade; the Hobbit-y BosTix booth in Copley Square; and the familiar ziggurat-shaped Cambridge Hyatt Hotel across the Charles River. 🗨️

DASHBOARD

TRASH & RECYCLING PICK-UPS

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

STREET CLEANING

In the Fenway, check both City and DCR schedules to see when street cleaning takes place. Find City info at [tinyurl.com/s9fyarf8](https://tinyurl.com/s9fyarf8). See the DCR schedule at [tinyurl.com/4usvd8w3](https://tinyurl.com/4usvd8w3).

SOX BOX		This month’s home games at Fenway Park	
FRI, 6/27 7:10PM	SAT, 6/28 4:10PM	SUN, 6/29 1:35PM	MON, 6/30 7:10PM
TUE, 7/1 7:10PM	WED, 7/2 7:10PM	MON, 7/7 7:10PM	TUE, 7/8 7:10PM
WED, 7/9 7:10PM	THU, 7/10 7:10PM	FRI, 7/11 7:10PM	SAT, 7/12 4:10PM
SUN, 7/13 1:35PM	FRI, 7/25 7:10PM	SAT, 7/26 7:15PM	SUN, 7/27 1:35PM



# WS Proposes Retail, Offices For Lansdowne Garage Site



IMAGES: WS DEVELOPMENT VIA BOSTON PLANNING DEPARTMENT

BY STEVE WOLF

At a Planning Department meeting on June 2, WS Development unveiled its proposed design for 55 Lansdowne St., now occupied by the Lansdowne Garage. The 250,000SF building would replace a grimly utilitarian stretch between the Cask & Flagon and the House of Blues. The proposal devotes the two lowest floors to retail space and the remaining five floors (including a penthouse) to offices—very likely the team’s back office operations, according to a story in the *Globe*. A digital signboard would crown the penthouse, presumably beaming avid “Go Sox!” slogans into the stadium during games. The proposal contains two design elements worth noting. First, it includes a “pass-through” reminiscent of the multistory entrance to the new North

*The rendering above shows a street-level view toward Brookline Avenue. The building steps back 10 feet to create outdoor space every two floors. The view at right, looking east to Ipswich, shows ground-level retail and widened, planted sidewalks.*

Station complex on Causeway Street. The passage would connect with a future air-rights development above the Turnpike. Second, despite approved zoning that allows for a building of up to 250 feet, the structure will top out at 129 feet, barely half of the allowed height. Equally notable, WS promises a “net zero carbon” building, using a variety of mechanisms to reduce its carbon footprint to zero. Like the Baltimore Orioles’ Camden Yards complex, the building’s appearance takes cues from nearby historic but undistinguished

commercial buildings, with plenty of brick punctuated by massive exposed steel girders. The girders may serve a structural function, but the architects [the team of Morris Adjmi, Jaklitsch/Gardner, and Gensler] have used them to create a gritty industrial look. On both the Lansdowne and Mass Pike

facades, the girders strike angles that echo the struts underpinning the Green Monster seats. WS has also pledged wider and more appealing sidewalks; better bicycle infrastructure; and \$3.9 million in housing and jobs linkage contributions. *Steve Wolf lives in the West Fens.*



## New Edgerly Plaza Open House



PHOTOS: REPRESENTU LLC



The City of Boston’s Transportation department and Streets Cabinet team hosted an evening open house at New Edgerly Plaza on Monday, June 2. The event invited attendees to discuss what is working well for the plaza, which was installed last October, and what can be improved. Posters recapped the process to date and sought input, with attendees filling up the poster that asked “What Are Your Ideas for the Plaza?”

## ROSE GARDEN PICNIC WELCOMES SUMMER



PHOTOS: REPRESENTU LLC



Although the solstice was still more than a week off, it definitely felt like summer as the Fenway Civic Association held its annual picnic on the sunny evening of June 11 outside the Kelleher Rose Garden. The evening featured food, drinks, socializing, remarks from elected officials, and more. Veteran Boston band The Bagboys added a rootsy Americana acoustic performance to the mix.



**LEARN TO DRAW AND PAINT**  
with artist and art teacher  
**Geoffrey Halverson**

- Flexible schedule
- 2-hour classes
- Perfect for beginning and intermediate students
- Classes in North Cambridge (Huron Village)

Call **617-501-6217** or  
Email **halverson12g@yahoo.com**

[www.geoffreyhalverson.com](http://www.geoffreyhalverson.com)



# Neighborhood Coffee Hour Brings Out Mayor, Residents (and Coffee)

The Fenway-Kenmore Mayor’s Coffee Hour at the Kelleher Rose Garden on Wednesday, June 11, featured brief speeches from Mayor Michelle Wu; City Councilors Ruthzee Louijeune, Erin Murphy, and Henry Santana; and State Rep. Jay Livingstone. They thanked City and State employees and community organizations and leaders for their efforts on behalf of residents, highlighting work in the areas of affordable housing, eviction prevention, 55 bus advocacy, street cleaning and maintenance, safety, transportation, and youth advocacy, among others. Livingstone reminded attendees that “we get the government we demand.”

Wu responded to questions submitted in advance. Asked whether the City plans to keep expanding bike lanes, she replied that the expansion has occurred across the tenures of three mayors, and as the City has reached the challenging stage of filling in connectivity gaps, her administration is taking a thoughtful approach that

considers street safety among other factors.

Asked how the City will mitigate heat island effects, Wu outlined a multi-pronged strategy including: net zero-carbon zoning for large buildings (Boston is the first U.S. city to require net zero emissions for new buildings); the City’s Energy Saver program to enhance access to energy-efficiency programs and incentives; green infrastructure and trees (the City now has an arborist team); and partnering with local organizations since federal funding is “not great.”

In addition, residents had a chance to talk directly with the Mayor and other elected officials, as well as representatives from several City departments that tabled during the event.

—LESLIE POND

Mallory Rohrig of the Fenway Community Center chats with Mayor Michelle Wu (and baby Mira).



PHOTO: LESLIE POND

# Fenway High and Boston Arts Academy Hold Graduations

PHOTOS: PATRICK O’CONNOR



Left: Fenway High School held graduation on Friday, June 6, at the Strand Theatre in Dorchester. 77 graduates received diplomas. Head of School Geoffrey Walker stood between salutatorian Jayleen Melo (left) and valedictorian Shaniece Clarke (right). Right: The Boston Arts Academy celebrated its 25th commencement at the Berklee Performance Center on Monday, June 9, presenting diplomas to 109 graduates. Salutatorian Liam Gideon Rotti (left) stood alongside valedictorian Leah Baptista Pires (right).



WE'RE BACK!

JOIN US FOR THE

# CHARLESGATE FARMERS MARKET

EVERY SUNDAY  
10:00AM–2:00PM

JUNE 22–OCTOBER 12

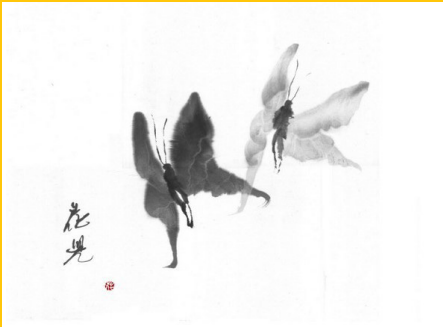
DCR CHARLESGATE PARK  
ON COMMONWEALTH AVENUE  
BETWEEN CHARLESGATE EAST & WEST

COME SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL FARMERS, SMALL BUSINESSES, AND MUSICIANS!

charlesgatefarmersmarket.com

## KAJI ASO STUDIO

INSTITUTE FOR THE ARTS



Flying together celebrating 51 years

# THE COLORS OF TANABATA

Group show inspired by the beloved summer legend


## Art • Music • Poetry


SUNDAY, JULY 6 | 3 PM AT KAJI ASO STUDIO  
POETRY AND MUSIC FROM 3:40 PM


Free and open to the public  
RSVP—[administrator@kajiasostudio.com](mailto:administrator@kajiasostudio.com)  
Also livestreamed on Facebook @kajiasostudio

KAJI ASO STUDIO, 40 ST. STEPHEN STREET  
[kajiasostudio.com](http://kajiasostudio.com)  
DONATIONS GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED

THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS

Mass Cultural Council

BOSTON CULTURAL COUNCIL

Mission Hill Fenway Neighborhood Trust



# The Arts

## Comicopia Owner Lands in Book Profiling Comic-Store Owners

BY SOFIA BERMAN RODRIGUEZ

Christopher Denmead has always been fascinated with comic-shop owners, and wanted to know the backstory of running one. How are they run? Who's running them? What is their backstory?

In March, Denmead published a book answering these questions. *The New England Comic Bookstore Owners* features interviews with 30 store owners, including Matt Lehman of Comicopa in Kenmore Square.

"It's about the love of the comic book store and who they are as comic book fans," said Denmead.

The elimination process of who to interview was "random," explained Denmead. He cold-emailed store owners, and it was a matter of "yes" or "no" to his request to be interviewed. In total, Denmead interviewed around 40 store owners, 30 of whom made it into the book.

While the 30 interviewees were amenable to the process, there were some snags. "Most of the stores are

pretty good," said Denmead. "I caught one store at a really bad time. I think they're going out of business. He started to have a panic attack over the phone when I talked about the book being published." And another store owner was upset that he didn't make the cover.

Despite these snags, "everyone says the book is 'well researched' and they're really happy [about] how it turned out," said Denmead. In total, Denmead spent five years researching.

Denmead is currently working on a second edition of the book, which will feature approximately 40 interviews. He also aims to educate readers about the comic business.

"I mean, to have people pick it up and understand the industry of comic books behind the scenes after Marvel and D.C...where does it go from there, how does it get to my hands? How are films like *Superman* coming and getting made?" said Denmead.

When asked about his hopes and fears for the second edition, Denmead

explains he does not have any fears but hopes to expand on the first edition. When asked about the third edition, Denmead says "not for a long time."

*Sofia Berman Rodriguez is a student at Simmons University.*

## DANCERS SWING IN NEW HUNTINGTON PROGRAM



PHOTOS: ALISON PUTNAMS

The Huntington Theatre has launched "Huntington Hosts," an initiative that uses the second-floor Maso Studio as a pop-up venue for creative programming. On June 14, Boston Lindy Hop took over the space to present the "Back Bay Shuffle." The Brookline dance school [coincidentally located just a few blocks west of Audubon Circle] organized the event under the Huntington Hosts banner. It featured an hour-long beginner's lesson followed by three hours of social dancing. Local jazz historian Richard Vacca calls this block of Huntington Avenue "the ballroom district" because of all the dance halls located there in the 1940s and 1950s.

## Bessie the Rhino Takes a Trip



PHOTO: ALONSO NICHOLS (COURTESY OF ROBIN SHYTON, TUFTS UNIVERSITY)

Bessie the rhino, the massive outdoor sculpture at the Museum School on The Fenway, has left for East Providence and repairs at Amarel Custom Fabrications. She should be back for the start of the fall semester. Bessie is a resin/fiberglass cast of one of two bronze rhinos flanking the entry to Harvard's Biolabs on Divinity Avenue in Cambridge. Katherine Weems, who studied sculpture at the school from 1918 to 1922, created the bronze rhinos, naming them Victoria and Elizabeth after queens of England.



## 2025 PORCHFEST

From Mass. Ave. to the Riverway, the Fenway rang with the sound of music on June 21. On the region's first rain-free Saturday in more than three months, crowds turned out to hear 45 acts performing at 17 venues across the neighborhood. The Fenway CDC organized the event with the collaboration of the Fenway Community Center and the Emerald Necklace Conservatory.

Thanks to CDC staffers and event volunteers whose photos appear here, including Ann McCormick (1,4), Cecilia Esteves (2), Mallory Rohrig (3, 5, 6, 12), Iris Tan (7, 10), Hang Lee (8), Mikiko Sato (9), Iqra Amin (11, 13). Sage Carbone took the unnumbered photo at top of a music lover grooving in Ramler Park. Poochfest, anyone?



1



2



10



11



13



3



9



12



4



8



7



6



5



July

CALENDAR

Mon, 6/30

Director Loretta Greco and The Huntington present a reading of **A MONGOOSE SPEAKS**, written by Mahira Kakkar and directed by Danilo Gambini. The reading is free and open to the public. Witnessing a sacred sacrifice changes a little mongoose: his fur turns gold and he breaks into speech. No longer fully animal, not yet something else, he is caught half-transformed. 7pm at the Calderwood Pavilion (527 Tremont St). RSVP at [huntingtontheatre.org/whats-on/a-mongoose-speaks-2025](https://huntingtontheatre.org/whats-on/a-mongoose-speaks-2025).

Wed, 7/2, 7/9, 7/16, & 7/23

The Boston Public Library hosts Concerts in the Courtyard at the Central Library in

COMMUNITY meetings

**THU, JULY 10** Join your neighbors for the July meeting of **FENWAY CDC'S ORGANIZING COMMITTEE**, residents advocating together for affordable housing and other neighborhood needs. Dinner provided. Contact [lruijsanchez@fenwaycdc.org](mailto:lruijsanchez@fenwaycdc.org) for more information. 6-7:30pm, Fenway Community Center, 1282 Boylston St.

Copley Square. Genres range from hip-hop to alternative folk to jazzy R&B. 6pm. 700 Boylston St.

Thu, 7/10 ➡ Sat, 7/26

**KUFRE N' QUAY**, the fifth play in the Ufot Family Cycle by playwright Mfonsio Udofia, premieres at Boston Arts Academy. Produced by the Arts Academy with Wheelock Family Theater and advisory support from The Huntington. The cast and crew includes 12 Arts Academy students. John Oluwale Adekoje (*Street Soldiers; Hype Man*), on the Arts Academy faculty, directs the production. 174 Ipswich St. All performances 7pm except matinee Sun, 7/10. For ticket information, contact the box office at 617-635-6470.

Wed, 7/16

Boston Landmarks Orchestra opens its season with an appearance by the Longwood Symphony. The program has an Eastern European flavor with works by Tchaikovsky, Popper, and Enescu, and Dvořák's *Symphony No. 8 in G*. Hatch Shell,

7pm. Details and other concert listings at [landmarksorchestra.org/](https://landmarksorchestra.org/) **FREE**

Sat, 7/19

Check out **AGELESS GRACE** at the Parker Hill Branch of the Boston Public Library. Ageless Grace, a brain-fitness program, uses 21 simple exercises to help people improve their brain health and age gracefully. The program is based on neuroplasticity and

OUTDOOR CONCERTS

- JULY 10 @ 6PM**  
Kevin Fitzgerald Park, Mission Hill—Eric German Latin Jazz Quartet (rain date July 15)
- JULY 16 @ 6:30PM**  
Ramler Park, West Fens—Swingin' in the Fens, featuring Noah Allen and the Peace (rain date July 30)
- JULY 20 @ 5PM**  
Bucknam Street Butterfly Park, Mission Hill—Lindsay Straw, Dan Accardi & Cara Frankowicz performing Irish jigs
- JULY 31, 7PM**  
Mission Hill Playground—Tito Puente Latin series, Kristalis y Las Nenas del Swing

@ THE CENTER

- The Fenway Community Center is open six days a week. Visit [fenwaycommunitycenter.org](https://fenwaycommunitycenter.org) for details.
- Wed, July 2, 6pm: **BOSTON BAKED BOOKS, "THE ACCIDENTAL BILLIONAIRES"**
  - Tue, July 8, 2pm to 4:30pm: **FREE MARKET WITH THE FENWAY CDC**
  - Tue, July 15, 5pm: **ICE CREAM SOCIAL**

everyday movements that are natural and organic. Learn more and register at [bpl.bibliocommons.com/events/68249ccf9c003a13d2ea72f3](https://bpl.bibliocommons.com/events/68249ccf9c003a13d2ea72f3). 10am, 1497 Tremont St. **FREE**

Celebrating Young Leaders



On May 22, Sociedad Latina held a 2025 Class Celebration to honor the achievements of its high school youth leaders. Youth leaders shared their work, including an album of original compositions, a gardening guidebook, and a sexual health and healthy relationships awareness campaign

SENIOR EVENTS

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

- Tue, July 1 at 12pm: **GAME TIME** with Sam Greene from the Fenway CDC
- Thu, July 3 at 12pm: Coffee and conversation with **MARIA TUMANG AT BRIGHAM & WOMEN'S HOSPITAL**
- Tue, July 8 at 11:30am: **"INDEPENDENCE DAY" MOVIE SCREENING**
- Thu, July 10 at 12pm: Coffee and Conversation with **CAPTAIN ALEX RODRIGUEZ, PASTOR-CORPS OFFICER, SALVATION ARMY**
- Tue, July 15 at 11:30am: **TRIVIA, BINGO, AND MOCKTAILS**
- Tue, July 22: **DELIA ALVAREZ MEMORIAL** sponsored by Nasreen Latif and Family (contact the senior center for specific time)

How Do You Thank A Transit Planner? Why, With a Bus!

At Mission Hill Link's June annual meeting at the Tobin Community Center Backyard, board president Mary Ann Nelson presented Tyler Lee, a transit planner with the Boston Transportation Department, a miniature Link Bus crafted by Maggie Cohn. The award came as a token of the group's gratitude for Lee's support. Board member Cindy Diggs explained that the Link bus has provided service to the neighborhood for more than 40 years. Funding comes from public grants, the New England Baptist Hospital, rider fares, and donations.

# SATURDAY, JULY 19<sup>TH</sup>

## ALL DAY AT CARTER FIELDS IN ROXBURY

# BOSTON UNITY CUP OPENING DAY

Tournament Play, Youth Jamboree, Parade of Nations, Resource Fair, Food Trucks, Music, and More!

Hosted by SOCCER UNITY PROJECT

In Partnership with Northeastern University