Vol. 4 Issue 14

By Joe Walsh

Downtown Boston is enjoying an unprecedented building boom, but many of the lavish condominiums that dot the city’s skyline do not serve as their owners’ primary residences. Downtown neighborhoods have seen a steady trend away from owner occupancy in the last 15 years, according to a Boston Guardian review of city property tax data confirmed by multiple urban economists. The share of condos downtown that
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So Who Lives in Pricey Condos?

By Joe Walsh

Crime in downtown neighborhoods has decreased compared to this point last year, mirroring a citywide drop in major crimes, according to Boston Police Department (BPD) statistics. Serious crimes in the Back Bay, Fenway and South End neighborhoods, covered by BPD District D4, decreased by 11% this year. Downtown and Beacon Hill, which are in District A1, saw a 5% drop. These statistics only include major crimes like homicide, assault, burglary and larceny, leaving out offenses like drug possession. Most of these offenses fell this year across the downtown neighborhoods.

Affordable Housing $$s Raising Serious Questions

By Dan Rabb

A deal orchestrated by the Walsh administration to save an affordable housing complex has some residents crying foul and long-time observers of City Hall scratching their heads.

SPECIAL REPORT

Mayor Marty Walsh and city officials celebrated outside the South End’s Newcastle/Saranac Apartments Wednesday, touting their successful effort to keep the building’s 97 low-income units off the open market. Faced with the impending expiration of income restriction at the complex and the
Continued on Page 2

Get Your Peanuts While You Can

By Joe Walsh

Throughout a century of upgrades and expansions to Fenway Park, Nick Jacobs’ peanut cart on nearby Jersey Street remains constant. But the cart’s days of hawking snacks to fans outside America’s most storied ballpark are numbered. The third-generation owner of Nicky’s Peanuts, Jacobs runs a business that has occupied roughly
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Condos
Continued from Page 1

claimed an owner occupancy tax exemption dropped by about 8% in that period, more than five times the rate of decrease in owner occupancy for condos citywide.

In sum, the downtown neighborhoods only added about 1,100 owner occupied condos in the last 15 years, even as the total number of condos grew by nearly 6,000.

So, if most downtown condos are not listed as owner occupied, who lives in them?

In some cases, condo owners might list another address as their primary residence for tax or convenience purposes, even if they spend most of their time living in their Boston condo, some real estate experts say.

But in other cases, some of the city's newest condo developments are explicitly marketed as investment plays for firms and wealthy individuals worldwide, not as homes.

As the local housing market soars, investors have begun to view Boston real estate as a safe way to store their wealth, says Barry Bluestone, a political economy professor at Northeastern. Bluestone has seen this dynamic firsthand. When he sold his home in Cambridge last year, he said he received four offers in a single day, all of which were from foreign investors.

This trend has appeared in many of Boston's newer luxury high rises. At Millennium Tower, around three in four units did not claim an owner occupancy exemption. Millennium Partners, the building's management, did not respond to a request for comment.

It is difficult to know whether these investor owned condos are occupied by renters or simply held vacant, Bluestone says, though many of them are not owned primarily as a source of rental income.

"Many of these people are so wealthy that they don't really need the rent they can get and are just holding them as an alternative investment," Bluestone said.

Real estate broker Kevin Abear says most investor owned condos are leased to renters. But he believes investor heavy developments like Millennium Tower are not representative of the downtown market overall, which is still awash with standard homeowners.

As a result, investor ownership does not necessarily spell trouble for normal homeowners, says Bluestone. Investors compete for different units, he notes, so their impact on condo prices is muted. "As far as I can tell, this is a particularly segmented market," Bluestone said. "I don't think the person buying a $40 million condo in One Dalton is displacing anybody."

Meanwhile, other owners might hold onto condos as rental properties, economists say. Amid a strong market, former residents who downsize or move to the suburbs can earn lots of money by leasing out their condos.

This trend indicates economic vitality, but it could make home buying tough for people who do not already own property, says Mark Melnik, a researcher at the UMass Donahue Institute. "If there's more demand than there is supply, that's what brings prices up," Melnik said. "It naturally prices some people out."

But even if some owners do not intend to live in their condos, economists say more housing supply in any form should ease price increases, improving conditions for renters.

"Whatever the person's intention, it's good to see them rented," says Devin Michelle Bunten, an assistant professor of urban economics at MIT. "If they are occupied, that seems beneficial."

Peanut Vendor
Continued from Page 1

the same patch of asphalt since Fenway's 1912 opening, Jacobs's grandfather, Peter, manned the stall in the park's early years and his son George continued the tradition for four decades after that. Under Jacobs's stewardship, a new version of the cart stands run by team management.

Since then, most of these stalls have been eliminated, but Jacobs continues to sell peanuts like nuts. As the city and park change, the role of the independent peanut vendor is waning.

"It's kind of a dying trade," he said.

Housing $$
Continued from Page 1

displacement of dozens of residents, the city had scrambled to facilitate the property's sale to an ownership group committed to keeping the apartments affordable.

Yet amidst the complex financing required to complete the sale, one part of the deal has turned heads. Namely, a $6 million contribution from a developer looking to build a massive new project at 60 Kilmarnock Street in the Fenway.

While the city often requires developers of large projects to pay for affordable housing, these so-called Inclusionary Development Policy (IDP) funds are negotiated after a development has cleared the city's arduous community review process, known as Article 80. But the payment by 60 Kilmarnock developer Cabot, Cabot & Forbes (CCF) was negotiated even before the project was submitted to city regulators.

Critics say this payment, agreed to by frantic officials, violated long-established city protocols, undermined the community review process and paved the way for the developer to build a much different project than what was promised to Fenway neighborhood groups.

"What they did was completely wrong and completely against the Article 80 process," said Tim Horn, president of the Fenway Civic Association (FCA). "You can't take funds from the developer before the project's approved, because then it's just a rubber stamp."

Horn applauds the preservation of low income units at Newcastle/Saranac, but he and other FCA members contend that the plan for 60 Kilmarnock that emerged after CCF's contribution was significantly larger than the developer showed them in a private meeting months earlier. They claim that what CCF initially presented as a middle-income complex within zoning restrictions ballooned beyond zoning in both height and density and included more expensive units, all to justify the $6 million payment.

Indeed, the plans approved by the BPDA in January include 423 residential units across a pair of eight story buildings with ground floor retail. FCA officials say their neighborhood is now stuck with a "bloated" building, all to pay for housing in the South End. CCF did not respond to requests for comment.

Former city officials contacted by The Boston Guardian agree that the timing of CCF's contribution raises red flags. They say the early payment undermines the credibility of the community review process and damages the perception of the BPDA as a neutral party.

"I've never heard of anything like this happening," said one former housing official. "IDP happens at the end of Article 80 for a reason."

BPDA officials acknowledge that the payment deviated from proper procedure. While they do not anticipate allowing similar agreements in the future, they say a unique situation called for desperate measures.

"That's the only time it has happened and it really was a response to an emergency need," said BPDA Housing Policy Manager Tim Davis, who helped facilitate the Newcastle/Saranac deal.

"It was really an all hands on deck process to try to save those 97 units."
Poetic Art Is Here
It’s Time to Rhyme

By Zach Carmosino

A 1952 Ford pickup truck and trailer, emblazoned with written verse and dubbed the Poetry Mobile, will bring a unique brand of public art to Downtown Crossing next week, such as a Recycled Rodeo event and a potentially massive collaborative sculpture.

Adorned with the poetry of students from central Massachusetts, the Poetry Mobile is a project by Jerry Beck, founder of the Revolving Museum in Fitchburg. Beck, his distinct vehicle and a team of artists will be in Boston on August 19 and 20 to create interactive art with the Downtown community at the corner of Washington and Summer Streets.

Aiming to spread his passion for writing, art and storytelling beyond the walls of his museum, Beck says he has specific ideas in mind for his stop in the hub. He envisions Bostonians writing their own short poems, which could be put together into a larger “community poem.”

He also plans on hosting the Recycled Poetic Art Is Here

It’s Time to Rhyme

By Dan Rabb

Downtown workers and residents irked by off-key keyboardists and persistent pot bangers will soon have a clearer idea of how to respond to noisy street musicians.

The Downtown BID and the Boston Police plan to install signs and hand out brochures this week informing residents, business owners and workers of their options when it comes to dealing with excessively loud street performers. While the signs and flyers simply advise annoyed downtown denizens to call either 911 or 311, organizers hope the initiative’s visibility will serve as a deterrent to entertainers thinking of cranking up the volume.

“It’s when it’s excessive or at hours that’s impacting business or quality of life,” said the Downtown BID’s Senior Manager for Safety and Risk Assessment Tucker Husband. “We’re not out there to squash First Amendment rights or the rights of street performers. They do have those rights to perform.”

Citywide efforts to restrict street musicians have run into trouble in the past. Boston once required performers to have a permit, but a federal lawsuit in 2004 struck down regulations and permits for performing on public ways on First Amendment grounds.

Boston Police say that while A1 officers have cracked down on loud buskers, challenges with enforcing the city’s outdated noise ordinances go beyond the rights of performers. Boston’s bylaws limit noise output to 70 decibels during the day, a volume level now regularly exceeded by the ambient noise throughout downtown.

Nearly all street musicians, not only those drawing complaints, have to violate the statute just to be heard

“It’s very hard to enforce and enforce fairly,” said Sergeant Steven Moy, A1’s community service officer. “You go outside on Tremont Street and you’d be hard pressed to find something that’s not past 70 decibels.”

Police typically respond to noise complaints by simply asking performers to turn down the volume, but they do make arrests on occasion, according to Moy. He says the precincts’ renewed focus on noise has produced results.

“We’ve engaged it a lot and we’ve hit it hard,” he said. “We’re actually getting some stuff done.”

The Downtown BID has also taken a proactive approach to limiting disruptions by amplified artists. In an effort to drive out some of Downtown Crossing’s more cacophonous regulars, the BID now brings in its own mellower musicians to occupy prime busking spots throughout the area.

“We’ve been finding acoustic musicians who want to come and play, so you’ll see a flutist and

Continued on Page 8

It’s Party Time

The Downtown BID held its summer party last week. Absent were surfboards but good cheer was in abundance.

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Downtown BID Amps Up Its Noise Campaign

By Dan Rabb

Downtown workers and residents irked by off-key keyboardists and persistent pot bangers will soon have a clearer idea of how to respond to noisy street musicians.

PawSox.com

Fireworks Every Saturday Night
Lei Down the Law
On July 30 at about 4 pm, two officers responded to a radio call about a threat at Sunglass Hut, 86 Newbury Street.
A store employee described a suspect who was seen suspiciously looking at sunglasses: a young black man in a blue and white Hawaiian shirt carrying a TJ Maxx bag. There must be a new law about how customers must peruse sun-shielding lenses. Yet, the suspicious stares were not why the employee called upon D-4.

The Hawaii loving suspect followed the employee into the showroom and said, “You’re a fat b****,” then quickly exited the store. Sea why the cops were called?

Tough love? Jealousy? A complete and utter emotional recount and so the officer advised his buddy to apologize.

Don’t Snitch
Two officers responded to a radio call about a theft at Alltown convenience store, 510 Park Drive, on August 4 around 3 pm.

One officer met with an employee who described witnessing a suspect attempt to steal a bottle of Sprite by hiding it in his waistband. Nothing can hold back someone craving the fizzing, bubbly, lemon lime taste of an ice-cold Sprite! Not even the possibility of jail time.

The employee called 911 and attempted to stop the Sprite stealer, who ended up just shoving past the poor kid. In a heroic turn of events, the clerk ended up retrieving the highly desired green plastic bottle containing the glorious soda.

The second officer stopped a man matching the description of the soda suspect until the clerk could confirm the identity.

The suspect was booked and will be summoned in district court.

Don’t Talk
On August 4 around 8:30 am, a victim walked into the police station to report a stolen motor vehicle.

The victim said he parked his father’s Honda Civic on the 300 block of Beacon Street around 2 am. He even had a picture of the car parked so that he could recall where the vehicle was.

After returning to the original parking space at 5 am, the car had vanished. Miraculously, the Jeep parked behind the Honda was still there.

The stolen car unit was notified.

All For a Sprite
Officers responded to a call about a shoplifter at Alltown convenience store, 510 Park Drive, on August 4 around 3 pm.

One officer met with an employee who described witnessing a suspect attempt to steal a bottle of Sprite by hiding it in his waistband. Nothing can hold back someone craving the fizzing, bubbly, lemon lime taste of an ice-cold Sprite! Not even the possibility of jail time.

The employee called 911 and attempted to stop the Sprite stealer, who ended up just shoving past the poor kid. In a heroic turn of events, the clerk ended up retrieving the highly desired green plastic bottle containing the glorious soda.

The second officer stopped a man matching the description of the soda suspect until the clerk could confirm the identity.

The suspect was booked and will be summoned in district court.

Don’t Snitch
Two officers responded to the 10 block of East Brookline for a disturbance on August 2 around 9:30 pm.

The victim met with officers and set the scene: She was sitting on the stoop outside her apartment building enjoying the cool night breeze, fondly recalling her day when, all of a sudden, her neighbor approached her and called her a snitch. Then think of the not so cute word rhyming with snitch, she called the victim that too.

All this happened because the suspect was angry her nephew was arrested for a “shots fired” incident previously. She blames the victim for the nephew’s arrest, not her own nephew who may have fired a gun. The verbal assault continued and the victim’s son became the knight in shining armor, ready to save the day!

Then the suspect punched the son straight in the jaw and she fled the scene. Good thing the victim knows where to find her!
D-4 detectives were notified.

Repeat Jumper
On August 5 around 8:40 pm, three officers responded to the Colonnade Hotel, 120 Huntington Avenue, for a jumper.

An employee told the officers a guest swimming in the rooftop pool needed to go. This was a result of said guest repeatedly threatening to jump off the roof of the hotel previously. The pool is 12 floors up.

Though the guest did not make any threats this day, the employee wanted to make sure there would be no foul play and requested the guest be removed.

The guest was trespassed and told never to return.

Urban Outfit-Stealer
Two officers responded to a larceny in progress call on August 6 around 3 pm at Urban Outfitters, 361 Newbury Street.

Employees informed the officers that a man had entered the store but employees recognized him from past shoplifting incidents and requested he leave. The man kindly obliged and left the store, but waited outside until there was no staff on the first floor.

Then, like lightning, he quickly grabbed a pair of black shoes off of a mannequin and left.

Employees were hot on his trail as he ran down Mass Ave toward Comm Ave. The shoes were priced at $70. What a steal!

The suspect is described as a black male in his 40s with a beard and carrying a TJ Maxx bag.

Club Members Only
On August 8 around 11 am, an officer responded to a report for threats at 426 Stuart Street, the University Club of Boston.

The manager of the high end sports club told the officer a woman, who appeared to be homeless, had entered the club and began wandering around. This woman even went around to all the employee only areas and made herself at home.

She went into the kitchen at one point to yell at the cooks. Two employees rounded up the woman kindly, escorted her out, and were thanked by the woman who said, “Fat Nazi b****,” then proceeded to threaten she would blow up the location.

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More Police Patrols
On The Esplanade

By Joe Walsh

The State Police plan to increase nighttime road patrols in Boston, a consequence of the Leverett Circle police barracks’ impending closure.

“The barracks, which sit aside Storrow Drive, is slated to close for three years so the state can gut and renovate the century-old building. Starting Saturday night, the troopers based there will temporarily move to another barracks about six miles down the road in Brighton.”

With two barracks combined into one, the number of troopers dedicated to desk duty overnight will be cut in half, allowing more officers to patrol the Esplanade and various state highways in Boston, says State Police spokesperson David Procopio.

“Residents will see the same number of patrols throughout the day,” he said in an email. “The barracks will be running an additional road patrol over the current [patrols] on the night and overnight shifts.”

Procopio says the closure will not undercut the department’s presence in the Esplanade, a busy park within State Police jurisdiction that sees occasional crime.

Still, even though patrols will remain steady, some neighbors say this loss of a brick-and-mortar State Police facility on the Esplanade is unfortunate.

“It’s comforting to have a physical place that residents and visitors can go if there’s an issue,” said Robert Whitney, president of the Beacon Hill Civic Association.

Whitney is largely optimistic about the renovation, which will result in an expanded and modernized barracks, but he is looking forward to the troopers’ eventual return. To maintain a physical presence, Whitney suggested deploying a mobile police station during events, an option Procopio says the department will continue to use.

“Three years is a long time to be without an active police presence,” Whitney said. “A lot of residents from Beacon Hill use the Esplanade and would be concerned if there’s no presence there.”

By 2022, the State Police plan to close their Brighton facility and move troopers back to Leverett Circle, where the newly expanded barracks will handle the wide territory once covered by two different stations. This renovated barracks will offer the police more space for operations, a welcoming entrance for neighbors, and a community room to serve local groups, Procopio said.

Even if troopers are temporarily based further away, this new barracks will ultimately better serve park users, said Esplanade Association Executive Director Michael Nichols.

“It’s a short-term disruption but a long-term
Continued on Page 8

Common Master Plan:
Fewer Large Events?

By Joe Walsh

With Boston Common due for an overhaul, some residents are pushing for a future with fewer large scale events.

The city is soliciting input for a master plan that could transform the historic park over the next few years, funded by $28 million from the sale of the Winthrop Square garage.

The wide range of voices city officials hope to include could lead to competing visions for the Common, including the role of events, which bring countless residents to the park but overwhelm its infrastructure.

“We struggle with the idea of the Common as all things to all people at all times,” said Cheri Ruane from Weston & Sampson, a design firm working with the city on the master plan. “That simply is not possible.”

The Common hosts more than 500 events annually, ranging from tiny gatherings to large multiday festivals. Making it one of the city’s most intensely used public spaces.

Yet these events take a toll on a relatively small park. Constant use of spaces, like the parade ground, damages the grass and threatens the ancient trees that ring the park, says Elizabeth Vizza, executive director of the Friends of the
Continued on Page 8
Nonprofit to Clean Charlesgate Park

By Joe Walsh

A local nonprofit plans to clean and revitalize Charlesgate Park, while simultaneously giving its at-risk staff an opportunity to improve their lives.

The Charlesgate Alliance contracted with Project Place, an organization that provides job training and services to homeless and vulnerable populations, to clean up trash in the park. The organization's clients will sweep the park three times per week from April to October, an effort funded through donations.

A blighted corner of the Emerald Necklace, Charlesgate Park is beset with garbage. Meanwhile, the park is owned by the state, placing it within State Police purview, even though it is surrounded by Boston Police Department territory. These conflicting jurisdictions have left the space virtually unpoliced and vulnerable to drug use, says Charlesgate Alliance Nonprofit to Clean Charlesgate Park Continued on Page 9

Cornwall’s Is Moving But Not Very Far

By Joe Walsh

Kenmore Square mainstay Cornwall’s is moving to a new spot, but its friendly atmosphere and legions of longtime regulars are moving with it.

The popular neighborhood pub closed its current location Monday evening, just in time for a long-anticipated overhaul of the Kenmore Square block it has called home for more than a decade. But Cornwall’s will reopen this weekend in a new permanent location a few doors down, serving food and drinks as its old building is razed and rebuilt by developer Related Beal.

The new space is about the same size as the old, and the decorations and massive mural that line the walls will travel to the new location. Owners Pam and John Beale will remain present, with Pam managing the establishment and John welcoming patrons at the door while keeping the peace inside, along with several of their nieces and nephews working the bar and serving the same menu.

“It doesn’t look the same, but it has all the same elements,” Pam Beale said. “Locations are just four walls. It’s really about the people.”

Cornwall’s is no stranger to moving. The bar changed locations three other times since John founded the business in 1973. Amid these moves, Cornwall’s has remained a Kenmore Square tradition, surviving decades of drastic changes in the neighborhood. Pam Beale expects that, in its newest location, the bar will still maintain its status as a Kenmore centerpiece as the square continues to evolve around it.

At a party Monday night, a cast of regulars spanning numerous generations gathered to say goodbye to the old location. These attendees agreed that the bar will not lose its neighborly spirit. “It’s our neighborhood bar,” said Kathy Conley, a Kenmore Square resident who has frequented Cornwall’s for at least 30 years. “It’s like coming home.”

Cole Young and Curt Hall have stopped by Cornwall’s at least once a week for more than a decade, a regularity they said is fueled by the bar’s friendly atmosphere. During lunch or after work, they could head over to Cornwall’s and invariably run into acquaintances, many of whom they first met at the bar.

Their familial relationship with the bar also extends to its staff, including Pam, John and their nieces and nephews. Young has attended concerts with one of the bartenders, and Hall has golfed with some staff members, a level of personal connection they say is rare at other establishments. Cornwall’s Is Moving But Not Very Far Continued on Page 8

DON'T SIGN ANYTHING:
A GUIDE FOR THE DAY YOU'RE LAID OFF

By the authors of the highly acclaimed How to Negotiate Your First Job
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A Prescription for Methadone Mile

By Representative Jon Santiago

The recent beating of a correctional officer on Atkinson Street is appalling and tragic. Not only was it a senseless act of violence, it served as a stark reminder of the homelessness, substance use, and mental health issues that plague the area near the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Melnea Cass Boulevard.

I have come to know the area quite well over the years. Living less than a mile from where the incident occurred, and as someone whose morning jog includes Atkinson and neighboring streets, I know the unfortunate sights, sounds, and smells of those blocks. I recognize familiar faces and have treated many of these folks in the emergency room at nearby Boston Medical Center. However, what transpired last week is merely a symptom of a much larger, systemic disease. The beating that took place was borne out of an evolving fentanyl epidemic, inadequate resources, and an over-concentration of services in the area.

In order to combat this crisis, we need all hands on deck. Long-term strategies must be focused on the increased investment and expansion of housing, substance use, and mental health services across the Commonwealth. Additionally, the Long Island Bridge must be rebuilt to increase regional capacity. The area scheduled to be vacated by Shattuck Hospital must retain its public health purpose and be considered as an option to provide more services in the midst of a relentless epidemic.

Expanding medication-assisted treatment, like buprenorphine, across the state will allow... Continued on Page 9

Exchange Survey Inadequate to Some

By Dan Rabb

After surveying South Enders, the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) is zeroing in on a vision for a proposed community and cultural space at Exchange South End, but some critics say more outreach is necessary.

The BPDA and Exchange South End developer The Abbey Group compiled results of an online survey that asked residents to evaluate potential uses for 30,000 square feet of subsidized space at the planned Albany Street complex. Distributed in May, the survey asked respondents to rate a range of possible types of users, from artist studios and culinary startups to job training programs and startup incubators.

"Triangulating between all these data points, art and culture really seems like it’s where the community’s major interests lie,” said Gerald... Continued on Page 8
Crime
Continued from Page 1

decreased in D4 and A1, but other kinds of larceny, which account for most of the major crimes in both districts, fell in D4 while rising slightly in A1. Residential burglaries, meanwhile, plummeted in both districts, and the area has seen fewer robberies and aggravated assaults. Both this and last year, the area faced two homicides along with 30 rapes and attempted rapes.

These figures contribute to an overall 9% decrease in serious crimes in Boston as a whole, with similar citywide drops in larceny, burglary, robbery and assault.

“Cooperation between businesses and the police is key to keeping crime down,” said Meg Mainzer-Cohen, president of the Back Bay Association.

Businesses in the Back Bay meet with police officials regularly to discuss crime trends and recurring security problems and they collaborate with BPD and other city agencies to assist

Poetry Mobile
Continued from Page 3

Rodeo event, in which his team works with the community to make sculptures using recycled materials. He aspires to create something that will display the written work that stretches an entire block.

“It could be 800 feet long,” he said.

The poems may be thematically diverse, but Beck hopes many will highlight economic, racial and environmental issues.

He has long focused his work on underprivileged communities in Massachusetts and encourages his students to be bold in sharing their experiences. He finds this especially important in a time of divisive partisan politics.

“I believe poetry can launch a revolution,” said Beck. “I think the kids are starting their own.”

The Fitchburg public school teachers and officials Beck collaborates with ask him to encourage work that brings students together and away from technology. In the digital age, he has been pleasantly surprised that people still flock to the Poetry Mobile.

“I was hoping the written word wouldn’t scare people,” he said. “But it hasn’t. It’s done the opposite.”

Beck’s work is rooted in his own experience with art as a tool of personal transformation. He is dyslexic and struggled in school. He became involved in poetry as an undergraduate at Florida State University, where he developed his love for the arts.

Poetry Mobile is a commemoration of the 35th anniversary of The Revolving Museum, which started in 1984 when he displayed an art gallery in 12 converted railroad cars along Boston’s waterfront. Three and a half decades later, Beck has used the works of his young poets to turn his old Ford and trailer into its own work of art.

After years of engaging underserved communities around Fitchburg, Beck is enthusiastic about bringing his work back to Boston, which he says is overdue for its distinct form of public art. The Poetry Mobile will also stop in South Boston this October.

“I’ve been doing this in small ways. I think it’s ready to explode.”

In order to keep these musicians, you’ve got to throw them a buck or two,” he told a meeting of residents and business owners. “It’s important let them know you appreciate them being there, because they could go to the Back Bay or Faneuil Hall.”

Yet if money is the measure of popularity, downtown may prefer its street performers to the Common. Residents and businesses take responsibility such as additional lighting and securing unattended alleyways,”Sansone told The Boston Guardian in an email, “conditions have improved.”

Some residents also agree that BPD is responsive to their concerns. Their partnership with the police is especially critical in crime hotspots like the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Melnea Cass Boulevard, said South End Forum moderator Steve Fox.

“As the community talks to the police about these things, it’s very clear that they listen,” said Fox. “This has paid off with the reduction in crime.”

Downtown Noise
Continued from Page 3

a violinist and other music like that,” said the BID’s George Comeau. “It’s a first come first serve thing, so we try to get them to stay as long as they want to stay.”

According to Comeau, the initiative will be a success as long as those who live and work downtown vote with their wallets.

Increased Patrols
Continued from Page 5

gain,” he said. The renovation is part of a wide set of upgrades to a neglected corner of the Esplanade, which will soon have more green space in place of parking and a new recreation complex

neighborhood focal point. But other regulars have mixed feelings.

Chris Strang is waistful about the loss of a space he has frequented for 17 years, but he is confident that the camaraderie that kept him at Cornwall’s will not be lost.

“I’m sure I’ll love it once I get used to it,” Strang said. “For now, I’m sad to see the doors close.”

The types of events that take place in the park could change as part of the master plan, especially if residents ask for modifications, according to Parks Commissioner Ryan Woods. But he says the Common will not lose its role as a public gathering space.

“I think the Common will still have a significant amount of open space and passive areas for people to congregate in,” Woods said.

Woods believes this master plan is a fresh start for the Common. The pathways, initially laid down to meander around trees that no longer exist, could be reconfigured, and the frog pond could be upgraded, said Woods, meanwhile, says the playground could be expanded, the sports fields could be resized and permanent spaces for dogs could be added.

All these ideas are dependent on public feedback. City officials hope to capture residents’ thoughts over the next 18 months through meetings, online surveys and outreach events in every neighborhood, reaching locals who might not have shared their opinions otherwise.

“We want residents to be able to engage and give feedback, no matter where they live,” Woods said. “We feel that all residents of Boston have a stake in the Common.”

Exchange Survey
Continued from Page 7

Auley, the BPD’s project manager for Exchange South End.

These conclusions will steer the search for organizations to program the future community space, according to Auley. BPD officials are now drafting a document outlining parameters for how the space can be used and inviting submissions from non-profits, businesses and individuals interested in operating it. Auley says he hopes to begin soliciting proposals in September.

With the sprawling Exchange South End site set to be developed in some section at a time, this initial search will focus on programming 12,000 square feet of temporary community space incorporated into the first phase of the project.

Yet some in the South End want to pump the brakes, arguing that the survey results shaping the process do not accurately reflect the will or needs of the neighborhood and that more outreach needs to occur before seeking users for the space.

“We needed to have incredibly vigorous outreach and that meant something more than people filling out a passive survey,” said South End Forum founder Steve Fox, who also sits on an advisory committee for Exchange South End. “I believe that just a survey is insufficient.”

Rather than simply presenting a menu of options, Fox says the BPD and The Albany Group should engage in an active conversation with residents through public meetings. Fox would like to see a plan that addresses the lack of communal meeting places in the South End for neighborhood groups and large civic functions.

He says this is vital community need that was ignored in the BPDA survey.

But the BPDA’s Auley cautions that the upcoming request for proposals is the beginning of the process, not its conclusion, and that there will be lots of chances for the community to have its say.

“Everybody who’s interested will have an opportunity to give feedback and participate at key points along the way,” he said. “Nobody will suddenly find out that there’s a user selected that they never had the opportunity to give feedback on.”
On the Town

Wednesday, August
Croquet on the West Lawn. Do you have a competitive drive but don't want to break a sweat? Come hone your croquet skills on the West Lawn. Free. Christopher Columbus Park. 12-4 pm.

North End Fisherman’s Feast. 109th anniversary, closes with famous Flight of the Angel. Free. North End. Friday, 6 pm, Saturday-Sunday, 12 pm.

Thursday, August
BAA & Esplanade Association Run Club. Boston Athletic and Esplanade Associations run club open to runners of all abilities, running 5K and 5-mile runs. Free. Fiedler Head Statue, Charles River Esplanade. 6:30 am.

Southie Saturday at the Lawn on D. Food, drinks, lawn games. Free. Lawn on D, 420 D St. 7 am-11 pm. Drinks from 12 pm-11 pm.

Brix Wine Tasting. Staff pick Saturday: Complimentary, educational and fun. Brix Wine Shop, 1284 Washington St. 4-6 pm.

Sunday, August 18
Phillis Wheatley Day. The day Phillis became a member of the Old South congregation. Free with museum admission. Old South Meeting House, 310 Washington St.

SoWa Dog Costume Contest. Prize of toys and treats worth over $200 from vendors to best pup costume. Free. SoWa Beer Garden, 450 Harrison Ave. 1-2 pm.

Methadone Mile
for treating people in their respective cities and decompressing overwhelmed urban centers and neighborhoods like Mass Ave and Melnea Cass. Creating “super-utilizer” programs - as we do in the ER, to provide intensive outpatient care for the most complex and high-cost patients must be explored. Addressing the stigma associated with addiction and providing mental health services as a cornerstone of recovery will also be critical.

Short-term strategies must include the participation of public and private stakeholder to streamline and coordinate the myriad services in what has become the epicenter of the opioid epidemic in Massachusetts. Similarly, organizations providing services should better engage their surrounding neighborhoods. By having service providers step outside their traditional roles to assist neighbors to streamline and coordinate the myriad of unsightly trash and dangerous needles has disappeared.

This relationship could also pay dividends for the 9th Suffolk District, which includes Atkinson Street is reduced to a single clean room physician at Boston Medical Center. It’s come down to us in the neighborhood,” James said. “Neighbors have been picking up the trash.”

Project Place will keep the park clean on a more regular basis than teams of volunteers can, James says. Staff will clean the red patio chairs that sit along the Muddy River and pick up trash scattered throughout the park, including needles, which are not safe for untrained volunteers to handle.

Charlestage Alliance eventually plans to turn the park, currently a neglected patch of dirt and grass underneath a highway overpass, into a vibrant public space. Private donors will become responsible for maintaining the grassy fields, dog park and sitting areas that neighbors hope will fill Charlestage. The Alliance hopes to continue working with Project Place as these improvements take effect, according to James. But for now, neighbors are excited to see the trash disappear.

The relationship could also pay dividends for the dozens of Project Place clients who will occasionally work in the park. These clients typically spend three months working in one of Project Place's enterprises, after which they graduate with the skills and career confidence required to succeed in the workforce.

Project Place’s mission of working with vulnerable populations makes it uniquely suited to work in Charlestage, according to James. Staff from Project Place will reach out to the homeless people who live in the park and steer them toward shelters or social services.

“We want to deal with our homeless park residents in a compassionate manner,” James said.

Project Place has worked to clean the neighborhood in the past, including in Kenmore Square and the streets surrounding Fenway Park. Pam Beale, co-founder of the Charlestage Alliance, says this local connection makes Project Place an ideal candidate to help Charlestage clean.

“They understand the problems and the population,” she said. “We’re thrilled to have them.”

Residents has the potential to foster trust, ally concerns, and create a shared vision for a community in crisis. And although we cannot arrest ourselves out of this situation, we must ensure public safety for all who use that space. The city’s decision to clean the area was important on a number of fronts for the residents, businesses, and schools reaching their breaking point.

Mayor Walsh’s recent appointment of Buddy Christopher to manage the effort in the area shows promise. Further, a task force should be created to coordinate short- and long-term objectives of the public and private sectors. I have faith in our municipal leaders and my colleagues in state government to move quickly, and I look forward to partnering with them. However, now more than ever, urgency combined with bold and comprehensive interventions are what Mass. Ave. and Melnea Cass demand. Because if the response to last week’s attack on Atkinson Street is reduced to a single clean sweep, that will be the true tragedy.

Dr. Jon Santiago is the State Representative for the 9th Suffolk District, which includes Massachusetts Avenue and Melnea Cass Boulevard. He is also a practicing emergency room physician at Boston Medical Center.

In the absence of extensive city or state help in the small urban park, keeping it free of unsightly trash and dangerous needles has become a volunteer effort. “It’s come down to us in the neighborhood,” James said. “Neighbors have been picking up the trash.”

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Under the August Moon. Meet and greet with the Armenian Heritage Park, food, moonlight labyrinth walk, Berklee jazz trio. Free. Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway. 7:30-9:30 pm.

Free Fun Friday: ICA. Free admission all day with family friendly activities. Institute of Contemporary Art. 10 am-9 pm.

Fenway Friday: Tiki & Karaoke. Cocktails and tropical bites with karaoke. Free. 401 Park Drive Green Space. 4-7 pm.

Our Local Real Estate

By Caroline Broderick

In Boston, few are able to rise in the morning, stroll into their living room and have the entirety of the Common right outside their window. At The Grandview, the name says it all. Residents have views of the flourishing green Common, blue Charles River and iconic State House. The professionally managed and meticulously kept building was constructed for the sole purpose of providing residents with an unmatchable perspective in an unmatchable location.

The building captures the essence of Boston in all its beauty while remaining accessible. Located in the heart of the city, downtown neighborhoods are only walking distance away, there are endless shops, restaurants and activities.

A unit in The Grandview is hard to come by, making this home a real rarity. Unit 1301 has three bedrooms, three baths and an abundance of space. This “smart home” has electric blinds and a Wi-Fi enabled Lutron lightning system.

The charming view is the centerfold of this home. The living space has floor to ceiling glass windows, including a bay window for an extra touch of classic Boston. These unique views are clear and unobstructed. The living area is spacious enough for an adjacent dining room.

This home’s floor plan is functional and open. Perfect for those who love to host, relax or individualize their space. The oak hardwood floors have been recently installed and the kitchen is recently renovated.

The sunny open kitchen has modern, sleek white custom cabinetry with quartz countertops stretching into a peninsula. There is a large SubZero refrigerator, Miele induction range and wall oven. In the sophisticated, large foyer, there is a dry bar with overhead cabinet space and wine fridge.

Each bedroom has its own set of wide windows, filling every inch of the home with light. One of these bedrooms has an ensuite bath, walk-in closet and two additional closets. Both bedrooms are gracious in size.

The master bedroom is not one room, but two. An additional space off of the master bedroom is separated by French doors and can be used as an additional office or cozy den. There are two closets, one walk-in and one standard. The master bath is fit for royalty with white marble spanning from floor to counter. There are double sinks and lots of counterspace. A soaking bath and standing shower are also adorned with marble.

For an even better view, the common rooftop terrace puts residents higher than the treetops. This unit also has a washer and dryer, elevator access, one garage parking space, one deeded storage unit, forced and central air. The Grandview has 24/7 concierge and maintenance. Unit 1301 is 2,085 square feet and priced at $2.699 million. Contact Todd Anskov (508) 264-2104 or Joe Sullivan (617) 733-6138 of Coldwell Banker Beacon Hill for more information.
### Open Houses

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</tbody>
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**BREWSTER & BERKOWITZ REAL ESTATE**

Beacon Hill Townhouse - 160 Mount Vernon Street
This inviting and aesthetically pleasing four story townhouse built in 1871 is in excellent condition. The current owners, who have resided there for 34 years, have brought the house into the 21st century while retaining historic details. There is sensational light and lovely views from both the front and rear. The house has a wonderful, spacious roof deck, gracious rooms, central a/c and a beautiful garden which has been on The Beacon Hill Garden Tour. The building foundation has been underpinned and the garden level has been totally renovated. There is a full on-site parking space. This is a "must-see."

$6,250,000

sallytbrewster@gmail.com ~ 617-367-0505
visit our website www.brewberk.com

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**COLDWELL BANKER**

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**GLOBAL LUXURY**

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242 Beacon Street - Unit 8
Leslie Adam 617-901-3664

**Back Bay** | $2,550,000
30 Commonwealth Ave - Unit 2
Marilyn Brandt 617-840-1878

**Back Bay** | $2,299,000
308 Commonwealth Ave - Unit L
Rebecca Davis Tulman 617-510-5050

**Midtown** | $2,699,000
165 Tremont Street - Unit 1301
Jody Anziolev 508-264-2101
Joseph Sullivan 617-733-6138

**Back Bay** | $2,295,000
274 Beacon Street - Unit 2R
Rebecca Davis Tulman 617-510-5050

**Back Bay** | $1,749,000
492 Beacon Street - Unit S TH
Rebecca Davis Tulman 617-510-5050
Julie Aragorn 617-840-4320

**Beacon Hill** | $490,000
16 Hancock Street - Unit 3R
Rebecca Davis Tulman 617-510-5050

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**COLDWELLBANKERHOMES.COM**

66 Beacon Street, Second Floor, Beacon Hill | 617.904.2000

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401 PARK

TIKI-INSPIRED DRINKS,
FREE HAMACHI POKE,
KARAOKE WITH A LIVE BAND.

WHEN: August 23; 4pm-7pm

WHERE: 401 Park Drive, Boston, MA 02215
         (green space)

COST: Free!

PARTNERS: Hojoko, trillium Brewing Company

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