



Photo: BPD

## A-1 Captain Fong Retires

By Jim Morrison

BPD District A-1 Commander Captain Kenneth Fong retired last week after 33 years on the job, including more than five years at the helm of a busy area that includes downtown, Beacon Hill, the North End and Charlestown.

Fong's successor has not been named, but Boston Police Department (BPD) is expected to announce one soon.

*Continued on Page 2*

# U.S. Census Count May Hurt Boston

By Jim Morrison



Photo: Census Bureau

In 2010, only 64% of Bostonians were accounted for in the census. This year, the COVID-19 pandemic has made people much harder to find and count and if Boston's neighborhoods are undercounted, that means less federal funding through 2030.

As a result of the last census, Boston lost a congressional seat. State Representative Jay Livingstone said he doesn't think that would happen again, but significant federal funding is at risk.

"The Census Bureau had a robust plan to go door to door to encourage people to fill out the forms," he said. "They were going to attend the typical summer community events. Some people have left their home in the city and are staying at second houses. Census reporting nationwide is under what you would expect due to the pandemic."

*Continued on Page 2*



Photo: Boston Preservation Alliance

## Local Buildings Get Preservation Awards

By Mary Ellen Gambon

Four historic downtown buildings were among those honored by the Boston Preservation Alliance with 2020 Preservation Achievement awards

for creatively modernizing their structures without losing their sense of significance. The theme of the awards focused on buildings as storytellers.

*Continued on Page 6*

# Boston Colleges Arm Their Cops



By Catherine McGloin

Fenway residents questioned the need for campus police to carry

guns, during a recent community meeting with local politicians. During a virtual town hall

hosted earlier this month by Sen. William Brownsberger and Reps. Chynah Tyler, Jay Livingstone and Jon Santiago, potential reforms of the Boston Police Department were discussed. An attendee, recalling Berklee's decision to arm college police officers in 2017, with little community input, then asked "Can we have a discussion about disarming [campus] police forces?"

Berklee's police department started arming their officers in June 2017 before local residents were notified of the change. A public meeting to discuss the move was held months after firearms were distributed. Although Berklee apologized for their lack of community engagement, residents were outraged by their actions.

*Continued on Page 2*

## U.S. Census

*Continued from Page 1*

And what about the tens of thousands of college and university students that left when the schools were closed March 15 before the census began? How many will come back and fill them out claiming residence in Boston, not their home town, by the October 31 deadline? No one knows.

Joe McDonald, long-time West End resident and civic leader said someone from the Census Bureau called him a month ago with concerns that so far, his neighborhood had dramatically lower census concerns than expected. With all the new construction over the last ten years, they expected much

higher numbers.

“Since COVID-19, the population has dropped drastically in the Whittier condos, where I live,” he said. “It seems like it’s down by around one third. I’m sure it’s true of the rest of the West End. I haven’t seen a school-aged child in the West End for six weeks. When the epidemic broke out, everyone with kids moved to their vacation homes and many likely filled the forms out there.”

Census data impacts things like representation, federal funding and business planning, McDonald said when people who spend most of the year in Boston, but claim to be residents of their vacation communities, they are unwittingly diverting federal aid away from Boston, leaving fewer resources for

where they spend most of their time.

“Unfortunately, taking a census during an epidemic is not going to find people where they live,” he said. “If the other neighborhoods are in the same boat, some of our districts could combine into one. I think it’s just going to be a disaster.”

Fenway CDC community organizer Jaya Aiyer is also very concerned about that neighborhood being undercounted since it is home to so many renters, people of color, low-income people, non-English speakers and young children, all people who have traditionally been difficult to count.

She said some residents don’t fill the forms out because they fear the government, even though personal census data is protected by

federal law and cannot be used by any other federal agency or court.

“Getting an accurate count is critically important,” she said. “Every form completed brings in \$2,400 in federal funds. There are around 35,000 to 40,000 people living in the Fenway.”

That amounts to about \$1 million in lost revenue annually for every 400 people not accounted for in the census. As of June 15, there had already been 936 COVID-19 related deaths in Suffolk County (which includes Revere, Winthrop and Chelsea).

Mayor Walsh’s office did not respond to a request for comment.

The U.S. Census can be completed in 13 different languages by phone (844-330-2020) or online at [www.2020census.gov](http://www.2020census.gov).

## College Guns

*Continued from Page 1*

Police and public safety departments at Berklee did not respond to requests for comment.

“There’s a very serious conversation about how much force do we need to be using to respond to problems in our society generally, and the answer is probably less,” said Brownsberger. “I do think that there’s a militarization thing that can go too far ... but the notion that you wouldn’t have any arms among college police forces is probably not a viable idea.”

Campus police are often the first department to respond to incidents that may require the use of firearms. “If a very serious incidence occurs would you want a police officer to show up without mace or a baton or a gun?” said Tyler. Brownsberger suggested that response times would increase if colleges and universities were to rely on municipal departments, asking residents “Do you want police to be able to respond or are they going to be dependent and waiting for the Boston police to arrive when somebody goes nuts and starts shooting up a place?”

Ensuring rapid response in an emergency is central to Northeastern University Police Department (NUPD) Chief of Police Michael Davis’ decision to arm his officers.

“Anything that we do in terms of having a capability is really us trying to reduce the response time to mitigate

any impact of an event that happens on campus,” said Davis, who spent 21 years as an officer and chief of police in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota.

In 2015 the NUPD was criticized for arming some of their officers with semi-automatic rifles. “This is a step backwards for community policing and encourages mistrust and fear,” wrote Councilors Tito Jackson and Josh Zakim in a letter to Northeastern’s President Joseph Aoun.

In defense of his decision five years ago, Davis said “In responding to active events in a densely populated campus, accuracy over distance is just essential.” He said these long guns do not fire at a faster rate than handguns, but give highly trained officers to ability to respond swiftly and with greater accuracy in an emergency.

During a semester, NUPD officers protect about 25,000 students and staff across Northeastern’s 80-acre campus, Davis said. While he gave no precise number of how many officers have access to long guns, he said “It’s not everyone and its not a small component. It’s enough people of our contingent so that we could respond capably and quickly to any event.”

NUPD employs 65 officers and is a full service department, nationally accredited and trained to the same standards as municipal police departments.

Another large university presence in Fenway is Boston University, whose dedicated police department

employs 49 officers, serving a community of 40,000 to 50,000, according to Colin Riley, Boston University’s executive director of media relations. Boston University Police Department (BUPD) officers are also trained to municipal police standards and carry firearms. All officers receive firearms training in the police academy and qualify twice annually.

BUPD officers protect the university’s communities and properties “mainly through education and prevention,” said Riley, and “are the first responders to incidents on campus, including any acts of terror or active shooter incidents, ensuring prompt emergency response time to critical incidents.”

Students and community members recognize campus police departments’ necessary role in ensuring the safety of everyone within their jurisdiction, but hope for better and continued engagement.

Hannah Nivar, a senator on Northeastern’s Government Association, hopes student voices will feature more prominently in future discussions about changes to on-campus policing. “The conversation from 2015 regarding arming NUPD officers must not die,” she said. “It is necessary that the conversation surrounding disarming campus police in 2020 incorporates the voices of our students, specifically elevating the voices of our minority students ... it is time for Northeastern administration to listen and take action accordingly.”

“Unfortunately there’s not panacea here,” said Davis, adding he welcomes a constructive conversation with the Northeastern community. “It’s really about building trust over time.”

“We should examine closely the equipment all police, including university police, are using, eliminate military equipment, and figure out what is appropriate for each department,” said Livingstone, who represents part of Fenway. “I look forward to this public discussion.”

## Fong Retires

*Continued from Page 1*

Fong could not be reached for comment, but in a statement he said, “Throughout my career, the community has always been at the forefront of my philosophy an efforts. If I have learned anything in my career, policing efforts are enhanced, strengthened and nurtured through strong community relationships. Undoubtedly the city is safer when we all work together.”

Community leaders in the district had nothing but praise for Captain Fong.

George Coorssen, cofounder of the Downtown Boston Residents Association said he worked with Fong through his involvement in many civic organizations since he took over District A-1 in 2014 and considers him a friend.

“Generally, I consider the Boston Police Department the gold standard of police departments across the country,” he said. “They’re respectful of everybody. Captain Fong was just that for A-1. He made it a better place to be. I’ve lived here in the center of it for close to 50 years. We’ll miss him. He’s just a wonderful human being.”

State Representative Jay Livingstone said Fong’s hands-on approach made him a particularly effective leader.

“The first time I met Captain Fong was at the West End children’s

festival,” he said. “He had just been appointed and he was just walking around talking to people. Shortly after that, he appeared before the West End and Beacon Hill neighborhood groups. Whenever there was a problem he was very thoughtful and approachable. He will be missed. Whoever succeeds him will have big shoes to fill.”

“Captain Fong has been a great leader in the field of public safety,” Downtown Boston Business President and CEO Rosemary Sansone wrote in an email. “His dedication and commitment to his profession and this neighborhood will be missed. He was a true partner and someone I could count on every day, no matter what time. On behalf of everyone at the Downtown Boston BID we wish him much success on his next chapter and a huge thank you for all he did.”

Paula O’Keefe, a long-time Beacon Hill resident, volunteer and activist said Fong stood out among the five or six previous A-1 commanders she has worked with.

“I will miss him a lot,” she said. “He always responded to the neighborhood. The officers who worked for him really respected him. The neighborhood loved him. He held everybody together. He was a good captain and a good man.”



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Photo: Greenway Conservancy

# Greenway Installs More Public Art

By Mary Ellen Gambon

Bostonians can escape from quarantine life at the Rose Kennedy Greenway, where two new art exhibits sponsored by the Greenway Conservancy were installed that explore cultural heritage.

Mexican-American master folk artist Catalina Delgado-Trunk's commissioned work, *Global Connections: Mesoamerican Myths, the Domestication of Nourishment, and its Distribution*, was unveiled in early June. The papel picado or cut-paper artist has drawn images of her cultural heritage, which have been enlarged to a monumental scale, reproduced on vinyl and affixed onto the Greenway's 30-foot Light Blades.

The Albuquerque resident combines indigenous, European, Asian and African influences in her work. Situated near the Rings Fountain at Milk Street, the historical legends and stories about the balance of nature will be illuminated with color-changing lights. Her exhibition will be complemented by signage with historical interpretation.

"With so many museums and galleries closed, this is great timing for Boston to have such an important installation outdoors for people to enjoy and stay safe," said Suzanne Schultz, the CEO and founder of Canvas Fine Arts in Boston.

"In this extraordinary time, when the public is longing to experience beauty and joy but few arts venues are able to be open, we think it is more important than ever to bring these world-class artists' works into the park," said Greenway Conservancy Executive

Director Jesse Brackenbury. "We welcome visitors to stroll the length of The Greenway, enjoying the artworks and the gardens, while respecting the public health guidelines as the Commonwealth reopens."

Another exhibit that will be imminently installed is by British-Nigerian artist Yinka Shonibare. The Conservancy commissioned his *Wind Sculpture (SG) V*, which will be exhibited in a garden on The Greenway, just north of Dewey Square. Twenty-two feet tall, it features a new variation of the classic batik Shonibare uses in his works.

Batik, which is regarded as an African cloth, is used as a metaphor in his art for global commerce. In this wind sculpture, it appears to capture the breeze and freeze it at a time in our history where we have been globally halted by the coronavirus, awaiting a time for freedom.

"The commissioned artists engage with a globalized world and its complexities," said Lucas Cowan, curator and director of Public Art for the Greenway Conservancy. "These artworks help us think about issues of cultural identity, immigration and interconnectedness." The two new pieces join three others currently on display along the 1.5-mile stretch that spans from Chinatown to the North End. They have been in commission for more than a year and were brought to fruition despite the financial obstacles imposed by COVID-19. The Greenway Conservancy is the nonprofit responsible for the management and care of The Greenway. The majority of the public park's annual budget is provided by private sources.

# Residents Not Included In Bike Lane Planning

By Mary Ellen Gambon

A controversial bike lane along Washington Street involved input from local businesses but not the residents.

Rishi Shukla, a founding member of the Downtown Boston Residents Association (DBRA), looked out his window last Monday morning. He saw the new bike lane, striped in fluorescent green, packed with double-parked cars, blocking the flow of street traffic.

"I think that the outreach effort has been lacking, and this isn't the first time," he said. "If there were a draft pick of a city department to improve, it would be the Boston Transportation Department (BTD)."

When there was outreach for a meeting, there was only a day's notice, he said. For a meeting at Caffe Nero last fall, Shukla added he was told by Rosemarie Sansone, executive director and CEO of the Downtown Boston BID (DBID).

Shukla sees the lanes impacting Uber and Lyft drop-offs and commercial delivery, creating a crunch.

DBRA cofounder George Coorsen said there "was no opportunity for residents to weigh in on a neighborhood traffic plan that would benefit everyone in the

district."

"Also, there is no chance for public comment by either residents or business owners at a time when the traffic pattern is being disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic."

On the day of the downtown protest in memory of George Floyd, Coorsen described a traffic jam on Washington Street because cars couldn't pass the bus.

Resident Tony Ursillo said the city has made "pretty good efforts to arrange for public meetings," but for the last three months, they were put on hold because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I hope the city will find creative ways to involve the public, perhaps through online streaming of meetings with the opportunity to contribute via questions and comments or traditional in-person meetings that might limit capacity by having small socially distanced groups attend in specific time slots throughout the meeting," he said.

On the other hand, BTD representatives said there had been community outreach efforts made since the fall planning process.

"The City made a good faith effort to reach out to the DRA several times," BTD representative Vineet Gupta said.

*Continued on Page 4*

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## On All Fours

No, we're not dealing with dogs, cats or coyotes. Imagine exiting your apartment on Queensberry Street in the Fenway on June 15 and finding your Subaru resting on four cinderblocks. Do you think that tires are overrated or that there is some kinky thief on the loose?

The tires were found at the intersection of Queensberry and Kilmarnock Streets. Hopefully, there is a surveillance camera somewhere that captured this larceny. We've heard of bringing burglar tools to a crime, but cinderblocks?

## What a stinker!

Could it be the Queensberry tire thief worked up a real sweat? Later that same day, the CVS at 1249 Boylston Street was ripped

off for \$298.90 of deodorant. Just coincidentally, the thief had a gray duffel bag on wheels.

If you find this guy, call the police, but from upwind.

## More Wheelies

Also on June 15, a poor guy at 263 Beacon Street notified the police that someone had poured white paint all over his black BMW. We're starting to think that wheels of all kind in Boston should be banned.

## Having a Dirty Mouth

Ok, so the Fenway CVS specializes in deodorant while the location at 587 Boylston Street across from Copley Square features mouth wash to steal. On June 16, a man in his fifties wearing a dark sweater, blue hospital pants but with no shoes grabbed a bottle of mouthwash and fled. Rather than running

into an alley to hide, Mr. "Badbreath" took his business over to 7-Eleven on Dartmouth where he was holding an unopened bottled of the CVS brand mouthwash. The police observed him in a semi-lethargic state and unable to stand. Boston EMS was called and took the man to Tufts Medical Center for evaluation. The officers dutifully returned the mouthwash to CVS.

## Safer in Bulgaria?

Europeans must be infinitely more trusting than Bostonians. A resident of Bulgaria was dining at Eatly in the Prudential Center on June 15 where she left her purse on a table where she was sitting and stepped away for a moment. Can you image? Her purse together with handbags and her backpack were gone when she returned.

Video footage showed a bald male in a grey sweater grab it and walk away. The victim was able to track her cell phone to a nearby Starbucks on Newbury Street where police found that the suspect had changed his clothes and left them in the bathroom.

Every thief knows to blend into his environment and that people dress differently on Newbury than on Boylston. The victim cancelled her credit cards and her green card, not that the thief needs a work permit in his profession.

## Want to be someone else?

On Halloween, yes. Regrettably, there's a plague of impersonators out there filing for unemployment using false identities as a poor

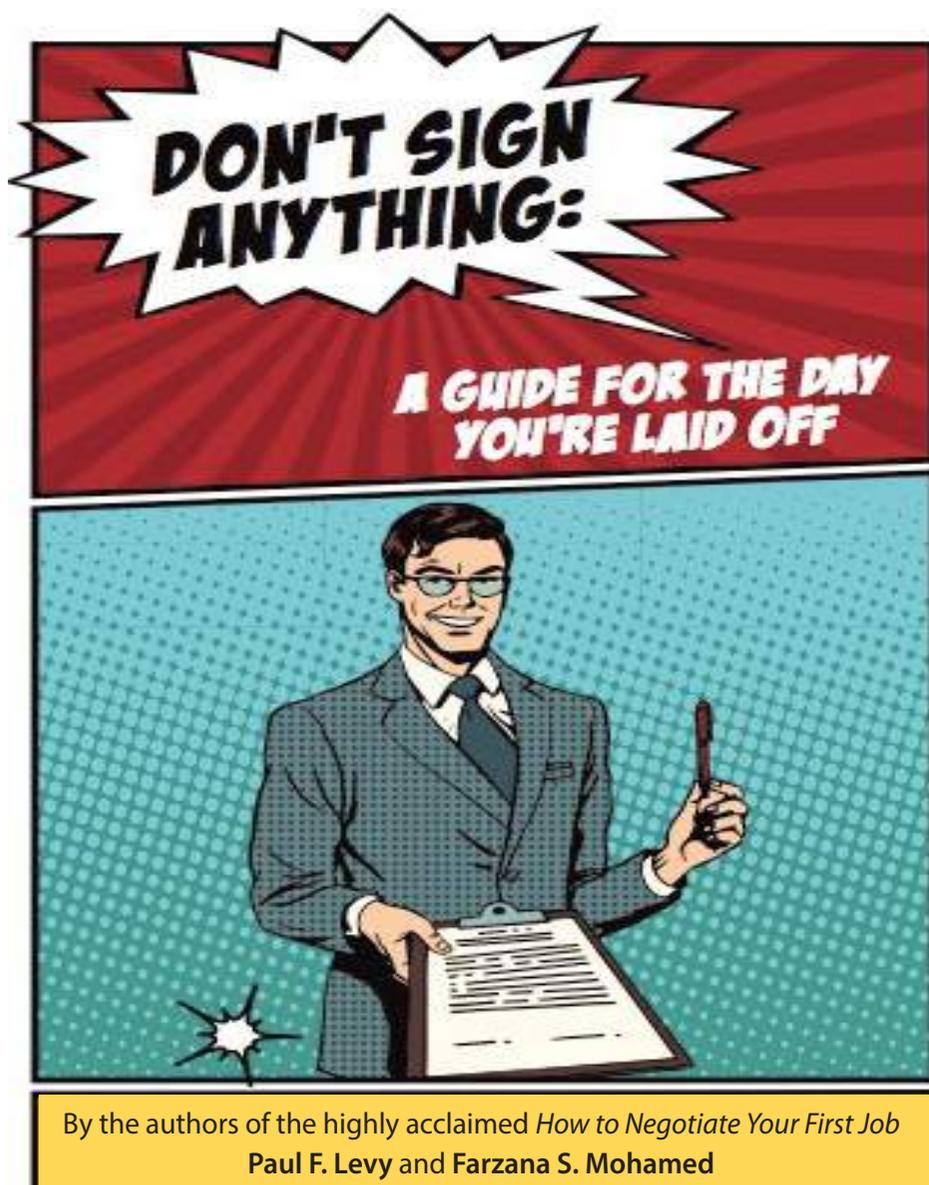
victim found out on June 17 when applying to the state for help. We pray for two things: that our victim can get money quickly and that our impersonator ends up wearing a prisoner costume.

## Fashionably undressed

In the early morning of June 20, police responded to a call about a man possibly on drugs taking off his clothes at 587 Boylston Street. The suspect was acting erratically and unable to calm down. EMS arrived and took this poor soul to Tufts Medical Center for treatment.

## Trying to be well dressed

On June 21, police officers responded to a call for shoplifting at Target on Boylston Street in the Fenway. Upon arrival, the officers were told by store security that the female suspect was stealing clothes from the men's section and has been a regular sticky fingers. Ms. Klepto was apparently super focused and did not like being disturbed by our men in blue. When approached, she became uncooperative and aggressive, shouting out "You can't touch me" and "don't put your hands on me". One would guess she had a proprietary shopping list because she refused multiple requests to show what was in her two shopping bags and any of the officers' questions. The police did see folded clothing in her bags with the price tags still on the items. Our professional shopper might divulge her secrets when she appears before a judge in Roxbury district court.



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## Residents

*Continued from Page 3*

"I sent an email to (Shukla) in December and asked to come out and make a presentation in January or February, but he never responded."

Coffee hours were advertised on the BTM website as well, he added.

Stefanie Seskin, BTM Active Transportation Director, added that community outreach happened during the Connect Downtown project planning process last fall.

"We are more than willing to revisit things," she said. "We want to get people used to the changes. We want to be a trusted

partner."

Sansone said the BTM was engaged with the BID. She attended several meetings, including one at Caffe Nero.

"Some people are cautiously optimistic but wondering how bus lanes and bike lanes will cohabitate together," she said. "I think the city is trying to do all it can to make sure that the people will be able to navigate better, especially with the pandemic. There's a need for better transportation routes and systems, especially since people aren't going to be relying on the T as much as they were."



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# TEA Seeking More Diversity



Photo: The Esplanade Association

By Jordan Frias

Diversity was on the docket during a virtual annual meeting last Tuesday by members of the Esplanade Association (TEA).

Given recent events, TEA's Executive Director Michael Nichols began the meeting with a discussion on diversity, equity and inclusion, which led to the need to diversify the association's board and staff and expand economic opportunities at the park.

Plans include expanding arts and culture programming at the Esplanade that reflect the diversity of Boston. Potentially bringing in diverse food vendors was also discussed.

Nichols said the board is looking for ideas for new programs "that will further diversify

and help the park to reflect Boston's diversity, Greater Boston's diversity."

Although the organization is "a relatively small nonprofit" that had a \$2.5 million operating budget last year, he said it can work "to create some economic opportunities" for underrepresented communities.

Fitness programming was also mentioned as a way to draw a more diverse crowd to the Esplanade.

Nichols explained how a World Dance Series was unfortunately postponed this year due to COVID-19.

"[It] would have included six different styles of fitness from around the world, free and open to the public," Nichols said.

*Continued on Page 8*

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# Public COVID-19 Testing has started

By Catherine McGloin

The Fenway Community Health Center (FCHC) opened the first dedicated testing site in Fenway last week, almost three months after Governor Charles Baker declared a public health emergency in Massachusetts due to COVID-19.

For over a month the makeshift testing site in the car park at McKinley High School, behind FCHC's building on Boylston Street, has been opened to registered patients. Now, anyone who has coronavirus symptoms, been exposed to someone with known coronavirus or who is living in a group setting, such as a nursing home or shelter, where there have been confirmed cases, can be tested at this site.

"We're excited about that because we think we'll see a whole lot more people by opening it up to the entire community," said Janet Mulligan, FCHC's executive director of nursing.

Testing is by appointment only, and patients undergo screening via telehealth services before they are allotted a slot. It is free, regardless of your immigration status, and FCHC accepts MassHealth and Medicaid. They have federal grant money to pay for those who are uninsured, said Mulligan.

This is the only testing site in Fenway. A spokesperson from the Boston Public Health Commission said mobile testing sites have filled availability gaps and that neighborhoods requiring dedicated testing facilities have been prioritized. The City of Boston is currently offering COVID-19 testing in 20 locations across the city.

According to Rep. Jay Livingstone, who represents part of Fenway, "The City has reported that Fenway had the highest number of cases for a neighborhood without any testing site."

Patients do not have to be tested in the neighborhood they live in, said a BPHC spokesperson. Jaya Aiyer, a community organizer at Fenway CDC, praised the services being offered by Fenway Health and the City's response. "I would say the City of Boston has done a pretty good job of sharing information and making sure residents are in the know". Staff at FCHC started out "rather conservatively," said Mulligan, testing only patients and employees, because they wanted to ensure their systems ran smoothly, patients received the right level of care and they had enough personal protective equipment to keep the site running.

*Continued on Page 8*

## Preservation Awards

*Continued from Page 1*

The Myles Standish Hall in Kenmore Square, for example, currently a Boston University dorm was once a posh hotel that hosted everything from galas to speakeasies. Babe Ruth, Rev.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Howard Stern were among its guests.

"The fact that Boston University took on this restoration project rather than argue for replacement, particularly within a neighborhood undergoing dramatic change and loss of historic fabric, makes an important statement about the importance of preservation and about sustainability," said Greg Galer, executive director of the Boston Preservation Alliance.

"Older buildings such as Myles Standish Hall are ripe for transformation, retaining the history that happened within their walls and holding firm to the historic context of the surrounding neighborhood while meeting the university's needs."

Most of the granite from the facades of the first and second-floor walls was used in the restoration process. The building also was made energy efficient and accessible.

In the South End, The Revolution Hotel also experienced a metamorphosis, transforming from the former YWCA built in 1953. Originally designed to house women joining the workforce post

World War II, the building kept unique features including 41 different room types, an original wall of mailboxes and concrete floors.

Street art bursting with color graces the lobby, depicting scenes and characters from Boston's past.

In contrast, the Revolution Hotel's three-story building showcases objects invented in the region, from a basketball to the telephone to Bose headphones, painted in white for dramatic effect.

The Whitney Hotel on Beacon Hill transformed a parking lot and the 1908 Jeffries House into an elegant four-story red brick building that blends into the historic character of the neighborhood. It is modern without being obtrusive, flanked by decorative trees.

"The Whitney Hotel is both richly modern and elegantly contextual," Galer said. Also recognized was the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in the South End. A home for two centuries for Boston's immigrant Catholic communities as well as devout residents, the church needed an overhaul to hold its growing population.

When the interior was painted with creams and whites to lighten the space, hidden architectural details were discovered on the walls that are now highlighted in red and gold.

Other buildings are in Roslindale, Roxbury and the North End, as well as a Boston lighthouse. The award ceremony will be held on Thursday, October 15.

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# Rushing Defends The Lincoln Statue

By **Jordan Frias**

The image of Abraham Lincoln standing over a freed slave in Park Square downtown has been under some scrutiny in recent days.

A petition to remove the Emancipation Memorial or Freedman's Memorial from Park Plaza and Eliot Street has gained over 8,000 signatures and has gotten

the attention of Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh.

But the debate over the statue isn't a new one, and while there is some agreement about its troubling imagery there is debate around its future. Former State Representative Byron Rushing who represented the South End said he was involved in discussions to keep the statue when City Councilor

Bruce Bolling wanted it gone. Rushing still argues for it to remain where it is.

"We certainly should not be talking about moving it first, the first discussion we should have is how do we engage people in this art ... you don't move this when the whole population doesn't know anything," Rushing said.

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# No Social Distancing For the Homeless



By **Jordan Frias**

A fenced off lot near the Woods Mullen shelter in the South End drew a large gathering recently, causing concern for those looking to encourage more social distancing among the homeless population.

As the weather warms up and the state begins to slowly open up in the midst of a pandemic, health officials said they are seeing a rise in street activity in the Mass Ave Melnea Cass area.

Large gatherings, such as the one by the Interstate 90 and 93 Connector, could pose a problem in an attempt to contain a virus that has killed 10 homeless people and infected many more throughout the city.

The fenced off Woods Mullen lot, located at 794 Mass Ave, serves as a temporary comfort station, equipped with handwashing stations, portable bathrooms and signage reminding people to stay 6 feet apart.

*Continued on Page 8*

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## No Social Distancing

*Continued from Page 7*

Another lot at 1010 Massachusetts Ave., the Proctor Street lot, was set up to serve the same purpose, but has seen a lot less traffic.

A spokesperson from the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) said the lots are meant to reduce the number of people on the street since daytime services in the area are closed due to COVID-19.

The nonprofit organization, the Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program, working with the population declined to comment on whether this type of crowding poses a danger amid a pandemic and would not provide a reason for its decision to not comment.

BPHC said they are working to address the issue and a spokesperson confirmed that the Woods Mullen lot is owned by the BPHC.

Attempts to draw more people to the Proctor Street lot are underway to reduce congestion at the Woods Mullen lot, a BPHC spokesperson said. Service providers at the lots will continue to encourage better personal hygiene and social distancing.

However, some were spotted not wearing masks at the Woods Mullen lot. This could be a cause for concern in addition to close contact with others amid a pandemic.

Stephen Fox, chair of the South End Forum, said people on the streets and in lots “is less of a concern” than crowding in shelters, which he described as “beds lined up where people are generally confined” and separated by plastic curtains.

Ideally, he said he would like to see more homeless people socially distant and wearing masks, but Fox admits the comfort station model is working as planned.

“The postcard view of the comfort station tends to misrepresent the purpose and effectiveness of the effort” to work with a challenged population, added Fox, who sits on the mayor’s Mass/Cass 2.0 Task Force.

He said the lot model is widely supported by neighbors and offers safety and supports to those struggling with substance use disorders and in need of a place to stay.

“The problem that we’re facing is the homeless don’t have a lot of options instead of public spaces and alleyways, which bring their own sorts of problems,” he said. “At least in the comfort stations there are porta-

potties there, there is nourishment there, there is a safe environment.”

Though “no one gets a free pass,” continued Fox, “These people presented less of a risk to the general population and to each other” since the city has “been so aggressive in terms of testing and quarantining those who had the virus for 14 days.”

The discussion now, he said, has to be on the creation of temporary and supportive housing for the fall and winter months when temperatures begin to drop. He said the discussion is being had by providers but not by elected officials.

“I think we need to rethink what we are going to do on how we house shelter clients,” he said. “... We’re going to be faced with a crisis with the lack of both temporary and supportive housing very soon.”

## Lincoln Statue

*Continued from Page 7*

He is advocating for a large scale discussion on the history of the statue which was purchased by Moses Kimball in 1879 and presented as a gift to the city.

“I think the statue is more important than an immediate personal reaction to it, and I think you need to talk about that immediate personal reaction. I am ready to do that,” Rushing said.

He said it would be a huge mistake and a missed opportunity to not talk first about the statue’s history before decisions are made.

But the petition, created by Boston resident Tory Bullock, is calling for the removal not the relocation of the statue, which Rushing said he is absolutely opposed to.

“I can understand people being opposed to having it in public unexplained, and I’m assuming that that’s what this really means ... we should be able to tell the story of the statue where it is, that’s my proposal for going forward,” he said.

But Raul Fernandez, a Boston University lecturer has been arguing for the statue’s removal since the deadly Charlottesville rally in 2017.

Rushing said Fernandez has written an incredibly researched piece on the monument, referring to a Medium article, on “all of the things that people should know”

but arrives at a different conclusion.

Fernandez, an associate dean for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at Boston University Wheelock College of Education and Human Development, refers to the piece as “a phenomenal teaching tool that belongs in a museum.”

“When you look at the depiction of Lincoln towering above this man you understand that from the artist’s perspective really this man that’s down below is just a prop,” Fernandez said, adding that the freed slave is stripped of his dignity and humanity.

“And that frankly has white gaze all over it,” he added.

Unlike Rushing, Fernandez does not agree with the notion that providing context is a solution to the issue if it’s kept in a public space.

“There is no plaque that can be put there that will provide dignity to the man ... It doesn’t matter what words you put on there, that person is still frozen in that position at Lincoln’s feet. There’s no way around that except to remove the statue from that public space,” he said.

Both Rushing and Fernandez recognize that the statue is a replica of the original that stands in Washington, D.C., which was financed by freed slaves in 1876 years after Lincoln’s assassination.

Fernandez said it is clear that those black men and women did not have a seat at the table when it

came to the actual depiction of the artwork, which portrays Lincoln as a paternal white savior, in his opinion.

“It’s not just a debate about the relative merits or demerits of Abraham Lincoln, the President, the man, it’s also about this other figure who’s at his feet ... [Lincoln’s] story has been well told ... But whose story we haven’t really told is the figure down below him,” he said.

Fernandez said the proper venue for the statue would be a museum, which he said could provide better context and allow more scrutiny.

Rushing added that maybe it could work in an art museum but it should not be stowed away in storage.

Walsh’s office is open to a community discussion on the issue and is engaging with the Arts Commission on the options he has.

Rushing admits he might not have chosen the artist Thomas Ball to design the memorial with the way it came out “but that’s part of the story.” “We can go move it, right, and never talk about it again or we could talk about it and decide after that conversation what we should do with it,” Rushing said. “So I have no problem with [Bullock]. And I have no problem with having a conversation, I have no problem with an eventual move, if that’s what after people have studied the history of this thing people decide to do.”

## TEA Diversity

*Continued from Page 5*

He estimates that the program would have seen 200 to 300 people “working out, side by side on the Esplanade, representing all that’s wonderful about Boston.”

“We’re committed to trying to preserve as much of that new program this year as possible, and as soon as it’s appropriate bringing that program back to the Esplanade.”

In terms of education and public art, Nichols said the association plans include “a more multifaceted telling of the Esplanade’s story,” which would provide more information on the indigenous population that lived in the area and cherished the river, which was known to them as the Quinobequin River.

“These are stories that the Esplanade Association would like to more deeply understand, help the public understand ... that this land has a long and storied history that is worthy of a narrative that we tell right along with the work of [Frederick Law] Olmsted and Charles Eliot and Arthur Shurcliff in the park. And so our organization is committed to telling these stories in the years ahead,” Nichols added.

The public art series on the

Esplanade, which currently consists of three murals on pump houses along the park, will also be an area where the board hopes to recruit more works of art by diverse artists. Nichols said the three current murals were done all by women.

An event that typically draws artists and producers of color each year, known as GroundBeat, a free riverfront music series that was held last year in the Hatch Shell, may go virtual this year, according to the association’s Chief of Staff Kelsey Pramik.

The program, sponsored by The Boston Foundation and Mass Cultural Council, is described as an effort to showcase a wide range of musical styles and promote local arts in the park, according to the association’s website.

Lastly, the association plans to use funds to broaden its outreach to successfully advertise all of the benefits of the park beyond the downtown area.

For the association itself, the board has begun working on steps that will lead to a more diverse staff and board in the future.

“We’re eager for this challenge, we’re excited about the work that we’ve done at this point and we look forward to reporting back with more specifics on some of these elements in the weeks and the months ahead,” Nichols said.

## COVID-19 Testing

*Continued from Page 6*

“It took that long because we couldn’t get our hands on the supplies that were necessary to do the testing,” said Mulligan. Not only were they short on masks and other protective equipment, but Quest Laboratories could not supply FCHC

with nasal swabs necessary to conduct the test.

“As soon as we could procure the swabs we needed, the PPE we needed and get the agreement with Boston Public Schools and the City of Boston, we actually moved relatively quickly,” she said. It took staff just five days to set up.

Medical professionals hope this more convenient location will encourage more

people to come for medical care.

Currently, about 15 people a day are being tested between 8 a.m. and midday, Monday to Friday. Mulligan said she’s expecting patient numbers to go up. They have the capacity to test about 48 people each morning, but if nurses are unable to accommodate all patients they will consider extending their hours, opening in the afternoons and potentially on weekends.

“We’re going to watch closely what the demand is,” said Mulligan.

Mulligan said FCHC is considering offering nearby colleges and universities testing services if and when students return in the fall. They have also offered free testing to all of those participating in protests and vigils. “We are looking for ways that we can be as helpful as we can to the community,” she said.

# LET THERE BE **RED,** **WHITE & BLUE!**

*At least one Fourth of July ritual is continuing this year as the Downtown Business Improvement District festoons the area with symbols of patriotism.*



*Photo credit: Downtown BID*



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# Extend Your Home Into the Outdoors

By Laura Porecca

Warm summer weather is a long-awaited treat for many Bostonians who want to turn off their heat and get outside. Whether the reason is for a planned dinner party, an impromptu brunch with some friends, or just to catch a breath at the end of the day, outdoor spaces boom as the season heats up.

The houses, apartments and beautiful brownstones of Boston are often also graced with patios, balconies and roof decks. While each serve a common purpose to extend your home's living space into the outdoors – they all do it differently.

A patio is usually a medium to large outdoor space located off a main area of the house, such as the living room or dining room. Ample space for guests and easy accessibility makes a patio the perfect place to bring the fun outside. A nice dining table and comfy chairs are some bare necessities to create a pleasant atmosphere, and you can get creative with them, too. For a whimsical touch, decorate with bright colors. For an ultra chic look, utilize more subdued colors. A patio can be a secret space where you can let your imagination run wild, so let it do exactly that! You can further enhance the ambiance of your patio with accessories and little touches here and there, whether or not they serve a real purpose. While something like a mosquito lamp or fire pit is practical and almost expected, do not limit your decorating to the expected. Go beyond with the finishing touches, like putting down a rug, fluffing some pillows and planting more than just some basic potted plants. Larger gardens including tall trees and fancy foods can make your sanctuary a little more exotic, yet still quite personal.

Balconies, on the other hand, are more intimate. Usually stemming off a bedroom, small balconies can be the perfect place to find some tranquility at the start or end to



Photo: Courtesy of Beacon Hill Garden Club

the day. Drinking coffee by the sunrise or tea by the sunset can bring stress relief and a sense of peace to your life, and that in turn can translate into the home. Since balconies are smaller, less furniture is needed, but still be sure to make your hideout nice and cozy. Perhaps a lounge chair and a small end table is all you need to hold a book or a glass of wine to help you achieve tranquility.

As if same-level extensions were not enough, some buildings even have rooftop decks for resi-dents to enjoy. These spaces can range from being just a plain empty space that happens to sit on top of a building to being a decked out – no pun intended – hideaway with electricity, heating and more. Depending on what your roof has, play to its strengths. If there is electricity, things like an electric fireplace and a hot tub can really enhance the feeling of luxury. For a deck lacking amenities, you can make a cozy second home by just adding some comfy chaise lounges and a table to sit around to share some stories and, of course, cocktails.

Rooftops are particularly special in a city like Boston because of the skyline or water vistas that can be seen from the top. Priceless views like this are perfect alone or shared with friends or significant others. After all, romance is often best found under the stars.



## How To Garden With Little Space

Photo: Bob Henry

Gardening in the city can sometimes be tough due to lack of space, but have no fear – container gardening is here! This type of gardening is great for city dwellers due to the little space required and large range of potential plants, from roses to rose-mary.

**A pot is not necessarily a pot.** One of the best parts about container gardening is that a pot is not the be-all and end-all. Anything with drainage can work, from a rain boot to a coconut. This is the perfect time to get creative!

**But make sure you pot smart.** Different types of pots will affect the longevity and moisture of the soil within. Plastic or ceramic pots will not absorb water from the soil, but clay and moss-lined ones will. Keep this in mind while getting ready to plant, especially if you have just recently discovered your green thumb.

**Drain, drain, drain.** Make sure your pots and containers have big enough holes in them so your soil can properly drain. Without this, your plants can virtually drown and rot from sitting in water.

**Going bigger is always a great idea.** A bigger pot means a larger amount of soil. In turn, more soil allows for a bigger root system that often leads to happier plants.

**Take your time researching prior to shopping.** There are many kinds of plants,

and they all require different amounts of sun and different size containers. Take the time to do your research prior to going to the nursery so you are not over-whelmed upon arrival. This will also help you choose the plants that best suit your wants and needs.

**Keep the tags.** Every plant or pack of seeds will come with information about food and light needed and potential size. Keep these so you know what your plant baby needs.

**Plant friendships.** If you are planning on mix-ing plants together, make sure they can play nice with each other and can live in the same environment. This will help your garden bloom with di-versity.

**But do not force too many at once.** Do not try to cram too many plants – especially different ones – in one pot. Overcrowding will lead to weak plants, and nobody wants their greens to be strug-gling.

**Make sure more mature plants get more space.** Plants that take a long time to be ready for harvesting usually get pretty big and require a lot of space. Crops like tomatoes, squash and kale all need an adequate-sized pot to really thrive.

**Do not let your plants go hungry.** Plain old soil most likely does not have enough nutrients to help your garden really thrive, so make sure to incorporate some fertilizer or compost into the mix.



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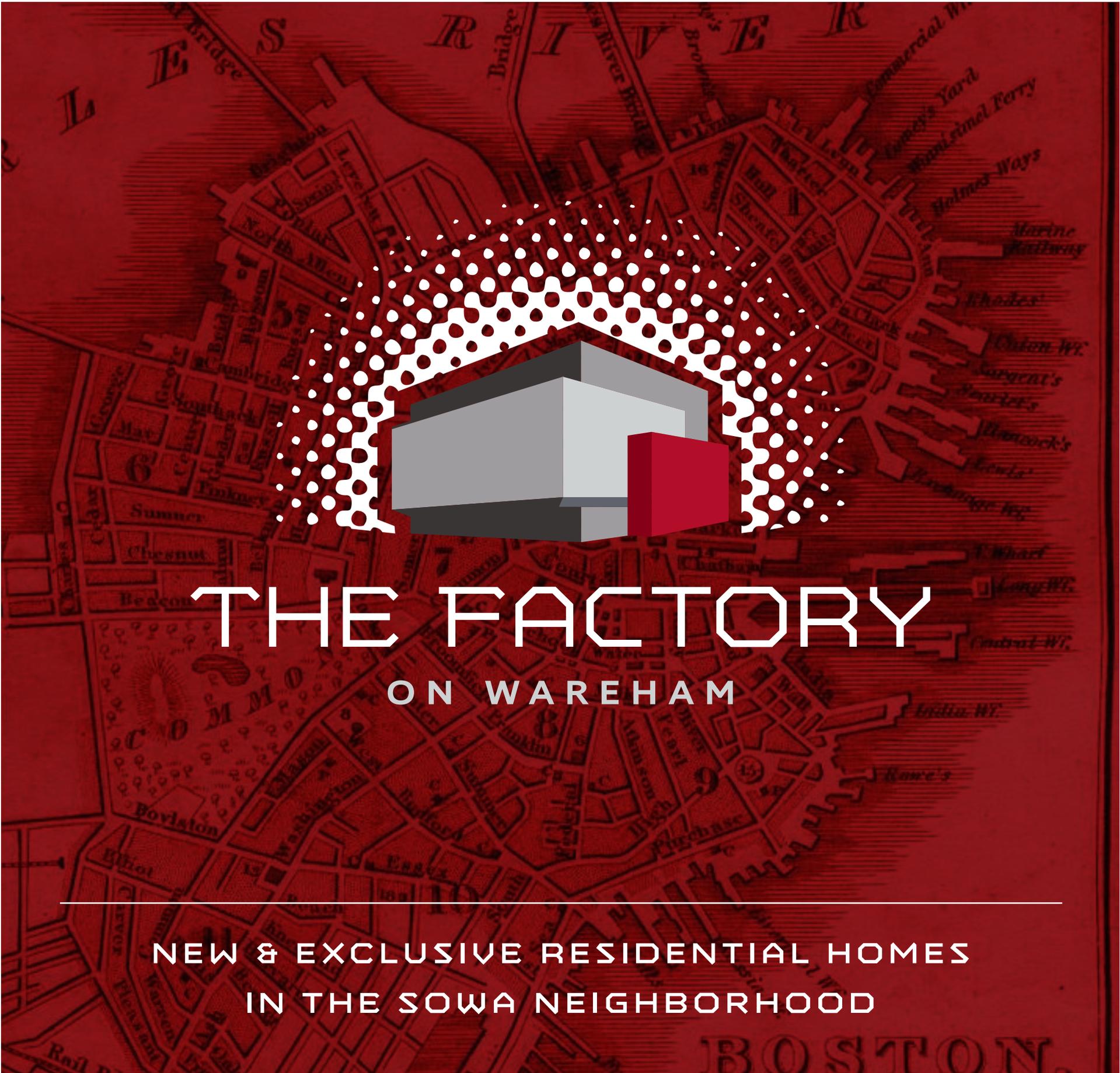
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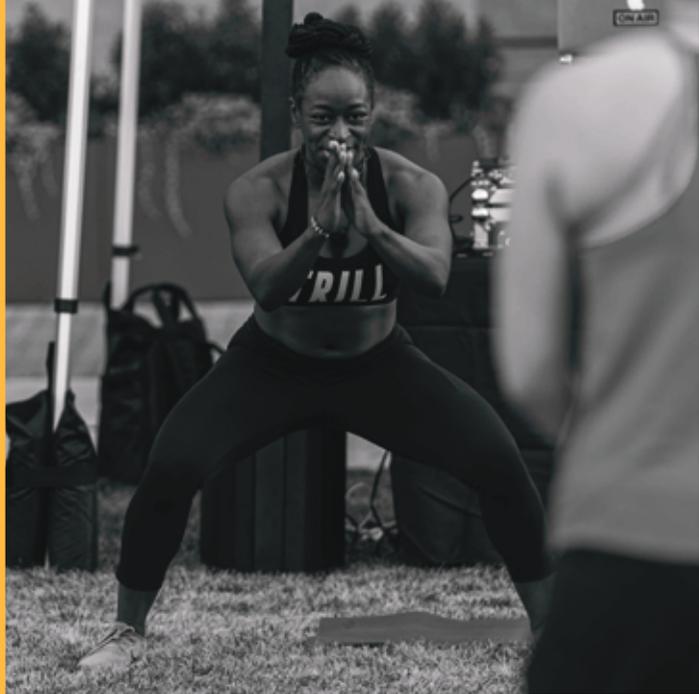
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