City Council District 2 profile: Corey Dinopoulos

BY MICHELE G. MANISCALCO

If he wins the District 2 City Council election in November and succeeds Bill Linehan, South Boston web designer Corey Dinopoulos will occupy a unique place in Boston history.

As a half-Creek, half-Irish gay man, he would set a precedent as both the first openly gay and the first Greek-American councilor from District 2, yet he will also follow the tradition of the Irish pol from South Boston that is somehow emblematic of Dinopoulos, who is part of the new influx of youth and diversity that is challenging South Boston’s Irish influence, while his Irish roots reflect that tradition.

He said at a March meeting of the Blackstone/Franklin Square

South End Forum discusses new drug, homelessness strategies

BY MICHELE G. MANISCALCO

The June 6 South End Forum meeting drew a packed house, with attendees spilling out into the back hallway as the group addressed the prospect of a state-proposed “safe injection site” for drug users with possible placement around Massachusetts Avenue and Melnea Cass Boulevard (Mass-Cass), a proposal for a new day center adjacent to the 112 Southampton Street shelter for homeless and addicted persons, and an update on office-based addiction treatment for patients of the South End Community Health Center (SECHC).

City councilor at large Annissa Essaibi George and District 3 city councilor Frank Baker, whose district comprises a corner of the South End and Newmarket as well as Dorchester, spoke about the Safe Injection Site proposal by the Massachusetts Medical Society.

Baker and Essaibi-George called for a city council hearing to take place on Monday, June 19 to discuss the safe injection site plan. Both councilors want to see the site located and Newmarket as well as Dorchester, spoke about the Safe Injection Site proposal by the Massachusetts Medical Society.

Cathedral goes to Beacon Hill

Six Cathedral High School students competed for and were selected to be interns at the Massachusetts State House this summer. They are among only 120 students selected from across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

They are participating in a 6- to 8-week program in which they will observe tours, learn the skills associated with providing historical information, create their own tours, and be fully functioning tour guides by the end of the summer.

All four of the Class of 2020, the Cathedral High School students selected for the internship are: Kamila Alfred, Fatmata Caceras, Imnuelle Edmunds, Janiah Ramos, Alexandria Rowell, and Unique Vazquez.

South End hosts, and shows, Pride

A powerful Atonement, a slender Camelot

Days of Atonement, Israeli Stage, Deane Hall, Calderwood Pavilion, Boston Center for the Arts, through June 25. 617-566-5555 or bostontheatrescene.com

Camelot, Lyric Stage Company of Boston, through June 25. 617-566-5555 or lyricstage.com

BY JULIE BESCHER

Yon Kippur is a time for the deepest introspection and striving for full repentance. Quite fittingly, Israeli playwright Hannah Amsud’s Haran’s moving drama “Days of Atonement” has the four very different Ghana sisters come together on the eve of this holiest of Jewish

Free music everywhere this weekend

2017 Lapin Fête de la Musique

This Saturday, June 17, from 3 - 6 pm, Fête de la Musique will be celebrated in the South End, with live musicians filling the streets with a wide variety of music for all ages. Area businesses, organizations and neighborhood groups have partnered to deliver a diverse range of music to be freely enjoyed by the neighborhood, visitors and passersby.

Live music can be found at Riggsfield Park, Childe Hassam Park, Union Park and Frieda Garcia Park. This year, in addition to music in four South End parks, we are having a Block Party on Warren Avenue (between Chauncy and Berdoff) to celebrate the retirement of Community Music Center of Boston’s Executive Director, David Lapin. The Block Party will have live music from 3:00 – 5:00 pm, food and activities for all ages!

https://www.boston.org/events/fete-de-la-musique/
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Neighborhood Association, “It’s better for the South End rather than previous consensus here.” Over lunch at the South End Bakery, Dinopulos said, “We asked the neighborhood to vote, but it’s hard for people to vote, so I think we need to focus on the South End best.” He went on to outline his vision, ideas, and priorities.

In meetings with potential voters, Dinopulos said, “It’s important to address transportation, housing, and education are key to retaining city residents. Dinopulos’s education public education was shaped by his parents’ experiences as Boston public school teachers and his own public-school education. Observing the Boston public schools (BPS) during his 12 years of residence here, Dinopulos thinks BPS is underfunded for a number of reasons and believes that the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program could help fill the gap.

As an example, he said, “For example, Northeastern University is paying only 20 per cent of the $40 million they would owe if they paid taxes. That’s irresponsible.” As a councilor, he would hold these institutions accountable.” Dinopulos, who voted No on Question 2 to raise the charter school cap, also thinks that charter schools are at odds with the survival and improvement of BPS, because they perform poorly at the public schools through their competitive approach, which doesn’t factor in the students’ special needs and language barriers and not administering standardized tests.

“The charter schools were established to be think tanks of innovation and to test new methods of learning. Whatever is working should be scaled back into BPS,” he said. Dinopulos hopes to work on attracting the 1200 students of students from BPS to private and charter schools and the exclusion of faculty to reduce the schools.

Dinopulos feels that the South End and South Boston are under-served by the current transportation network and would like to see an improved bus service in both neighborhoods, dedicated bus lanes, better prevention of vehicular speeding and other measures to make daily commuting easier and improve access to shopping, dining and leisure destinations.

Dinopulos lamented waiting at the bus stop for more than 30 minutes with a diverse group of people in line while several full buses rolled by without stopping. Dinopulos uses monthly MBTA passes but sometimes results in ride-sharing services when the bus is late.

“Whether it’s spending your money on a tax or an Uber, we should have to be reaching into our pockets every time we want to get around,” he said. He seemed encouraged by the T’s new pilot program for bus-boarding, such as opening all doors on the Silver Line. He also suggested expanding the route to purchasing T passes.

Dinopulos also expressed concern for the future success of the Silver Line due to its distance from any of the MBTA stops, and asked the developers at a recent community meeting how they plan on get-

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someplace other than Boston and particularly the South End/Melrose Ave area, which they feel is already overtaxed with addiction treatment and harm reduction services and the crime that surrounds drug activity.

Baker reported that he has received irate calls and e-mails from people who are confined between the day center and the safe injection site, thinking that the injection site is about to open at South Boston Street.

"If everybody knew me, they knew I advocate constantly for programs to happen in other places outside the city. Speaking with the police, the people who do outreach and the people who pick up needles, the city of Boston and this area in particular are totally overwhelmed down here.

The last thing I am going to do as a city councilor who represents this area is allow a safe injection site to come in." Jennifer Tracey, director of the Mayor’s Office of Recovery Services, described a pilot program for a day center at the 112 South Boston Street shelter for homeless persons and addiction-treatment patients to go as an alternative to wandering the streets.

Often patients in drug treatment come into the city early in the morning to receive methadone and have another appointment for counseling or medical follow-up hours later, leaving them with nowhere to go between appointments.

The day center, a fabric-covered structure that served in the dining area during the completion of 112 South Boston Street, has electrical power and will offer water, snacks, portable restrooms and referrals to drug treatment and to Boston Health Care for the Homeless (BHCH) for medical needs in addition to a place to rinse from the neighbor-

hood. The day center would be open from approximately 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM. The idea has already been presented to the Newmarket Business Association as well.

"The sidewalks in the Mass Ave area leading to Newmarket during the warm months become a difficult management area in terms of people who are coming for treatment and who have a follow-up appointment in the afternoon and have no place to go from the first appointment to the next appointment. We call on the police to say, ‘Help us’ and the police say, ‘Where are we supposed to tell them to go?’ The problem then becomes one for our parks and our playgrounds,” South End Forum chair Steve Fox explained. A representative of Boston Health Care for the Homeless (BHCH) said the idea arose from the fact that BHCH and other organizations in the Mass Ave. and Albany Street and Newmarket areas have had to hire extra security as more and more people have been roaming the streets. In addressing admittance to the day center, Tracey described it as "low threshold".

Two attendees asked for clarification of the term but there was none given. Tracey did say that security requirements and restrictions at the entrance to the day center have not been finalized and that initially, the day center would probably serve a capacity of about 30. James Green of the Office of Neighborhood Development pointed out that there already is a similar day center adjacent to St. Francis House at 39 Boylston Street that serves 75-100 homeless people per day, also offering referrals to addiction services and BHCH. Returning to the proposed South Boston Street day center, Green said, "It has to be run safely. We don’t want to have metal detectors or check lists of people who are barred from entering.” A neighbor asked whether they had established metrics for evaluating the day center’s impact on the surrounding areas.

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Photos by Michele Marsalis

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holidays to forgive each other and themselves. Israelische Stolpersteine, powerful and disturbing, are displayed at the Boston Center for the Arts, sensitively staged by company artistic director Gay Berenato, will have theater-goers of all religious persuasions tapping into memories of personal family reunions called up by this very insightful play. Truly, Annie Haslour, played by Israelische Stolpersteine, powerful and disturbing, are displayed at the Boston Center for the Arts, sensitively staged by company artistic director Gay Berenato, will have theater-goers of all religious persuasions tapping into memories of personal family reunions called up by this very insightful play. Truly, Annie Haslour, played

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neighborhood. Fox responded, “We are very successful with [SECHC] as a result of their doing very good data collection.” He said further, “This is a pilot program and specific criteria will be developed to measure its success or failure as a location. If it is successful, in the future we may think about less service to an alternate location outside the South End.”

Henry Goodrow, director of external relations at SECHC, reported that in the fall of 2015 the health center began offering addiction treatment to patients, participation in the program has grown from 25 to 45. Addressing community concerns that SECHC’s drug treatment might draw adverse activity, Goodrow said, “We have not received any complaints nor have we had any disturbances.”

One longtime East Cambridge Street homeowner said he has witnessed increased listening around the center in the past few months, to which Goodrow replied that in his 9 months at the center, he has seen 8 more increases in listening around SECHC, Walpole’s and Flors. One resident expressed the warming weather.

Goodrow also pointed out that the health center’s addiction treatment is part of primary care, unlike the treatment offered at neighboring drug treatment clinic. Two other longtime neighbors of SECHC said that they have not noticed any increased listening or negative activity.

Michael McCormack of McCormack and Surry, an attorney for the Church of Scientology, said that the center’s location and development of the church’s new headquarters in Allston, talked about a new office on the historic but dilapidated hotel at the corner of Washington Street and Massachusetts Avenue. McCormack, who has worked with the church for many years on permitting and other development issues, said the church is

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Letters policy
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the mid-1950s by Moroccan and Tunisian immigrants, joined by Russian and Ethiopian counterparts in the 1990s. What begins with a search for their lost identity in Morocco continues (Anoushay Haqani also Morocco) ultimately becomes their own search for self and a dramatically satisfying arrival at a solidarity that transcends their personal conflicts and religious differences. That search includes Malik’s doubts about his husband’s fidelity, ultra-Orthodox Evelyn’s questions about the limits on a mother’s love, and businesswoman Penny’s estrangement as being perceived as inscrutably prominent and Amia’s psychological needs. Jackie Davis is vividly cast as Malik, and Amia’s joys are affected by the self-sabotaging nature of Evelyn. Dana Stern is excruciatingly vulnerable Amia. Renaud’s Lia Alexander is a standout capturing Penny’s confidence as a moral professional and her complex emotional state.

Ben Alman has sharply stripped down production values to house it in a family-friendly, in its own way harrowing, in that of the family’s battle in a “Long Live Journey into Night.” Call it “Days Of Attonement,” a theater blessing in Israel Stage’s ongoing celebration of women. 

The adaptation Lyric Stage Company is staging may have been trimmed by adaptor David Lee. Even so, the elimination of the bulk of Marin’s in this 2000 edition does not mean the absence of the show’s tragic messages about women’s dignity and right to achieve great things. Ed Hooper’s production, directed by James E. Johnson and costumed by D. Monroe Wolfe, is strikingly relevant and stirring. Inside the venue, a bench typical of a wide-open, inviting. The production has found a way to bring the story to life.

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Other than theusual, they were treated with a sense of civility and respect. Everyone in the South End is very polite. The neighborhood associations have been to town, to parks, and to public events where they have been heard.

District 0 is home to a public-policy organization that is affecting both the South End and its South Boston neighborhood so tragically, for which he does not have the answers. He wants to learn by listening to experts and to families affected by the drug epidemic. "I am not an expert in everything, but I am definitely willing to talk and listen to people with open ears."
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