South End News

December 15, 2016 [Vol. 37 , No. 49]

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Inside

Claremont holiday party embodies the spirit of giving

By Michele D. Maniscalco

About 45 guests sampled light and tasty Asian appetizers, sipped cocktails, engaged in friendly banter and contributed to a good cause at the Claremont Neighborhood Association's (CAN) December 6 holiday party and benefit for Cradles to Crayons at Shun's Kitchen, 520 Columbus Avenue. Neighbors and friends brought toys, books and games for children living in poverty. "I loved that we were able to collect over 60 items for Cradles to Crayons! I will be bringing the donations to their Allston location this Saturday," CNA president Bob Barney said in a follow-up e-mail.

Guests chatted about holiday plans and goings-on in their own blocks as well as speaking their minds with South End liaison Sam Chambers. Chambers reported that residents are concerned as the

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Mayor Walsh meets with South Enders

By Michele D. Maniscalco

by Michele D. Maniscalco

The South End Branch Library at 685 Tremont Street welcomed Mayor Walsh on Thursday, December 8 to speak with and listen to a standing-room only crowd of residents packed into the library's second floor meeting room. South End Forum president Steve Fox moderated, and the mayor offered a brief overview of his administration's chief accomplishments and challenges before hearing the neighbors. Walsh took notes as he listened to each question from the audience.

In his opening remarks, Walsh announced proudly that his administration has housed over 1,000 homeless persons, not just giving them the key to an apartment but providing "wraparound" services to help them adjust to and manage a household. He said he is working with the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) to create a program similar to the street worker program to locate homeless persons and try to find out how best to help them. Walsh said that he does not want any new facilities opened in the South

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South Enders Ring Those Bells

The Back Bay Ringers, Boston's premiere handbell ensemble, will perform An English Christmas on Friday, December 16, 7:30pm First Church Boston, 66 Marlborough Street, Boston.

"I'm looking forward to sharing this season's BBR repertoire," shares South Ender Griff Gall, Artistic Director. "The ensemble has been working hard, preparing repertoire that highlights the musical possibilities of our beautiful handbells. Audiences will enjoy the variety of music, including a new arrangement of 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing'

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The Back Bay Ringers

Copley Square Tree Lighting

Thousands of revelers gathered on Copley Plaza November 28 for the annual tree lighting celebration hosted by Mayor Martin J. Walsh, the Boston Parks and Recreation Department, and The Friends of Copley Square. The free event featured appearances by Jenny Johnson, Santa Claus, and Rudolph along with musical performances by the Boston Children's Chorus, vocalist Marchelle Jacques-Yarde of the Boston Parks and Recreation Department, the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, and Berklee College of Music student Mahamma Germain of Hyde Park. In addition, the US Postal Service unveiled its new holiday stamps. Light refreshments were provided by New England Coffee, DAVIDsTEA, and HP Hood LLC. The Fairmont Copley Plaza hosted a family reception immediately following for all in attendance.

Cassandra and Oskar Buchka of the South End await the annual Copley Square Tree Lighting on November 28 hosted by Mayor Martin J. Walsh, the Boston Parks and Recreation Department, and The Friends of Copley Square.

Navidad en la Villa

Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción (IBA) is spreading joy this holiday season and inviting you to enjoy an uplifting musical collaboration between Christian Figueroa and Lina Gonzalez's Unitas Ensemble Chamber Orchestra. A native from Puerto Rico, Figueroa's smooth tenor has entertained audiences on a variety of stages – from Fenway park to Carnegie Hall. A Colombian

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Christian Figueroa

SNOW and COLD 101

What to Do With Your Car When it Snows

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For your safety, make sure to clear all snow at least one foot around your muffler before starting your engine. Blocked mufflers can cause carbon monoxide poisoning.

What to Do With Your Trash

Trash and recycling collection is canceled only in the most extreme storms. Crews may work later than usual, so leave items out unless collection is canceled. If it's canceled,

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Walsh

Continued from page 1

End, and that to build new facilities rather than to continue placing people in homes and helping them to succeed "would mean that we've failed." Turning to the Boston Public Schools, Walsh said that this year for the first time, the city has more level 1 and 2 schools than level 3 schools. He acknowledged also that serious work needs to be done to improve results at level 3 and 4 schools. Walsh spoke proudly of the $90 million his administration has spent the parks over the past two years and said he plans to continue to make major investments in the parks in the future. "I'm a parks guy," he said. He harkened to his days as coach and head of the Savin Hill Little League, observing that today, many of the children's sports fields have poor grass, while suburban teams have fields that are "like Fenway Park".

Marleen Nienhuis of the Friends of the South End Branch Library told the mayor that the library and its park have been significantly affected by the homeless and opioid crises, and she wanted to know what can be done and when to improve the library. "It's one of the few safe places where people can meet, greet and see one another. It needs to be protected." Fox added, "It's the only public bathroom in the neighborhood," to which the mayor replied, "I know. I saw that when I came in." The mayor said that once the renovation of the main library is complete, he plans to "re-establish and reconstruct" every branch library in the city. He did not, however, offer a timetable for renovations to the South End branch. There was also some discussion of the ownership of the Library Park, which both the Boston Parks and Recreation Department (BPRD) and the Boston Public Library (BPL) system claim not to own. Fox pointed out that this has been the case for about 20 years, and that recently BPRD commissioner Christopher Cook said, "If it's a park, then I own it." Another open question is whether the Library Park is listed administratively as a park. The mayor took note of the situation and said he would check with BPRD and other authorities to clear up ownership. When Fox pointed out that the library has the only public bathrooms in the South End, the mayor replied, "I know. I could tell when I walked in." Walsh pointed out that in the lasts year, the Boston Parks and Recreation Department (BPRD) has invested $90 million in city parks, the largest budget in history. "I intend on making another large investment this year. I'm a big parks guy."

Affordable housing was a recurrent subject in the discussion. Walsh said that soon after his inauguration, he appointed Sheila Dillon of the Department of Neighborhood Development as Chief of Housing. We worked on a comprehensive plan to create 53,000 new housing units by 2030. By the end of 2014, we had 4,000 new housing starts and half of those were low and moderate income housing. In 2015, there were 5,000 housing starts and about half of that was low and moderate income housing. We are starting to see a softening of the micro-market. We have about 40,000 units of that planned, either under construction, in the pipeline for a permit or complete. Now we are having problems, not necessarily in the South End, siting some of this housing. People say, 'We don't want it in our backyard.' So we are trying to figure out where we can build some of this housing. There are some great moderate and low income units coming on-line. We are also making some major investments in our stock of public housing. We are doing the next phase of Old Colony; we broke ground in Orient Heights yesterday; we are waiting to get a grant from the federal government to reconstruct Whittier Street and Charlestown. It's all low-income now, but it's going to be low-income, middle-class and high-end but not crazy high end. The problem we have is population. People are coming into the city in boatloads."

Walsh said that while the 2014 census revealed a population of about 650,000, pending the numbers from the 2015 census, he estimates the current population at 670,000. "We haven't seen that population since the 1960s, and once we hit 700,000, that's the 1950s population," Walsh observed. The South End News followed up with the observation that in the South End, it is not uncommon for developers to pay an IDP (Inclusive Development Policy) payment in order to avoid including the required affordable units in their South End projects, limiting the growth of affordable and moderate-income units in the neighborhood. The mayor responded that the IDP has been changed to require 18 per cent affordable units rather than 13 per cent and that the zones have been drawn around the city to govern the IDP payments. For example, in Zone A downtown, the maximum number of affordable units is required and the payment to build off-site is higher than in Zone C, which encompasses Hyde Park and Dorchester. Offsite units must be built within the same zone. Resident Renee Harmon noted that many residents now consider the South End white rather than multi-racial and drew a parallel between affordability and diversity. The mayor said that improving schools and

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(Top) Walsh takes notes on Steve Fox's question (Center) South End attendees (Bottom Left) Dr. Siegel speaks to Walsh (Bottom Right) Marleen Nienhuis of Friends of the Library

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Walsh

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reducing income inequality, lamenting that Boston has one of the highest indexes of income inequality among major US cities. The mayor suggested trying to build a more diverse inventory of jobs at different skill levels, and also pointed out that the South End, like his native Savin Hill, South Boston and other areas are changing because people are selling their homes at very high prices. He said Boston needs to respond by increasing the stock of affordable housing citywide. "The strength of our city is that we are a diverse city. Fifty per cent of our residents are people of color. When we talk about white people, it's the Irish, the Italians and (different groups). In city hall, we focus every day on how to deal with income inequality."

A BPS high school student asked a question about young people's voices being heard by the Walsh administration. The young girl faltered from nervousness as she tried to read her question, and the mayor invited her to the podium to speak to him directly. Addressing the recent school walk-out to protest the election of Donald Trump, Walsh acknowledged that many people were surprised and disheartened following the election, and he decried the hateful tone of much of the president-elect's rhetoric. Walsh pledged to continue to look out for the rights and needs of immigrants, of women, and of students, noting that some BPS students have undocumented family members. He also said that while Boston is not officially a sanctuary city, Boston law enforcement will not notify federal authorities of immigration violations if someone stopped for a traffic infraction, for example. "I'm not going to stand for some of the rhetoric that is coming out of Washington, DC. Boston is a special city, and when the time is right, I am going to join with some other mayors around the country and we will push back at what is going on." Walsh continued, "Washington needs us more than we need them," explaining that President Obama said he counted on mayors to help him spread the message of his agenda, and tht he and other mayors have engaged with the president on climate change, guns and many other major policy questions. On the school walk-out, he said he didn't feel that the walk-out was the appropriate action at the time, but he does want to hear what BPS students have to say.

A young adult inquired about extending restaurant and nightlife hours, saying the current schedule is "boring". The mayor said he filed legislation to do so early in his tenure. The result was that "some people loved it, some people hated it, some people didn't care". Walsh made the point that if 4:00

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Violent Crime Down 13% in Boston

Over the Past Three Years

SUBMITTED BY BPD

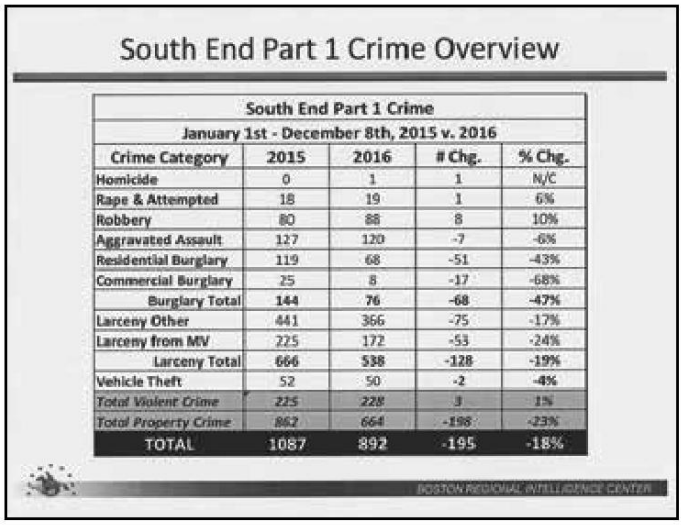
The Boston Police Department is pleased to report that violent crime is down again this year, with a 4% reduction while overall part one crime is down 6%. This is the third year in row where both violent crime and property crime have seen decreases, making Boston one of the safest major cities of its size in the country.

Violent crime, which includes Homicide, Rape, Attempted Rape, Robbery and Aggravated Assault, has dropped 13% since 2014. The City recorded a 6% reduction in violent crime in 2014, followed by a 3% reduction in 2015 and a 4% reduction so far in 2016.

Overall part one crime, which includes violent crime and property crimes such as Burglary, Larceny and Auto Theft, saw a combined decrease of nearly 20% over the past three years.

Boston has seen a 3% increase (seven total incidents) of Rape or Attempted Rape over last year. This follows a 22% reduction in such crimes last year (fifty-seven fewer incidents in 2015 compared to 2014).

Homicides are up slightly this year over last. This comes after Boston recorded a ten year low thirty-eight homicides in 2015 compared to forty-one so far in 2016 and well below the ten year average of fifty-seven.



South End Part 1 Crime January 1st - December 8th, 2015 v. 2016				
Crime Category	2015	2016	# Chg.	% Chg.
Homicide	0	1	1	N/C
Rape & Attempted	18	19	1	6%
Robbery	80	88	8	10%
Aggravated Assault	127	120	-7	-6%
Residential Burglary	119	68	-51	-43%
Commercial Burglary	25	8	-17	-68%
Burglary Total	144	76	-68	-47%
Larceny Other	441	366	-75	-17%
Larceny from MV	225	172	-53	-24%
Larceny Total	666	538	-128	-19%
Vehicle Theft	52	50	-2	-4%
Total Violent Crime	*225*	*228*	*3*	*1%*
Total Property Crime	*862*	*664*	*-198*	*-23%*
TOTAL	1087	892	-195	-18%

Non-fatal shooting incidents are also down this year compared to last year, with 8 fewer incidents in 2016 over 2015 and 9 fewer incidents than the 5 year average of 192. Remarkably these decreases were achieved while the total number of arrests in the city dropped 26% during this period.

At a time when crime rates are on the rise around the country, Boston continues to experience a steady decrease in violent crime and property crime. "Keeping Boston safe is my number one priority," said Commissioner William Evans. "An increase in any category is of concern and my officers will continue to strive to ensure the safety of all who work, live and visit the city. We will continue to build strong relationships in the community because we see the value and impact they can have on reducing crime and improving the quality of life in our neighborhoods."

Ringers

Continued from page 1

and a spirited arrangement of 'God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen.'"

"This is an exciting season for Back Bay Ringers," says South Ender Donna Matson Executive Director, "as we return to favorite sold out venues, and debut at the Shalin Liu Performance Center in Rockport. We can't wait to transform our audiences back to old Christmas times and traditions, if only for a little while."

An English Christmas features traditional holiday carols that were first published in an 1833 printing called "Christmas Carols Ancient and Modern" by William Sandys. This collection of seasonal carols marked the first publication of many familiar English and French carols including "God Rest Ye MerrGentlemen," "I Saw Three Ships," "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," "Good People All," "The Sussex Carol," "The Coventry Carol," and "The First Noel." The Back Bay Ringers will play modern arrangements of all ofthese as well as crowd-pleasing favorites from past holiday concerts, such as "O Holy Night." These familiar tunes are sure to transport the audience to a time and place that popularized Christmas cards, holiday feasts, and the exchange of gifts during the winter holidays. In addition to the handbell ensemble, An English Christmas will feature Greg Urban on percussion, Amanda Koslowski on flute and Patricia Kopko, soprano on select songs.

Back Bay Ringers (BBR) is an advanced, auditioned, handbell ensemble. Under the direction of Griff Gall, BBR has quickly developed a reputation for excellence, regularly performing at Boston-area landmarks as Faneuil Hall, Symphony Hall, the Boston Children's Museum, and the Prudential Center. Back Bay Ringers has also performed in festivities associated with the 2004 Democratic National Convention as well as the Boston Marathon.

BBR was founded as the nation's first handbell ensemble dedicated to members and friends of the LGBT community, and remains open and affirming for membership, board and community. BBR performs annually at the Boston Handbell Festival and earlier this year performed at the national conference of the Handbell Musicians of America. In addition to the annual holiday concerts, BBR performs both as a large ensemble and in smaller quartets throughout the year in both public settings and for private bookings. BBR has recorded three recordings: Merry and Bright, Perpetual Motion, and Comfort and Joy. For more information, visit http://www.backbayringers.org/.

Back Bay Ringers founder & Artistic Director Griff Gall

37/49

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To be considered for publication, letters must be no longer than 500 words; refrain from extreme personal attacks; be signed and include an address and daytime telephone number. Writers should refrain from making incorrect statements since they may be barred from future issues. Deadline is noon Tuesday for Thursday's paper. To send us letters: Mail to 46 Plympton St., 5th floor, Boston, MA 02118; FAX to 617.464.7286; E-mail: letters@southendnews.com

EMERGENCE

The Friends of Blackstone & Franklin Squares are pleased to welcome EMERGENCE: What Does Hope Look Like?, a sculpture by local artist Chanel Thervil, to Franklin Square. Formerly on the plaza of Boston Center for the Arts, this temporary exhibit will add some color and whimsy to the park through the winter. Thervil's project is envisioned as a communal tree of hope, built based on direct community input. Read more about the artist, the creation of the sculpture, and its meaning here http://www.bcaonline.org/visualarts/summer-public-art.html and here http://www.chanelthervil.com/emergenceblog/.

Emergence in Franklin Square

Walsh

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AM closing were to come to the South End, some businesses that might want to stay open would be "literally right next to a house or in a neighborhood". Walsh thinks a pilot program in an area like the Seaport would be a better trial, but for now, the issue is "off the table".

Fox asked about Runway 27 at Logan Airport, explaining to the mayor that airplane noise affects many people's sleep and lives in the South End. "Since June, it is constant and everyone is losing sleep," Fox said. Fox added that in dealing with Massport and state officials, the South End is competing for an ear with towns like Milton and Watertown that have paid lobbyists to advocate for them. "How can we get some political muscle" involved in the debate over the use of Runway 27?" Walsh explained it is more of a matter for the FAA, and suggested meeting with one of Congressman Michael Capuano's staff to go over the problem, then meeting with Capuano once he has been briefed and can suggest a plan of action.

Dr. Ben Siegel, a pediatrician at Boston Medical Center, began by congratulating the mayor for his work on homelessness, drug addiction and children's issues before asking about Boston Basics, a program focused on children aged 0-3 years. Siegel then handed the mayor a packet of recommendations, which the mayor put in his pocket. The mayor explained that a representative of Boston Basics greets new mothers at the hospital with a welcome package to assist them for the first three years of the child's life. Siegel responded that Boston Basics is good, but not sufficient, and that better coordination and leadership is needed. The mayor said rather abruptly that Ron Dorsey is looking into Boston Basics, then called for the next question.

The meeting concluded at approximately 4:45 PM, at which time the mayor headed to Villa Victoria to help light the community Christmas tree.

Navidad

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native, Gonzalez's masterful conducting has earned her the honor of being named one of El Mundo Boston's 30 Under 30 Rising Stars; she founded the Unitas Ensemble in 2014 with the mission to celebrate the unique beauty of Latino and Ibero-American arts and culture. We invite you to enjoy this bilingual concert that will warm your senses and leave a smile on your face well into the New Year. Friday, Dec. 16 at 7pm at Villa Victoria Center for the Arts, 85 W. Newton Street, Boston. Tickets at bit.ly/navidad16

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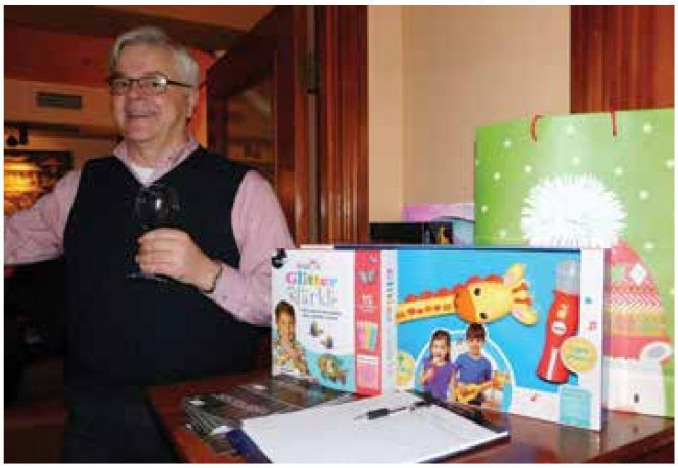
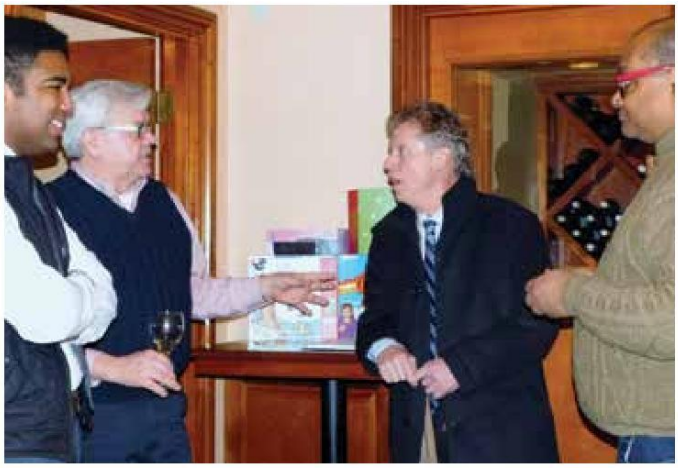
Claremont

Continued from page 1

weather turns wintry for the homeless and those with no place to sleep, as well as with the possible effect the election of Donald Trump will have on our city. "I think people are very interested in the future and I tried as best I can to reassure them that our administration is doing the best we can to remain a vibrant, inclusive city," Chambers said. He also noted the abundance of holiday festivities around the South End. "It's my favorite time of year. The South End is so generous. There are a lot of parties, tree sales, Christmas tree lightings and events."

Boston resident Lynn Margherio founded Cradles to Crayons in 2002 after a holiday trip to visit family. Margherio was struck by the abundance of clothing and toys, many outgrown or unused, she witnessed in the homes of families with children and thought of all the children who are homeless and living in poverty. She set out to bridge the gap between them by collecting donations of new or like-new clothes, toys and other items for children up to age 12 and distributing them to low-income children through social service agencies and schools statewide. In 2006, Margherio worked with Philadelphia resident Jennifer Case to launch Cradles to Crayons in the City of Brotherly Love, where approximately 130,000 children live in poverty. This year, Cradles to Crayons opened in Chicago, and there are plans to expand to two other cities by 2018.





(Left) Bob Barney (Right) Sam Chambers and Bob Barney at left. Photos by Michele Maniscalco

Mayor Walsh Supports Library Renovation

By Marleen Nienhuis, FOSEL

Mayor Marty Walsh, in a meeting held at the South End library on December 8, responded positively to efforts by the library's Friends' group to renovate and redesign the branch library and its adjacent Library Park, which is used extensively for children's programming and the popular summer Jazz & Blues concerts by Pat Loomis and his Friends. The meeting, the third annual "conversation with the Mayor" on a number of topics sponsored by the South End Forum, brought Mayor Walsh in direct visual contact with the cramped condition of the branch, where as little as 4,000 square feet is divided between children and adults, many of them homeless, a number of them suffering from mental health and addiction problems.

"I saw it," the Mayor said when the Friends of the South End Library (FOSEL) pointed out the difficulty for the staff to manage the adult population seated in close proximity to the children's room. The South End's teenage patrons, moreover, have no space available to them at all at this branch.

As mayor, Walsh has been very supportive of the long-neglected Boston Public Library system, and was one of the state's Boston legislators who in 2010 halted the attempted closing of up to a third of BPL branches proposed by his predecessor, Mayor Thomas Menino. After his election, Walsh funded the massive, more than $80-million renovation of the Copley Library's Johnson building, then in its planning stage. The building, redesigned by William Rawn Associates (who also renovated the outstanding Cambridge Public Library) reopened to rave reviews last summer. The Walsh administration also put in place a more than $90-million five-year capital plan to bring BPL's branch libraries into the 21st Century. As a result, for example, Adams Street, Dudley, Parker Hill and Roslindale have substantial capital projects and/or renovation plans underway, as well. Recently added to the list by BPL President David Leonard were long-overdue projects related to library services in Chinatown and Uphams Corner.

But, as FOSEL pointed out at the South End Forum meeting, the South End library is not yet on the current list for capital improvements. "You will be," Mayor Walsh said, adding he would bring it up with BPL's David Leonard, with whom FOSEL has been in discussion about the South End library's urgent needs since earlier this year. In addition, Mayor Walsh promised he would bring up Library Park's planned redesign with Parks Department Commissioner, Christopher Cook, especially important in the effort to resolve the sticky question as to who actually "owns" Library Park, the BPL or the Parks Department. In the past, the lack of clarity about ownership has been one of the factors that led to the lack of capital investment or repair of the small but prominently located park.

Under the current plan proposed by FOSEL, an immediate reconfiguration of the ground floor would open up the adult area by moving bookcases to the side; situate computers at the back wall with a library-wide electrical grid upgrade to replace the warren of electrical extension cords; turn the area underneath the stairs into a space for teenagers; and create more diversified seating arrangements for all library patrons. Subsequent renovation phases would build on the immediate reconfiguration, as part of a capital plan that would be subject to public hearings and suggestions. Library Park's redesign would also require a public process, with the aim of uniting the library's functions with park usage.

Cold 101

Continued from page 1

please hold onto your trash and recycling until your next scheduled pickup.

Where to Place your Trash and Recycling

Crews have a difficult time reaching trash barrels and recycling carts behind snow banks. Please clear an area at the curb, or place containers next to or in front of snow banks.

By making it easier to reach containers, workers can collect more quickly and safely

Plowing Snow

During a snow storm, the Public Works Department de-ices and plows 850 miles of roadway with over 500 pieces of equipment. In the 2014-15 season, the City plowed 295,000 miles of streets - roughly 12 trips around the earth - for 110.6 total inches of snow. State agencies like DCR and MassDot clear state-owned such as Storrow Drive.

How Public Works Plans a Snow Response

The Public Works Department plows streets citywide during snow storms by prepping, plowing, cleaning the roads. The department strategically dispatches City and contract equipment across 200 plowing routes as needed. At full deployment, Public Works utilizes over 500 pieces of equipment. Small public alleys, side streets and dead ends will be fully cleared by the completion of all snow removal efforts.

In clearing roadways, plowing snow across driveways is unavoidable. When shoveling your driveway or parked car, please consider that crews make frequent passes until roads are adequately cleared.

Snow Removal

It's the responsibility of the property owner to remove snow, slush and ice from sidewalks and curb ramps abutting their property. Violators will be fined each day the sidewalk is not shoveled.

When you shovel, make sure to:

Clear sidewalks within three hours of snowfall ending or three hours after sunrise if it snows overnight.

Remove ice to bare pavement or make as level as possible.

Clear at least a 42 inch wide path for wheelchairs and strollers.

Don't shovel or plow snow into the street: Violators caught shoveling snow from private property into the street will be fined.

Fines

Each day that a violation exists is considered a separate and distinct violation.

Shoveling Safety Tips

Don't overexert yourself when you shovel. Cold weather can exacerbate underlying respiratory illness, and overexertion can bring on a heart attack - a major cause of death in the winter. Avoid shoveling if you are elderly or have a heart condition.

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