

See This Now at the Arnold Arboretum



Catkin of rosegold pussy willow before flower emergence. Photo by William (Ned) Friedman/Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University.

Willows in Flower

SUBMITTED BY
ARNOLD ARBORETUM

Nothing announces the coming of spring quite like the willows (Salix). Comprising some 350 species of trees and shrubs, the willows are among the earliest woody plants to leaf out in spring and among the last to drop their leaves at season's end.

As early as January and February, many willows sport yellow to light-green new growth that stands out in the stark winter landscape, and shrub species commonly known as pussy willows exhibit the hairy flower scales that inspire their common name. Throughout North America, our common pussy willow (*S. discolor*) attracts early emerging

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The true worth of the *Cost of Living*

Cost of Living, SpeakEasy Stage Company at Roberts Studio Theatre, Calderwood Pavilion, Boston Center for the Arts, through March 30. 617-933-8600 or www.SpeakEasyStage.com

BY JULES BECKER
Contributing Writer

Caring and being cared for are universal human needs—often satisfied at great personal cost. As Martyna Majok powerfully demonstrates in her 2018 Pulitzer Prize winning play “Cost of Living” (2016 at Williamstown and 2023 Tony nominee), such connection can be all the more challenging for people with disabilities. Under the strong direction of Alex Lonati,



Lewis D. Wheeler (left) and Stephanie Gould in “Cost of Living” at SpeakEasy Stage Company. Photo by Nile Scott Studios.

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Mother Caroline Academy Launches First Immersive Career Program for Middle School Students

SUBMITTED BY
MOTHER CAROLINE ACADEMY

Mother Caroline Academy, the only tuition-free, all-girls elementary and middle school serving under-resourced communities in Boston, announced the launch of its first immersive career development program for middle school students, taking place at Boston Children's Hospital.

The week-long Science, Technology, Education, and Healthcare Career (STEHC) Camp will take place March 4-8 at Boston Children's,

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Full group shot of the 8th grade class with lecturers. From left to right: Naaysha Lerick (Dorchester), Meliah Nelson (Hyde Park), Vanessa De Los Santos (Dorchester), Faith Mogoli (Dorchester), Harmonie Johnson (Dorchester), Julyah Cene (Rosindale), Nicole Henry, MD, Nadia McBrayer (Hyde Park), Chinyere Egbuta, MD, Dr. Izabela Leahy. Photo courtesy of Elevate Communications.

USES Neighborhood Gala



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Bekah Salwasser
Executive Vice President, Social Impact | Red Sox Foundation

**MEL KING
SOCIAL INNOVATOR AWARD**
Frieda Garcia
Activist, former Executive Director of USES
Byron Rushing
Activist, former MA State Rep.

For more information and to buy tickets visit: <https://www.classy.org/event/united-south-end-settlements-neighborhood-gala-2024/e560603>

On May 10, United South End Settlements' will host their 2024 Neighborhood Gala fundraiser! Come together with friends, neighbors, and partners for an evening of food, dancing, and opportunities to support our mission as we celebrate USES's accomplishments and community. We will additionally recognize the philanthropic and community contributions of the following individuals:

BPDA approves new Squares + Streets zoning districts

First office to residential conversion moves forward under City program

The Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA) Board of Directors Thursday took a major step forward in the Squares + Streets planning and zoning initiative, ap-

Continued on page 6



1033-1055 Washington Street project. Rendering courtesy of BPDA.

LOEG

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Annette Green

Arnold Arboretum

Continued from page 1

pollinators and hosts several butterfly and moth species during the growing season. The rosegold pussy willow (*S. gracilistyla*) is a beautiful shrub from Japan, Korea, and China that is prized in horticulture as one of the earliest flowering pussy willows.

At the tail end of winter, flowers begin as fuzzy nubs along the branches of pussy willows. The soft coating of hairs acts as insulation to protect these early bloomers from cold temperatures. Individual plants bear either male (pollen-producing) or female (seed-producing) flowers which have no sepals

or petals and are borne in large numbers on catkins. When blooming, male catkins feature beautiful yellow to orange to red anthers (pollen sacs) that then split open to display bright yellow pollen inside. After the pollen has been dispersed by wind or visiting insects, the anthers appear black. Female catkins are typically smaller and less showy and tend to emerge later than the catkins borne on male plants. Willows grow best in moist environments, so many of the Arnold Arboretum's pussy willows grow in and around the wet meadow inside the Arborway Gate.

Learn more about willows and Boston's museum of trees at arboretum.harvard.edu. Open every day. Free every day.



Male flowers emerge on rosegold pussy willow Photo by William (Ned) Friedman/Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University.

Cost of Living

Continued from page 1

SpeakEasy Stage Company's moving Boston area premiere is capturing the emotional journeys and physical challenges of two such people. John, a mid-20's Princeton graduate student with cerebral palsy and Ani, an early 40's separated Bayonne, New Jersey wife paralyzed with spinal cord injury as the result of an accident.

Janie E. Howland's smart scenic design places John and Ani's respective stories side by side—with the former stage right and the latter stage left. The apartment building backdrop contains window evocations with shadows suggesting residents struggling with their own bouts of loneliness. The title costs have as much to do with John and Ani's caregivers as they do with the challenged man and woman themselves. Playwright Majok writes with authority and insight as someone who actually served as a personal care aide herself. Her knowledge invests John's mid-20's caregiver Jess—a Princeton alum herself—with remarkable authenticity as she shaves, dresses and lifts him to his shower seat (in a frank but subtle sequence).

By contrast, unemployed late 40's truck driver and would-be caregiver Eddie admits to being sober for the last 12 of 21 faithful years with Ani. Insisting that he has come a long way, Eddie does what he can to care for Ani—who speaks of a strictly business visiting nurse—and help her bathe (with a bathtub that he moves). Ani speaks of wanting to go to Maine. While both have “too much dirt on each other,” emotionally conflicted Eddie indicates a willingness to tear up the divorce. In a striking prologue—monologue, Eddie details a grief in which he

tries texting Ani. Common to both John and Ani is an ongoing quest for self-realization.

That focal quest informs the attitude-rich exchanges between John and Jess and the blunt banter between Ani and Eddie. Humor and flirting have their moments in the former as Jess speaks of using perfume samples from Sephora and a date becomes an option. To the play's credit, what follows avoids any neat resolution. In fact, an unusual meeting between Eddie and Jess creates a satisfying new possibility for connection.

To ensure the full authenticity of the care-giving and the individual quests for real living and connection, playwright Majok specifically asks that John and Ani be played by actors with disabilities—a request richly carried out by SpeakEasy Stage. Sean Leviashvili, a gay New Yorker born with cerebral palsy, captures John's vocal tension and his demanding stance in initially interviewing Jess and making sure his needs are fulfilled. Stephanie Gould—who grew up with cerebral palsy in Melrose—finds Ani's tenacity and spunk in the face of vulnerability and conflict with Eddie. Lewis D. Wheeler catches Eddie's angst and profound loneliness—especially in the vivid prologue. Boston University graduate and Cuban American Gina Fonseca has all of first generation immigrant Jess' attitude and street savvy as she cares for John and begins to feel drawn to him. Wheeler and Fonseca make the unusual encounter between Eddie and Jess alternately edgy and touching.

For some theatergoers “Cost of Living” will be a valuable eye-opener to the spirit and strengths of people with disabilities as they confront their daunting challenges. For all audience members, Majok's uplifting play should provide always timely insight about the pricelessness of human connection.

Letters Policy

The South End News welcomes letters to the editor.

All letters must be signed and accompanied by a mailing address and phone number.

Because of space limitations, letters should not be more than 200 words.

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City Announces Expansion Of Swim Safe Program

Announces Funding For Free Swim Lessons

SUBMITTED BY THE CITY OF BOSTON

Mayor Michelle Wu, the Human Services Cabinet, and Boston Centers for Youth & Families (BCYF) announced expanded investments in water safety through the City's Swim Safe program. The City is opening up a new round of grant funding to support learn-to-swim programming for historically underserved communities. This expansion builds on an investment made by the City this past fall to offer free swim lessons through the winter months. The investment is part of the Mayor's initiative Connect, Learn, Explore – to build a family-friendly city where every child has the opportunity to explore their passions.

BCYF Marshall Pool in Dorchester, closed for many years, reopened last fall. The pool reopening was officially celebrated by the community at a Black History Month event on February 28th. BCYF Mattahunt Community Center pool in Mattapan will reopen this summer following the completion of a multi-year \$12.7 million renovation of the community center.

"As a coastal city, we want to make sure all our young people can safely enjoy our water and pools," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "By expanding our Swim Safe partnership, we're ensuring our youth are also able to explore all their interests to make Boston the best place to raise a family. I'm grateful to our partners for their continued support for our young people."

The Swim Safe initiative was originally announced in July 2023. To date, the city has served more than 1,000 youth participants who have received free swim lessons. To continue to support the high demand for free swim lessons and importance of water safety in a coastal city, Boston is expanding the program to offer additional support to aquatics providers.

The previous round of grant funding for the Swim Safe initiative supported partners to offer free swim lessons throughout the winter at pools in Boston operated by the YMCA of Greater Boston, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston and DotHouse Health. This new round of funding will continue to support free lessons this spring in advance of the summer swim season. Priority will be placed on providing lessons for beginner-

level swimmers.

"As a parent and former lifeguard, I am passionate about getting children and families access to city pools, swim lessons, and water safety information," said José Massó, Chief of Human Services for the City of Boston. "These grant opportunities and pool openings represent progress and a lot of hard work on the part of this administration, and I look forward to continuing our momentum into the summer months."

Despite being a coastal city with beaches along the harbor and numerous indoor and outdoor swimming pools, not all Boston residents have equal access to opportunities to learn how to swim. Nationally, fatal drowning is the leading cause of death for children ages 1-4 years old and the second leading cause of injury death for children ages 5-14 (CDC). Black and Latino youth are less likely to know how to swim and therefore are at higher risk of drowning (CDC).

"DotHouse Health is extremely proud to partner with the City of Boston to help provide free swimming lessons to all youth and families in our communities," said Michelle Nadow, President & CEO of DotHouse Health. "We are very appreciative of the opportunity to collaborate and to continue to expand accessible swimming resources in our neighborhoods."

"Providing water safety education to the community is a public health imperative, and we are proud to support Swim Safe Boston so community members can enjoy the health benefits of water recreation," said Jeff Belows, Vice President of Corporate Citizenship and Public Affairs at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. "This program eliminates the barriers of access and education so that people across the city can safely enjoy our local pools and beaches."

The City is acting with urgency to renovate several city-owned pools, many of which were built in the 1970s. Mayor Wu has made an unprecedented commitment to aquatics programming by commissioning a first-ever citywide evaluation of aquatics infrastructure with the goal of expediting the improvements needed to get city pools back open. In addition to the assessment, this fiscal year, Mayor Wu allocated \$34.3 million in the FY24-FY28 capital plan for repairing and renovating the city's pools.

"This investment is critical to addressing the alarming number of youth - in particular minority youth - who cannot swim," said Marta E. Rivera, Commissioner of Boston Centers for Youth & Families. "We welcome our aquatics partners to join us in providing free lessons across the city."

In May, Boston will host USA Swimming for a series of events to mark International Water Safety Day, a day dedicated to spreading global awareness about the risks of drowning and importance of water safety education. Activities will include visits by former Olympic swimmers to Boston Public Schools, a water safety fair at a BCYF Pool, and instructional programming for BCYF swim team participants. Water safety information will be shared with Boston Public Schools families, all to highlight the importance of water safety during the summer months.

Because of a collaboration between Boston Public Schools, Boston Centers for Youth & Families, the Public Facilities Department, and the Property Management Department, investments of City funding, and improved facilities assessment, the City is on track to have more pools open this year than in previous summers, including the BCYF Clougherty, Draper, Hennigan, Marshall, Mattahunt and Perkins pools. BCYF Marshall Community Center pool opened this fall. The Draper, Hennigan, Mattahunt and Perkins are expected to be open this summer as is the Clougherty Pool, which is approaching the completion of a two-year renovation.

The City also has more opportunities for lifeguards through a residency waiver which allows the City to hire more lifeguards and the Lifeguard Preparedness Academy and hiring days that BCYF has been hosting in collaboration with the Office of Human Resources. Additionally, through the Swim Safe program, the City is providing more free swim lessons for children in partnership with the YMCA of Greater Boston (nine pools), Boys and Girls Club (four pools), Dorchester House (one pool), and USA Swimming.

There is no charge for membership or programming at BCYF centers and pools but visitors need to create a membership at Boston.gov/BCYF-Registration. Registration for classes and programs can be found on individual BCYF pools' webpages or at Boston.gov/BCYF-Aquatics.



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LETTERS POLICY

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 PO BOX E14, Boston, MA 02127; E-mail: letters@southendnews.com

Back to Back State Champs



The Cathedral Panthers - D4 girls basketball team defeated South Hadley on Monday, March 18th to secure their MIAA State Championship for the second year in a row. Photo courtesy of Cathedral Highschool.

Mother Caroline

Continued from page 1

offering Mother Caroline Academy seventh- and eighth-grade students exposure to future careers in medicine. The program launch follows a successful pilot program completed in March 2023. Mother Caroline Academy, which is located on Blue Hill Avenue in Dorchester, serves students who are eligible for free and reduced-price lunch programs.

Health experts say greater diversity in the medical field is necessary to address a variety of health disparities and lead to better health outcomes for all. Currently, only 5.7% of active physicians in America are Black, while the overall Black population is 13.6%. The Hispanic/Latino population is also under-represented. Only 6.9% of U.S. physicians are Hispanic, despite making up 19.1% of the country.

“We’ve realized that with early exposure to careers in the medical field and investment in students even earlier than high school, we can take a first step in transforming the landscape of the healthcare workforce,” said Izabela Leahy, Executive Director of the Department of Anesthesiology, Critical Care & Pain Medicine at Boston Children’s. “By collaborating with Mother Caroline Academy, the STEHC Program can leverage the talent and enthusiasm of current healthcare professionals to create a diverse and inclusive healthcare workforce. It enables us to inspire future healthcare professionals and grow the diverse pipeline of tomorrow’s leaders.”

The program curriculum will include:

Hands-on, practical experience with operating room simulations at Boston Children’s Immersive Design Systems lab, as well as ultrasounds and live demonstrations.

Discussions with Boston Children’s physicians and hospital leaders, with introductions to a variety of clinical specialties at the hospital as well as non-clinical careers in administration, finance, marketing, and other fields.

Engagement with students from Harvard

Medical School, including an anatomy and pathology workshop and a panel discussion, and with a student from MIT who held the Pediatric Anesthesia Clinical and Research Internship (PACaRI) at Boston Children’s.

Learning opportunities with other health care professionals, including Mother Caroline alumnae Shinikha Paige (class of 2000), program manager at Boston Children’s, and former Mother Caroline teacher Sarah DiMare Atwood, now a nurse at Boston Children’s.

Meeting with the hospital’s Workforce Development team regarding career development and future opportunities for enrichment and employment.

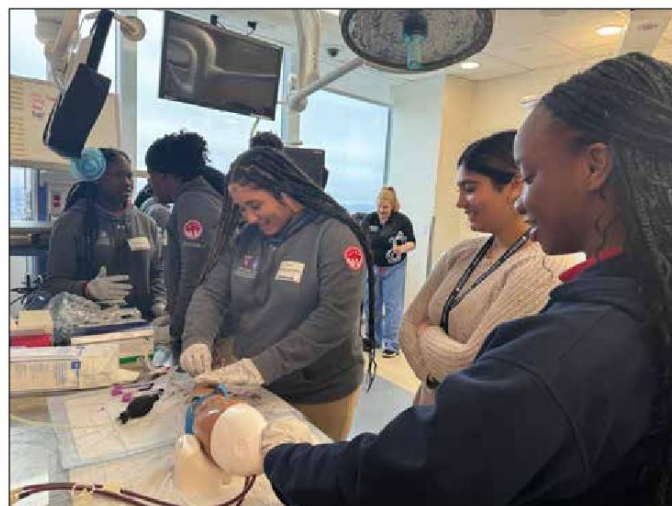
“Education outside the classroom is critical for empowering girls and preparing them for potential future careers,” said Marie Louise Greenidge, Mother Caroline Academy’s Interim Head of School. “This program helps to level the playing field, giving students from less-advantaged socioeconomic backgrounds the tools and experiences they need to pursue these essential careers. We’re appreciative of this collaboration with Boston Children’s and hope to expand it in the future to include more educational opportunities.”

The Women’s Foundation of Boston is supporting the launch of the immersion program as part of a three-year grant, awarded in 2023, to expand Mother Caroline Academy’s STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) initiatives and enable students to further pursue interests beyond the classroom.

Mother Caroline Academy and Education Center is a tuition-free independent school for girls in grades 3-8, serving traditionally under-resourced Boston neighborhoods. Founded in 1993 in the Catholic tradition, the school promotes cultural, religious, and ethnic inclusion that’s reflective of Boston’s rich diverse communities. Our commitment is to drive active success for the community by providing a holistic approach to education and family service. The school is located in Dorchester. For further information, visit mcaec.org.



7th grade students exploring a simulation with a fake patient. From left to right: Anne Fox (Simulation Instructor), Saida Muhammad (Boston), Anne-Sagine Nicolas (Hyde Park), Sanaya Barros (Hyde Park), Elizabeth Brutus (Dorchester), Divine Uzamah Ishenrein (Roxbury) (all 7th graders). Photo courtesy of Elevate Communications.



8th grade students learning how to insert IVs and draw blood with a fake patient. From left to right: Naaysha Lerick (Dorchester), Harmonie Johnson (Dorchester), Vanessa De Los Santos (Dorchester), Saja Traoui (Simulation Instructor), Meliah Nelson (Hyde Park). Photo courtesy of Elevate Communications.



Students learning how to provide oxygen to a fake patient. From left to right: Caleah Dume, Sanaya Barros, Anne Fox (Simulation Instructor), Angeliz Bones, Anne-Sagine Nicolas. Photo courtesy of Elevate Communications.



Students practicing putting in IVs and drawing blood on a fake arm. From left to right: Faith Mogoli, Julyah Cene, Saja Traoui (Simulation Instructor). Photo courtesy of Elevate Communications.



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BPDA

Continued from page 1

proving an amendment to the Zoning Code with new zoning districts which will serve as a range of options for neighborhood centers and main streets across the City. The Board also approved six new development projects representing approximately 2.6 million square feet (SF). The new projects will create 147 residential units, 135 units, or 92 percent of these units are designated income-restricted, and will support approximately 2,325 construction jobs and 4,251 permanent jobs. These projects will make Boston a more resilient, affordable, and equitable city.

1033-1055 Washington Street project in the South End will build new office, life science, and retail space

- Live: \$6.3 million in Linkage towards affordable housing
- Work: Approximately 763 construction jobs, approximately 1,823 permanent jobs, \$1.2 million in Linkage towards jobs training
- Connect: \$5 million in public realm improvements, close proximity to public transportation.
- Sustain: LEED Gold, sea level rise resilient, parking for EVs

This project will convert what is currently a vacant warehouse and parking lot in the South End into two new mixed-use buildings comprised of office, life science, retail, and community space. In addition, the development will include space set aside as cultural space, or as space for a startup business. This development will include 266 bike parking spaces for building tenants and visitors, and contribute \$164,640 to the Boston Transportation Department in support of the City’s bikeshare program. The new development will include significant improvements to the public realm like new street trees, a pedestrian plaza, and improvements to sidewalks, traffic flow, and accessibility.

Project at 716 Columbus Place will renovate Northeastern University administrative building

- Work: Mail center for Northeastern University, Northeastern University Police headquarters
- Connect: Public realm improvements to Benton Street, approximately 30 construction jobs
- Sustain: LEED Silver

This project will take a seven-story Northeastern University building and renovate the first five floors and basement. This building houses a mail distribution center, the Northeastern University Police Headquarters, office space, study space and meeting spaces. Public realm and transportation improvements will be made to Benton Street to mitigate the impacts of the mailroom operations. The pedestrian experience down Benton Street will be improved by reconstructing sidewalks and curb ramps as the project formalizes the mailroom load-

ing zone. This project will support the City’s bikeshare program with a contribution of \$14,280 to the Boston Transportation Department.

Project at 290 Tremont Street to build new affordable housing on BPDA-owned land

- Live: 132 income-restricted housing units, 36 homeownership opportunities
- Work: Approximately 153 construction jobs
- Connect: Adjacent to Tufts Medical Center Orange Line MBTA stop
- Sustain: LEED Gold and Passive House Certification

This project will create 132 income-restricted housing units, including 36 homeownership units in the Chinatown neighborhood. The site is owned by the BPDA and is currently used as a parking lot. The BPDA awarded tentative designation to the Asian Community Development Corporation and The Community Builders to redevelop the parcel (P12C) in 2023. This will be a transit-oriented development, as it is located in close proximity to the MBTA Orange Line and is walking distance from other MBTA lines, buses, and the Commuter Rail. The 12-story building will be divided into 34 one-bedroom apartments, 76 two-bedroom units, and 22 three-bedroom units. More than 100 bike parking spaces will be available for residents and visitors. There will also be commercial/community space to help activate the ground floor. The development will also create new public open space with new trees, and provide more lighting and landscape elements to increase walkability around the site. Additionally, a crosswalk will be added to Tremont Street. The project will also contribute a Bluebikes station on site.

840 Columbus Avenue project will build new student housing for Northeastern University

- Live: Beds for approximately 1,200+ students, social lounge, fitness center, academic success center
- Work: Approximately 452 construction jobs
- Connect: Ground floor community space, small business entrepreneurship network, coworking space
- Sustain: LEED Gold, all electric building, Passive House certification

This new building on the Northeastern University campus will fulfill the University’s ten year Institutional Master Plan by providing more than 1,000 new student beds on campus. The building will be 23 stories, accommodate approximately 1,370 students, and provide space for student amenities. In addition, there will be a dedicated community space on the ground floor. This project will contribute \$1 million to the Mayor’s Office of Housing to advance housing stabilization and wealth creation in the neighborhoods immediately adjacent to this project. Public realm improvements will include widening the sidewalks, a new bike lane, and more street trees. In addition, this project will contribute \$188,375 to the Boston Transportation Department in support of the City’s bikeshare program, as well as provide two bikeshare stations on site.

LEGAL NOTICES

LETTERS OF AUTHORITY FOR PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE	Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court
	Docket No. SU24P0470EA
Estate of: Jeffrey J White Date of Death: 01/31/2024	Suffolk Probate and Family Court
To: Valerie M Cooke 200 Bedford Road Apt 14e Woburn, MA 01801	24 New Chardon Street Boston, MA 02114 (617) 788-8300
You have been appointed and qualified as Personal Representative in Unsupervised Administration of this estate on February 29, 2024. These letters are proof of your authority to act pursuant to G. L. c. 190B.	
Date: March 07, 2024 <i>Stephanie L. Everett, Esq, Register of Probate</i>	

CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME	Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court
	Docket No. SU23C0417CA
In the matter of: Andrew Nana Asare Of: Boston, MA	Suffolk Probate and Family Court 24 New Chardon Street Boston, MA 02114 (617) 788-8300
A Petition to Change Name of Adult has been filed by Andrew Nana Asare of Boston, MA requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to Andrew Nana-Kwasi Ansah	
Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Suffolk Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 03/21/2024 . This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.	
WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court.	
Date: March 01, 2024 <i>Stephanie L. Everett, Esq, Register of Probate</i>	

About the Boston Planning & Development Agency


As the City of Boston’s urban planning and economic development agency, the BPDA works in partnership with the community to plan Boston’s future while respecting its past. The agency’s passionate and knowledgeable staff guides physical, social, and economic change in Boston’s neighborhoods and its downtown to shape a more prosperous, resilient, and vibrant city for all. The BPDA also prepares residents for new opportunities through employment training, human services and job creation. Learn more at bostonplans.org, and follow us on Twitter @BostonPlans.

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