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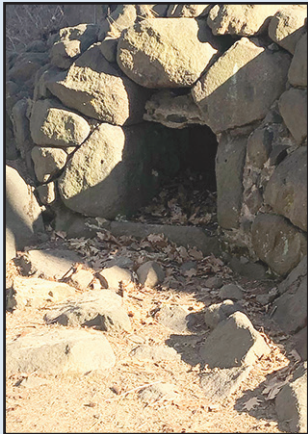


VOL. 9 NO. 2

SOMERVILLE, MASS. WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2021

TWENTY-FIVE CENTS

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Medical dispensary's plan for selling cannabis for adult use



Revolutionary Clinics' Somerville location at 67 Broadway.

— Photo courtesy of Revolutionary Clinics

By Hongyu Liu

On January 5, Revolutionary Clinics presented its plan of selling adult-use cannabis in its Somerville store.

Revolutionary Clinics is a medical dispensary selling medical marijuana in the State of Massachusetts. One of its three clinics is located at 67 Broadway Street in Somerville. It opened more than three years ago.

Keith Cooper, the CEO of Revolutionary Clinics, said the store paid over \$250,000 host community fees to the City of Somerville last year. The fee goes to programs including drug treatment and education.

"We have been cooperative citizens, we plan to continue to do that," Cooper said.

Current customers of the clinic are people with medical conditions that were traditionally treated with opioids. Only

Continued on page 4

Keeping the lights on for afterschool programs

SomerSocial offers free, fun, online afterschool classes and activities for Somerville youth in grades K-8. From local community partners like Somerville Media Center, Parts and Crafts, the Beautiful Stuff Project, Farrington Nature Linc, and more. Classes are free, but you must register to attend.

Afterschool programs help students succeed in school and in life and provide invaluable support to communities. As we've seen this year, these programs play an especially important role when students, families, and communities are struggling.

Programs across the country have stepped up in the pandemic, providing virtual educational activities, delivering meals and enrichment kits, helping families bridge the digital divide, connecting people to social services, and continuing in-person care for the children of essential workers and first responders.

Unfortunately, a large majority of afterschool programs that were open in

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The views and opinions expressed in Newstalk do not necessarily reflect those of The Somerville Times, its publisher or staff. The column has many contributors.

The first phase of COVID-19 vaccinations is underway. Somerville Public Safety personnel are getting vaccines next week. Cambridge Health Alliance has been steadily vaccinating health workers with success, and now the city has just received 500 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine that were administered to first responders and 911 staff starting January 12 as part of Phase 1 vaccinations. For information on where you fall in the state's vaccine rollout plan, check the timeline on the state's website: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-vaccination-program>. This is rapidly evolving information that may be subject to change, and city staff will continue to keep you updated via emails, their website, and other outreach. Have more questions about the vaccine? The Department of Public Health has a list of FAQs online and watch for a continually updated list of more FAQs at somervillema.gov/covidvaccine.

The city reports that in December, Somerville had at least 1,135 new COVID-19 cases. That's more cases than the three previous months combined, and that number may rise as end of the month tests are reported. As we move into our tenth month of dealing with this pandemic, it is vital that we all continue doing our part to stop the spread. That includes wearing a face covering that covers your noses and mouths whenever you're in public, not gathering with anyone you don't live with, and staying home if you feel ill or have been exposed as a close contact to someone who tested positive for COVID-19. Taking these steps helps protect you; your family, friends, and neighbors; essential workers; and those who are more vulnerable to COVID-19. As of January 7, a total of 3,474 Somerville residents have tested positive for COVID-19 since March, another 222 are considered probable positive cases (some current, some in the past), and sadly there have been 53 deaths. See more Somerville case data at somervillema.gov/covid19dashboard.

Happy birthday this week to several locals: *Continued on page 7*

Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of January 13 – January 19 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
Wednesday January 13	Partly Cloudy	41°/26°	4%	8%	WSW 8 mph
Thursday January 14	Partly Cloudy	44°/32°	6%	11%	WSW 7 mph
Friday January 15	Rain	49°/34°	36%	26%	S 10 mph
Saturday January 16	Rain	41°/30°	34%	25%	W 10 mph
Sunday January 17	Sunny	36°/29°	6%	9%	W 12 mph
Monday January 18	Partly Cloudy	39°/26°	24%	19%	WSW 11 mph
Tuesday January 19	Partly Cloudy	37°/27°	9%	11%	WNW 11 mph

NOTE: Conditions subject to change. Always check a daily forecast prior to activities that can be affected by the weather.

TheSomervilleTimes.com Comments of the Week

Response to: Somerville educators demand clear thresholds for in-person return

Parent says:

The SEU's own selected expert, a Harvard epidemiologist, said that thresholds were not needed and that there was no magic number to pick. You can't accuse the SC of having cherry picked an expert, because you were able to choose your own.

Further, many parents have contacted Governor Baker about the school situation because he has left it up to districts to decide what to do. That is why Cambridge, Medford, Boston, Everett, and Chelsea, our immediate neighbors, all have some students in-person – generally high needs SPED. The SEU is the remaining reason Somerville schools are remote. Full stop. Further, threatening for remote school to be worse due to quarantines is repugnant – SPS is already providing less synchronous time than DESE requires, and less than other districts.

Aili Contini-Field (Parent) says:

"The SEU has proposed metrics and thresholds that will determine when we can be in-person and when we must be remote." This is exciting news. What are they?

Parent 2 says:

FACT CHECK: In response to your statement "The committee includes zero educators who work directly with students."

The 2 parent representatives appointed to the reopening advisory committee are both educators who work directly in person with students who are 18-30 years of age (much higher transmission rates).

Concerned Community Member says:

Educators — and all workers — have a right to know that their safety is being prioritized, and they have a right to a voice in their working conditions. The SEU is abusing this right by repeatedly obstructing the bargaining process in myriad ways (see recent statement by school committee member Laura Pitone) in order to prevent return to school for Somerville's most vulnerable children. They are simply not bargaining in good faith. Somerville is one of only two districts in the entire state of Massachusetts that is providing no in-person services to even the highest-needs children (the other one is Springfield). 3-and-4-year olds with autism are being asked to "access" their "education" remotely. Somerville also happens to have the most robust and extensive safety plan, including both testing and building remediation, of any district in the state: it is more robust than Wellesley or Weston, more extensive than Cambridge. We have both the BEST plan and yet are doing the LEAST for our children. The authors cannot actually argue that it is unsafe to embark on a limited, cautious, phased reopening that prioritizes a small number of kids who cannot fully access virtual learning — children with disabilities, English learners, the very young. They are attempting to use "metrics" as a means of obstruction.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

The Somerville Times

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Life in the **VILLE** by Jimmy Del Ponte

Urban legends



Being born in Somerville in 1953 and growing up here in the 60's and 70's, there were certain stories and tales that bordered on reality. Was there really

a kid that hung around playgrounds stealing kids' balls and then biting the air valve? Fact or fiction? Let's go back...

This chew n' screw episode did not end well. Ming Toy Chinese restaurant, Davis Square. Two men, ate their PuPu platter and then decided that they would book it out the door without paying. They got in their car and as they were speeding away, one of the owners came out. He crouched down and shot a few rounds at the thieves as they drove to-

wards Porter Square. Fact of fiction?

Ever since I was a kid, I've heard that there is a tunnel that leads from Powder House Park to Prospect Hill that was used during the Revolutionary War. There's even what appears to be a cemented entrance amid the rocks of Powder House Park. Fact or fiction?

This is about the West Branch Library on College Ave. that is being renovated for what seems to be forever. Legend has it that in the early '70's there was a teen center, which hosted live local bands, on the top floor of that library. Fact or fiction?

Supposedly, on a Sunday in the '70's, TV football commentators Merlin Olson and Dick Enberg popped into The Embassy Lounge formerly on Somerville Ave. It's also said that they served customers drinks and even refilled the ice



behind the bar. Fact or fiction?

One day in the late '70's, three – count them, three – loud rock bands did a four-hour concert at Powder House Park. Crowds of teenagers came from every corner of the city to enjoy a day of rock 'n roll music. Was there actually a ... Ville Stock? Fact or fiction?

Bartender plays helicopter pilot with drunk guy! In a bar in Somerville that featured live bands, a boisterous and inebriated patron crossed a bartender. The bartender lifted the drunk guy up over his head and spun him around a few times, like a helicopter. I wonder if he had a safe landing? Was there any damage to the Disco ball? Fact or fiction?

The College Ave. Methodist church plays musical bells a couple of times a day. Years ago, the church bells were on a record because the scratches could be heard very plainly. Legend has it that a former Boy Scout or DeMolay member who knew the church building from their meetings went up to where the music played. He replaced the church bell record with a Led Zeppelin album and when it was time for the bells to sound, an awesome Jimmy Page guitar solo resonated from the tower! Fact or fiction?

I'm sure there are lots of other legends and tales woven in with Somerville's colorful history. If you have one please let me know! Jimmydel@rcn.com.



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THE WEEK IN CRIME

By Jim Clark

A little porch theft on the way home

Somerville Police officers were dispatched to the Temple and Derby St. area on reports of a man wearing a blue mask, yellow hooded sweatshirt and backpack, riding a blue bicycle and circling the area, suspiciously checking out houses.

Shortly thereafter, the officers located a man matching that description in the area of 49 Fellsway West (Foss Park), just a street over from where the re-

porting party observed the suspicious individual.

The officers approached the man and asked if they could speak with him. The man reportedly complied and explained to that he was coming from the Walgreens on Broadway, where he purchased a phone charger and was now on his way home.

The officers explained to the man that the reason they wanted

to speak with him was because it was reported that someone matching his description was seen in the area suspiciously checking out houses.

The officers asked the man if he could identify himself, at which time he provided them with the name of Robert Richards, along with his date of birth.

After querying that information, the officers discovered that Richards had a default warrant

out of Boston District Court, and he was placed in handcuffs.

The officers located several packages inside of Richards' backpack belonging to someone at a Mystic Ave location. They also found another three packages with a bar code, as well as what appeared to be Mandarin writing on the packages.

While the officers were looking at the packages, Richards reportedly stated that he had

taken them from the front of the apartment building at the Mystic Ave. address.

Richards was ultimately transported to the Somerville Police headquarters and booked in the usual manner on charges of receiving stolen property under \$1200 and on multiple warrant charges of assault and battery on a person over 60 or disabled.

Police delivered the packages back to the Mystic Ave. location.

Crime Tip Hotline: 617-776-7210

Do your part - Leave a message on our tip hotline answering machine - All calls are confidential - Your Privacy is Assured. If you choose, you can leave your name and phone number and your call will be returned (not required). Also, if you prefer you may e-mail directly with your crime tip. We will follow up on all information provided to the best of our ability.

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SOMERVILLE POLICE CRIME LOG

Arrests:

Jonathan Denning, of Roslindale, January 6, 7:14 p.m., arrested at Washington St. on

a warrant charge of felony daytime breaking and entering of a vehicle or boat.

Anthony Moore, January 9,

5:15 p.m., arrested at McGrath Hwy. on warrant charges of unarmed robbery and shoplifting by concealing merchandise.

Robert Richards, of Randolph, January 10, 10:09 a.m., arrested at Derby St. on charges of receiving stolen property

under \$1200 and on multiple warrant charges of assault and battery on a person over 60 or disabled.

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Powered by:



Medical dispensary planning to sell cannabis for adult use

CONT. FROM PG 1

medical-card holders are allowed in the store at present. After the conversion, however, the store will open to everyone over the age of twenty-one.

Cooper emphasized that the store will remain a medical dispensary, and their products will remain the same. He said

the sale for medical and adult-use will be conducted separately to provide medical customers "privacy and convenience."

"It's the same business, just incrementally more customers," according to Cooper.

Anticipating a growing number of customers, the store will expand its current

four-space garage. The shop will also install bike racks for customers.

The store will implement an appointment-based system until the demand is clear.

Cooper expects the expansion to be finished this summer. However, he mentioned

that they will have to wait for a series of permits to begin their construction projects.

City Planner Charlotte Leis added that an urban design meeting regarding the construction will be scheduled in the near future. The date will be settled soon after the permit is issued.

Keeping the lights on for afterschool programs

CONT. FROM PG 1

the fall of 2020 report they are straining to meet the needs of the students and families they have long supported. National surveys of parents and afterschool providers conducted by Edge Research for the Afterschool Alliance, a nonprofit awareness and advocacy group, find that programs and parents are challenged by virtual learning; program budgets are inadequate to address new safety protocols and students' emerging needs; and students from

low-income families are now less likely than others to have access to afterschool programs.

To underscore the value of afterschool programs and the need to invest in them, the Afterschool Alliance recently organized the 21st annual "Lights On Afterschool," the only national rally for afterschool. It took place throughout the fall and included local, state, and national events - many of them virtual this year - showcasing the skills

students hone and talents they develop at their afterschool programs. From virtual STEM fairs and art contests to car caravans and letter-writing to isolated nursing home residents, events focused on academics, civic engagement, STEM education, social and emotional wellbeing, bullying prevention, mental and physical health, and more.

"The strength and resilience afterschool programs demonstrated in 2020 was remark-

able. Despite scarce resources, programs found ways to help students through what has been, for many families, the hardest of times," says Jodi Grant, executive director of the Afterschool Alliance. "However, there aren't nearly enough afterschool programs to meet the need, especially now, with so many schools functioning virtually and with school schedules changing without warning. We need to invest much more in afterschool and summer

learning programs."

To learn more about the Afterschool Alliance and "Lights On Afterschool," which will next be held on October 28, 2021, visit afterschoolalliance.org.

"In normal times, afterschool programs help students succeed by keeping them safe, inspiring them to learn, and by supporting working parents," says Grant. "During a pandemic, the support they provide is even more essential." (StatePoint)

Somerville statement on insurrection at U.S. Capitol

Statement from Mayor Joe Curtatone, City Council President Matt McLaughlin, School Committee Chair Andre Green, and Superintendent Mary Skipper.

January 6, 2021

Like everyone else, we are watching events unfold on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. To say that it is disheartening would be a gross understatement. It is an assault on our beliefs and our values as a nation. While this shameful chapter in our national history takes place, we are grateful for our own community's civic strength and want to assure our residents, workers, families, and students, that we are being vigilant at the local level to make sure that no one here imitates the violence we are seeing in our capital. We are committed to the safety of our residents.

Our hearts go out to everyone in Washington tonight. Hopefully, members of both parties come together to condemn this assault on our republic and authorities can quickly restore order. In the meantime, our local commitment to peaceful, citizen-led government remains unshaken. Our democratic traditions run deep, and they are stronger than this attempt to derail them.

In recognition of the emotional stress and questions these events may produce for our students, we want our parents and guardians to know that as we send this, our school leadership are preparing to adequately support students and staff in addressing and processing these events in the coming days. We encourage you to contact your school principal if you feel that your child needs additional support.

Tune in for the city's virtual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration

The city's annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day ceremony will be held virtually this year with a pre-recorded program. Beginning Monday, January 18, the pre-recorded ceremony will air on City Cable (RCN channel 13 and Comcast channel 22) and the city's YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/SomervilleCityTV. The event will include remarks from Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone, School Committee Chair Andre Green, and Somerville resident Keidrick Roy; readings from student essays; music from the World Percussion Ensemble; and poetry by Arthur Collins.

The event is organized in cooperation with the City of Somerville's Health and Human Services Department, Somerville Public Schools, and the Somerville Human Rights Commission.

Individuals with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication (i.e., CART, ASL), written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures in order to access the programs and activities of the City of Somerville or to attend meetings should contact Nancy Salamoun in advance at 617-625-6600 x2323 or NSalamoun@somervillema.gov.

Somerville's new Allen Street Playground now open

A new playground is now open for some of Somerville's youngest residents near Union Square. The Allen Street Garden and Pocket Park, which officially opened last month with a COVID-compliant ribbon-cutting ceremony, now features imaginative and engaging play structures for kids aged 2 through 5, as well as renovated community garden facilities.



Once a vacant lot, the Allen Street gardens were built in 2007 after a community-driven campaign to transform the site into a green space. In 2016, Community Preservation Act funds were awarded to redevelop the site to incorporate a small playground, and construction began in 2019. A welcome oasis in this densely populated neighborhood, the gardens will now provide a safe, dedicated recreation space for children and families, in particular the CAAS Head Start students across the street.

In addition to the playground, the renovated site features new garden plots, wheelchair-accessible plant beds, a larger shed, a plaza space with cafe tables and a water bottle filler, permeable playground surfaces that allow for the infiltration of stormwater, and wider, more accessible sidewalks along the street. The gardens will be returned to gardeners for planting this spring. Learn more about the space at somervillema.gov/allenstreetplayground.

The Somerville Times Historical Fact of the Week



Eagle feathers #221

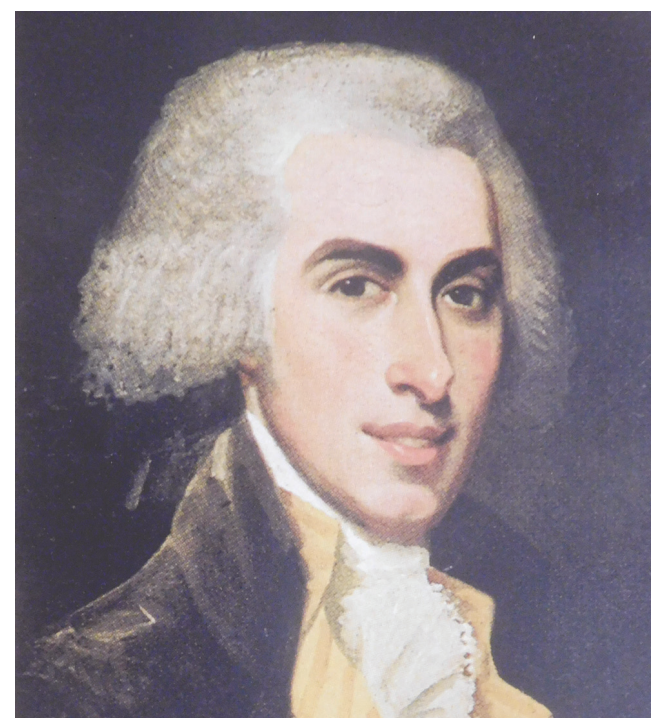
Voyage to China

By Bob (Monty) Doherty

Joseph Barrell was born in 1739 and died in 1804. He was a Boston ship owner, a fishery merchant, a former member of the patriotic organization, Sons of Liberty, and was an exceedingly wealthy trader. Ten years after the American Revolution in 1793, he purchased Cobble Hill in Charlestown, which is now Somerville, and the over 211 acres of land surrounding it.



During the first year of the war, this site was an American fortress built by Generals Henry Knox and Israel Putnam. It had provided protection to the Charles River, and its soldiers participated in the bombardment of Boston which kept the British at bay until their withdrawal to Canada.



Sparing no expense, Barrell hired America's first-born architect, the acclaimed Charles Bullfinch, to design what was christened Pleasant Hill at that time. Bullfinch had worked for Barrell earlier and became a family friend. The Barrell mansion and its grounds were one of his first creations. At that time, the design, with its surrounding grounds, was said to be the most beautiful country home in New England.

In 1787 Barrell organized an association of merchants to support a bold voyage to the Northwest *Continued on page 11*

COMMENTARY

The views and opinions expressed in the commentaries and letters to the Editor of The Somerville Times do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of The Somerville Times, its publishers or staff.

Somerville educators demand clear thresholds for in-person return

We are ten months into the Covid crisis and we have a long road ahead of us before we can return to normalcy. In the current context, each of us as individuals is constantly assessing risk and making choices based on how much risk we can tolerate. Although we all long for safety, the reality is that there are no definitive answers, only varying levels of risk. The educators of Somerville have the right to determine how much risk we deem acceptable as we consider returning to in-person instruction. The Somerville Educators Union (SEU) has been clear: negotiating objective benchmarks of Covid prevalence in the community is the avenue through which we will set the appropriate level of risk. Once those are established we can continue to collaboratively develop an in-person learning model.

The City of Somerville and the Somerville School Committee have invested heavily in measures to mitigate risk, specifically regular surveillance testing and upgraded HVAC systems. While this leaves us in a strong position to return to school buildings this school year, we cannot ignore that we are in a state of “unchecked community spread.” This is due to a complete failure of our federal and state government.

It is in this context that we are considering reopening our school buildings. Educators recognize the limitations of a remote model and would love

nothing more than to be in person with our students. We are all longing for normalcy but that does not mean we can return to normal. We wish that as a society we had followed the maxim that schools should be the first to open and last to close. But, that is simply not reality. If you are angry about this, please let your state representatives and Governor Baker know. If we want to open schools safely we need to recognize who is to blame for the current situation, as opposed to intimidating educators into making riskier decisions.

We must also consider the pedagogical and logistical challenges when considering instructional models. Mayor Curtatone has repeatedly said that his goal is to open schools and keep them open. This will mean classrooms quarantining and moving to remote instruction without warning during periods of high spread. This is not educationally sound and creates uncertainty for educators, students, and families. Furthermore, without time to prepare high-quality remote lessons, it could lead to similar experiences as the spring. Any decision we make will come with trade-offs between risks and benefits.

There is no definitive answer on when schools are “safe” or “unsafe,” but rather strategies for minimizing overall risk. The question before us is whether the mitigation strategies hold up regardless of the infection

rate within Somerville and the greater community. Somerville’s strategies undoubtedly decrease the probability of in-school transmission, more than more districts. But, as community cases climb there will be more cases in the schools, and therefore more chances for transmission despite our best efforts. In addition, as more and more members of our community are exposed to Covid and must quarantine, it will be increasingly challenging to staff our schools, leading to a host of other safety and logistical challenges. This is why predetermined thresholds are so important.

Throughout negotiations the SEU has been very clear that there must be a set process for determining objectively when we can be in-person and when we must be remote. Mayor Curtatone announced that he would make that decision in consultation with an advisory committee. The committee includes zero educators who work directly with students. This is unacceptable. Educators will determine what level of risk is acceptable to us. Excluding educational experts is bad policy and insulting. But, even if this was addressed it would not be good enough.

The purpose of a union is to protect members’ rights and interests. Many unions were founded specifically to assert control over working conditions in unsafe environments. As we consider returning educators to high-risk environments we are



SEU members speaking at a community event in 2019.

in exactly the type of situation that requires strong union protections. The SEU will neither cede our power to an advisory committee nor to the mayor. The negotiating table is the place where these decisions must be made, and we welcome Mayor Curtatone to join. The SEU has proposed metrics and thresholds that will determine when we can be in-person and when we must be remote. Our hope is that the School Committee will accept this premise so that we can continue building a model for in-person instruction with the district at the negotiating table.

The SEU is clear in our position. In a membership meeting this week, 83% of members in attendance agreed that we should not accept any proposal without metrics and thresholds. We will have a voice in creating a process that we can trust. We need a process that is transparent and pre-

dictable, rather than the proposed arbitrary decision-making process of our elected representatives and their appointees. If we cannot be heard on this, then it begs the question of whether we can have confidence in our School Committee to ensure the safety of educators, students, and the greater Somerville community.

Rami Bridge,
SEU President

Megan Brady,
SEU Vice President

Dave DiPietro,
SEU Membership Secretary

Theresa Nickerson,
SEU Treasurer

Mark Quinones,
SEU Recording Secretary

Dayshawn Simmons,
SEU Grievance Chair

Somerville Public Schools Reopening Town Hall, Jan. 19

The Somerville Public Schools and the City of Somerville will jointly host their next online Schools Reopening Town Hall on Tuesday, January 19, at 6:30 p.m. The presentation will provide updates on local efforts related to the 2020/2021 school year amid the coronavirus pandemic, including information on building ventilation and COVID-19 testing plans. Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole interpretation will be available. Participate in the Town Hall online or by phone:

The meeting will be hosted on Zoom, and there will also be an option to call into the meeting from a phone. Visit somervillema.gov/virtualtownhall at the start time of the meeting to join live or get call-in information.

The Somerville Public Schools will also send meeting information via their alert system to all student families and conduct additional multilingual outreach via the School’s Somerville Family Learning Collaborative.

Call-in information will also be available on the day of each meeting on City Cable TV and the Educational Channel (channels 13 & 15 on RCN, channels 15 & 22 on Comcast) or by calling 311.

Watch the Town Hall. The meeting will also be live-streamed. You can view the meeting on:

City Cable TV and the Educational Channel (Channels 13 & 15 on RCN, Channels 15 & 22 on Comcast)

City YouTube: youtube.com/SomervilleCityTV

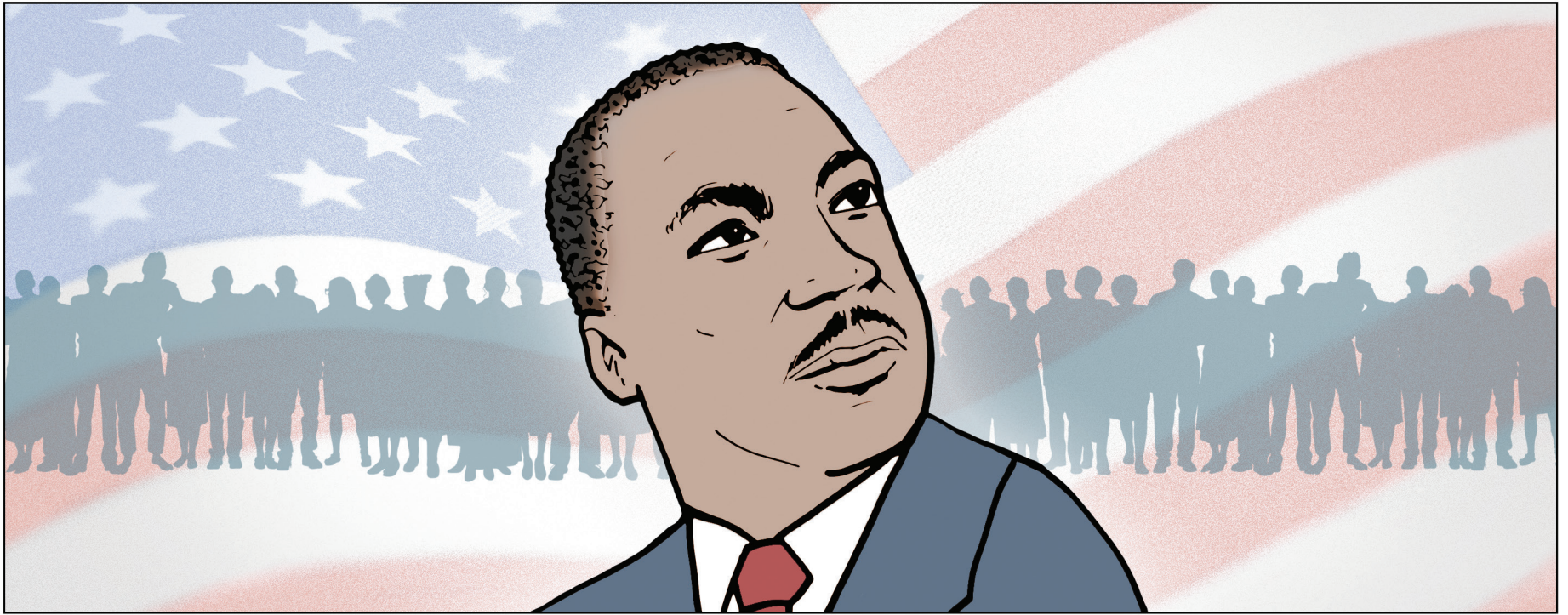
Via the City Website: somervillema.gov/TV (Select “Watch Live Stream”)

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COMMENTARY

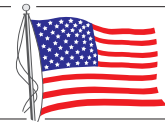
SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Somerville and the world honors the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Our View Of The Times



The annual celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day reminds us of the importance of tolerance and embracing diversity in these times, just as it was in the days when Dr. King was still with us. We celebrate this once again next week.

The civil rights movement of the 60s may seem like a distant and detached part of American history for some, perhaps as remote as the civil war itself in the minds

of the young who did not live in that time. And yet, there was never a time in our history when the principles involved in that struggle were more relevant and meaningful than today, and even more so as we step forward into the future.

The great melting pot that is at the heart of the American dream is constantly tasked with the challenge of people of mixed racial, ethnic, and national identity

blending and working together as equal partners with a common goal: to live freely and prosper in a land still stands as the best possible hope for so many.

As we all strive to surmount the wearisome onus of turning back the economic downturn that has kept many down over the past few years, and at the same time celebrate all that is good and count our blessings each day, the great equalizer

remains in effect. We recognize and embrace the common humanity in all of us.

The tireless efforts of those like Dr. King helped to teach us the importance of knowing these things. As we acknowledge and celebrate the man this week, let us take time to consider what has taken place in this country since he was taken from us. We are a better society now, and that should never be taken for granted.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

Happy birthday to **Katie McDaid**, a great person. We wish her a great day. Happy birthday to retired high school teacher **Marion Joyce**. She was a great teacher. We wish her a happy birthday. Happy birthday to **Bill Rogers** of Winter Hill, a nice guy and we wish him the very best of birthdays. Happy birthday to **James Ribeiro**, we wish him a great birthday. Happy birthday to **Donna Desrescente**. We wish her the very best. Big time birthday greetings to **Ken Kotch**, a great photographer. We wish him the very best. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as **Suzanne Ryan Marks, Paul Nunziato, Leslie Figueira, Donna Marie DAlelio** and **Rachel Tonello** a very happy birthday. We hope everyone has a great day. To all the others we may have missed, we sincerely wish them the very best of birthdays.

Our hearts go out to **the Ferro family**. Our own photographer, **Claudia Ferro**, and her family lost their home to a fire. The community has been stepping in and helping them out however they can, and for that the family expressed how grateful and overwhelmed with happiness they are towards everyone. If you would like to help out, a **gofundme**

fundraiser for **Claudia Ferro** has been set up by their granddaughter, **Arianna Andujar**: <https://gofund.me/a0fcdde3>. It also gives an address where things can be dropped off. They will be publishing a thank you in our paper once things settle down, but they wanted us to share how grateful they are for all the help.

Somerville's **Winter Farmer's Market** takes place **Saturdays** 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., **through April 10**, at 191 Highland Ave. Offering the best locally grown and produced agricultural items and more. Online pre-order market with a small outdoor "live" shopping market. They offer a diverse range of local and New England produce, as well as cheese, eggs, meats, fish, breads, pastries, chocolate, and wine. They feature rotating guest vendors each week, as well as live entertainment and activities. Check out the schedule and map here: <http://maps.managemymarket.com/1610>. They accept SNAP/EBT, CREDIT and DEBIT cards. \$10 SNAP match for EBT customers. For market information visit: <http://www.somwintermarket.org/>

The Highlander Theatre Company

presents three live streaming performances of **Clue**, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, **January 15-17**. All shows begin at 7:00 p.m. and ticket price is "pay what you can." Based on the 1985 movie, which itself was based on the classic Hasbro board game, **Clue** is a farce-meets-murder mystery. Each performance is followed by a fun and interactive post-show activity. For more information, please visit <https://www.highlandtheatre.org/live>.

Apply for **small business relief funds**. **The City of Somerville** has made \$5 million available to small businesses in its third round of the **Small Business COVID-19 Relief Fund**. Eligible businesses can apply for grants of up to \$25,000. Applications are now available and will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Learn more about the funding, including eligibility requirements, or apply for funds online.

The Pandemic – Electronic Transfer (P-EBT) Program created spring 2020 to provide eligible families funds to purchase food while schools were closed during the COVID-19 pandemic has been extended through the end of the

2020-21 school year. Visit <https://www.map-ebt.org/home/#ihdtab> for additional information.

The city is still accepting **homemade face masks** as part of their **10,000 Mask Drive**. They have passed the 5,000 mask milestone. Can you help get it to 10,000? If you're a crafty Somerville resident who has been sewing reusable face masks, please consider donating some to our 10,000 Mask Drive. After being laundered, masks are distributed to seniors and other vulnerable populations. If you would like to donate masks, put them in a sealed bag and bring them to the drop box at either the **Central Library**, 79 Highland Ave., or the **East Branch Library**, 115 Broadway.

CHA Somerville Hospital offers **free COVID-19 testing** at **Assembly Row**. To make an appointment, call 617-665-2928, Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. The **mobile COVID-19 testing unit** also offers testing in our neighborhoods. Mobile testing schedules and more information on both can be found under the **"Symptoms, Testing, & Medical Info"** tab on somerville-ma.gov/covid19. The *Continued on page 11*

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#763

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. What was the mission of the Manhattan Project in 1941? | 7. Who was the lead singer for the Scorpions? |
| 2. What textile is produced by insects? | 8. What was the name of Bob Marley's band? |
| 3. What type of leaf is on the Canadian flag? | 9. Who was the only U.S. President to resign? |
| 4. What artist is famous for <i>The Helga Pictures</i> ? | 10. NBA superstar Kevin Durant appeared as himself in what children's film? |
| 5. What condition is characterized by a stiff neck and fever? | 11. What immigrants brought Santa Claus to America? |
| 6. On <i>Seinfeld</i> , what was the name of the bagel place Kramer worked for? | 12. The four colored seas in the world are what? |
- Answers on page 11*

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

1. The first CD pressed in the US was Bruce Springsteen's *Born in the USA*.
2. John Wilkes Booth's brother once saved the life of Abraham Lincoln's son.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

THE GRAMMY AWARDS

ACROSS

1. Nothing-but-net in basketball
6. "Zip it!"
9. The _____ in Switzerland
13. Ann Patchett's novel "Bel _____"
14. "Mele Kalikimaka" wreath
15. Ten million, in India
16. Fire in one's soul
17. Crematorium jar
18. Trail follower
19. Artist with most 2021 Grammy nominations
21. Powerhouse Award 2020 winner with six 2021 nominations
23. _____ Sayer's "You Make Me Feel Like Dancing"
24. Pettifoggery
25. Lending letters
28. "Through" in text
30. Butcher's discards
35. Fortune-telling coffee remnant
37. Crew equipment
39. Asian goat antelope
40. "Polar Express" roof rider
41. Toughness
43. Two-time Grammy winner Kelly
44. Watch word?
46. Best New Artist nominee Cyrus
47. "Clueless" catch phrase
48. Black Pumas' nominated record
50. Hand-me-down
52. NYC time zone
53. _____ Loaf, winner of one Grammy
55. Nirvana's "Come as You _____"
57. Post Malone's twice-nominated work
61. Venue of 2021 Grammy Awards
65. Dig, so to speak
66. Reunion bunch
68. Silk-patterned fabric
69. On Elsa of Arendelle's head
70. Historical period
71. Join the cast of, two words
72. Balkan native
73. Dog's greeting
74. Bed cover

DOWN

1. Union foe
2. Stuff for sale, sing.
3. Capital of Indiana, for short

CROSSWORD															
1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12		
13						14				15					
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- | | |
|---|--|
| 4. Counter seat | 33. Large-eyed lemur |
| 5. "The Green _____" | 34. "Folklore" nominee and recipient of 10 Grammys |
| 6. Swerve | 36. Nancy Sinatra's boots |
| 7. "I Can't Breathe" artist | 38. Sinbad's seven |
| 8. Delhi language | 42. Semolina source |
| 9. Seed coat | 45. Cloth armband |
| 10. Trickster in Norse mythology | 49. Get the picture |
| 11. Like "Dead Poets Society" school | 51. Movie genre, pl. |
| 12. Blood fluids | 54. Off kilter |
| 15. Winnowing remains, pl. | 56. Longer than #70 Across |
| 20. Salmon variety, pl. | 57. A and B, e.g. |
| 22. Flying saucer acronym | 58. Doing nothing |
| 24. Event attendance | 59. Katy Perry's 2013 Grammy-nominated song |
| 25. Kind of committee, two words | 60. Stewie Griffin's bed |
| 26. Movie trailer, e.g. | 61. Unforeseen obstacle |
| 27. He had no cause? | 62. Low-cal |
| 29. "_____ on Me" by Lady Gaga and Ariana Grande | 63. One of Great Lakes |
| 31. Cheese on Peloponnese | 64. Email folder |
| 32. "...when out on the lawn there _____ such a clatter..." | 67. Composer Gershwin |
- Answers in the next edition of The Somerville Times.*

SUDOKU

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1	8						5	2	
3			4					7	
		2			5	6	3		

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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

Answers in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

Solution to last week's sudoku puzzle:

6	4	1	3	8	7	5	9	2
5	2	7	6	1	9	3	8	4
8	9	3	2	5	4	1	6	7
9	1	2	5	7	3	8	4	6
7	6	4	1	2	8	9	3	5
3	5	8	9	4	6	2	7	1
4	7	5	8	3	2	6	1	9
1	3	6	7	9	5	4	2	8
2	8	9	4	6	1	7	5	3

Solution to last week's crossword puzzle:


D	U	M	B	O		E	M	S		B	I	T	S
A	T	A	L	L		R	A	W		R	A	D	I
M	A	X	I	S		A	C	E		A	R	E	N
P	H	I	N	E	A	S		P	I	N	K	M	A
			I	N	N		I	T	L	L			
S	A	C		S	I	L	D		L	O	W	C	A
C	R	O	C		L	I	E	U		W	E	D	G
A	R	C	H		S	M	A	R	T		P	R	O
L	O	C	U	S		E	L	S		T	O	R	I
D	W	I	G	H	T		L	A	M	E		M	A
						O	I	L	Y		P	U	S
L	A	V	E	R	N	E		L	O	R	E	L	A
E	X	E	R	T		A	B	A		E	P	I	C
G	L	E	N	S		V	E	T		K	A	R	E
S	E	R	E			E	N	E		A	L	E	R

The winners of The Somerville Times Reader's Choice results for THE BEST OF SOMERVILLE 2020


Congratulations to the winners! Please support their businesses and let them know you saw them in The Somerville Times

Readers choices for 2020


Best Idea in 2020:

Converting streets to outdoor dining 

Worst Idea in 2020:

COVID-19 pandemic 

Best Community pulling together during a crisis:

Residents of Somerville! 

Best Somerville Food & Restaurants:

Somerville's most unique dining experience: **Juliet, 21 Union Sq.**
 Best Breakfast: **Neighborhood Restaurant, 25 Bow St.**
 Best Breakfast Sandwiches: **3 Little Figs, 278 Broadway**
 Best Combination Breakfast & Lunch: **Ball Sq. Cafe, 708 Broadway**
 Best Italian Take Out Food: **Mortadella Head, 20 College Ave.**
 Best Italian Specialty Store: **Capone Foods, 14 Bow St.**
 Best Portuguese Restaurant: **J and J Restaurant & Takeout, 157 Washington St.**
 Best Brazilian Restaurant: **Modelo's Market Café, 501 Medford St.**
 Best Chinese Food: **China Delight, 524 Somerville Ave.**
 Best Mexican Food: **Don Julio Restaurant, 514 A Medford St.**
 Best Variety and All Around Restaurant: **Mount Vernon Restaurant, 14 Broadway**
 Best Seafood Restaurant: **Out of the Blue, 215 Elm St.**
 Best Irish Pub: **The Burren, 247 Elm St.**
 Best Hamburger: **RF O'Sullivan & Son, 282 Beacon St.**
 Best Roast Beef Sandwich: **Hot Box, 1 Bow Market Way**
 Best Vegan Tacos: **Taco Party, 711 Broadway**
 Best Bar Food: **Sally O'Brien's, 335 Somerville Ave.**
 Best Vegetarian Pizza: **Veggie Crust, 445 Somerville Ave.**
 Best Pizza: **Ernesto, 641 Assembly Row**
 Best Pan Pizza: **Leone's, 292 Broadway**
 Best Detroit style Pizza: **Avenue Kitchen and Bar, 158 Boston Ave.**
 Best Sub Shop: **Leone's Sub and Pizza, 292 Broadway**
 Best Sandwiches: **Big Belly, 513B Medford St.**
 Best Chocolate: **gâté comme des filles, 1 Bow Market Way #8**
 Best Donuts: **Davis Square Hand Crafted Donuts & Bagels, 377 Summer St.**
 Best Muffins: **Magnificent Muffin & Bagel Shoppe, 1118 Broadway**
 Best Cakes: **Elm Street Sweets, 381 Summer St.**
 Best Cannoli: **Mike's Pastry, 445 Revolution Dr.**
 Best Half Moons: **Lyndell's Bakery, 720 Broadway**
 Best Pies: **Petsi Pies, 285 Beacon St.**
 Best Cheesecake: **7ATE9 Bakery, 199C Highland Ave.**
 Best Local Coffee Shop: **Diesel Cafe, 257 Elm St.**
 Best Bar for Bands: **Once, 156 Highland Ave.**
 Best Bar/Entertainment: **Urban Axes Boston, 2 Union Square**
 Best Brewery: **Winter Hill Brewing Company, 328 Broadway**
 Best Appetizers: **Daddy Jones, 525 Medford St.**
 Best local Bar: **Sally O'Brien's, 335 Somerville Ave.**

Best of Somerville Services:

Best Doctor: **Dr. Deborah Bershell, Davis Sq Family Practice**
 Best Optometrists: **Eye Associates of Somerville, 174 Broadway**
 Best Medical Services: **CHA Broadway Care Center, 300 Broadway**
 Best Wellness Clinic: **KenkoDo, 735 Broadway**

Best Dentist: **Dr. Dobrin, Dental Arts, Highland Ave.**

Best Electricians: **Bent Electrical Contractors, 59A Inner Belt Rd.**

Best Plumbers: **T.J. Sillari, Inc., 99 Albion St.**

Best Law Firm: **Rumery & Smith 403 Highland Ave.**

Best Attorney: **Sean O'Donovan, O'Donovan Law Office, 741 Broadway**

Best Paralegal: **Paula LeBlanc, O'Donovan Law Office, 741 Broadway**

Best Insurance Agency: **Wedgewood-Crane & Connolly, 19 College Ave.**

Best Bank: **Winter Hill Bank, winterhillbank.com**

Best Bank President: **Sandra L. McGoldrick, Winter Hill Bank**

Best Branch Manager: **Lisa Ramos, Century Bank**

Best Teller: **Brittany, Century Bank**

Best Real Estate Rental Agent: **Bill Murphy, Colony Real Estate, 1242 Broadway**

Best Florist: **Wagner Floral Designs, 508 Somerville Ave.**

Best Waiter/Waitress: **Mount Vernon Waitstaff, 14 Broadway**

Best Cook: **Omar Djebbouri, Ball Sq Café, 708 Broadway**

Best Laundromat: **Spin Cycle, 6 Main St.**

Best Liquor Store: **Ball Square Fine Wines, 716 Broadway**

Best Barbershop: **Alibrandi's Barber Shop, 194 Holland St.**

Best Hair Salon: **HAIR by Christine & co, 290 Highland Ave.**

Best Hair Stylist: **Lori Pino, Amal Niccoli, 731 Broadway**

Best Gas Station: **Good Gas, 345 Medford St.**

Best Mechanic: **Pat Lydon, Auto Plus, 229A Lowell St.**

Best Auto Body: **A Plus Autobody, 297 Medford St.**

Best Handyman: **Bill Faber, Main St.**

Best Contractor: **Bobby Potaris, Potaris Construction**

Best Pest Exterminator: **Best Pest Control Services, 63 Elm St.**

Best Dry Cleaners: **Family Dry Cleaners, 5 Main St.**

Best of Somerville Municipal Services:

Best Somerville Department: **Communication Dept.** *(in recognition of their excellence in handling the COVID-19 crisis)*

Best Somerville DPW Supervisor: **Tom Barry, DPW-Highway**

Best City Employee DPW: **Jimmy DiFraia, DPW-Highway**

Best City Employee City Hall/Annex: **Tie – Dave Keating and Joan Shute**

Best City Elected Politician: **State Rep. Denise Provost**

Best Teacher: **Ms. Lisa Brewster, Somerville High**

Best Nurse: **Mary Hart, Cambridge Health Alliance**

Best Police Officer: **Officer Timothy Sullivan**

Best Firefighter: **Lt. Danielle O'Hearn**

Best of Somerville Arts/Entertainment:

Best Artist: **Charan Devereaux for "Faith in a City" at Somerville Museum**

Best Somerville Poet: **Doug Holder**

Best Photographer: **Claudia Ferro**

Best Food Columnist: **Dorothy DiMarzo, Dorothy's Corner**

Best Local Columnist: **William C. Shelton**

Best Somerville Stories: **Jimmy Del Ponte**

Best Somerville Historian: **Bob "Monty" Doherty**

Best Somerville Non-Profit Agency: **Community Cooks, 337 Somerville Ave**

Best Somerville Charity: **Mutual Aid Medford and Somerville, mutualaidmamas.com**

LEGAL NOTICES

Legal Notices can also be viewed on our website at www.thesomervilletimes.com**MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE**

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Elm Court, LLC, to Athas Capital Group, Inc., dated March 5, 2019, and recorded with the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds in Book 72305, at page 398, as assigned to The Rama Fund, LLC, by assignment recorded on March 29, 2019, in said Deeds in Book 72400, at page 204, and as further assigned to PS Funding, Inc., by assignment recorded on April 11, 2019, in said Deeds in Book 72443, at page 93, and as further assigned to Wilmington Trust, National Association, not in its individual capacity, but solely as Trustee of MFRA TRUST 2016-1, by assignment dated July 21, 2020, recorded on August 10, 2020, in said Deeds in Book 75328, at page 438, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at Public Auction at One o'clock PM, on the 29th day of January A.D., 2021, on the premises below described being known as 111 Elm Street, Somerville, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage as set forth below:

To wit: "A certain parcel of land together with the buildings thereon situated in the City of Somerville, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, and being lot numbered 27 on a plan of land entitled "Plan of Land in Somerville, belonging to Timothy Tufts arranged and numbered by L.R.W., May 6, 1890" which plan is recorded with Middlesex South Registry of Deeds in Plan Book 62, Plan 39. Said land is bounded and described as follows:
SOUTHWESTERLY by Elm Street, eighty-six and 01/100 (86.01) feet;
NORTHWESTERLY by land now or formerly of Wentworth, Trustee, fifty-one and 47/100 (51.47) feet;
NORTHEASTERLY by lot numbered 26 on said plan, seventy-seven 88/100 (77.88) feet; SOUTHEASTERLY by Hancock Street, eighty-seven and 96/100 (87.96) feet. Containing 5,429 square feet more or less, according to said plan of land.

Subject to restrictions of record insofar as the same are now in force and applicable, Said premises are conveyed subject to and with the benefit of easements and restrictions of record insofar as the same are now in force and applicable.

APN: 030-C. 00019-000000

PROPERTY ADDRESS: 111 ELM STREET, SOMERVILLE, MA 02144"

The above premises will be sold subject as above and to the following: any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, municipal assessments and liens; any and all outstanding water and/or sewer charges; any and all covenants, easements, restrictions, rights, reservations, conditions and/or other enforceable encumbrances of record created prior to the mortgage; and to all tenancies and/or rights of parties in possession, if any of the aforesaid there be.

Terms: Twenty Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$20,000.00) will be required to be paid in cash or by certified check by the purchaser at the time and place of sale as earnest money. The balance is to be paid in cash or by certified check within thirty (30) days of the sale at the Law Offices of Ford & Paulekas, LLP, 280 Trumbull Street, Hartford, CT 06103. Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.

WILMINGTON TRUST, N.A., NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY, BUT SOLELY AS TRUSTEE OF MFRA TRUST 2016-1
Present Holder of Said Mortgage

By: _____
David A. Hill, Jr.
Its Attorney

Attorneys for Mortgagee:
Ford & Paulekas, LLP
280 Trumbull Street
Hartford, CT 06103
(860) 527-0400

Dated: December 30, 2020

1/6/21, 1/13/21 The Somerville Times

A Public Hearing for all persons interested will be given by the **Somerville Licensing Commission** on **Monday, January 25, 2021** at **6:00PM**, to be held by remote participation, on the Application of a Marijuana Retailer License, for Sira Naturals, Inc. for 240 Elm St., Somerville, MA. For instructions on testifying at this public hearing go to the calendar at www.somervillema.gov or contact the City Clerk's Office.

For the Commission
Christopher Allen
Christine M. Lindgren
Joseph P. Lynch Jr.

Attest: Lori Batzek
Administrative Assistant

1/13/21 The Somerville Times

A Public Hearing for all persons interested will be given by the **Somerville Licensing Commission** on **Monday, January 25, 2021** at **6:00PM**, to be held by remote participation, on the Application of an Alteration of Premises, for Fraiman Enterprises, Inc., d/b/a The Somerville Theater for 55 Davis Sq., Somerville, MA. For instructions on testifying at this public hearing go to the calendar at www.somervillema.gov or contact the City Clerk's Office.

For the Commission
Christopher Allen
Christine M. Lindgren
Joseph P. Lynch Jr.

Attest: Lori Batzek
Administrative Assistant

1/13/21 The Somerville Times

Community Outreach Meeting

Notice is hereby given that a Virtual Community Outreach Meeting for a proposed Adult Use Marijuana Retail Establishment is scheduled for **Wednesday, January 27, 2021**. The meeting will begin at 6:00 PM and will include discussion about the proposed use in accordance with M.G.L. ch. 94G and the Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission's regulations at 935 CMR 500.000 and 935 CMR 501.000 *et seq.*

The Virtual Community Outreach Meeting will be available at the following link and phone number:

Date: January 27, 2021

Time: 6:00 PM

Link: <https://zoom.us/j/99217714808>

iPhone one-tap: +13126266799,99217714808# or
+16465588656,99217714808# or

Telephone: +1 312 626 6799

Webinar ID: 992 1771 4808

The proposed Adult Use Marijuana Retail Establishment for Sira Naturals is anticipated to be located at 240 Elm Street, Somerville, MA 01244. Interested members of the community are encouraged to ask questions and receive answers from company representatives about the proposed facility and operations. Questions can be submitted in advance of the January 27 meeting to community@siranaturals.org. Responses to these questions will be provided at the meeting.

A copy of this notice has been published in the Somerville Times at least fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the meeting as well as filed with the appropriate municipal entities, including the Town Clerk. This notice was also certified mailed at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the meeting to all abutters within 300 feet of the property line of the petitioner. You can view background information from the Mayor's Marijuana Advisory Committee (MAC) by visiting <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/programs/adult-use-marijuana-establishments>. You can view project information and meeting materials by visiting: <http://Siracommunity.com/somerville>.

1/13/21 The Somerville Times

A Public Hearing for all persons interested will be given by the **Somerville Licensing Commission** on **Monday, January 25, 2021** at **6:00PM**, to be held by remote participation, on the Application of a Transfer of a Wine & Malt Package Store License, from La Internacional Food Corp. at 318 Somerville Ave. to Jai Gitanjali LLC d/b/a Get N Go for 152 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA. For instructions on testifying at this public hearing go to the calendar at www.somervillema.gov or contact the City Clerk's Office.

For the Commission
Christopher Allen
Christine M. Lindgren
Joseph P. Lynch Jr.

Attest: Lori Batzek
Administrative Assistant

1/13/21 The Somerville Times

A Public Hearing for all persons interested will be given by the **Somerville Licensing Commission** on **Monday, January 25, 2021** at **6:00PM**, to be held by remote participation, on the Application of an Alteration of Premises, for Kajal and Kevin II, LLC d/b/a Liquor Junction for 14 McGrath Highway, Somerville, MA. For instructions on testifying at this public hearing go to the calendar at www.somervillema.gov or contact the City Clerk's Office.

For the Commission
Christopher Allen
Christine M. Lindgren
Joseph P. Lynch Jr.

Attest: Lori Batzek
Administrative Assistant

1/13/21 The Somerville Times

A Public Hearing for all persons interested will be given by the **Somerville Licensing Commission** on **Monday, January 25, 2021** at **6:00PM**, to be held by remote participation, on the Application of a Transfer of Stock, a Change of Officers/Directors/LLC Managers and a Change of Ownership Interest, for River Bar LLC, d/b/a The River Bar for 661 Assembly Row, Somerville, MA. For instructions on testifying at this public hearing go to the calendar at www.somervillema.gov or contact the City Clerk's Office.

For the Commission
Christopher Allen
Christine M. Lindgren
Joseph P. Lynch Jr.

Attest: Lori Batzek
Administrative Assistant

1/13/21 The Somerville Times

**TO PLACE LEGAL ADVERTISEMENTS IN
THE SOMERVILLE TIMES,
CONTACT US BY 12 PM MONDAY
PH: 617.666.4010 • FAX: 617.628.0422**



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
IFB # 21-30**

The City of Somerville, through the Purchasing Department invites sealed bids for:

Dilboy Stadium Turf and Track Renovation

An Invitation for Bid (IFB) may be obtained online at: www.BidExpress.com, and by contacting the Purchasing Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave. on or after: **Wednesday, January 13, 2021**. Sealed qualifications will be received at the above office until: **Thursday, January 28, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.** at which time such applications will be opened. The City of Somerville reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive any minor informality in the proposal process, and accept the qualification(s) deemed to be in the best interests of the City of Somerville.

A 5% bid deposit will be required.

Please send questions to acaruth@somervillema.gov.

Andrea Caruth
Assistant Purchasing Director

1/13/21 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
RCN TELECOM SERVICES OF MASSACHUSETTS, LLC CABLE
TELEVISION RENEWAL LICENSE CHANGE OF CONTROL**

The Mayor of the City of Somerville, Massachusetts, as Issuing Authority, has scheduled a Cable Television Change of Control Public Hearing to be held virtually on **Wednesday, January 27, 2021**, at 7:00 PM via Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/99843752906?pwd=Vm1VeEdNa2l0SFZJZmxtUTNyTm5lUT09>

Meeting ID: 998 4375 2906 Passcode: KJ1WBR

The purpose of the hearing will be to review the FCC Form 394 transfer request received by the City on December 2, 2020. The Form 394 seeks the Mayor's approval for a Change of Control of the Licensee, pursuant to State law and the RCN Telecom Services of Massachusetts, LLC, Cable Television Renewal License, from Radiate Holdings LP to Stonepeak Associates IV, LLC. A copy of the FCC Form 394 is in the Somerville City Clerk's Office and may be viewed during regular business hours by appointment only. Interested parties can call the Mayor's Office at (617) 625-6600 for more information. Written comments may be submitted up to 6:00 PM on January 25, 2021 at mayor@somervillema.gov.

1/13/21 The Somerville Times

A Public Hearing for all persons interested will be given by the **Somerville Licensing Commission** on **Monday, January 25, 2021** at **6:00PM**, to be held by remote participation, on the Application of a Marijuana Retailer License, for The Harvest Club LLC for 255 Elm St., Somerville, MA. For instructions on testifying at this public hearing go to the calendar at www.somervillema.gov or contact the City Clerk's Office.

For the Commission
Christopher Allen
Christine M. Lindgren
Joseph P. Lynch Jr.

Attest: Lori Batzek
Administrative Assistant

1/13/21 The Somerville Times

A Public Hearing for all persons interested will be given by the **Somerville Licensing Commission** on **Monday, January 25, 2021** at **6:00PM**, to be held by remote participation, on the Application of a Marijuana Retailer License, for Revolutionary Clinics II Inc. for 67 Broadway, Somerville, MA. For instructions on testifying at this public hearing go to the calendar at www.somervillema.gov or contact the City Clerk's Office.

For the Commission
Christopher Allen
Christine M. Lindgren
Joseph P. Lynch Jr.

Attest: Lori Batzek
Administrative Assistant

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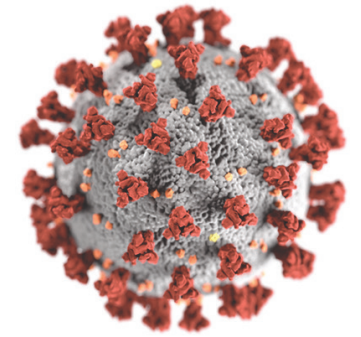
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Somerville to remain in modified Phase 2, Step 2 of reopenings

With high numbers of new COVID-19 cases, Somerville will remain in a modified Phase 2, Step 2 of business reopenings until further notice. Somerville rolled back to this earlier phase of reopening on December 17.

Closed as of the end of day December 17:

- Indoor fitness centers and health clubs, including gyms using alternative spaces. One-on-one personal training sessions are allowed.
- Indoor non-athletic instructional classes in arts, education & life sciences for persons 18 years and older
- Indoor recreational and athletic facilities (except for youth 18 and under), indoor pools may remain open for all ages under pre-registration format structure limited to one person per swim lane
- Indoor recreational venues with potential for low-contact (for example, ax throwing, rock-climbing, etc.)



Remaining closed or restricted (as Somerville has had existing additional phase restrictions in place):

- Outdoor theaters and outdoor performance venues
- Indoor theaters, arenas, and performance venues, including concert halls
- Museums
- Movie theaters
- Indoor live theaters
- Bowling facilities, arcades, and gaming spaces
- Indoor event spaces (meeting rooms, ballrooms, private party rooms, social clubs)
- Existing limits to pool usage remain in place

Open:

- Office spaces may remain open at 25 percent capacity. Employers are strongly encouraged to allow employees to work from home as much as possible. Indoor dining in restaurants may remain in operation with restricted bar seating. Ancillary activities such as pool tables, darts, trivia, etc. remain prohibited. Bar seating remains closed.
- Existing restrictions, plans and safety plans remain in place for post-secondary, higher ed/ and vocational-tech/trade/occupational schools. Outdoor event spaces may be used for gatherings and celebrations under the Somerville current 10-person capacity limit. Motion picture, television and streaming production may continue to operate.

For more information and regular COVID-19 updates, visit www.somervillema.gov/COVID19 and sign up for City alerts at www.somervillema.gov/Alerts. We urge you to sign up for every alert method you are able to receive: phone call, text, email. Also follow [FB.com/SomervilleCity](https://www.facebook.com/SomervilleCity) and [@SomervilleCity](https://twitter.com/SomervilleCity).

Historical Fact CONT. FROM PG 5

coast of America. If successful, it would profit immensely. One of the members was Charles Bullfinch and another was John Derby, brother of Somerville resident Elias Hasket Derby, America's first millionaire.

The two-ship enterprise commanded by Captain John Kendrick of the ship Columbia and a veteran of the Boston Tea Party didn't fulfill the expected financial profit. However, the trip brought immense gratitude from our country and

• cemented claims to the Pacific

Coast for America

- discovered and named the Columbia River
- introduced the American Flag to Japan for the first time
- opened the China trade to America
- was the first American ship to circumnavigate the globe.

Today, West coast citizens can enjoy a scenic cruise aboard its replica on Disneyland's Sailing Ship Columbia.

When you pass to or from Boston on Washington Street, please take a moment to glance past the

Holiday Inn. Imagine the industrial site behind it was once the fifty-foot high Pleasant Hill surrounded with the most stunning grounds and crowned with the most beautiful country home. That was Barrell's house. Before it was razed in 1896, the mansion's staircase was privately sold. In 1942, Somerville's bicentennial year, the staircase and mantels were presented to The Somerville Historical Society. Today, the famous "Bullfinch Staircase" can be seen and appreciated at the Somerville Museum.



Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

state also operates several **Stop the Spread** testing sites, including in the nearby communities of **Chelsea** and **Everett**. For more information, visit the state's website: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/stop-the-spread>.

In collaboration with **The Beautiful Stuff Project**, the **City of Somerville**, and with generous support from **Cradles to Crayons** and **individual donors**, **Somerville Family Learning Collaborative** volunteers distribute free diapers to Somerville families every **Wednesday** from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., outside of the **East Somerville Communi-**

ty School, 50 Cross St., (Glen St. side) and **West Somerville Neighborhood School**, 177 Powderhouse Blvd. Home deliveries will be provided for emergency and quarantined families. You can help raise awareness and resources to address diaper need by contributing here to **The Beautiful Stuff Project's** diaper wish list, or contacting **SPS/SFLC Volunteer Coordinator JCapuano@k12.somerville.ma.us** to volunteer or donate diapers.

If you need assistance **accessing food**, there are several resources available to you locally. Visit the **COVID-19 Help page** at <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/covid-19-help-food-housing-and-financial-assistance> to learn more. There you will find a chart that includes local food pantry schedules, contact information, languages spoken at the food pantry, and whether or not you need to bring ID.

Hate incidents impact victims as well as the community. In an effort to make reporting hate incidents easier for the residents of Somerville, you may now report them using an online form. Visit the **Somerville Police website** under the Home tab and submit your Hate Incident report: www.somervillepd.com/home/.

Ms. Cam's

From page 8

Olio

Answers

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. To produce the first nuclear weapons | 7. Klaus Meine |
| 2. Silk | 8. The Wailers |
| 3. Maple | 9. Richard Nixon |
| 4. Andrew Wyeth | 10. <i>Thunderstruck</i> |
| 5. Meningitis | 11. The Dutch |
| 6. H & H Bagels | 12. Black, Yellow, Red, and White |

Stay connected with Elder Services in 2021

By Nathan Lamb

The pandemic of 2020 created many challenges. Staying connected is high on that list for most of us.

I can speak from personal experience on this one. 2020 was the first Thanksgiving I could not visit my parents. Instead, my mom arranged a last-minute Zoom call with the extended family.

We had some technical difficulties getting started, but soon my sisters, aunts and uncles, and grandmother were all together; making small talk about our plans for the day and getting caught up on the stories of our lives.

Most of my family lives in Wisconsin. We exchange cards and the occasional phone call, but oddly enough, the Thanksgiving of 2020 was our largest gathering in a long time. Technology was a piece of that, but the cumulative monotony and isolation from eight months of

sheltering in place was likely a factor as well.

The experience really drove home to me the importance of staying connected, and a greater appreciation for what Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services (SCES) does to help people do so in our community. Here are a few examples:

Friendly Visitor matches volunteers with older adults for weekly, one-hour visits (currently phone or video calls) to reduce isolation and loneliness. The specifics are up to the participants, but typically center on conversation and activities; we have had some long-running friendships grow out of this program.

Friendly Visitor is a partnership with the Boston-based non-profit FriendshipWorks and is open to Cambridge and Somerville residents age 60 and up.

Technology Coaches help older adults navigate technology basics, providing three succinct sessions to help with

device set-up and instruction for email, Zoom, and other common applications.

Advice is limited to devices our volunteers can assist with, such as Kindle tablets and smart phones. If needed, the program includes an initial visit to the older adult's residence to drop off a device and/or materials, link to Wi-Fi, and install apps. Follow-up sessions are over the phone.

This free program is open to SCES clients age 60 and up.

The Aging Information Center provides information and advice on a wide variety of aging, disability, and caregiving issues. Our elder care advisors can check eligibility for state and federal programs that support Aging in Place and are also knowledgeable on local and regional resources. During the pandemic, they have also connected local older adults with food, masks, and other essentials.

The Aging Information Center is a free resource that is open

to all residents of Cambridge and Somerville, and non-resident caregivers.

Bonus The Cambridge and Somerville Councils on Aging have both hosted virtual events in recent weeks. Follow their Facebook pages to stay posted on upcoming events. The local libraries are also offering virtual programming and contactless pickups. Visit their websites for more details.

I will close by wishing everyone good health and a happy 2021. The past nine months have felt more like three years, but we have seen a lot of good as well: Volunteers and donors helping others. Local businesses supporting meals programs. Organizations working together to provide food and protective equipment where it is needed most.

We are proud to be part of a community that cares so deeply about our older neighbors. We made a lot of connections in 2020, and we look forward



Director of Outreach and Community Relations for Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services Nathan Lamb.

to building on those in the new year and beyond.

Nathan Lamb is the Director of Outreach and Community Relations for Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services, a non-profit agency that supports the independence and well-being of older adults in Somerville and Cambridge. For free advice and guidance on questions of aging, caregiving or disability, contact our Aging Information Center at 617-628-2601 or info@eldercare.org.

Legislature passes bill to provide warning during sewage spills

On the final day of the 2019-20 legislative session, the House and Senate gave final approval to An Act promoting awareness of safe recreation in public waterways, filed by Representative Denise Provost (D-Somerville), Senator Pat Jehlen (D-Somerville) and Representative Linda Dean Campbell (D-Methuen).

The bill addresses a major problem for many areas of the commonwealth with antiquated combined sewer overflow (CSO) systems that combine sewer and rain water during substantial rainfalls, a combination that sends raw sewage directly into public waterways. Every year in Massachusetts, nearly 3 billion gallons of untreated or partially treated sewage is discharged into Massachusetts rivers through CSOs when there is heavy rainfall. The legislation would institute a statewide notification system so that Massachusetts residents know within 2 hours of CSO discharges if their rivers are unsafe for recreation or public use.

"It is standard medical advice to avoid contact with water containing sewage," said Representative Provost. "People in Massachusetts deserve information about discharges of sewage into recreational waters, so that they can protect their health and that of their families."

"Rep. Denise Provost worked on this bill with me for years, because of concern for the Mystic River," said Sen. Jehlen. "She recruited many allies inside the legislature and out. This session Rep. Linda Dean Campbell from the Merrimack River joined us as a lead sponsor, along with over 80 other legislators. Forty-seven major environmental groups gave crucial support to the bill."

The Mystic and other major rivers that wind through the commonwealth serve as valuable recreational resources used by tens of thousands of residents every day. Residents presently have no way to know when raw sewage discharges render these rivers unsafe for boating and swimming. The bill now rests with the governor where the constitution allows him ten days to sign the bill into law.

BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER

By Bobbygeorge Potaris



My friend had his nose broken in two places.
I told him he should stay away from those places.

On This Day in History

January 13

- 1397 – John of Gaunt marries Katherine Rouet.
- 1862 – President Lincoln names Edwin M. Stanton Secretary of War.
- 1919 – California votes to ratify the prohibition amendment.
- 1923 – Hitler denounces the Weimar Republic as 5,000 storm troopers demonstrate in Germany.
- 1927 – A woman takes a seat on the NY Stock Exchange breaking the all-male tradition.
- 1955 – Chase National and the Bank of Manhattan agree to merge resulting in the second largest U.S. bank.
- 1980 – The United States offers Pakistan a two-year aid plan to counter the Soviet threat in Afghanistan.
- 1990 – In Virginia, Douglas Wilder, the first African American elected governor of a US state, takes office.

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Light shed on Knights of Malta Hall controversy

By Max Eidelman

In a recent interview, Tom Champion, former Director of Communications for the City of Somerville, and Jim Kaplan, owner of the Knights of Malta Hall in Gilman Square, elaborated upon Malta Realty Trust's recently filed lawsuit against the city and others.

While a press release (see below) has been prepared, both Champion and Kaplan were able to contextualize what has ultimately led to the formal complaint. The issue stems from Kaplan's claim that the city's recent "spot zoning" allows for development of buildings that will, among other effects, obstruct the light that flows through the Malta Building, thus detracting from the building's value.

Kaplan said that he supports developing the area for the Green Line Extension. He thinks, though, that there are ways to proceed that do not so negatively impact the Malta Building.

Constructed at the end of the 19th century, the Malta Building has obvious historic value that merits preservation. The building has aesthetic value as well that

relies upon the light that can filter through the building's large windows and high ceilings. Current tenants of the Malta Building spoke in support of the value of this light, which you can read more about in the press release.

What specifically threatens this lighting is the potential construction of six-story buildings surrounding the Malta Building. Kaplan explained that in June 2020, he had negotiated a potential arrangement with the developer that allowed for a six-story building, provided there were appropriate setbacks and setbacks. However, this agreement eventually became unnecessary when a citizen's petition was approved by the City Council this fall. This allows for the lots in question, which were previously zoned to permit four-story buildings, to now permit six-story buildings, without any setbacks or setbacks. Herein lies the threat to the Malta Building's lighting, which may adduce Kaplan's claim that this is spot zoning.

In the interview, Kaplan said on multiple occasions that he does not feel there is any ill-will between the parties involved, but that it seems as if the strategy is

to develop as quickly as possible in advance of the Green Line.

Champion and Kaplan drew attention to a publicly available document from 2014, Gilman Square Station Area Plan, to highlight the city's previous pledge to preserve the Malta Building in the midst of development for the Green Line Extension. Quotes from the Area Plan are featured in the press release as well.

The Plan provides some history of Gilman Square and the Malta Building in particular, explaining that "By 1900, Gilman was well established as a handsome public green framed by multiple four-story commercial buildings around the intersection of Medford Street and Pearl Street. Several of these buildings remain to this day: The Knights of Malta Hall, the Litchfield Block, and a Telephone Switching building that is now Mad Oyster Studios."

The Plan also features potential development ideas, one of which provides that, "If the Marshall-Pearl-Medford intersection and Gilman Square are redeveloped according to this plan, the ABJ Auto Repair site would be slightly reshaped, cre-

ating the opportunity for a small protected plaza on the north side of Medford St., framed by the Knights of Malta Hall and a new four-story, mixed-use building on site." Both of these excerpts depict an area that houses four-story buildings as opposed to six-story buildings.

In reiterating his support for developing Gilman Square, albeit without detriment to his building, Kaplan spoke about the potential implementation of an overlay district. He referred to a memorandum prepared on his behalf by attorney Adam Dash and submitted to the City Council in September, which sets forth that, "[Kaplan] is not opposed to development in Gilman Square, and is not even opposed to the abutting properties to 343 Medford being increased to six stories in height, provided that the light and view of this existing historic building are preserved."

The memo suggests that an overlay district might allow for Gilman Square to be developed, "holistically," with changes that can be "drafted by the Planning Department, rather than piecemeal through a citizen's petition. This will yield a better-looking

neighborhood which is laid out according to sound urban planning practices, as opposed to the blunt instrument of simply changing some parcels in Gilman Square to MR6 with little consideration for the impact on the environment, parking, existing buildings, jobs, and the rest of the Square."

The issue seems to involve many technicalities, but in a broader sense this appears to be an issue of cooperative development. Kaplan made clear his impression that there is no ill will or malicious intent, and he spoke highly of the developer. A formal suit has been filed, though, which of course portends the process of litigation.

As the Green Line Extension progresses, more development will proceed as well, and it remains to be seen if similar disagreements occur between the city, developers, and current residents.

In light of the complaint, the city understandably is limited in its capacity to comment on the matter. There is a preliminary hearing scheduled for the end of month, at which time the city may perhaps be able disclose more fully its position.

Owner of 1902 Gilman Square building sues city, developers for illegal 'spot zoning'

Lawsuit Targets October Vote by City Council Giving Developers Unrestricted Right to Build 6-Story Structures on Both Sides of Historic 4-Story "Piano Building"

Malta Realty Trust, LLC, the owner of the Knights of Malta Hall at 343 Medford Street in Gilman Square announced today that it filed a complaint in Massachusetts Land Court on December 11, 2020 against the City of Somerville, the City's Director of Inspectional Services and three other named defendants. Malta Realty's suit alleges that the City has engaged in spot zoning in violation of state law. Also known locally as the Piano Building, the Malta Building is a landmark in Gilman Square, and a connection to the square's, and the city's, commercial history. The four-story building offers large windows and high ceilings that support a variety of artisanal and creative community tenants, including East Cambridge Piano, the Boston Billiard Emporium, architectural offices and an aerial photography and video production company.

A 2014 City planning report entitled "Gilman Square Station Area Plan," had stated that, in any future development of the square, "buildings like the Knights of Malta Hall . . . will be preserved and celebrated." But on October 8th, the Somerville City Council voted to approve a citizen petition requesting an increase in the size of new buildings allowed on two specific lots in Gilman Square, while leaving similar commercial lots in the district unchanged. The two lots are on either side of the Knights of Malta Hall, at 346 Medford Street and 255 Pearl Street.

"State law is pretty clear on this topic," said Jim Kaplan, manager and owner of Malta Realty Trust. "Cities can't tinker with their zoning codes to provide financial benefits to favored property owners and developers to the detriment of their neighbors. In this case, the Council decided that owners and developers of the lots on both sides of our building – and only those developers – should have the right to build six-story structures that will cut off the light, air and views of the tenants of our iconic building. No other commercial lots in Gilman Square have been zoned to permit such large structures. So, instead of treating similar properties in a similar way – which is what the state says municipal zoning codes should always do – the City has decided to pick winners and losers in Gilman Square," Kaplan said.

"I understand that the new Green Line station opens up all sorts of transit-oriented development opportunities on the square," said Kaplan. "That's a good thing. There should definitely be greater density, and maybe even some six-story buildings. But there are ways to do that are not detrimental to existing buildings, without boxing in and shadowing the creative economy tenants in one of the square's few remaining architectural gems."

In Union Square, where the City faces a similar, transit-related development challenge, the solution has been to impose a special "overlay" district. In a 2018 report describing the Union Square Overlay District, City planning officials said its purpose is "to permit flexibility . . . for development that maintains consistency with the neighborhood scale standards" and "To permit the development in accordance with the provisions of the MR4, MR5, CC, and HR districts following the approval of a Coordinated Development Plan Special Permit."

"An overlay district allows for creative development solutions that are designed to benefit all of the stakeholders," said Kaplan. "Before the Council decided to engage in spot zoning, we had actually worked out an agreement with the would-be developer of the 345 Medford Street site that would protect the Malta Building with appropriate setbacks and height restrictions. But once the Council took up the resident petition, the developer abandoned our agreement. I guess they felt they no longer needed to work with us because they could now build a larger structure as of right to the detriment of our tenants, ignoring the importance of celebrating our building's ties to the history of Gilman Square."

Instead of adopting an overlay district for Gilman Square, the City Council and Planning Board approved an amended version of a petition from The Gilman Square Neighborhood Association that changed the zoning designation of the two properties on either side of the Malta Building from MR4 to MR6. "One of the ways you can tell this is clearly spot zoning is that the Council amended the resident petition to make it even more targeted and narrow," said Kaplan. "They took out other lots originally included in the petition and focused in on the two lots on both sides of the Malta Building."

The lawsuit names not only the City and its Director of the Inspectional Services Department, but also the owners of the two properties, PCJ Auto *Continued on page 14*

Owner of 1902 Gilman Square building sues city, developers for illegal 'spot zoning'

CONT. FROM PG 13

Service, Inc. (345 Medford Street) and BG Properties, LLC (255 Pearl Street). Also named as a defendant is 345 Medford Street, LLC, an entity created last year by developer Elan Sassoon to acquire the rights to purchase the lot at 345 Medford Street currently occupied by the Good Gas service station.

In addition to challenging the October spot zoning vote, the Land Court complaint cites the City's 2019 decision to place the Malta Building in a one parcel "Fabrication (FAB) Commercial District" even though the Malta Building is not currently used in accordance with the uses that are permitted in a FAB zoning district. In the words of complaint, the FAB

designation was designed "to discourage the owner from tearing down the building or redeveloping it for some other purpose." The Malta Building, along with a number of other isolated buildings across the city, were zoned as FAB.

The complaint notes, "This is not a proper purpose of zoning and causes significant harm by diminishing the value and utility of Plaintiffs property and existing building, while having no impact on the surrounding properties."

"I certainly don't want to tear down the Malta Building, and I've been trying to live within the constraints of the FAB designation, even though it's obviously unfair," Kaplan said. But the ad-

dition of this latest spot zoning action calls the entire process into question. The City needs to work with all stakeholders, not just their chosen favorites. And the City needs to live up to its commitment to preserve and celebrate historic buildings like this one."

One of the Malta Building's long-term tenants is East Cambridge Piano. Founded in 1978 by Somerville native James Nicoloro, the retail, repair and restoration business moved into the Malta Building over 25 years ago. "This has been a great location for us; when people visit us for the first time, they always talk about what a beautiful building this is," said Nicoloro. "We know change is

coming to Gilman Square and there's nothing wrong with that. But we also think there should be a place here for established businesses that benefit from the kind of space we're in. The light and air we have now is part of the value of this building. The goal should be development that doesn't hurt that value for the successful businesses that are already here."

Another creative-economy tenant of the Malta Building is Above Summit, LLC, a production company specializing in drone aerial cinematography and promotional videos. "We've been here for ten years now," said company co-founder and director Jovan Tanasijevic. "The high ceilings, the huge side win-

dows, the natural light and the historic nature of the building are what attracted us in the first place. We're on the second floor; to be bookended by taller buildings on both sides, without appropriate setbacks, would put us in a canyon. We do photographic work on site. Putting our workspaces in shadow all day would be disastrous for us - and for all our fellow tenants. Surely there's a way to achieve greater density and more intense development in Gilman Square without harming a building that gives the neighborhood so much character and historic continuity."

The Land Court has scheduled a preliminary hearing on the complaint for January 27th.

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OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

Somerville ceramicist Arthur Halvorsen brings flower power to the city

Lyrical

SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

The hippies of the 60s evoked flower power in their fight against the "system." Now in 2021, Arthur Halvorsen conjures up the power again, in the city of Somerville and beyond.

Arthur Halvorsen is a graduate of Maine College of Art where he received his BFA in Ceramics. His work uses bright colors, textures and patterns on earthenware, gathering inspiration from pop art, coloring books and tattoos. Arthur is a Somerville Mudflat studio artist. He teaches classes and workshops at Mudflat but also teaches at Lesley University in Cambridge MA and other venues nationally as a visiting artist. His work has been featured in *Ceramics Monthly*, *Pottery Making Illustrated*, *Studio Potter*, *ArtScope Magazine* and on WCVB Channel 5's *Chronicle*. Arthur has been recognized as a 2019 Brother Thomas Fellow recipient for his work in the field of ceramics within the Boston area.

Recently, Arthur has been painting murals with spray paint throughout Boston. Keep up to date with him more accurately on Instagram @arthurhalvorsen.

Doug Holder: How has it been for a creative person living in Somerville?

Arthur Halvorsen: I have to say that moving to Somerville, as an artist, brings with it a lot of benefits because of the Somerville Arts Council and all that they have to offer artists that live in Somerville. I couldn't take advantage of what they have to offer in the past because I didn't live in Somerville. I didn't have the residency box checked off. I have lived in South Boston, Dorchester, Braintree, Newton, and Chelsea, but I had my studio at Mudflat Studios on Broadway here in Somerville, since we moved to the new building in 2011. I haven't looked back since. Also, I'm now a 10-15-minute walk to my studio from where I live. I don't know if that's necessarily a good thing, or a bad thing. I think it's a little bit of both and I say that because I am an insomniac, so when I don't or can't sleep, I'm in my studio.

DH: You work as a ceramicist, but your recent project is spray painting flowers on abandoned storefronts in the city. Is this another direction for you, or just an extension of your work? Was this spurred on by the pandemic?

AH: I see both my work in clay, and my more recent work with spray paint as relating to one another and complimenting each other. The clay came first I have to say, but the imagery I use of flowers translates so well into spray paint. I think that has all to do with the thick black line. That line to me is an incredible vehicle for getting ideas across. I reference kids coloring books, stained glass windows, tattoos and drawings done with Sharpies – like I did as a kid.

The spray paint did come out of the pandemic. I work at a hardware store in the South End, and after one of the protests in the city there was rioting and looting. At the same time, I had been self-quarantining away from Mudflat because I am a frontline worker, I haven't caught COVID luckily, thankfully, but back in 2009 I had Swine Flu (I survived the Swine, '09!), and I didn't know if having had that made me more susceptible or whatever to catching COVID, so I stayed away for 13 weeks.

That made me so depressed. I'm an artist and I feel as though I need to work with my hands, I need to do something with my hands, I need to be creative. So, the store where I work was hit by looters and we had plywood in the windows, we sell spray paint, and that's where I was hit by lightning with an idea. So, I think for a second ... I'm depressed, a lot of other people are depressed what can I do to make other people smile? What

is something that I could do for the people of city, where we have been through so much. Flowers, flowers are what you give to show someone they're special, to say, "I'm sorry," to send your condolences for a friend or family member that has passed away, etc.

Flowers are very powerful, they can sometimes carry a lot of meaning and take on a life of their own, so I didn't reinvent the wheel. I did what I knew I could do best and just started spray painting my flowers around the city. It was already in my wheelhouse but only on what I call the band-aids. One could say that I am vandalizing the buildings. But to be honest, I am only hitting plywood or rigid foam insulation, the band-aids. I am not and will not "tag" or spray paint a brick wall or something of the like, unless I have permission.

At one point throughout the city, I had 48 spray painted murals. I also find it interesting about which ones do stick around or are kept up – available to be viewed by the public. I assume after the pandemic that some of these murals will migrate and have a new life. They may be put in peoples' homes as art, to or they the art on the interiors of restaurants and local businesses. It is going to be fascinating to me, where they end up.

DH: For your ceramic objects you often take banal things like buses, city buildings, etc., that you infuse with colorful, bright, and provocative images. Do you see the extraordinary in the ordinary?

AH: Short answer, yes, I do. Throughout my life I have a tendency to give inanimate objects personalities. For example, I see the traffic cones and construction barriers as the urban wildflower. Imagine looking at a hill, field, meadow, whatever, you are going to see flowers and weeds, and more nature sprinkled in there as well. When I see the traffic cone as doing the same thing. They both signal for your attention and both are about survival, one is to entice a bee to pollinate it, the other is screaming "WATCH OUT!" or "DANGER, DANGER!" They're both calling attention to themselves for a variety of reasons. I like to draw what I commonly see around me and make it special.

DH: Why did you choose ceramics as your genre?

AH: I graduated from Maine College of Art in 2007. When it was time to declare our majors, I was torn between ceramics and photography. And in all honesty, I didn't want to be photographing weddings for the rest of my life. I would rather make the cake stand for the wedding. After watching the reality TV show *Bridezilla* one time in college, we got to see how brides act on their big day. After seeing how they treated the photographer I said to myself: Absolutely not!

Honestly that's how I came to clay. Also, clay has a lot of mystery imbedded in it. It's an art and a science at the same time. You give up a lot of what clay could be by placing things or objects into the kiln. You put your pieces in the kiln and there is magic that happens when it gets glaze-fired and then you open up the kiln again. That could be like Christmas Day or the worst day of your ceramics career, if everything gets ruined. You have to have gambling in your blood in order to make friends with clay. You get used to disasters and happy accidents happening all the time with clay.

DH: Why should we view your work?

AH: Well, why not? Everybody at least likes, not everyone loves but everyone likes flowers.



Every once in a great while, I publish a poem of mine. My mother passed at 94, in a nursing home on Long Island, NY. Because of COVID we were unable to visit her, to hold her hand, to look into her deep blue eyes. I hope this poem speaks to you in some way...



Mother, Mother, Mother
For Rita Baum Holder (1926 to 2020)

Mother, Mother, Mother
she pushes me
from her pubic
portal.

Mother, Mother, Mother
my hungry lips
on her maternal
nipple

Mother, Mother, Mother
you held
you released
my trembling hand
on Kindergarten's first day
to the clutches
of Mrs. Saint

Mother, Mother, Mother
on the beachhead of adolescent battles
"Why can't you be like other young men?"
Nelson Eddy on his mount
strong, so straight
crooning
to Jeanette....

Mother, Mother, Mother
I hold your wizened hand
and again return
to that dark tunnel
leading to the light
of Grand Central.
Later
my hand
blisters
and bleeds.

Mother, Mother, Mother
your voice
moans like a foghorn
adrift in
a terminal
sea.

I Love you. I love you, I love you.

— Doug Holder

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Doug Holder, 25 School St., Somerville, MA 02143. dougholder@post.harvard.edu


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