

Panhandling

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and live here and who visit the stores here," Davis said. "[Kelling] is going to work with us on issues of disorder and lawlessness stretching from Downtown Crossing through the Common and into the Back Bay. He has had tremendous success in dealing with homelessness, lawlessness and disorder in the subways of New York City."

Davis said he believes that the strategies that come out of the partnership will be effective in identifying methods of reducing the amount of aggressive panhandling in the Back Bay. Beat officers can set standards for panhandlers by making it clear that aggressive panhandling, which is an arrestable offense, is not acceptable in the neighborhood, he said. He described aggressive

panhandling as when someone impedes the movement of another person to ask for money.

"If people are going to act like that, we are going to take action immediately and stop what they're doing, and maybe that means incarceration," Davis said. "Whatever it takes, we'll make sure that the streets in the city are safe and that when people come here to shop or are driving home and get out of their cars, they're not confronted."

Meg Mainzer-Cohen, president of the Back Bay Association, said she was pleased with Davis's ideas on how to handle aggressive panhandlers.

"I see the issue of panhandling as an increasing problem," Mainzer-Cohen said. "I think it really creates a negative environment. I don't think we've got a solution at this point, so I think it's great that we're going to different areas for new ideas."

Hynes

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all mandate of maximizing revenue, and that would have the result of decreasing the state subsidy. Particularly in this environment of less revenue and rising deficit, I suspect that any opportunity that we have to maximize revenue will be welcomed."

Potential supporters of adding retail operations at the Hynes say they would want to see specific plans to be sure it would be successful. "Retailing is not an automatic home run," said Meg Mainzer-Cohen, president of the Back Bay Association. "If properly executed, I think it could be a benefit, but it depends on how the space is configured, how visible it is and how the signage is executed."

Ramps

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Kenmore Square and an east-bound on-ramp near the Bowker Overpass, according to Elliot Laffer, a NABB member and chair of the traffic advisory committee for the Storrow Drive reconstruction project.

Laffer is working with Royer to promote the idea to the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and MassHighway, which are managing the Storrow repairs, as well as the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority (MTA). "Even though this is a state project, the city must have a say," Royer said.

Laffer said that the impetus for the I-90 ramp proposal are studies, such as a 2006 DCR Storrow driver survey, that show that nearly half the traffic on Storrow that goes through Boston exits at

the Bowker Overpass. "Odds are they're using Storrow mostly to access the LMA [Longwood Medical Area], which is one of the engines of our economy, but it's not what Storrow was built for," Laffer said after last week's meeting.

The 2006 DCR study shows that most Storrow traffic enters the roadway from the north via I-93. Adding exit and on ramps around Kenmore Square would allow vehicles to go directly from I-93 to I-90 and still be able to exit in the Kenmore Square area, the main conduit for LMA traffic.

The idea of new I-90 ramps has been proposed before and it has resurfaced in the context of ongoing public discussions concerning the reconstruction of Storrow Drive. Laffer said that while the ramps could allow I-90 to serve as a detour while parts of the Storrow tunnel are closed for repair work, the ramps will more likely be a longer-term project

that would permanently take pressure off the roadway.

Laffer is drafting letters to DCR, MassHighway and the MTA, which he said has so far "not agreed to look at the idea."

State Representative Marty Walz, who has been closely involved in the Storrow repair planning process, said that she has yet to see a traffic study that supports the touted benefits of additional I-90 ramps. "With a tremendous backlog of projects just to maintain our current infrastructure, I want to see proof that it's worth the investment," Walz said.

In a report issued last month, the state Transportation Finance Commission warned of a nearly \$20 billion deficit over the next 20 years to fund current projects and maintain the state's transportation system.

A call to the MTA was not returned by press time.

Single-Family Homes

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293 Marlborough Street.

Holland maintains that it is not only the super-rich who are in the market for the residences, but also families of means who want to stay in the city, as well as empty-nesters from the suburbs. "People are seeking more privacy while still being in an urban setting," Holland said. "A person with a higher net worth may decide to take a whole building on."

For Back Bay residents, the rising demand for single-families presents a mixed blessing. While the high-priced residences may raise property values and ease congestion and parking demand, some residents have raised concerns over a loss of neighborhood diversity.

"It's nice to have developers who want to bring back the former glory of these buildings," said Sue Prindle, chair of the architecture committee of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay. "But there needs to be some balancing in terms of available housing. We don't want to throw our young people out. They need to get their start too."

Prindle also noted that it was the abandonment of the neighborhood's single-family residences starting in the 1930s that led the city to consider razing large sections of the Back Bay as part of urban renewal efforts in the 1950s and 1960s.

The trend toward single-family conversions comes as the city has stepped up efforts to address what is widely regarded as one of its most serious problems: a lack of affordable housing.

Holland said the shortage of affordable housing is a critical issue statewide and will not be impacted by the loss of a few units in the Back Bay. "We should be building 30,000 units of housing every year to keep up with demand and declining housing stock," Holland said. "New housing is not going to be built in the Back Bay."

Furthermore, Holland said, having eight units in a 6,000-square-foot building, as was the case at 293 Marlborough, was unsafe "by any measure." By rehabbing 100-year-old structures, Holland said, his company was shoring up decaying buildings and correcting decades of shoddy modifications.

"A lot of these buildings have never been fully remodeled," said Joseph Holland, John's brother and business partner, during a recent tour of one of the houses the company is converting. "We end up working with a pure shell, because in a lot of cases buildings have been bastardized for years."

Stripping a building to its bare bones also allows Holland to hardwire it for modern amenities, such as computer-controlled lighting, cable internet and plasma screen TVs. Most of the residences also have elevators.

Naturally, all of this comes at a price. Holland plans to put 293 Marlborough on the market for \$4.8 million.

Spotlight

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Perhaps one of the most interesting shows Rivera has been considering is a stage adaptation of the 1977 movie *The Turning Point*, the enormously popular

dance film starring Ann Bancroft, Shirley MacLaine and Mikhail Barishnikov. "The biggest problem is who would play opposite me? Gwen is gone," Rivera said, referring to her *Chicago* co-star, Gwen Verdon.

It seems that triple-threat actress, singer and dancer types of Rivera's caliber are not com-

ing up through the ranks. It will be interesting to see how well Rivera's roles will be recreated throughout the coming years, which is another reason to see the incomparable and original Chita Rivera in *The Dancer's Life* — a living history dedicated to an irreplaceable talent — a true Broadway treasure.

Theater Fare

409 Edgecombe Avenue: *The House on Sugar Hill*. A play about Madame Stephanie St. Claire, the "Numbers Queen" of Harlem in the 1930s, living among black leaders like Thurgood Marshall, Eunice Carter and W.E.B. Dubois. Boston Center for the Arts, 539 Tremont Street. \$24-\$30. Through Saturday, April 21. For tickets call 933-8600.

***La Bohème*.** An opera about love, tragedy and the Bohemian life in Paris based on "Scenes de la vie de Bohème" by Henri Murger presented by the Boston University Opera Institute and Chamber Orchestra. Boston University Theatre, 264

Huntington Avenue. \$15-\$20. Thursday, April 19 through Sunday, April 22. For tickets call 933-8600.

***Persephone*.** A play narrated by a statue of the Greek goddess Demeter, who tells the story of her life spanning five centuries. Boston Center for the Arts, 527 Tremont Street. \$50-\$52. Through Sunday, May 6. For tickets call 266-0800.

***Sesame Street Live*.** A production entitled "Elmo's Coloring Book" about the importance of diversity and acceptance, featuring songs such as "Sing," "True Colors" and "Sunny Days." Boston University Agganis

Arena, 925 Commonwealth Avenue. Thursday, April 26 through Sunday, April 29. \$15-\$20. For tickets call 931-2000.

***Surviving the Nian*.** The world premiere by the Theater Offensive about a woman introducing her new life plan to her family in Hong Kong, despite their own plans for her. Boston Center for the Arts, 527 Tremont Street. Through Saturday, May 5. \$20. For tickets call 933-8600.

***A Year with Frog and Toad*.** A musical based on the children's books by Arnold Lobel. Grand Lodge of Masons of Massachusetts, 186 Tremont Street. Through Sunday, May 6. \$12-\$18. For tickets call 424-6634.

NEW SCHEDULE!

Leaf & Yard Waste collected during the week

Collection dates:
April 30 – May 25 on your recycling day

Put leaves, grass, weeds in open barrels or paper leaf bags. Tie brush with string, 3 ft. max length x 1 in. max diameter

Put out on curb before 7 AM

Yard waste will no longer be collected as trash from April 16 through May 25

No plastic bags

Boston Public Works will collect and compost residents' yard waste

No more Saturday collections

For more information call 635-4959



Thomas M. Menino, Mayor