



THE NAVY YARD NEWS

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE FRIENDS OF THE CHARLESTOWN NAVY YARD

Winter 2011

Be-Friending Main Street



As part of a Festival of Trees, the Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard sponsored a holiday display inside Otis & Ahearn on Main Street.

Apartments planned for long-empty Parcel 39A site

A plan to add 49 apartments to the Navy Yard's red-hot residential rental market met with cautious optimism at a Nov. 30 meeting of the Charlestown Neighborhood Council Development Committee.

The development would fill the now-vacant parcel, known as Parcel 39A, at the corner of First Avenue and Ninth Street, in front of the YMCA building on Second Avenue.

Successful development of the property "finishes off that neighborhood," said CNC Development Committee member Thomas Cunha.

Still, Cunha and his fellow committee members who presided at the meeting asked the developers in attendance to come back for one more public meeting with assurances about adequate parking and financing for the project.

Geoffrey Lewis, Boston Redevelopment Authority senior project manager, reviewed the history of the proposed development, recalling that Boston-

based Kenney Development Co., which was designated developer in August 2001, originally planned a commercial building. But as demand for such space weakened, Lewis continued, Kenney moved toward developing residential space – condominiums, at first, and, as of June of this year, rental apartments.

"We've been accused, in some quarters, of land-banking, but nothing could be further from the truth," Robert Kenney, a former BRA director, told the committee. Development proposals such as his have "really been buffeted" by the vicissitudes of the economy, he noted.

The current plan by Kenney Development, which is working in conjunction with The Raymond Group, also of Boston, calls for 49 apartments – nine of them at "affordable" rents, Kenney said – and 33 underground parking spaces. The units, consisting of studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments, will range in size from 600 square feet

Continued on Page 4

A Navy Yard favorite son battles back from disabling illness

By BARBARA RABINOVITZ

On Wednesday, Sept. 1, John Moore, owner of the Navy Yard Bistro, was catering an event at the U.S.S. Constitution Museum, mere steps away from his popular restaurant.

"My legs felt really weak," the strapping six-footer recalled during a recent interview in a solarium at Boston's Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital.

His restaurant manager, Lauren Rubino, suggested he return home to his condominium at Lincoln Wharf in the North End. But still he was "so ache-y," in his words, and

by 10 that night he was on his way to the emergency room at Massachusetts General Hospital. The diagnosis was bronchitis, and the prescribed remedy was an antibiotic.

By Saturday of Labor Day weekend, Moore's condition had worsened to the point where his feet were extremely sore and his hands were tingling. He returned to MGH, and this time he was admitted to the hospital. "By Sunday afternoon, I was completely paralyzed," Moore told The Navy Yard News.

This time the diagnosis was Guillain-Barre Syndrome, defined as a polyneuritis of

Continued on Page 3



Navy Yard Bistro owner John Moore is undergoing rigorous physical therapy at local rehabilitation facilities. Assisting him is occupational therapist Kacey Semchenko.

Councilman sees Yard as one of city's 'best-kept secrets'

His area of jurisdiction as Boston city councilor for District 1 includes the North End, East Boston, the north slope of Beacon Hill, the Financial District and Charlestown. And for Councilman Salvatore LaMattina, the Charlestown Navy Yard is "one of Boston's best-kept secrets."

A lifelong resident of East Boston, LaMattina, 51, admits that he was not familiar with the former U.S. Navy installation berthed at the northern end of the city until he began campaigning for election to the City Council in 2006.

"I absolutely love the neighborhood," he told *The Navy Yard News* in a recent interview, citing in particular its desirability as a place to live and its lively "community activity."

Still, he conceded that the Yard and Charlestown as a whole are not without their issues, some of them controversial.

LaMattina was instrumental in forging a recent agreement on a parking policy in the Yard governing non-residents' vehicles. "We had a big meeting on that one," he said, referring to a June 24 gathering where the issue was hotly debated. LaMattina voiced strong support for the plan, which was implemented a few weeks later.

On an ongoing basis, LaMattina meets at the Chelsea Street police station with what he refers to as "a neighborhood response team" to discuss the delivery of basic services, progress on

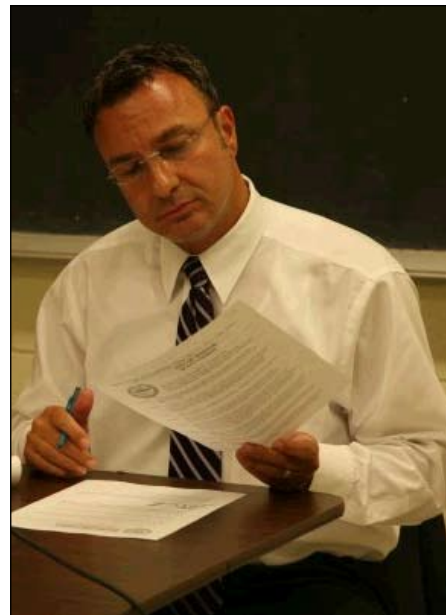
public works projects, the condition of local parks and other concerns.

Assisting him in that neighborhood outreach is his staffer and lifelong Charlestown resident Judith Evers. "She's my eyes and ears in Charlestown," he said of Evers, whom he met in the late 1980s when they both worked in the administration of former Boston mayor Raymond Flynn. "I'm so fortunate to have her on my staff," he added.

Michael Parker, chairman of the Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard, is glad for having LaMattina as Charlestown's representative on the council. "Working with Sal on the myriad of vexing issues facing the Yard, whether it be parking, development or waterfront use, is a pleasure," he said. "He is thoughtful, keeps an open mind and knows how to get things done. Charlestown is fortunate to have him as a councilor."

One issue unique to the Navy Yard that has LaMattina's attention is the use of the city's waterfront. The councilor said he would like to see it put to greater use, beyond service as a sightseeing attraction. He mentioned, as one example, the possibility of a more elaborate water transport system that would link the Yard to other harborside sections of District 1, such as East Boston and the North End.

Still another priority for LaMattina is greater use of the public schools in



"I absolutely love the neighborhood."

Boston City Councilor Salvatore LaMattina, commenting on the Charlestown Navy Yard

District 1 by his constituents. "I want to get more kids to go to the neighborhood schools," said this graduate of East Boston High School.

From there, he moved on to the University of Massachusetts in Amherst where he earned a degree, appropriate to his current calling, in political science. The career in public service has included his years as a neighborhood liaison to East Boston and the North End and his role as assistant director of the Central Artery Team. He now chairs the City Council's committees on neighborhood services and veterans' affairs and is vice chair of the Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on Arts, Film, Humanities and Tourism.

His mention of the latter committee prompted a reporter to ask if he had seen "The Town," a recent hit film about Charlestown's notoriety as a spawning ground for bank robbers that was juxtaposed with a romance played out on the scenic streets and in the elegant homes around the Bunker Hill Monument. He had seen it and offered this brief review: "It was a movie, and the neighborhood looked good in the movie. ... And Charlestown residents were used as extras, and that's good for the local economy."

THE NAVY YARD NEWS

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF
THE FRIENDS OF THE CHARLESTOWN NAVY YARD

PUBLISHER
Michael Parker

EDITOR AND SENIOR REPORTER
Barbara Rabinovitz

Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard

CHAIRMAN	Michael Parker
PRESIDENT	Lois Siegelman
TREASURER	Elaine Vigneau
SECRETARY	David Whelan

DIRECTORS

Peter Borré
Richard Burr
Karen Colombosian
Marion Dancy Cullen
Karen Dempsey Carney

Kate Fillo
Alexis Finneran
Kira Jacobs
John Moore
Doug Pope

Terry Savage
Debra Lee Stevens
Jennifer Tegfeldt
Jean Tochterman

P.O. Box 290787, Charlestown, MA 02129
www.friendscny.org info@friendscny.org

For membership information, please visit the website or send an e-mail.
The organization is a 501(c)3 non-profit.

City residents find Navy Yard institute very therapeutic

As the high cost of health care in this economy continues to stress and strain delivery systems, the MGH Institute of Health Professions in the Navy Yard is offering physical therapy services to residents free of charge.

Established in May of this year, the institute's Center for Physical Therapy Clinical Education and Health Promotion matches its students with clients in need of PT whose health care insurance may provide only limited coverage or whose benefits have been exhausted.

Approximately 1,000 students are enrolled in the health sciences graduate school, which offers degrees in PT, nursing and speech pathology.

"The center serves two purposes: It provides pro bono services to people who need them, and it provides an opportunity for clinical education for our students," said Jane Baldwin, associate director of clinical education and clinical assistant professor at the institute and overseer of the new center.

Last summer, she reported, approximately 15 individuals were treated for orthopedic, neurological and multi-system impairments during a course of nearly 65 visits.

A second-floor computer lab has been converted into a gym for the clients, complete with bicycles and other equipment and mat tables.

Baldwin emphasized that all the



Jane Baldwin (left), of the MGH Institute of Health Professions, ministers to a physical therapy patient as institute students look on.

students administering the PT are supervised by licensed therapists during all client visits.

The center is open to everyone although Baldwin estimates that the preponderance of the clients come from Boston – with about one-quarter of them residing in Charlestown and the West End “and a couple of people from the suburbs.”

“We’ve started out small, but we

hope to be able to expand into a bigger space and serve more people,” she said.

The establishment of the center at MGH's institute is part of a nationwide trend of free clinics, Baldwin noted. “There’s actually a Society of Student-Run Free Clinics,” she said, pointing out that hers is not student-run as of now. “I hope eventually the students will have those administrative skills,” she added.

Fans of Navy Yard Bistro owner root for his recovery

Continued from Page 1

unknown cause and characterized by muscle weakness and paralysis. Immediately, he was placed on intravenous antibiotics for five days; he also received two blood transfusions and was confined to his hospital bed for 16 days.

On Sept. 21, Moore, an active golfer, runner, weight-lifter and skier, was transferred to Spaulding where he undertook a physical therapy program that has kept him moving from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. “Even getting dressed and washing is a form of PT,” he said.

His progress has been steady. As of a recent visit, the sensation on his left side was returning, Moore reported. He was using a joystick to

type words on an on-screen computer keyboard. “I can check e-mail,” he said, “but it’s hard to answer.”

What gladden him more than the electronic communications are the scores of visits from friends and Navy Yard Bistro patrons – “an unbelievable amount,” he calculated.

He has been treated to meals from his restaurant, and Lucca, a North End eatery, sent over

complimentary bolognese. A fellow member of the Ferncroft County Club in Danvers, where Moore plays golf,

“An unbelievable amount” of friends and bistro patrons have visited.

John Moore
Owner
Navy Yard Bistro

arranged to have pizza delivered to the doctors and nurses caring for his friend and said they were from Moore.

Back at the bistro, Rubino is taking care of business in her boss’

absence, overseeing the 10 employees in the kitchen and another 10 out in the dining

areas. Moore had hired her, only three months before he took sick, so that he could vacation (on Nantucket) for the first time in the six years since he bought the restaurant. “I taught her everything before I went to Nantucket,” he said.

Moore, acknowledging that he still has “a long way to go,” was hoping to return to his post inside his restaurant’s front door by Christmas for a couple of hours a day. “I should be on a walker by December, then a cane,” he said, “and I hope to be walking on my own by April.”

Barbara Rabinovitz is editor and senior news reporter for The Navy Yard News.

Sagging Pier 5 in Yard raises hopes for successful re-use

A badly deteriorated Pier 5 stirred a lively discussion at a mid-November meeting called by the Charlestown Neighborhood Council and the Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard to discuss the fate of the 88,000-square-foot parcel sitting vacant at the head of the harbor.

The meeting was prompted by the Boston Redevelopment Authority's decision to revoke the developer designation previously granted to Martin Oliner. His plan called for the development of a residential building, but with the souring of the real estate market that plan stalled. In the spring of 2009, the BRA began the process of de-designation.

BRA senior project manager Geoffrey Lewis, recounting the history of Pier 5, told the approximately 50 Navy Yard residents who had gathered in the YMCA building for the Nov. 17 meeting that the BRA does not know what proposals will materialize now that there is no developer designated for Pier 5.

"That's one of the reasons we want to get a development



An iron fence bars public entry to the deteriorating Pier 5.

process started," he said, estimating that it could take 18 to 24 months for the perennially lengthy permitting process to be completed.

Lewis said the BRA "doesn't have a use in mind" but wants to see a plan that is both "fundable and developable."

Given the pier's current condition, its repair would cost "in the lower seven figures," Lewis said. "Whatever is there will have to be on a new pier," said Mark Rosenshein, an

architect and chairman of the CNC Development Committee.

Rosenshein opened the public discussion by inviting suggestions for Pier 5 uses from the meeting attendees, several of whom quickly expressed their concerns about the prospect of development on the site rather than ideas for what might take shape on the pier.

Among those concerns were worries about: vehicular traffic crossing the Harborwalk

to gain access to whatever is built on the pier; the possibility of a lawsuit by Oliner, asserting his rights to the property; the impact of a major construction project, with its attendant noise and other disruptions; and the likelihood of increased traffic on already heavily traveled Eighth Street, which leads to Pier 5.

Acknowledging the concern about a possible lawsuit, Michael Parker, Friends chairman, urged Lewis to open talks with Oliner "to find out if he's going to hold this up for five years" with a lawsuit.

As for potential neighborhood opposition to a large condominium development on the pier, Parker expressed "serious doubts condos will be built there anytime soon."

Several ideas for non-residential use were put forward, including a museum, a restaurant, an extension of the Courageous Sailing Center and a park.

Parker pledged that the Friends would take "a participatory role" in the development of the site to ensure "the kind of development the city could be proud of."

New apartments planned for desolate Parcel 39A

Continued from Page 1

to 1,100 square feet and will rent for approximately \$1,800 to \$3,000 per month.

"We have strong interest in financing for rental residential," Kenney said. "We do feel it's a viable project." With the completion of the new Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital complex at the far end of First Avenue, "we feel there will be demand" for the Parcel 39A units, he added.

Thomas Schultz, of the Architectural Team in Chelsea, which is designing the four-story apartment building, said that the BRA had indicated it wanted the development to be in keeping with the "massing" of other Navy Yard structures but not necessarily dupli-



An architect's rendering shows the building envisioned for Parcel 39A.

cative in style. "This one will have more of a contemporary look," he said.

Ted Raymond, who developed the Yard's Flagship Wharf building some 20 years ago, said he and Kenney are hoping for a March 1 construction start in anticipation of completing the project

at the same time Spaulding opens its new facility.

Cunha voiced concerns about the 33 parking spaces in a 49-unit building, but Kenney said the developers have a commitment that will enable them to obtain additional spaces in Building 199. "The bottom line is there has to be a minimum of 49," Cunha stated.

As for the financing, Raymond said his and Kenney's companies are in the midst of negotiating the terms of a commitment

letter for financing. "We are very aware of the Filene's factor," he said, referring to the collapse of a major mixed-use development plan for the site of the former Filene's department store in downtown Boston for lack of financing.