Mayor candidates discuss plans for greener Boston

BY LING-MEI WONG

Nine of Boston’s 12 mayoral candidates discussed ways to make Boston greener at a forum on July 9 at Suffolk University. The event was organized by the Coalition of Energy, Environmental, Transportation and Innovation Groups.

Two moderators asked questions, then called on specific candidates to reply, to make sure they all spoke. Issues included carbon emissions, parks, recycling and alternative energy.

Dan Conley, Suffolk County district attorney, advocated for increasing the parks and recreation budget and opening up Boston Harbor Island.

The candidates proposed ways to cut down on emissions, including fines, better signage and more space for bikes. “I would depurate the Boston Police Department to ticket for idling,” said Mike Ross, city councillor for district 8.

Felice Arroyo, city councillor at large, proposed retrofitting diesel trucks to be cleaner. “I’m a lifelong Bostonian and asthmatic,” he said. Asthma is a local “epidemic,” causing 50 percent of Boston Children’s Hospital’s visits and making Suffolk County the third worst U.S. county for diesel emissions, according to City Commissioner Bill Walczak.

Moderator Derrick Jackson asked about biking solutions, as bike tracks in Amsterdam and Stockholm required removing hundreds of parking spaces. State Rep. Marty Walsh said, “If downtown Boston takes away any parking, we could push people toward public transportation.”

Recycling received unanimous support from the candidates. City Councilor at-large John Connolly said he supported the bottle recycling bill, which passed the Boston city council but failed in the State Legislature. “If I was mayor, the bottle recycling would become a community engagement program.”

Mayor candidates (L to R) Mike Ross, Bill Walczak and Marty Walsh attend a green forum on July 9. (Image by Ling-Mei Wong.)

Emergency preparedness for natural disasters like Hurricane Sandy was a priority. “A critical piece is bringing together people in City Hall to discuss solutions: Folks in inspection services, planners, the Boston Redevelopment Authority and folks in permitting,” said Rob Consalvo, city councillor for district 5.

Alternative energy sources such as solar and wind power were discussed. “There are existing homeowner programs to help seniors and homeowners improve property,” said former state Rep. Charlotte Golar Ritchie. “We should allow for environmental innovations like solar panels and realize the payback eventually.”

Conley proposed loans to add solar panels to homes and businesses, which would be paid back with a property tax assessment. He also proposed increasing the city’s commitment to solar power to 50 megawatts from 20 megawatts by 2020.

Ross added a greener Boston could retain more college graduates. “Public transit has to run well into the evening,” he said. “We need affordable housing for people in college. And it shouldn’t take a year in Boston to start a business or have a festival.”

Greater Boston Citizenship Initiative pools aid for immigrants

BY LING-MEI WONG

Free citizenship clinics attract plenty of folks, as the Greater Boston Citizenship Initiative can attest. With seven large group workshops in 2011, each event drew 150 to 200 registered individuals eligible for U.S. citizenship. About 20 smaller clinics also took place, resulting in more than 2,000 citizenship applications completed in 2012.

GBCI was launched by Boston-based Fish Family Foundation in May 2011. Immigration had long been a priority for the foundation as a way to naturalize the best way to make a difference.

“Currently 200,000 individuals in Massachusetts are eligible as legal permanent residents,” said Sher Omerovic, GBCI program manager. “In the last two years, only 15,000 to 20,000 individuals have naturalized. We ourselves have completed more than 2,000 applications.”

At the citizenship clinics, individuals are screened by volunteers to make sure they have all the necessary documents. They complete paperwork at the application station, review it at the quality control station and copy all documents at the printing station. Snacks are served and services are free. Low-income individuals can qualify for a waiver for the $680 application fee.

The foundation sought agencies with naturalization services and then pooled their resources. Six organizations are part of the GBCI collaborative: the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center, Centro Latino, the Irish International Immigrant Center, the Massachusetts

HIGHLIGHTS

Boston Asian YES youth create art against racism PAGE 4

Senate immigration bill: What it means and what happens next PAGE 6

Greenway Community Workshop discusses Chinatown Park Improvements PAGE 7

Boston tackles climate change PAGE 8
The Chinatown Safety Committee and the Chinese Resident Association met on July 3. Local crime was the focus of the CSC’s July meeting, while Boston city councilor and mayoral candidate John Connolly spoke to the CRA.

Capt. Tom Lee presented the crime report to the CSC at the Doubletree Hotel, with 44 arrests for June. “Crime continues to be coming down for Chinatown,” he said.

On July 1, the Sovereign Bank at 43 Kneeland Street was robbed by a male in blue jean shorts, a yellow shirt and black sneakers. Lee said. He fled with an unknown amount of cash at 1:26 p.m. and his face was captured on the bank’s surveillance video. The suspect did not use a weapon during the robbery.

Another incident was reported on June 9 at 12:29 a.m., when teenagers at the Josiah Quincy School reported black males threatening them with a small revolver. The teenagers refused to give them anything and the suspects fled on foot. “It seems like a teenager-on-teenager thing, but the concern from us is the weapon on display,” Lee said.

Sgt. Tom Lema urged the community to be vigilant about public disorderliness and theft. “People from other neighborhoods have broken into Chinatown,” he said. Homeless shelters have closed in other locations, resulting in displaced individuals who are younger. Increased drug abuse has been reported, instead of alcoholism.

Pastor Steve Chin said there was no baseline air conditioning at the Boston Chinese Evangelical Church, 249 Harrison Street, because the copper tubing had been stolen. Copper larcenies have affected areas in Boston to Charlestontown, Lema said.

The August Moon Festival organized by Chinatown Main Streets will take place August 11, said Courtney Ho-Ha, Chinatown Main Streets executive director.

There will be no CSC meeting for August, as the National Night Out against crime will take place August 6.

CRA meets Connolly

City councilor at-large John Connolly outlined his platform at the Josiah Quincy Elementary School, as part of the Boston Mayoral Candidate Forum Series organized by the Asian American Commission. He also signed a petition supporting a library in Chinatown from the Chinese Youth Initiative, organized by the Chinese Progressive Association.

“I deeply respect Mayor Menino and this city is better because of him,” Connolly said, who announced his candidacy before Menino decided not to seek reelection in March. “I am not running because Mayor Menino is stepping down and it’s politically opportune, but to think about the difficult questions facing the city and its future.”

Connolly emphasized job creation outside of the high-tech sectors, adding more affordable housing and establishing a multilingual call center for Boston.

As a former teacher, he seeks to change the city and its future.”

Officers arrested a suspect on June 18 at Tamworth Street, after they witnessed a male chasing another male with a knife over a marijuana transaction. They also arrested a male and female for trespassing on June 24 at Oxford Place, who each had outstanding warrants for shoplifting and stolen property.

Sgt. Tom Lema urged the community to be vigilant about public disorderliness and homelessness. “People from other New England states are coming here because we provide the most city services,” he said. Homeless shelters have closed in other locations, resulting in displaced individuals who are younger. Increased drug abuse has been reported, instead of alcoholism.
Event Calendar

BCEC summer phonics class
Saturday, July 13
9 a.m.
249 Harrison Avenue
Boston, MA 02118
Boston Chinese Evangelical Church will hold a summer phonics program. The classes will be held for 3 (9:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. every Saturday) starting from July 6. Teachers speak Cantonese.
Fee: $15 per person.
For more information, please contact (617) 426-5711.

Golf tournament
Saturday, July 13
10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Red tail Golf Course
15 Bellage Road
Devon, MA 01434
The Chinese Culture Connection is hosting its 20th annual Golf Tournament. The format is scramble, with foursomes and singles equally welcomed. A brown bag lunch and dinner reception is included in the registration. Participants will also have access to the driving range and putting green before the tournament. There will also be a silent auction, raffle and more at the award dinner.
For more information please contact (781) 321-6316 or email at info@chinesecultureconnection.org.

Nelson Mandela Day celebration
Thursday, July 18
5:30 p.m.
Old South Church
645 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02116
A coalition of community organizations, elected officials, and activists will host a celebration of Nelson Mandela’s life. The celebration joins special guests speakers Gov. Deval Patrick and a U.S. South African Embassy representative along with a reading of Mandela’s inspirational words by local youth and musical tributes. The event is free and open to the public.

Citizenship session
Saturday, July 20
4 p.m.
308 West Squantum Street
North Quincy, MA 02171
Good Neighbor Lutheran Church and the Greater Boston Citizenship Initiative will host an info session on U.S. citizenship as well as some of the risks involved. For more information please contact (617) 655-3693 or visit www.gbciscap.org.

Sound of the Garden Wednesday, July 24
6 p.m.
Wheatland Avenue Community Garden
86 Wheatland Avenue
Brighton, MA 02135
The Sounds of the Garden concert featuring the inspiring music of Carolyn Watson and Kenny Seeler. For more information please contact (617) 542-7696 or visit www.bostonnatural.org.

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CORRECTION
A May 10 caption for the Hong Kong Spring Reception misidentified Madge Meyer, owner of Madge Meyer Consulting. The Sampan sincerely regrets the error.

Sampan
A Publication of the ACA
www.sampan.org
107 Yuan Street
Boston, MA 02111
Tel: (617) 426-9492
Fax: (617) 882-2116
Editor: Ling-Mei Wong
lingmeiwong@sampan.org
ENGLISH SECTION
Contributors: Sylvana Chan
Hao Lu
Lan Nguyen

CHINESE SECTION
Contributors: Sylvana Chan
Hao Lu
Lan Nguyen

Translators: Gina Fong
Jianjie Liu
Hao Lu
Kawela Xie
Keke Xu
Juicy Zhang

Advertising:
Teresa Cheong
Ivy Mih
ads@sampan.org
www.sampan.org

Prepared by S-C MGMT Corp
S-C MGMT Corp

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“A Force for Good” was unveiled at the Boston Asian Youth Essential Services on June 27. (Image by Ling-Mei Wong.)

“A Force for Good” glitters with multicolored sequins, mirrors and a 24-foot body. Gold horns sprout from the dragon’s papier-mâché head and white fangs are bared above a long white beard. De- spite the tough appearance, the dragon is affectionately referred to as “Gramps” for its white mane.

“He looks wise,” said Angela Yu, a senior at Another Course to College, who wrote “Live to learn” on the artwork and designed a sign-in area for participants. “My favorite part is his head.”

Boston Asian Youth Essential Services unveiled “A Force for Good” art installation at its center on 199 Harri son Street on June 27. It is the result of a year-long art project that started with 10 teenagers and artist Steve Wilber, but quickly attracted more youth and staff to pitch in.

The installation was part of the Culture for Change initiative, piloted by Barr Foundation and led by the Boston Foundation. It provided funding for artistic instruction and materials used for the art installation, along with training on cultural sensitivity.

The artwork inspired Lisa Hy, who will attend Suffolk University in the fall, to write a poem “Colors of Racism” about her project experience.

“It’s a disgrace to have such a disgusting flaw in our society,” Hy wrote. “We’re all old enough to understand racism isn’t a fun game to play.”

The installation includes a central saran-wrap figure separated because of racism. “The dragon goes around the figure to save him,” Wilber said.

While the students were led by Wilber, who also teaches art, they built the installation on their own.

“We did it by ourselves and we’re proud,” said Joyce Huang, a junior at the John D. O’Bryant School of Mathematics and Science. “We could show off skills that were hidden.”

Some of the more creative students worked on the trickier art, while others honed their public speaking skills through presentations like Huang. More reluctant students used their computer skills to make slideshows showing the project’s progress.

“Yes is a youth development organization,” said Jane Leung, executive director for Boston Asian YES. “Our focus is to use programs and activities to develop youth self-confidence, build their skills, broaden and enrich their experiences and development, support them to succeed in education, and develop work readiness. YES’s mission is to inspire Asian youth to discover and actualize their greatest potential.”

The dragon’s spine is formed by linked hands, showing racism could be eased by people working together, said YES youth worker Nicholas You. He was joined by fellow youth workers Suzanne Cheong and Will Li, who encouraged the teenagers throughout the project.

“Everyone’s opinions made the project better,” said Eva Wu, a junior at Fenway High School who helped with drawing. “It proves we can do anything.”

Youth artists included Jimmy Guo, Joyce Huang, Lisa Hy, Kenny Le, Catherine Tsang, Vanessa Tse, Eva Wu, Angela Yu, Timmy Yu and Katy Zhen.

“A Force for Good” will be on display at Boston Asian YES until September.

Harvard Seed cohosted its 2013 Citizenship and Social Innovation Demo Day with MIT China Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum on July 4 at the MIT Tang Center. At least 30 Chinese youth from China, the United States and Europe gathered as Seed summer camp members, presenting nine projects for social benefit to the audience. Nearly 100 people attended the event.

The Seed summer camp was established in August 2012. Based at Harvard University and in collaboration with Chinese nonprofit organizations, Seed runs interactive and hands-on training camps in the United States and China to potential entrepreneurs in their social responsibility projects and future careers.

The Seed Demo Day is the concluding event of the camp. After the seven-day camp with lectures, speeches, forums and workshops, the 30 members are divided into nine groups based on their academic backgrounds, fields of work and personal interests. Projects are linked to new media, nongovernmental organization branding, eco-agriculture, senior care, medical service and other social issues.

Fei Deng, founder of Free Lunch For Children; Chung To, founder and chairperson of Chi Heng Foundation; Xing Hu, domain manager at the Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations at Harvard University; and Christopher Fang, worldwide vice president and strategic medical affairs at Johnson & Johnson were invited to be judges.

During the demos, the camp members presented their projects to the judges. One of the nine projects, Na Jia or Na+, aims to provide branding for Chinese NGOs and to cultivate more talent for NGO communication through training and academic research. The idea was widely praised by the audience.

After the Seed Demo Day, the 30 members will go back to their communities with the nine revised projects, and start their social experiments.

“Seed advocates civic engagement by encouraging innovative solutions to social problems,” said RuiXi Hao, collaborative secretary of the Seed executive team.

“With the four core values — social responsibility, empathy, empowerment and dedication, our goal is to train China’s future youth leaders, to develop social innovation projects, and to build an innovative and cross-border community of Seed fellows,” Hao said.

Want to get published in our August Moon issue, August 9? Submit a 400-word article on the topics below to editor@sampan.org by July 30 and you could be part of New England’s only Chinese-English newspaper!

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Senate approves immigration bill: What it means and what happens now

BY SYLVANA CHAN

The U.S. Senate approved a landmark immigration reform bill on June 27, the first in almost 30 years. The Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act focuses on a pathway to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented immigrants currently living in the United States.

Although the legislation passed with bipartisan Senate support in a 68-32 vote, it will be a different story getting it through the Republican-controlled House of Representatives.

House Speaker John Boehner said, “The House is not going to vote on whatever the Senate passes.” He added representatives are “going to do our own bill ... and move the legislation that reflects the will of our majority and the will of the American people.”

Supporters of immigration reform remarked that the Senate decision will put pressure on the House.

The bill addresses issues of tighter border security, as well as greater opportunities for highly skilled immigrant workers. Here are some of the key points of the bill:

Is there amnesty and/or a “path to citizenship” for undocumented immigrants?

Yes. If you are an undocumented immigrant who arrived in the United States before Dec. 31, 2011, you immediately gain the status of “registered provisional,” provided you meet the following conditions: you cannot have committed a felony (or three misdemeanors), you must have a job, and you must pay a $500 fine and back taxes. This will allow you to legally stay in the United States without risk of deportation. You would not be able to receive public benefits.

After six years, you can renew your status with another $500 fine, provided you still meet the above conditions. Four years later, you can apply for permanent residency or a “green card.” This final three years later, you would be eligible to become a U.S. citizen. The entire process takes 13 years and requires $2,000 in fines.

How does this affect employer enforcement?

This bill would require employers to use an improved version of “E-Verify,” an online system for businesses to determine the work eligibility of their employees. Non-U.S. citizens would have to show employment authorization cards, embedded with biometric data to prevent forgery, to be eligible to work.

Employers with more than 5,000 employees will transition to this new system within two years, while employers with less than 500 employees will transition in three years. All employers will switch in four years.

What about high-skilled immigrants? Would we let more in?

Yes. The number of H-1B visas—vias that allow U.S. employers to temporarily employ foreign workers in specialty occupations—has risen from an annual quota of 65,000 visas to at least 100,000 visas and up to 180,000 visas, depending on employer demand.

Employers whose H-1B workers consist of more than 30 percent of their overall workforce would have to pay fees.

How are family-based visas affected?

This bill eliminates the unlimited number of visas to go to parents, children and spouses of U.S. citizens and permanent residents. Once the law takes effect 18 months later, visas for siblings of citizens and permanent residents would be eliminated. Visas for married, adult children over the age of 30 would also be eliminated.

Are there any random visa programs?

Yes. The Diversity Visa, which uses a lottery each year to distribute 55,000 permanent resident visas to natives of countries with low rates of immigration to the United States, would be eliminated.

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CITIZENSHIP: GBCI efforts grow communities
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Each agency does its own outreach to targeted communities, then registers eligible individuals for clinics.

“We are only able to do this with the collaborative,” Omerovic said. “We would not able to do with a single organization.”

GBCI is unusual for being funded solely by the Fish Family Foundation. “Others national partners with similar models are funded by multiple foundations,” Omerovic said.

The collaborative’s efforts have paid off, surpassing its goal of 2,000 applications a year. “I know that we were able to do more in the program, I would have had a difficult time gaining citizenship like many others do,” wrote Sherifia Ali Diaz. “So, I thank you and am forever grateful that you gave me the chance to succeed in the future. A program like this only comes around every so often if at all, and it is something that is needed because everyone deserves the chance to live the American dream.”
Greenway Community Workshop discusses Chinatown Park improvements

BY LAN NGUYEN

The Greenway Community Workshop focused on the Chinatown Park on June 26 at the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center, 38 Ash Street.

The Greenway is a series of parks that is 1.5 miles long, ranging from Chinatown Park to the North End Parks. The Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway Conservancy maintains the Greenway through a lease from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation. With the lease up for renewal this fall, the Conservancy is confident the lease will include Mary Soo Hoo Park or the Chinatown Park, said Jesse Brackenbury, Greenway Conservancy chief operating officer.

Recycling bins in Chinatown Park are currently being misused for trash. To address this problem, Chinese signage will be added to distinguish recycling bins from trash cans.

There will be more ash trays in the park to combat the increase of cigarette butts on the ground. Light fixtures will also be adjusted to illuminate the park’s darker and more desolate areas to make it safer at night.

Drinking in public and skateboard- ing are prohibited on the Greenway. The public is encouraged to call 911 should they see either behavior.

The Greenway has seen an increase in visitors. Patrons have enjoyed more than 200 annual events hosted by the Greenway Conservancy.

Chinatown Park features furniture, seasonal planters native to China, free public Wi-Fi and food trucks. The Greenway Conservancy is looking for feedback about a proposed concrete ping pong table in the park.

There is strong community interest in a pavilion. The pavilion would be an open outdoor stage that could be used by performers ranging from opera singers to martial artists. It has no imminent construction date due to budget constraints.

Jodi Wolin, Greenway Conservancy director of development, presented ways to fund the Conservancy’s projects. The public could either donate money or become a Conservancy member.

Wolin is also looking for community feedback about bringing the Mothers’ Walk to Chinatown Park. Present in the Greenway’s Wharf District Parks, the Mothers’ Walk allows the public to buy a paver for $500 and have it inscribed with a loved one’s name and a personal message to show their appreciation. Pavers in Chinatown Park could be in Chinese.

This new 48 unit development is offering 5 three bedroom detached single family home at 60% and 80% of median to eligible first time homebuyers, by the Department of Transportation. With the public is encouraged to call 911 should they see either behavior.

Maximum Income Limits are:

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<th>Number of People</th>
<th>60%</th>
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<td>1 person</td>
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<td>2 persons</td>
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<td>$53,900</td>
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<tr>
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<td>6 persons</td>
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Boston tackles climate change by cutting greenhouse gases

SUBMITTED BY BRIAN SWETT, CHIEF OF ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY, CITY OF BOSTON

President Barack Obama’s announcement of several federal climate change initiatives on June 25 will reduce greenhouse gas emissions nationwide and help prepare the country for the impacts of climate change. As a coastal city, Boston is especially vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Without significant national and international action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, Boston and many other cities could face potentially catastrophic impacts within the next 100 years.

Boston has set ambitious greenhouse gas reduction goals — 25 percent by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050 — and we are working hard with residents and business to achieve them in order for Boston to lead by example. Greenovate Boston and the Green Ribbon Commission are demonstrating how collective actions can help meet these bold climate goals. However, our success as a leader is hinging on having partners beyond the city limits. President Obama’s message indicates the federal government is listening to the cities that are leading the way on climate change.

The president’s announcement of the development of regulations that will reduce emissions from some of the oldest, dirtiest power plants in the country, as well as the new investments in renewable energy, energy efficiency and climate preparedness, provide encouragement and reinforcement to the City of Boston.

As a sea-level city, Boston’s waterfront is threatened by climate change and rising ocean levels. (Image by Ling Mei Wong.)

Through long-standing programs like Renew Boston, the incubation of clean-tech companies and new policies such as the Building Energy Reporting and Disclosure Ordinance, Boston is simultaneously reducing its carbon footprint and investing in its green economy. As a result, we have a rapidly growing Innovation District with thousands of new jobs. We are also working hard to ensure that the Innovation District and other new developments, as well as our entire existing waterfront, are prepared for more severe storms and other impacts of climate change. The new tools and assistance from the federal government will help support these efforts.

Finally, the president announced new efforts to engage the international community in finding equitable strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Climate change is a global issue and we must work together; however, the United States, like Boston, must lead by example. We need action from Congress that demonstrates to the world that we have a long-term commitment to reducing our greenhouse gas emissions.

The City of Boston has an aggressive plan to reduce our emissions and simultaneously prepare for the inevitable impacts of climate change. Yet these efforts will not succeed over the long-term without collective action. We need a range of efforts — from national policies to individual and business climate actions — to once again reach safe levels of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere. On behalf of all those who live, work and play in Boston, as well as the city’s future generations, we are grateful to President Obama for his leadership in the fight against climate change and look forward to working together on the implementation of the President’s Climate Action Plan.

Book review: ‘Julie Black Belt’ by Oliver Chin

BY DEVIN YOUNG

As society progresses away from gender stereotypes, it is nice to see children’s literature doing the same. Growing up in the ‘90s, I spent my childhood wondering why all the heroes were male and females characters who needed saving. “Julie Black Belt” by Oliver Chin is a shining example of how things have changed for the better.

Tracing the story of a young Asian-American female named Julie, who decides to pick up kung fu at her parents’ suggestion, this book undermines stereotypes about martial arts being only for boys. On the other hand, it simultaneously steers clear of attacking males by default.

While Julie becomes the kung fu master rather than her brother, the book does not portray him as unable to do kung fu. Instead, the book leaves it open-ended whether he eventually decides to try harder.

Part of Julie’s motivation for taking kung fu involves her obsession with Brandy Wu, a female actress who plays powerful female leads in movies. The admiration that Julie has for Brandy transfers to the reader for Julie’s efforts.

Julie gives young girls many positive values to emulate: Try new things, work hard, follow your dreams, and most of all, never lose hope. After all, as Julie’s kung fu instructor or Sifu tells her, “A black belt is just a white belt that never gave up.”

Goddard Highlands
Stoughton Affordable Housing

3BR and 4BR single family homes starting at $208,225

The first affordable homes will be ready for occupancy in early 2014.

Goddard Highlands is a new community that will eventually consist of 104 beautiful single-family homes on beautiful wooded lots in Stoughton, Massachusetts. Located only minutes from downtown Boston, Routes 24 & 128, and the Stoughton commuter rail station, Goddard Highlands offers a unique opportunity for the discerning homebuyer who desires ultimate convenience. There will be at least two homes (either 3BR or 4BR) available through this lottery process and sold at affordable prices to households with incomes at or below 80% of the area median income.

Maximum Household Income Limits:

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- $67,350 (4 people), $72,750 (5 people), $78,150 (6 people)
- $83,550 (7 people), $88,950 (8 people)

Housholds cannot have more than $75,000 in assets.

For more information on the Development, the Units or the Lottery Application Process, please visit: www.s-e-b.com/lottery or call 617.782.6900. For more information on the development please visit www.GoddardHighlands.com.

Applications and Information also available at Stoughton Public Library (M-Th 9-9, Fri-Sat 9-5) and The Planning Department in Town Hall. Completed Applications and Required Income Documentation must be delivered, not postmarked, by 2 pm on July 30th, 2013. The Lottery will be held on August 13th at 6 pm in Town Hall.
How to understand Asian diabetes risks

BY LING-MEI WONG

Diabetes affects Asians in unique ways. Asians are 2.26 times more likely to develop type 2 diabetes than Caucasians, said Greeshma Shetty, staff clinician at the Joslin Diabetes Center and part of the center’s Asian American Diabetes Initiative. Shetty spoke at the State of Asian Women’s Health in Massachusetts conference on May 29.

There are two types of diabetes. Type 1 is auto-immune diabetes, which usually occurs at a younger age. Type 2 diabetes is more common, caused by sedentary lifestyles, poor diet and weight gain. While Asians typically weigh less than Caucasians with a lower body-mass index, they are more likely to have diabetes.

“When we talk about Asians, you can’t just look at the Caucasian standard BMI of 30 as obese,” Shetty said. “For Asians, they should be under 27 for their BMI, which is the cut-off for obesity in Asians.”

The average BMI for diabetic Asians is 24 at diagnosis. Other non-Asian ethnic groups typically have a higher average BMI of at the time of diagnosis. Asians diagnosed with diabetes tend to be younger by approximately 10 years. They have a family history of type 2 diabetes and greater insulin resistance. This means the insulin they produce is not working effectively to control blood sugar.

Asians also tend to gain weight around the middle. This central abdominal weight is visceral fat, a bad type of fat that secretes hormones that make obesity worse, Shetty said. “Exercise is very important,” she said. “A moderate intensity workout reduces risk significantly.”

However, patients from Asian cultures frequently have family commitments that sideline their own needs. One of Shetty’s South Asian patients is a professional and mother who works long days and has to prepare food for her family after a full day’s work, leaving little time for exercise. “Asian women are the backbone for their families,” she said. Treatment for diabetes involves diet, exercise and medications. While the traditional Asian diet is healthier, with more fiber (13 grams) and less fat (15 percent of daily values), a whopping 70 percent of calories come from carbohydrates, Shetty said. Asian immigrants also adapt the American diet to their own culture, adding more sodium and fat to their meals.

Massachusetts is one of the top 10 U.S. states for Asian Americans, with Asians making up 4.9 percent of the population in the 2008 census. However, there is a great deal of diversity among subgroups, making it difficult to generalize about diet and risk factors. For example, South Asian women face a high risk of gestational diabetes, while Chinese women are less affected.

“We need to expand research in the future, as the differences between different populations are important to understand,” Shetty said. “We also need more culturally appropriate education for patients and caregivers.”

This summer: Stay in shape without a gym membership

SUBMITTED BY STATEPOINT

It’s not as easy to hide under layers of clothing during the summer. You’ll want to look your best in those shorts, T-shirts and bathing suits. As such, staying in shape is key.

Many lifestyle experts say you have more than enough space for a makeshift gym inside your home or apartment, no matter how small it is. And during the warmer months of the year, you can also make great use of your home’s outdoor spaces.

“Not everyone can designate an entire room of their apartment, condo or home to exercise; but as long as you have some floor space, you can get a great full-body workout,” said Wendy Froehlich of Homes.com, one of the nation’s top online real estate listing and lifestyle resources.

Whether you live in a mansion or efficiency, you can stay fit with these great moves:

• **Push it with a plank:** Simply push off your mat as though you’re doing a push up and rest on your elbows and toes. Keep your back flat and maintain the pose for two sets of two minutes. It’s a challenging but rewarding fitness move that provides a full body workout and especially targets your core.

• **Classic moves:** Some of the best moves require no equipment whatsoever. Pushups, crunches, squats and floor lunges are all classic fitness moves that will help you tone and tighten in your very own home.

• **Pull ups:** A pull-up bar is simple to install in any doorway, so even those in temporary home rentals can target their biceps and back muscles with a few sets each day.

An insulin pen for diabetic individuals. (Image courtesy of Flickr user Sprogz.)

Greeshma Shetty, staff clinician at the Joslin Diabetes Center and part of the center’s Asian American Diabetes Initiative, gave a presentation on diabetes in Asians at the State of Asian Women’s Health in Massachusetts conference on May 29. (Image courtesy of Ling-Mei Wong.)

Image courtesy of Stockbyte.

• **Get Zen with yoga:** All you need is a yoga mat and a little floor space to practice yoga: a quiet and relaxing way to wind down, stay flexible and gain strength. Try the poses on your back deck, balcony porch or even your living room. Likewise, Pilates moves can be done on a yoga mat as well.

• **Easy equipment:** Get toned with free weights, exercise bands, ankle weights and stability balls. You can do your reps right in front of the television. And the beauty of this inexpensive equipment is that it doesn’t take up much space inside your home or apartment when you aren’t using it.

• **Flat abs:** For minimal movement with maximum impact, try bicycle crunches. You’ll target your core — specifically your obliques — without disturbing the neighbors.

Whether you live in a mansion or efficiency, you can stay fit with these great moves.
**A food aficionado: Gyu-Kaku**

**BY ANNA ING**

Japanese chain Gyu-Kaku recently opened a Boston location, adding an East Coast post to 700 other restaurants worldwide. It specializes in yakiniku, Japanese for grilled meat. In the former Ginza space off the St. Mary T stop on the green “C” line, it has a bar to the right of the hostess stand. There is plenty of seating and simple but attractive décor.

We decided there were too many options and chose the Samurai Menu for two ($13 Chashu) to a la carte. The service was attentive and the wait was surprisingly short. Previous attempts to eat here were over an hour wait each time, so this was an improvement. Our appetizers and side dishes included the fried shrimp dumplings, Gyu-Kaku salad, miso soup and sukiyaki hour wait each time, so this was an improvement. The fried shrimp dumplings were

Fried shrimp dumplings. (Image courtesy of Anna Ing.)

Barbecue meats. (Image by Anna Ing.)

**Chinatown Main Street Festival offers fun for all**

**BY LING-MEI WONG**

The annual Chinatown Main Street Festival took place June 23 on Harrison Avenue, Beach Street and at the Rose Kennedy Greenway. Booths with face-painting and games entertained children, while vendors sold barbecue skewers and drinks. Performances at the park included kung fu, traditional dance and a karaoke contest. The festival kicked off with the Wong Family Association lion dance troupe. Wei Jia Zhang, a female lab technician at MIT, was the winner of the karaoke contest.

Other performers included the Boston Chinese Folk and Classical Dance Group, Calvin Chin Martial Arts, Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association dulcimer drummers, Chinese Folk Dance, Gun Kwo Lion Dance Troupe cubs group, Gun Ho Athletic Club, the Nam Pai Kung Fu Academy, the New England Kung Fu Dance Group, the Rhode Island Kung Fu Club, the Shaolin Hong Family Dao Martial Arts Academy, Woh Lum Kung Fu and Tai Chi Academy, Westwood Dance, Wong Keung Lion Dance, Woo Ching’s Bak Hoi Pai kung fu, the Wang YMCA dance troupe and Yuan Ji Dance.

By Ling-Mei Wong.

**Preschoolers don caps and gowns for Acorn graduation**

**BY LING-MEI WONG**

The Acorn Center for Early Education and Care held a graduation for 20 preschoolers on June 28 at the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center. Acorn is a bilingual education program for preschool-age children.

“The students’ graduation is the whole family’s graduation, thanks to your hard work and love,” said Lai Ng Chan, Acorn staff member. She noted that some of the parents were Acorn graduates themselves and their children were second- or third-generation students.

The children sang “Down by the Bay” and “It’s Circle Time” to a rapt audience of parents, siblings and grandparents. They were directed by teacher Michele Dandrea.

Kathy Cheng, Acorn program director told the graduate’s families, “We would not have Acorn without you.”

Acorn graduates will be moving on to attending kindergarten in the Metro-Boston area, such as Boston, Brookline, Newton, Malden, Framingham, Quincy, Pembroke and Medford.

The Acorn Center for Early Education and Care is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. The program is housed in a green building for children 15 months to 6 years old.