



*keeps our community ticking!*

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# The Week's News!

**February 9, 2026**



## Stanley Senior Center promotes healthy, active aging

BY STEVE MILMORE • COMMUNITY • FEBRUARY 8, 2026

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## Library's 'Waltham Room' is a treasure trove of the city's history

BY CYD ABNET • COMMUNITY • FEBRUARY 8, 2026

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The Waltham Times is Waltham's local news publication, currently available online only. This printed compendium of articles is produced by volunteers for readers who prefer hardcopy. We aim to have an official printed edition of The Waltham Times in the future, dependent of raising sufficient revenue through donations, grants and advertising to cover the cost of printing.



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# Stanley Senior Center promotes healthy, active aging

Steve Milmore

February 9, 2026



*Meals on Wheels volunteers enjoy team lunch after deliveries. Photo by Steve Milmore.*

From the outside the Stanley Senior Center looks like any other city building, but behind its placid brick facade is a vibrant space for exercise, connection and community.

Since it opened in 2002, the Stanley Senior Center has served a growing population of Waltham's seniors by offering programs that support and celebrate their lives. But

the resources and options available to adults 60+ are still a secret to some in the area. [Council on Aging](#) Director Patrick O'Brien wants to get the word out to one and all.

"We're a welcoming community center and a great resource for people," O'Brien said. "We've got a variety of social, recreational and wellness programs every week. And our staff works hard to connect seniors with local, state and federal resources that support and help them live independently."

The center is located at 488 Main St. with on-site parking and within two blocks of a bus stop. Programs available range from tax prep assistance and computer skills to line dancing and pickleball.

The lineup changes continually based on residents' suggestions and needs. "We try to find out their interests. Do you like to dance? Have a hobby? Like to cook and maybe want to teach a class? Then [we] find a program that fits," O'Brien said. To make winter living in Waltham a bit easier on seniors the COA has resources available to keep residents mobile and safe.

Volunteers can help with snow shoveling and clearing off cars. Seniors can get free transportation to medical appointments within Waltham, and take COA buses to Market Basket and Target. A volunteer handyman is also at the ready to handle small home repairs such as installing safety railings free of charge.

## Eyes and ears for seniors

One of the most popular and successful programs year round is [Meals on Wheels](#). Volunteers deliver more than 120 meals a day Monday through Friday to seniors who are unable to prepare food for themselves or who are homebound. The packing and distribution is free; recipients pay only for the food.

The COA serves as eyes and ears as well. If someone doesn't show up or doesn't answer the door when the meal is being delivered, the staff will call the emergency contact. If the contact is unable to reach them, COA will call the Triad officer and the police will do a wellness check.



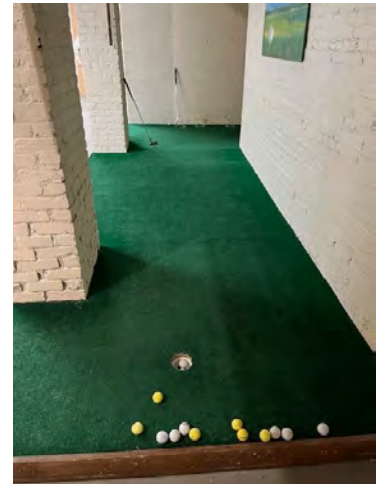
*COA staffers Nancy Storer, Diane Lane, Bonni LeBlanc and director Patrick O'Brien.*

This sense of concern and compassion is a trademark. A few years ago, a resident was concerned about his mother who was living alone and wouldn't leave the house. After much cajoling, he brought her to the center for a first look. The staff showed her around, introduced her to other seniors and the next week she was playing chair volleyball.

"Just getting seniors out of the house is a win," O'Brien said.

It's estimated that 3,500 seniors use the center each year. To keep the numbers climbing, the COA is planning trips to Castle Island, the Museum of Science, the JFK Library and the Concord Museum when the weather gets better.

To read about monthly program updates, seniors can access the Senior Connection monthly newsletter [online](#) or pick up a free copy at the Stanley Senior Center, City Hall and Waltham Public Library as well as at various supermarkets and pharmacies throughout the city.



*New mini golf putting green at the Senior Center*

# State representative Thomas Stanley helps pass trades apprenticeship legislation

Cyd Abnet

February 9, 2026



State Rep. Thomas Stanley from Waltham helped to pass legislation through the Massachusetts House of Representatives that requires public works projects over \$10 million to hire trade apprentices to work on-site. The bill still needs to pass through the Massachusetts State Senate in order to be signed into law.

Stanley said the bill would make “critical investments to the skilled workforce and infrastructure in Massachusetts by expanding access to jobs, training and fair wages.”

Apprentices will account for 5 percent of overall work hours in a public works project. This number would increase to 10 percent three years after the bill is signed into law and to 15 percent one year later.

Agencies would be required to select bidders who participate in a Division of Apprentice Standards approved apprenticeship program for public works projects over \$10 million. If no such bidders come forward, the agency is allowed to select a bidder without an apprenticeship program to complete the work. Additionally, a Special Commission on Apprenticeships would be established to evaluate apprenticeship programs across the state in all industry sectors.

# CSA shares open for summer at Waltham Fields Community Farm

Waltham News Team

February 9, 2026

Waltham residents can now sign up for the 2026 summer season of Community Supported Agriculture shares at [Waltham Fields Community Farm](https://walthamfieldscommunityfarm.org). CSA is a model in which customers invest in a “share” of the farm’s harvest at the beginning of the season. The advance support of CSA investment helps provide farmers with funding for seeds, soil amendments, tools and staffing. In return, members receive a regular supply of locally grown produce and connect directly with the people who grow their food.

Waltham Fields Community Farm, a local nonprofit farm, is offering a variety of share options — including vegetable, fruit, flower and mushroom shares — with flexible pickup days and a choice-based system that lets participants tailor each week’s selection to their household’s needs.

Each vegetable share also includes access to weekly pick-your-own crops, such as herbs, beans and cherry tomatoes. Shares begin in early June, but farm staff encourage residents to sign up soon, as they typically sell out before the start of the season.

Learn more and sign up at <https://communityfarms.org/csa/csa-overview>.



*2026 Waltham Fields Community Farm CSA poster. Courtesy of WFCF.*



# The week ahead: City Council seeks to purchase Crescent Street lot for public riverside access

Artie Kronenfeld

February 9, 2026

In a resolution for the Waltham City Council this week, the city's South Side councilors have requested that the city purchase a lot at 67 Crescent St. to improve public access to the Charles River.

The Community Preservation Committee has already recommended this purchase, and City Council approved it in 2008. That approval expired before the city completed the purchase. The resolution argues that since then the property has been "a blight" on the South Side.

The council will discuss the resolution at its Feb. 9 meeting.

Below is a chronological rundown of other city meetings scheduled this week.

## Historical Commission

The Waltham Historical Commission is a seven-member board charged with preserving and overseeing Waltham's historic buildings and properties.

This week the commission will discuss a development prospectus for Home Depot at 100 First Ave. and a new tour brochure for Waltham's historic Mill Village.

It will meet on Monday, Feb. 9, at 7 p.m. over [Zoom](#). The passcode for the Zoom meeting can be found [on the commission's page](#).

## City Council

In other business, City Council will discuss two special permit hearings it opened in January. The Ordinances and Rules Committee last week [voted to approve](#) one of the special permits, for the approval of [a Jersey Mike's on Lexington Street](#); the other, for [a hotel on Moody Street](#), is restarting its public hearing as requested by the committee.

The council will also vote on whether to amend its own regulations to move [its deadline for preparing the city's legislative budget](#) to March so that it can wait for federal consumer price index information.

It will also receive some requests from Mayor Jeannette A. McCarthy that will likely be discussed in committees next week, including a request to allocate \$2.5 million for the city's deficit before the next budget cycle; to fund opening expenses for the skating rink; to pay for tech updates for the City Clerk's office; to accept a grant for the Council on Aging; and to purchase emergency services equipment.

City Council will meet on Monday at 7:30 p.m.

## Housing Authority

The Waltham Housing Authority works to provide affordable housing options for Waltham residents who face barriers to housing.

This week, it plans to go over financial and maintenance information at its monthly meeting. The meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 10 at 4:30 p.m. over Zoom and in person at 110 Pond St.

## **Zoning Board of Appeals**

The ZBA is a five-person board charged with reviewing new and existing buildings that might violate the city's [zoning code](#).

The board has the power to grant project-specific variances to the code, overrule judgments made by the building inspector and grant specific types of special permits, including the comprehensive residential permits outlined by the state's Chapter 40B statute.

This week will see a return to the public hearing for a Chapter 40B development [at 455 Totten Pond Road](#). The project has been in front of the ZBA for [nearly a year](#), and its development team has said that they plan to present a draft of their proposed language for the special permit at this hearing.

The ZBA is also hearing another case presented by landowner Paul Yu who is requesting a reduced parking requirement in order to convert upper-floor offices of a building at 719-723 Main St. into apartments.

The board will meet at 7 p.m. on Tuesday at the Arthur Clark Government Center.

## **Board of Survey and Planning**

The Board of Survey and Planning regulates public and private ways and makes decisions on the status and boundaries of lots in the city.

This week it will discuss a special permit for a gas station [at 962 Main St](#). The permit, which it has been discussing since January 2025, would allow the station to continue using four driveways that are larger than permitted by the zoning code.

It will also continue discussions about [repaving Fir Avenue](#) and [multi-use zoning overlay districts in the west of Waltham](#). It will consider an approval not required plan for a property at 564 Main St. and a request to widen a driveway at the 71 Second Ave. Costco.

# Library's 'Waltham Room' is a treasure trove of the city's history

Cyd Abnet

February 9, 2026



Secured behind glass doors just off the grand foyer of the Waltham Public Library sits the Waltham Room, a resource open to anyone curious about the city's history.

The space is home to bookshelves of resources on genealogy research alongside lush plants and bright, sunlit research tables. There is a large desk with decorative iron gates on both sides that form a wall to protect the

more delicate artifacts from being handled without assistance from the archivist on staff, Dana Hamlin.

Hamlin assumed the position in 2018, filling a long-open vacancy. Before working at the Waltham Public Library, she worked at the library and archives at MIT. Hamlin spends the majority of her day answering questions from members of the public using the archive resources. The questions range from inquiries about a family member to requests for historical maps of the city.

*Archivist Dana Hamlin holds records from Overseers of the Poor. Photo by Cyd Abnet.*



Anyone can visit the Waltham Room and explore its collection by dropping in during open hours or scheduling an appointment with Hamlin, who must accompany all visitors per library rules. The Waltham Room holds a variety of records and memorabilia that help paint a picture of what life in Waltham was like throughout the city's history.

## Glimpses of ordinary lives

Visitors can view annual reports from each city department dating back to the 1850s through the 1960s. Each report gives a detailed glimpse into employees, projects and budgets for each sector.

They can also peruse records from a former city department called the Overseers of the Poor that oversaw the city "poor farm," a place where the homeless worked in exchange for meager room and board. These provide genealogical data from 1875 to 1935 about individuals whose information might not be recorded elsewhere because they lacked homes and steady employment. Hamlin hasn't had time to fully dive into the contents due to time constraints, but hopes to do so soon.

The archive also contains records and photographs from the Waltham Training School for Nurses, which once provided cutting-edge training at its location off Main Street near the current Main Street post office. When the school opened in 1885, it was the first nurse’s training school in the nation. It closed its doors in 1935. Annual reports, handbooks and written histories from students are included in the collection, along with reports about the 1918 flu epidemic’s impact on Waltham.



Archivist Dana Hamlin holds a catalog card compiled by former Betty Castner that lists newspaper articles related to specific events in city history. Photo by Cyd Abnet.

The Waltham Room also houses the original transcripts and photographs for an oral history of the city compiled by Brandeis University beginning in 1983 and culminating in a published book in 1988 titled “Waltham Rediscovered: An Ethnic History of Waltham, Massachusetts.” The anecdotes within

the book, grouped by the ethnic background of the storyteller, paint a picture of daily life in Waltham while also documenting the city’s industrial heritage.

Visitors can borrow the book from the library or purchase a copy from the Waltham Historical

Society. Family portraits from the book are preserved in a permanent exhibit at the library compiled by former archivist Melissa Mannon. Hamlin and an intern also created an [online exhibit](#) of the photos.



Another archival gem in the Waltham Room is a collection of news clippings about the Waltham Fire Department from 1817 to 1996. Compiled by local fire historian Michael D. Drukman and bound into a booklet, this collection provides an extensive record of the department’s history and documents nearly every fire that has happened during those years. “It’s one of my favorite pieces in the collection because it’s compiled by a resident,” Hamlin said.

Ethnicity-specific books about genealogy research are available to reference in the Waltham Room. Photo by Cyd Abnet.



*The archivist's desk in the Waltham Room with iron gates on either side protecting the shelved archives behind it. Photo by Cyd Abnet.*

### **A rare Civil War anthology**

Waltham's book of personal war sketches is a unique resource for those interested in local Civil War history. The book contains handwritten accounts of the Civil War from Waltham members of the Grand Army of the Republic veterans organization. According to Hamlin, there aren't many of these books still in existence, which makes the fact that Waltham has one all the more special. The physical book, available to view in person in the Waltham Room, was conserved via a state grant and was digitized during the conservation process.



Also available at the library is a microfilm machine which visitors can use to view articles from Waltham newspapers. Some of these articles date back to the 1800s and can provide information about notable city events, as well as birth, death and marriage dates of family members. A catalogue card cabinet in the Waltham Room, compiled by former archivist Betty Castner and touted by Hamlin as "a lifesaver," is used to narrow down the microfilm that would have the information needed.

Some Waltham Room resources are available [online](#) through the library's website as well as in person. Online resources include city directories that list names, addresses and occupations of Waltham residents; digitized maps of the city; genealogical research resources; surveys of Waltham's neighborhoods; and Waltham High School yearbooks.

A historical City of Waltham lot map shows roads and plots around Prospect Hill. Photo by Cyd Abnet.

Due to the fragility of the contents of the room, there are set hours for visiting the archives. The Waltham Room holds drop-in hours every Friday from 12 to 2:30 p.m. and one Saturday a month from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Outside of those hours, Hamlin accepts [appointments](#) where she can answer questions and pull archive materials to look at. She also answers questions via [phone or email](#).

The Waltham Room accepts donations of artifacts that are related to the history of Waltham. Those interested can contact Hamlin for more information.



The "W.F.D. History, Directory and Block Maps" book as compiled by Michael D. Drukman contains newspaper clippings from local papers about Waltham fires. Photo by Cyd Abnet.

# Waltham High School sweeps up awards at Central Mass Show Choir Festival

Waltham News Team

February 8, 2026



Waltham High School's show choir competed at the Central Mass Show Choir Festival at Shephard Hill High School on Saturday, Feb. 7.

They swept up multiple awards including:

- First runner up in the large mixed division
- Best choreography
- Gold medal
- Best soloist, Anabel Rutledge
- Outstanding performer, Alice Svinolobova
- Triple threat award, Hanz Louis



The awards presentation at the Central Mass Show Choir Festival. Photo by Jade Longstaff.

# Council chooses hockey over housing for former Lawrence School

Artie Kronenfeld

February 4, 2026



The site of the former Lawrence Elementary School, 258 Trapelo Road, could become a new city hockey rink.

The Waltham City Council voted unanimously on Monday to give the property to the Recreation Department for the purpose, rejecting a proposal to turn the old school into senior housing.

Mayor Jeannette A. McCarthy initially [went before the council in September](#) with two options for the land: look into creating a hockey rink on the 3.8-acre lot or split it into two pieces, turning one half into a hockey rink and the existing building into affordable housing, similar to the city's work at the former Hardy Elementary School.

The City Council discussed both ideas, and councilors said that the city has a need for both a municipal hockey rink and additional housing.

At the City Council's Committee of the Whole meeting on Feb. 2, councilors ran through additional pros and cons of McCarthy's proposals. Some voiced concerns about the limited parking and limited space that would come with splitting the lot. Some expressed concerns that the dual housing-rink plan was overambitious.

"I don't think we can build the rink that the city of Waltham truly wants [by] splitting this, and I don't know that the housing would be that good in the long term as well," said Ward 5 Councilor Joey LaCava.

Councilor-at-Large Colleen Bradley-MacArthur asked McCarthy about the timeline for any housing project at the site, raising concerns that the city's existing backlog of housing construction projects might push it far in the future.

City's future access to Veterans rink is uncertain

Waltham is home to the state-owned Veterans Memorial Skating Rink on Totten Pond Road.

## Parks-Recreation board discusses potential hockey rink at Lawrence School

Cyd Abnet

February 6, 2026

The Parks-Recreation Board discussed potential plans for a hockey rink at the former Phineas Lawrence Elementary School property during their meeting this week. The property was signed over into the control of the Recreation Department during Monday's city council meeting.

Waltham's lease on the Massachusetts Department of Recreation's Veteran's Rink on Totten Pond Road will run out in four years, so building a rink at the Lawrence School is an option that can provide the city with a rink so that hockey programming can continue.

The vision for the property is a year-round 1.5-rink facility. Director of recreation Kim Hebert let the board know that a feasibility study will take place to see if the property is fit to house the rink. Board member Thomas Creonte raised concerns about parking in the area, citing concerns with the 200 Trapelo Road property. Hebert said that the parking situation would most likely be examined in the feasibility study. She emphasized that this was not a guaranteed solution, but it was currently the only place available to build a rink in the city.

## **In other business, the Parks-Recreation Board:**

Brought Recreation Department staff in front of the board to introduce themselves and thank them for their work. “You are superlative representatives for our city and we appreciate everything you do,” said board chairman Jerry Walker.

Heard a presentation from Waltham Youth Soccer board member Peter Fekkes. The program consists of nearly one thousand participants from all areas of the city, and scholarships are available for those in need. Waltham’s program is one of the largest in the league, according to Fekkes.

Decided to forgo applying for the Community Block Development Grant. The grant provides funding for improvements to parks in low-income areas or for parks to become more accessible for those with disabilities. Hebert said that since there were no outstanding projects that qualified for the grant, she would rather the money go to another community in need.

Approved staff pay rates for the summer of 2026.

The city is currently 21 years into its 25-year lease with the state and has not yet negotiated any additional lease extensions.

McCarthy told councilors that the state rinks are frequently rented to large private ice companies, which could jeopardize Waltham’s continued access to the Veterans rink.

She said she is working with state Rep. Thomas M. Stanley to have the state grant Waltham right-of-first refusal on the rink if the state decides to lease it again. However, she said that won’t guarantee the city the lease and would only ensure the city could “be in the running” for it.

Councilors were emphatic about the need for a rink for the Waltham Youth Hockey program, which Recreation Director Kim Hebert said serves more than 500 children.

“Forget what’s going on with the state; there’s never enough ice,” said Ward 4 Councilor John McLaughlin, who proposed the idea of building a “small ice” training rink by using the additional space at the Lawrence school that would be freed up by rejecting the housing plan.

Ward 1 Councilor Anthony LaFauci told the council that additional space would currently be useful for the Waltham Youth Hockey program, which already rents rink space from Watertown’s John A. Ryan Arena and from Bentley University.

With Monday night’s City Council vote, the Recreation Department will investigate the feasibility of constructing a rink at the Lawrence Elementary School.

However, McCarthy said the city did not have much immediately available funding for a design study. The full City Council must also still ratify the decision to transfer the land from the School Committee to the Recreation Department.

# Popular Sage and Seekers program connects Waltham seniors with Bentley students

Steve Milmore

February 6, 2026



Participants in the Sage and Seekers program. Photo courtesy of Waltham Connections for Healthy Aging.

[Waltham Connections for Healthy Aging](#) is offering its Sages and Seekers program on Thursdays from 9-10:30 a.m. at the Stanley Senior Center. Enrollment is still open for the course, which begins on Feb. 12.

Sage and Seekers is a free eight-week program designed to foster intergenerational connections between Waltham seniors and Bentley University students.

Once a week, students (seekers) and seniors (sages) engage in structured, hour-long, one-on-one discussions. Through these conversations, both parties learn from each other and have an opportunity to examine issues and topics from different perspectives. The goals of the regular meetings are to promote community, trust and belonging.

At the end of the experience, each Bentley student writes a reflective essay or tribute to the Waltham senior(s) with whom they've met. The writing is an important part of the program's learning goals, which include listening and reflection skills.

Sage and Seekers is open to Waltham seniors 60+. Those interested should call the Council on Aging at 781-314-3499 and leave contact information.

The Council on Aging offers various social gatherings for seniors over 60 and their families at the Stanley Senior Center. See the [February calendar](#) for other upcoming events.

# Waltham's Embassy Theater through the years: How the historic cinema adapted to face modern challenges

Lauren Goodman

February 6, 2026



Once a cornerstone of Waltham's downtown entertainment scene, the Embassy Theater has evolved through decades of change — from golden-age movie palace to modern community arts hub.

Small cinemas struggle to remain culturally relevant in 2026 amid a surge in streaming services and declining

movie theater attendance. The refurbished Embassy Theater on Waltham's Moody Street, however, is determined to thrive.

Owner Smaranda Albeck has transformed the theater into an [all-purpose performing arts center](#). From indie film festivals to community talent shows, Albeck is getting creative to keep the Embassy's doors open and the Waltham community engaged.

Many in the city welcome Albeck's efforts to keep the theater alive. For City Hall worker and third-generation Waltham resident Paula Landry, the Embassy holds memories of magic and wonder.

"It was just amazing," Landry recalls. "It should have never disappeared."



Outside view of the historic Embassy Theater in Waltham, circa 1968. Photo by Lauren Goodman.

The original Embassy opened on April 9, 1928. In its early years, the theater showcased silent films as well as stage shows such as vaudeville acts and acrobatics. Even when the stage shows diminished, Embassy remained one of the most lavish theaters in the Boston area. The auditorium had been designed to evoke an elegant Spanish patio, and the theater's dimmed lights revealed twinkling stars and floating clouds decorating

the ceiling. During show intermissions, live performances from piano and organ players would add to the magic of theatergoers' experience.



That splendor didn't last. After closing out in style with a farewell concert by Guy Lombardo, the original Embassy Theater was demolished in October 1972. "It was a financial decision," Landry recalled.

News Tribune article on the Embassy's last film showing, Feb. 20, 1972, from the Waltham Public Library archives. Photo by Lauren Goodman.

The arch from the old Embassy Theater at its original site on Moody Street. Photo by Lauren Goodman.



## Reborn on Pine Street

In 1998 a new building was constructed on Pine Street, a block away from the theater's former site. As Landmark's Embassy Cinema, the six-screen theater showed first-run movies and international films until it closed in September 2022. Under Albeck, the theater was rebranded as the Embassy Performing Arts Center.

The Embassy name remains, but much has changed. The main area now houses Boston Rhythmic, a rhythmic gymnastics school, while two smaller screening rooms still show films. Earlier this fall the building was adorned with flags from around the world as it hosted the [Manhattan Short Film Festival](#), one of the many cultural events that the new Embassy hopes to feature more regularly.

*Smaranda Albeck, owner of the Embassy Performing Arts Center. Photo by Lauren Goodman.*



Albeck remains optimistic about the Embassy's future. She appreciates when longtime moviegoers and new residents alike stop by to reminisce, marveling that the theater is still open. "People walk in and say, 'Oh my God, I came here 20 or 30 years ago!'" she said. "They're so excited the building is still open. A lot of cinemas are going out of business, but we've kept ours alive."

That enthusiasm, Albeck said, extends beyond nostalgia. During the recent Manhattan Short Film Festival, one patron noticed the soundproofed screening rooms and suggested hosting a "Battle of the Bands" to feature local high school musicians.

"That kind of excitement is what keeps me going," Albeck said. "People want to come together again, they want that sense of fun and community."

She hopes to continue shaping the Embassy into a cultural arts hub, utilizing the space for more than just film-related events.

“Nobody expects to walk into a building that has a cinema and then find a gymnastics studio,” Albeck added with a laugh. “But that’s the beauty of it. It brings in different groups, different interests, and it blends them into a vibrant community center.”

Reinventing itself as public tastes change

As the Embassy strays away from its sole identity as a traditional movie theater, nostalgic residents still feel a great loss.

“[Albeck] got her permit to open based upon a promise that the essential nature of the Embassy — with first-run excellent films — would be honored,” Waltham resident Sue Kelman commented on [Facebook](#). “No such thing has happened. As [Embassy is] one of the few available indie cinemas, this has been very disappointing.”

However, as nationwide trends show, the Embassy’s changes are necessary to ensure its survival. A [CBS video report](#) highlighted a similar small nonprofit theater in New Jersey, where owner and filmmaker Kevin Smith frequently holds live events, including filmmaker Q&As and an annual film festival. Similarly, a [Variety](#) article described how family-owned cinema chain B&B Theatres transformed itself post-pandemic from a chain of simple cinema houses to sprawling multiplexes offering bowling, pickleball, arcade games and more.

These changes may be crucial. Variety reported that box office ticket sales in 2024 dropped by 23.5% from pre-pandemic levels. Many chains such as Regal Cinemas have filed for bankruptcy.

For the Embassy, the decision to preserve some screens while diversifying use reflects how communities can reinvent these spaces rather than lose them altogether.

While some still feel intense nostalgia for the old Embassy, many locals appreciate the theater’s transformation and embrace its new identity.

William Joseph Durkin, a Waltham resident since 2022, approves of the changes the Embassy has made. He prefers the theater’s unconventional screenings, such as its showings of Oscar-nominated short films. “It’s a good chance to see things that you might not have otherwise gone out to see.”

He also appreciates Albeck’s collaborative management style. “[Albeck] is open to a lot of ideas for community engagement. I called her about the possibility of renting the screens for private screenings, and she’s really open to it.”

Durkin characterized the Embassy’s changes as a post-pandemic necessity — not just for the cinema itself, but for its patrons, too. “There’s an appetite for excuses to meet up with people, especially after COVID. We haven’t really gotten back to the regular swing of things. The more opportunities for [getting together], I think that’s great. I hope that there’s more.”



Waltham City Hall Museum exhibit of the Embassy Theater, featuring old seats and invitations to the Embassy’s farewell concert by Guy Lombardo. Photo by Lauren Goodman.

# Public health report: Health department resolves restaurant violations, begins retail inspections

Artie Kronenfeld

February 6, 2026



Five local businesses were cited for health violations in January, and all five have mitigated the issues that prompted the citations, according to the city's Health Department. That's out of a total of 41 retailers and restaurants inspected in January,

Health Department inspectors also reported that all the violations they had identified [during restaurant inspections between Dec. 5 and 17](#) have been resolved.

## Health complaints

Additionally, the Health Department acted on nine new complaints reported to the department between Dec. 17 and Jan. 20.

The department received one trash-related complaint and three dumpster-related complaints, which it has since resolved with property owners, as well as one trash complaint that was still open as of Feb. 4.

A third report of a trash violation resulted in the department bringing a court complaint against the property's owners. It received two reports of rodent activity, both of which also resulted in the department filing court complaints.

It also received a complaint from a resident who found cockroaches and mold at their apartment that is still unresolved and which the department intends to address by bringing a civil charge against the owner.

During that period, the department also resolved two housing complaints and one trash complaint it had received [earlier in December](#).

## Lodging inspections

On Dec. 22 and Jan 5, the Health Department conducted 12 inspections at Brandeis University lodgings. It found violations in six of those cases: two at the Pomerantz residence hall and once each at the Hassenfeld residence hall, Shapiro House, The Village (the Lorraine and Jack N. Friedman House), and Ridgewood. The violations involved loose paint in bathrooms, carpets that required repair, a broken toilet and sink, and a trash room that required repainting. All six were resolved by Jan. 20.

In January the department also inspected the Hurley House recovery home and nine other privately owned lodging house properties, none of which had any recorded violations.

## Retail and restaurants

Below is a summary of the violations at each of the five retail establishments and restaurants where inspectors found violations between Jan. 2 and Jan. 20. Violations that inspectors designated to be critical are marked with an asterisk.

*Continued on next page...*

Taste House Restaurant, 800 Lexington St., on Jan. 7

- Inspectors identified the following instances of noncompliance with Waltham’s safety regulations:
- Flooring under a grill and fryolater that required cleaning.
- Flooring in a walk-in freezer that required cleaning.
- Missing ceiling tiles in a kitchen.
- The owners were given five days to address these issues, which were corrected by the time of publication.

Walgreens, 15–21 Main St., on Jan. 8

- Inspectors identified the following instance of noncompliance with Waltham’s safety regulations: Damaged ceiling tiles that needed to be replaced.
- The owners were given five days to address these issues, which were corrected by the time of publication.

CVS Pharmacy, 800 Lexington St., on Jan. 9

- Inspectors identified the following instance of noncompliance with Waltham’s safety regulations: Waterstained ceiling tiles that needed to be replaced.
- The owners were given five days to address these issues, which were corrected by the time of publication.

New World Gas, 487 Main St., on Jan. 12

- Inspectors identified the following instance of noncompliance with Waltham’s safety regulations: Dented food items that needed to be removed.
- The owners were given five days to address these issues, which were corrected by the time of publication.

Chapin Grocery, 220 River St., on Jan. 16

- Inspectors identified the following instance of noncompliance with Waltham’s safety regulations: Floor tiles beneath a toilet that required repair.
- The owners were given five days to address these issues, which were corrected by the time of publication.

## **About Health Department inspections**

The city’s Health Department conducts regular inspections of housing and food establishments to ensure compliance with the city’s safety codes. Twice a year it inspects each of the city’s restaurants, schools, lodging houses, nursing homes and any other businesses that serve food or are regulated by specific Waltham health codes to make sure they comply with the city’s safety regulations. Its inspectors also investigate complaints about pests, trash management on private properties and other environmental hazards.

It’s common for establishments to have minor violations during inspections, and when a business is found to be unsatisfactory, the department sets a deadline for the owners to correct any violations — usually five days from the date of inspection. Health Department Inspector Ivan Colon told The Waltham Times that restaurants and other businesses generally resolve all of their violations by the deadline.

Colon said if the Health Department finds a violation at a restaurant or other food establishment that causes immediate and severe health concerns, or finds three or more violations the department counts as “critical,” it will close the business until it determines the business is safe for patrons.

All information was obtained from public records requests to the Waltham Health Department.

# WPS superintendent speaks on potential of new zoning to shake up district

Lea Zaharoni

February 6, 2026



The Superintendent of Waltham Public Schools, Marisa Mendonsa, told the Ordinances & Rules Committee she was “not significantly concerned” about the district’s schools’ capacity for an influx of new students. Mendonsa was invited to the Committee’s Feb. 2 meeting to discuss how the housing units allowed by [new zoning overlay districts](#) might impact class sizes.

Initially, Mendonsa was [asked](#) to attend the Feb. 23 meeting of the committee to present a comprehensive plan on how the school district can accommodate the three new major zoning changes, as well as [other large developments](#) under construction in west Waltham. Her attendance at the Feb. 2 meeting appeared to be more casual, as she fielded questions from committee members on the capacities of the Waltham districts.

Kier Evans of BXP, owners of the land that makes up two of the overlay districts, has said that his company hopes to create [1500 new units of housing](#), although numbers are still preliminary. Despite this large number, Mendonsa assuaged concerns that schools might be unable to handle the load of new school-aged tenants.

Mendonsa said that “elementary schools are not necessarily at capacity,” and that there were options to redistrict or add assistant educators to classrooms if necessary. She referred specifically to the [Dual Language School](#), which could be expanded and potentially absorb more students.

In looking at the specific locations of the new districts, Mendonsa said that the schools most likely to be impacted by increased enrollment would be Plympton Elementary School and MacArthur Elementary School. She also referred to a decline in enrollment of approximately 60-100 students over the past year at Northeast Elementary School, which could provide space for possible overflow at other schools. “We’ve seen a decline in multilingual learners, and I can’t always predict what’s going to happen. Some of these things are out of our control,” she said.

Despite the district’s demonstrated readiness, large-scale changes to the school system can bring about unexpected hurdles. Ward 2 Councilor Caren Dunn remarked, “No matter what, there will be dollars spent on moving people around.” It was unclear how the [district’s current budget](#) would handle the changes, with Mendonsa mentioning that one additional school bus costs around \$90,000.

Ward 8 Councilor Cathyann Harris suggested Mendonsa “get comfortable” with making estimates as the city plans for the new zones to begin construction.

# School Committee approves contract for district's union educators, hears parent concern on reducing allowable high school course load

Isabella Lapriore

February 6, 2026



School committee members approved a new contract for members of the district's union, the Waltham Educators Association, at its meeting on Feb. 4.

Committee member Edmund Tarallo addressed multiple updates included in the 2025-2028 contract, including increases in working days, after-school meeting hours, parental leave, pay for paraprofessionals, cost of living adjustments and a half day for the last day of school for both staff and students.

"I want to thank the Waltham Educators Association for the time they spent and how they worked with us to come to a fair contract," Tarallo said.

## Credit reduction

Additionally, the school committee heard concerns about reduced maximum allowable credits and school hours from resident and Waltham public school parent Michelle Campbell.

Campbell told the committee she was concerned about reducing the allowable student course load from 40 to 35 credits and class hours from 8 to 7 hours. She said this would impact students' ability to participate in individual education plans, advanced placement courses, career and technical education programs, advanced music and art coursework and early college courses while taking required classes.

"I know firsthand that three years ago 37.5 class [hours] was an extreme challenge for students to fit CTE along with any additional credit, not to mention honors or AP," she said. According to Campbell, even the existing 40 credit limit is difficult for many families she knows and reducing it to 35 would make it even more challenging.

She asked members about the impact on students, teachers and the existing school-day schedule. "I respectfully ask the committee, as you consider any future proposal, to look at the full academic ecosystem and ensure that effort to solve budget, academic and scheduling challenges do not unintentionally reduce opportunity for all students," Campbell said.

Later, members approved adding the proposed reductions discussion to the committee's list of agenda items.

## Additionally the School Committee:

Heard Waltham High School updates about winter sports senior nights, dance theater performances, girls basketball, international women in sports night and a domestic violence warning signs presentation from student council representative and WHS senior Anabel Rutledge.

Unanimously approved proposed updates to the district's meal charge policy to reflect that students are no longer required to have a \$0 outstanding payment balance as a graduation requirement.

Accepted a \$10,000 prize for Northeast Elementary School from the Boston Bruins Foundation's BFit to Win It contest.

# Zoning Board anticipates finishing Winter Street apartments' hearings next month

Artie Kronenfeld

February 5, 2026



A large apartment building project that city departments have been discussing since last summer is nearing its conclusion, project representatives said. At the Feb. 3 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting, board members said they anticipate closing the public hearing on the case the next time they hear from the developer at the meeting on March 24.

The project, which will be named The Alexan Winter Street, would sit at 245–265 Winter St. Its developer applied to the ZBA [last July](#) for a comprehensive special permit through [Chapter 40B of Massachusetts General Law](#). This policy [incentivizes affordable housing construction](#) through a special permitting process overseen by local zoning boards.

At the February ZBA meeting, project representative Mark Baranski said his team has been working with the city's Law Department to draft final language for the comprehensive special permit. He expects to deliver a full draft of the permit in time for the board's March 24 meeting.

ZBA members had asked the development team and its own consultants about outstanding concerns raised about the project [in previous meetings](#).

Neighbors have asked the board to examine the project's traffic studies and ask why developers didn't study the project's impact on a series of intersections west of I-95. The developer's traffic architect, Matt Kealey of VHB, cited figures demonstrating that the Alexan Winter Street building would increase traffic at one of those intersections by less than 1%, which doesn't meet state criteria to warrant further study.

The board's traffic consultant, Bob Michaud of MGM Engineering, agreed with Kealey and said he examined the traffic study and found it appropriate in scope. When board members asked about the joint impacts of this development and another proposed Chapter 40B project [at 455 Totten Pond Road](#), Michaud said the board would have to commission a corridor study to answer their questions. He recommended that the board require the developer to contribute to Waltham's traffic mitigation fund to address any joint impacts from the Winter Street development and other nearby projects.

City Engineer Robert Winn also spoke to clarify some concerns he previously voiced to the board over the project's sewer output. He said that project engineers had eased his concerns about the capacity of sewer lines on Winter Street, but he still had concerns about how the building would affect sewer lines on Totten Pond Road. He said he was waiting for an analysis from the 455 Totten Pond Road team to determine the impact from both projects.

Baranski discussed the possibility of installing eastbound sidewalks on Totten Pond Road near Lexington Street, which ZBA Chair John Sergi [previously requested](#) the developer fund in collaboration with the 455 Totten Pond Road project. Baranski said his development team intends to build a new sidewalk going westbound on Totten Pond Road to a nearby bus stop, but that the team was still pricing out the cost of Sergi's original request.

## ZBA officer election

At its Feb. 3 meeting, the Zoning Board also elected officers for the new year. [The board](#) unanimously voted to extend the term of its three current officers—John Sergi, who serves as board chair and runs weekly ZBA meetings, Mark Hickernell, who serves as vice chair and Matthew Deveaux, who serves as board clerk.

## Zoning Board talks chicken regulation, rat control with Health Department

Artie Kronenfeld

February 2, 2026

The Waltham Zoning Board of Appeals last week discussed ways to improve interdepartmental communication and make the permitting process smoother for residential chicken owners.

According to section 3.612 of the city's zoning code, the ZBA can grant residents special permits for "livestock farms under five acres in size, including ... the raising or keeping of poultry, pigeons, and furbearing animals, except dogs." Section 3.83 of the code, however, adds that residents keeping poultry on lots smaller than five acres in size must also be licensed by the Board of Health.

At the ZBA's Jan. 27 meeting, Thomas Creonte, senior public health inspector in the Health Department, requested the board's assistance in ensuring chicken owners go through the department to get yearly licenses for their coops.

ZBA member Mark Hickernell opposed additional conditions on chicken owners' permits that would require them to report to the Health Department for licenses, arguing that such conditions would be outside of the scope of the ZBA's power. After more discussion, however, board members agreed they could refer new permit holders to the Health Department for licenses after their ZBA hearings and notify the department of any new coops in the city.

Creonte said that chicken coops were a concern for the city, arguing that even if they were well maintained, they could attract rats.

Personally, he said that he was against residential chicken coops: "I hate them. In my business, it puts a lot of work on the department and stress on the neighborhoods," he said.

He added that the city has put a lot of resources into rat mitigation and hasn't seen sufficient results. "The city has spent so much money [on rodent control.] I say it's like emptying the ocean, one bucket at a time," he said. "We're throwing money at it. We just can't make it go away."

Creonte said that the current cold weather and the city's dumpster ordinances could help control the rat population, but that the city's current bait box strategy was not creating a "return on our money."

Multiple board members spoke in favor of residents who had previously requested chicken permits from the ZBA, saying they were generally well prepared and had taken rat mitigation into account.

"Most of them are ahead of us on that kind of stuff," said ZBA chair John Sergi. "A lot of them have a [pest control program already in place] and they have a pesticide company come in."

### Further delays at 455 Totten Pond

A hearing for a special permit for a large residential project [at 455 Totten Pond Road](#) was again postponed [due to a ZBA member's absence](#).

The board and developer agreed to take up the case again on Feb. 10, and extended the ZBA's deadline to close the public hearing on the permit from Feb. 3 to Feb. 28.

A representative of the developer, The Davis Companies, expressed a sense of urgency in rescheduling the hearing since the project hasn't appeared in front of the board [since November](#).

The representative said that some of the board's questions about transportation, engineering and affordability would be answered by the project's updated draft of the language for the special permit, which it plans to present to the board at the February meeting.

# Jones Road residential proposal tied to Green Street Connector and proposed train station

June Kinoshita

February 4, 2026



The Jones Road site for the proposed residential development. Google Street image.

Real estate company BXP Inc. intends to build a large apartment building that could add hundreds of new housing units to the city along its border with Weston.

The company, formerly known as Boston Properties, may also help bring a new commuter rail station to Waltham.

To move forward, BXP needs the city to make a zoning change, as the Jones Road land where it intends to build is currently zoned only for industrial and commercial use. BXP has requested that the city [create a new zoning overlay district for the property](#) to allow the company to build both residential and commercial buildings.

The company submitted its Jones Road zoning petition alongside a similar petition for a property it owns on Winter Street. 1265 Main St LLC has also requested the creation of an overlay district for property at 1265 Main Street.

BXP's representatives and the City Council's Ordinances and Rules Committee have been meeting [since December](#) to discuss what BXP plans to build at the site, what the city will allow, and a timeline for any potential construction.

The company is scheduled to appear at a committee meeting in late February to present a more detailed site vision and plans for the project.

## Current plans for the site

The Jones Road property consists of three lots, collectively totaling 23.3 acres.

The lots are at the end of Jones Road, abutting property held by the MBTA for the Fitchburg commuter rail line and includes buildings that house the New York Life Insurance and Power Home Remodeling companies.

Kier Evans, BXP's vice president of development, has told the City Council his company plans to build primarily rental housing units at the site.

At [a Dec. 28 meeting](#) of the City Council's Ordinances and Rules Committee, Evans told councilors that the company would agree to build no more than a combined 1,500 housing units at the Jones Road site and BXP's other proposed mixed-use zoning overlay district (MIRROD) on Winter Street. He said BXP intended to build the majority of those units at Winter Street, estimating that the Jones Road site might see 300 to 400 new residential units.

Evans said BXP envisioned a single building that would hold the majority of the units on top of a larger ground-level structure that would hold an “anchor” retail store or collection of smaller boutique stores.

## **Transit ties**

This proposed Jones Road development ties in financially and logistically with transit improvements proposed to improve traffic in west Waltham.

Those planned traffic improvements stem from the state’s 2023 [Route 128/I-95 Land Use & Transportation Study](#), which examined transit improvements along the Waltham-area stretch of I-95 that could relieve current and projected future congestion. The study proposed constructing a new transit “multimodal hub,” including a new station for the Fitchburg commuter rail line, near the end of Jones Road. The new station would replace the Kendal Green Station in Weston, and it would connect to the Mass Central Rail Trail.

BXP has shared its design plans for the station to the MBTA. Evans said in a statement to The Waltham Times that the 2023 study had identified the proposed station as “one of the most critical transportation improvements for this region.”

“BXP’s traffic infrastructure improvements are a key enabler of the station,” he said.

MBTA spokesperson Lisa Battison said the MBTA has not yet committed to moving forward with the project. “At this stage, the MBTA supports and reviews BXP’s preliminary design plans, but the final project is contingent on identifying a funding source,” she said.

However, Mayor Jeannette A. McCarthy told The Waltham Times a new Jones Road commuter rail station is definitely on its way.

At a [Jan. 20 Ordinances and Rules Committee meeting](#), Evans said BXP plans to invest \$15 million in another area transit improvement, as long as BXP makes progress with the city on its zoning petitions for Jones Road and Winter Street.

This second transit improvement project is known as the Green Street Connector, which would [extend Green Street](#) — a short roadway paralleling Jones Road that extends south from Route 117 — all the way down to Route 20. The 2023 I-95 transit study proposed extending Green Street to Route 20 to mitigate traffic congestion in that area.

# City Council in brief: City accepts \$7.5 million to improve dangerous Rte. 20 interchange

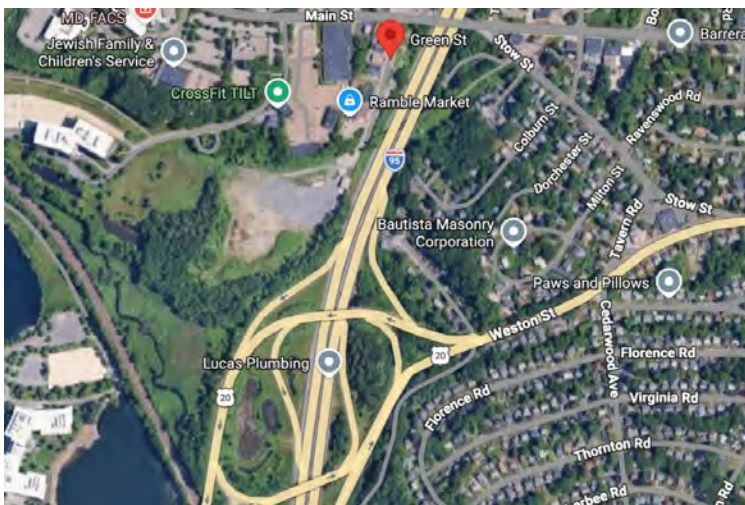
Artie Kronenfeld

February 4, 2026

Mayor Jeannette A. McCarthy asked city councilors this week to accept \$7.5 million [in state grants](#) to construct a new stretch of road in Waltham just west of I-95.

At a Feb. 3 Finance Committee meeting, McCarthy said that these grants covered half of the state funding earmarked for the project, which aims to improve traffic on and around the highway, including at the Route 20 exit, which she said was one of the most dangerous interchanges in the state.

McCarthy explained that this grant money will fund [the construction of just under a mile of road](#) to extend Green Street, currently a short roadway off of Main Street, into a connector road between Route 20 and Route 117.



Satellite view of the Rte. 20 interchange. The Green Street extension would provide a connector running between Rte. 117/Main Street and Rte. 20. Google maps.

This corridor will connect the Rail Trail and, McCarthy said, is the first step toward building an improved Route 117 bridge over I-95. Waltham Housing Director Collette Casey-Brenner said part of this grant money was coming from the state housing fund because the new road will facilitate future housing development in the area.

The project will be managed by the construction site's owners and real estate companies BXP Inc. and 1265 Main Street LLC. McCarthy said the city will have to apply to the state's [Community One Stop For Growth program](#) next year for additional grant money to receive the full \$15 million promised for the project, but that the landowners plan to match the state's funding for the road's construction. Waltham should not have to contribute any additional money, she said.

She added that the project is being realized after "more than 20" years of work and projected it will be completed by September 2028.

The Finance Committee voted unanimously to accept the grants.

## Additionally, the City Council's committees:

Asked the Law Department to draft new zoning language [lowering affordability requirements for housing development](#). The committee voted to require developers to create fewer affordable units, especially in smaller buildings, and make a portion of those units affordable to residents making 60% of the area median income instead of 50%. Some councilors expressed interest in keeping affordability requirements slightly higher and reducing parking space minimums, which advocates have [cited](#) as a major deterrent to housing development, but the committee decided parking issues could be better addressed through [ongoing zoning reform](#). (Ordinances & Rules)

Appointed former Councilor-at-Large Kathy McMenimen to a position as an associate member of the Zoning Board of Appeals and former police officer John J. O'Connor, III as director of veterans' services and assistant to the License Commission. (Committee of the Whole)

Approved a \$940,000 loan to design a new indoor pool in the [Howe Building](#) of the former Fernald State School. (Long-Term Debt and Capital Planning)

Approved a midyear raise for a current junior city accountant who is taking on additional work while the department attempts to fill a long-vacant position. (Finance)

Approved the special permit application by TTGROUP WALLEX, INC at 864 Lexington St. to franchise a [New Jersey Mike's location](#). Despite initial concerns about parking availability and trash removal, the petitioner accepted all conditions of approval on their initial application. (Ordinances & Rules)

Heard from WPS Superintendent Marisa Mendonsa on the potential effects of the [new zoning overlay districts](#) on Waltham elementary schools. (Ordinances & Rules)

Heard updates on [petitions to repave private ways](#) in the city. Assistant City Solicitor Michelle Learned provided new copies of petitions for Samoset Lane and Blossom Street/Pine Hill Circle to redistribute to homeowners because of errors in the original petitions. She also presented updated timelines for successful petitions, projecting that some would return to committee in the spring. (Public Works and Public Safety)

Reallocated unused money from the Public Works Department to water and sewer projects to cover unexpected costs surrounding an inspector's resignation and pump station issues. (Finance)

Voted to transfer the former Phineas Lawrence Elementary School property to the Recreation Department for the purpose of constructing a [new municipal hockey rink](#). (Committee of the Whole)

Voted to allocate funds that ride-sharing companies have reimbursed to Waltham to resurface roads and sidewalks along Seminole Avenue and Hardy Pond Road. (Finance)

Voted to purchase a new Zamboni to resurface the Veterans' Memorial Skating Rink. (Finance)

# Committee of the whole approves Kathy McMenimen's ZBA appointment amid backlash from residents

Isabella Lapriore

February 4, 2026



Kathleen B. McMenimen addresses city council members prior to her approved appointment. Photo by Artie Kronenfeld.

City councilors unanimously approved former at-large council member Kathy McMenimen's appointment to Waltham's Zoning Board of Appeals at [Monday's City Council Committee of the Whole](#) meeting. The vote will be ratified at the council's meeting next week.

Mayor Jeannette A. McCarthy requested the committee approve McMenimen's appointment as an associate member of the ZBA, a move that has since sparked backlash from residents.

McMenimen will join three current associate members on the board that are called to sit if a permanent member is absent or has a conflict of interest in a matter before the ZBA.

In an interview with The Waltham Times McMenimen said she is familiar with the ZBA. While she said she didn't work directly with the board during her time as a city councilor, she is looking forward to both participating and learning in her new role.

"The first thing I'm going to do is learn all about what I'm going to need to know," McMenimen said, "I love to learn; I'm an educator by profession." During the committee's meeting, McMenimen told members that while she hasn't served on the board before, she's attended numerous ZBA meetings in the past.

One issue McMenimen mentioned was the use of 40B petitions in place of 40A special permits. A 40B is a state statute exempting developers from local zoning bylaws when building affordable housing if a municipality is under a 10% affordable housing threshold.

"They are, for all intents and purposes, basically allowed to do what they want to do in order to develop what they want to develop. Anyone who's been to the ZBA and watched a 40B in process understands how that process works," she said.

Residents have taken to Reddit to express their concerns about the appointment. "It seems pretty undemocratic to appoint somebody who just lost an election to a city board," a user wrote. "Kathleen McMenimen is against development, a position she made clear at debates."

McMenimen told The Waltham Times she had no response to anonymous users and platforms. "I'm always looking for objectivity and I'm not finding it on the anonymous sites," she said.

After holding a council seat for 50 years, McMenimen's reelection bid was unsuccessful in last year's municipal election, which viewers of last week's virtual council meeting commented on expressing concern during the YouTube livestream.

Waltham resident Jack Holder was one of the commenters. Holder said he voted against McMenimen in an attempt to bring change to local government, specifically citing the former councilor's opposition to new housing.

"To then have our mayor decide that she knows better and appoint McMenimen to the zoning board feels like a smack in the face, like our election didn't matter in her eyes," Holder told The Waltham Times.

# Waltham High show choir wins gold at 2026 season opener

Waltham News Team

February 4, 2026



WHS show choir at Tantasqua. Photo by Brooke Fitzgerald of @brooketakespictures.

Waltham High School's show choir, Music Unlimited, kicked off its 2026 competition season at the Tantasqua Show Choir Spectacular in Fiskdale, Mass., on Saturday, Jan. 30. Music Unlimited competed in the large mixed division against three other New England show choirs and came away with a gold medal, first runner-up and an award for outstanding fight scene.

Their set, "Trial of the Elements", portrays a fantasy world called Etheria, where the elements are an integral part of the living breathing identities of the people who inhabit the land.

The choir represented the clans of Water, Earth and Fire through songs inspired by the elements, such as "Fire" by Jimmy Hendrix, "Water" by Tyla and "I Feel the Earth Move" by Carole King, as well as a compilation of other well-known show tunes such as "Get Lost", "Somewhere Over the Rainbow", "Defying Gravity", "Brand New Day" and "Not Like Us" by Pulitzer-winning rapper Kendrick Lamar.

The WHS show choir's next competition is on Saturday, Feb. 7, at Shepherd Hill Regional High School in Dudley, Mass. The schedule is posted on the [WCPA website](#). Follow Waltham High Show Choir on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#) for more information on future competitions.

# Waltham YMCA helps fight community hunger with self-serve food pantry

Steve Milmore

February 4, 2026



Two years ago, former Waltham YMCA advisory board member Donna Kendall had the idea of setting up a free food pantry for people in the community who needed food assistance. Waltham High School students Gus McVeigh, his brother Finn, and brothers Ben and Joshua Yawoga took the lead, setting up a GoFundMe that raised hundreds of dollars to get the pantry going.

Today the Little Free Pantry, located in the vestibule of the [Waltham YMCA](#) at 725 Lexington St., is often stocked with canned goods, non-perishables, beverages, snacks, water — and even fresh produce in season thanks to the Waltham Fields Community Farm.

“It has all kinds of food but peanut butter, rice, beans, snack bars and pasta seem to be the favorites,” Gus McVeigh said in an email to the Waltham Times. “[The students] were instrumental in getting the initial round of donations for the pantry,” Kendall, now a member of the general board of the YMCA of Greater Boston, said.

Since then several donors have contributed to the cause. A significant donation from [Abe and Norman Stein](#) helped families get through the holiday season this year. Cambridge Savings Bank, the Waltham Lions Club and the Waltham Rotary Club also made donations in support of food for the pantry.

Gus McVeigh has been tracking how much food people are consuming. He’s been taking pictures during the day and checking on what’s been taken or added. He estimated that more than \$9,000 worth of food is being distributed per year.



Christine Curtain, Waltham YMCA advisory board member, said the pantry is in full use and open to everyone — those dealing with food insecurity as well as people who simply need a break.

“Maybe you don’t need that granola bar financially right now, but it’s been a long day, it’s raining, you’ve got the kids in the car leaving swim lessons and you can’t go to Shaw’s. It’s OK. We want to reduce the stigma of using these community food banks,” she said.

According to Waltham YMCA Executive Director Lindsey Lerit, the team is planning to increase the pantry’s physical space to accommodate more food dropoffs. With the concern of future SNAP benefits being cut, people are more aware and more willing to drop off extra canned goods or fruit snacks, she said.

The Waltham YMCA pantry is available during business hours and no membership or sign-in is required to use it. It’s self-serve so anyone in the community can drop off or pick up food. In bad weather and before big storms, such as the one last week, the pantry can run out of food quickly, however. “This is a good time to help,” Gus McVeigh stated.

People in the community are encouraged to drop off unopened, non-expired food at the Waltham YMCA during normal hours of operation seven days a week.

# Waltham robotics giant Boston Dynamics partners with Google DeepMind on AI-driven Atlas humanoid

William Holder

February 4, 2026



Like the Scarecrow longing for a brain in “The Wizard of Oz,” robots at Boston Dynamics may soon become smarter.

Boston Dynamics’ AI-powered the Atlas humanoid robot learns complex tasks through practice. Courtesy of Boston Dynamics.

The Waltham-based company, one of the world’s leading manufacturers of advanced robots, announced a partnership with Google DeepMind to imbue its next-generation robot, Atlas, with a new level of artificial intelligence. Executives from Boston Dynamics and Google unveiled the partnership last month at the Consumer Electronics Show 2026 in Las Vegas, a showcase for the latest advances in technology.

“The strategic partnership will focus on enabling humanoids to complete a wide variety of industrial tasks,” Boston Dynamicsthe company said [in a blog post](#), “and is expected to become a driving force of manufacturing transformation, beginning in the automotive industry. The joint research effort, expected to kick off in the coming months, will be conducted at both companies.”

Boston Dynamics announced its intention to build a commercial humanoid in 2024 after it became clear that advances in AI held the potential for swift progress in the robot industry. Google DeepMind has been developing Gemini Robotics, an AI model built on Google’s large-scale Gemini AI model that is designed to allow robots of any shape and size to perceive, reason, use tools and interact with humans.

“For more than 30 years, Boston Dynamics has been building some of the world’s most advanced robots,” said Robert Playter, CEO of Boston Dynamics, in a company statement. “Atlas is going to revolutionize the way industry works, and it marks the first step toward a long-term goal we have dreamed about since we were children – useful robots that can walk into our homes and help make our lives safer, more productive and more fulfilling.”

During an onstage presentation, Carolina Parada, senior director of robotics at Google DeepMind, said that the partnership aims “to develop the world’s most advanced robot foundation model to fulfill the promise of true general-purpose human needs.”

Atlas learns new tasks quickly, adapts to dynamic environments, lifts heavy loads and works autonomously with minimal supervision. In many respects, it is more versatile than humans, with joints, for example, that rotate 360 degrees, for example.

“60 Minutes” provided a [vivid demonstration](#) of Atlas’s capabilities (and limitations) in a segment shot at Boston Dynamics and at a Hyundai plant in Georgia.

Robots developed by Boston Dynamics, located off I-95 north of Trapelo Rd., are widely known for their feats of physical versatility.

Hyundai Motor Group, Boston Dynamics’ majority shareholder, is [preparing to deploy tens of thousands of Boston Dynamics’ robots](#) into its own manufacturing facilities. The company also recently [announced a \\$26 billion investment in its U.S. operations](#), including plans to build a new robotics factory capable of producing 30,000 robots per year.

# Dedicated mail carrier gets first-class send-off from neighbors

Steve Milmore

February 4, 2026



A much-loved USPS mail carrier who served Waltham neighborhoods for more than 33 years got a retirement send-off he'll never forget.

On Saturday, more than 80 neighbors in Briarwood showed their appreciation for Paul Ricciardi with a thank you, a note, a sign or a balloon for his dedication and service over the years. His last day on Jan. 31 ended with a surprise party at a house on Van Vechten Street packed with neighbors old and new as well as Ricciardi's family.

"They fooled me to the max. I didn't have a clue," Ricciardi said.

The idea for the celebration and surprise party was spearheaded by Bryan and Kara Platt with help from other neighbors in North Waltham, where Ricciardi served the last 14 years of his long career.

"Everyone wanted to do something special for Paul on his final delivery day," Bryan Platt said.

"He's larger than life around here. We all have stories about his dedication to the job and his sense of humor. He'd brighten up a bad day."

During the COVID pandemic, for instance, Ricciardi didn't miss a beat. He would show up wearing a mask and gloves, armed with plenty of stories to tell his home-bound customers. "He was our connection to the world," Platt said.

"Paul was always cheerful. He'd ask how my husband and I were doing and tell us about his granddaughter," Priscilla Thayer said. "He was like family. I'd make him cookies, and they'd be gone by the time he got back to his truck."

Neighbor Paul Keating echoed that sentiment and feels like he's lost a family member. "I'll miss my afternoon chats with Paul from the window of my truck or sitting on the stoop at my house, talking about anything and everything," he said. "But he's earned his retirement for sure, and we all wish him the best."

Signs of support for retired mail carrier Paul Ricciardi. Photo by Peter Lobo



Early in his career, Ricciardi was bitten by a dog. Another time, an elderly neighbor fell just as he arrived. He called 911 and stayed with her until help showed up. Despite such mishaps, overall, it was a job he thoroughly enjoyed, he said.

"I'm very grateful for all the people I've met during my career," Ricciardi said. "It's been amazing, and they showed me how much they care with the way it ended."

Ricciardi plans to "play a lot of golf" and spend time with his family in retirement. He's been coach of the Arlington Catholic girls softball team for 15 years, which will keep him busy.

"I also need to catch up on some home jobs that I put off," Ricciardi said. "Today I went for my car inspection sticker and didn't have to worry about leaving work early to get it. That's a start."

# Waltham High School graduate cross-country skier Julia Kern heads to her second Olympic Games

Greg Levinsky

February 2, 2026



Julia Kern heading to her second Olympics Games. Photo courtesy of Julia Kern.

If you're a Waltham community member feeling disconnected with the upcoming Milano Cortina Olympic Winter Games or without a rooting interest, look no further than cross-country skier Julia Kern as your reason to pay attention.

A 2015 Waltham High School graduate, the 28-year-old Kern will represent Team USA in various skiing events held at the Tesero Cross-Country Skiing Stadium in Tesero, Val di Fiemme, Italy, February 6–22. Kern competed in the 2022 Beijing Games but looks forward to a fully non-COVID-19 restricted experience. This time, she thinks she has a real shot at a medal.

“Last time I was going, medals weren't really in reach, it was more about gathering experience and doing the best I can,” Kern told The Waltham Times in an interview from Austria, where she recently finished

the winter World Cup. “This time around, there're expectations, pressure and big goals I want to achieve. It has a bit of a different flavor this time around.

“Even so, I also want to make sure I enjoy and soak up the whole Olympic experience.”

Born in California, Kern spent all but the first year of her childhood in Waltham. She first put on cross-country skis at 15 months old and began racing at age 7. She graduated from Dartmouth College in 2021 with an economics degree and a minor in human-centered design. While at Dartmouth, she trained and competed with the Stratton Mountain School elite SMS T2 program.

She stays connected to the area, visiting family and friends and taking part in an annual September event with the Youth Enrichment Services for Boston Kids (YES) program.

In her Olympic debut at the 2022 Beijing games, Kern placed 18th in the Sprint Freestyle and 53rd in the Skiathlon. She will likely race both events again this year, and perhaps a few more with a maximum of six.

## Looking forward to the full Olympic experience

Kern's first Olympic experience came at the end of the pandemic. The stress of avoiding COVID-19, daily testing and isolation made it "quite locked down" for all athletes, Kern said. She looks forward to a fully open Olympics this year. Kern's parents, two sets of aunts and uncles, her boyfriend and other friends plan to make the trip to Italy to support her.

Since her first Olympics, Kern has earned a bronze medal at the 2023 World Championships in the Team Sprint Freestyle and a silver medal at the 2025 World Championships in the Team Sprint Classic. The six-time U.S. National Champion also finished fifth in individual Sprint Freestyle last year.



WHS graduate and star cross-country skier Julia Kern in action. Photo courtesy of Julia Kern.

Kern calls Richmond, Vermont, home now, but travels seven months of the year for skiing. She's been in Europe since November. An active [content creator](#), she's active on Instagram [@julieakernski](#), and [TikTok](#), chronicling her career for more than 25,000 followers across platforms.

The annual Tour De Ski event ends in Val di Fiemme, and Kern finished seventh in the skiathlon there at last year's World Cup. Although the Olympic courses are not the same as the Tour De Ski and World Cup courses, the somewhat familiar territory brings comfort. It also doesn't hurt that Kern loves Italy.

"We generally know what to expect," Kern said. "The weather can be crazy and all that ... but it feels like we're racing something representative to what we normally race."

Though the team isn't staying at the main Olympic Village or participating in the opening ceremony, Kern looks forward to exploring the town where they'll be staying with her inner circle and teammates, trading pins with athletes from other countries, acquiring Olympic swag and spending time with other Team USA-related people.

"Last time around, you could run like five-minute laps in a fenced in athlete village," Kern said. "I think just having some team games and connecting with one another also brings the stress level down a little bit."

# WEA reaches contract agreement for district's union educators

Isabella Lapriore

February 2, 2026

After 13 months of negotiation, teachers and paraprofessionals from the Waltham Educators Association voted to ratify a new contract for union educators across the district on Jan. 29.

The contract is set to include a 10% salary increase over the next three years, a \$3 per hour pay increase for paraprofessionals, 12 weeks of parental leave and a half day for staff and students on the last day of the school year, according to WEA co-president Ryan Hoyt.

WEA and Waltham Public Schools participated in 18 negotiation sessions before reaching an agreement on the 2025-2028 contract.

[According to a WEA Facebook post](#), the contract will assist in increasing competition with neighboring districts.

“We believe that our new contract makes us competitive with our neighboring districts and will help recruit and retain highly qualified professionals for Waltham Public Schools,” WEA wrote in a post on Jan. 29.

The WEA is a member union of more than 800 pre-kindergarten to 12th grade public educators in Waltham represented by both the Massachusetts Teacher’s Association and the National Education Association.

Members of the Waltham School Committee are set to vote to approve the proposed contract at the committee’s meeting on Feb. 4.

## Green Street Connector project comes in front of City Council for the first time

Artie Kronenfeld

February 2, 2026



A city project to create a new north-south road in the west of Waltham will go before the City Council tonight.

The project will extend Green Street, a short roadway that runs south off Main Street parallel to I-95 on its western side, all the way to Weston Street.

The proposed work would more than double the street’s current length and provide another connection between Route 20 and Route 117. It will also

involve constructing a “shared use path,” as well as stormwater, utility, intersection and streetscape improvements along the length of the street.

City officials [announced the project](#) in November after the state determined it would award \$7.5 million in grants for the project as part of its [Community One Stop for Growth program](#).

At its Feb. 2 meeting, the City Council's Finance Committee will discuss these grants, which the state has supplied in two parts: \$6 million from the Executive Office of Economic Development and \$1.5 million from the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities.

From its inception, this project has been linked to housing. In a budgeting attachment submitted to the state, Waltham Planning Director Robert Waters wrote that the project could "catalyze the development of up to 1,500 housing units."

#### Route 128 transportation corridor development

The idea of the Green Street Connector came up nearly three years ago in the state's 2023 [Route 128/I-95 Land Use & Transportation Study](#). The study described the stretch of I-95 passing through Waltham and nearby townships as "one of the most congested roadways in the state," in part because the area hosts many jobs but provides insufficient housing for workers.

It projected that problem would worsen in the coming years. In addition to general improvements to car, bike, pedestrian and public transit options in the corridor, the study examined proposed construction projects in the area and ways to mitigate the potential impact of that development.

Waltham is home to many of the construction projects examined in the state study. One such project was 1265 Main St., the site of the former Polaroid factory and now home of Market Basket and [other commercial buildings](#). The site's owners have proposed additional construction in the coming years, including a [hotel](#), office spaces and potentially some residential units. The site owner has petitioned the city [for a zoning change, which is necessary to build residential units on the site](#).

The Route 128 Study cited the Green Street Connector as a proposal from owner 1265 Main Street LLC to offset traffic generated by future development on the site.

The connector project has come up recently in 1265 Main Street LLC's discussions with the City Council on rezoning the lot and two others owned by real estate company BXP to allow mixed-use residential and commercial development.

At a Jan. 20 meeting of the City Council's Ordinances and Rules Committee, BXP's vice president of development, Kier Evans, [told councilors](#) his company was considering contributing \$15 million to the project as long as zoning negotiations showed progress in the next few months. He said the Green Street extension project would help mitigate the traffic increases expected from its proposed commercial and residential construction.

Evans said BXP and the state had together proposed approximately \$30 million in funding to construct the Green Street Connector, adding that 1265 Main Street LLC had also offered the city a right-of-way easement on its own land to move the project forward. He said that this project would lay the foundation for future highway improvements around the Route 20 ramps on and off I-95.

In a December statement to The Waltham Times, a Massachusetts Department of Transit spokesperson said state highway infrastructure in connection with the Green Street Connector project was currently under review by MassDOT.

# Waltham Family School brings English learning to the immigrant community

Steve Milmore

February 2, 2026



Waltham Family School hosted its Coffee and Conversation event for students, parents and guests on Jan. 30. Photo by Steve Milmore.

On Jan. 30 the [Waltham Family School](#) held its latest Coffee and Conversation event, a morning program open to the community to learn more about WFS and see the school in action.

More than 40 people attended the event including students, parents and guests. They asked questions, shared experiences, and met the WFS staff in a supportive,

friendly setting.

WFS is a long-standing preschool program that provides English language education for immigrant parents and school readiness for their children. Its mission is to set families up for educational and career success.

The school, located at 510 Moody St., was established in 2003 via a federal grant called [Even Start](#), which awarded funding to communities and municipalities to provide English skills and educational opportunities for lower-income families.



Classroom mural by Anthony Lucero Montoya, a former WFS student. Photo courtesy of WFS.

The school's program director, Jackie Herrera, said the WFS curriculum serves families who want to improve their English and workplace skills through English-as-a-second-language classes and tutoring. The school offers field trips, Chromebooks and scholarships for students who need extra help.

Throughout the year WFS also runs programs that promote community integration and inclusion. This year's literacy event included a book fair, bilingual bingo and raffle baskets. Its annual kindergarten family resource fair attracted a large crowd, with more than 60 families participating.

Since its opening, WFS has supported more than 600 families from from Guatemala, Turkey, Haiti and beyond.

WFS preschool children have gone on to high school, college and successful careers. Parents have graduated and become small business owners, according to Herrera.

“Learning English at Waltham Family School opens up a whole new world of possibilities for me. Every day there is something new to learn and much to be grateful for WFS,” Veronica, a parent at the school, said.

“The future is bright”

Herrera is a first-generation high school and college graduate from El Salvador. She has a passion for serving the immigrant community and wants to continue and build on WFS’ success.



Staff members Anastasia Ekman, Jackie Herrera and Diana Argueta. Photo by Steve Milmore.

“We’ve been welcomed by the community and had great success,” Herrera said. “Our goal is to offer additional preschool classrooms and [English to speakers of other languages] classes so that more immigrant families can get access to our learning tools.”

The Even Start program was eliminated at the federal level in 2010, and WFS’ future was in jeopardy at that time. With the school very successful and thriving, the city didn’t want it to disappear and stepped up, Herrera said.

WFS is now supported by Waltham Public Schools for staffing help, the city for space allocation and The Friends of the Waltham Family School, a small nonprofit, for fundraising. “The future is bright,” Herrera said. “What’s most important, especially given the current

climate and what’s happening in our country, is that we continue to value the richness of our immigrant, multilingual and diverse communities and give them access to high-quality educational opportunities.”

# Tarik Samman emphasizes a values-driven approach to politics in his congressional campaign

Cyd Abnet

February 2, 2026



Tarik Samman is making his first run for political office. Photo courtesy of Tarik Samman.

Cambridge's [Tarik Samman](#) is one of three candidates running in the Massachusetts 5th District congressional primary. He and Jonathan Paz, of Waltham, are challenging Rep. Katherine Clark, Democratic Whip in the U.S. House of Representatives.

When Samman filed with the Federal Election Commission on Nov. 15, it was his first foray into the world of campaigning. He decided to make the leap now because of his concerns about the current political climate. Samman said he's inspired by his family's journey as Syrian immigrants in America.

Samman said voters who want to understand him need to understand his family's story. His father moved to Massachusetts from Syria in the 1980s to escape the Islamist uprising and pursue the American dream. After college, Samman's father moved back to Syria, married Samman's mother and returned to Massachusetts, where Samman and his siblings were born.

Feeling unsafe due to the rise in Islamophobia after 9/11, Samman and his family returned to Syria only to move to Texas in 2011 to escape the Syrian civil war. After finishing high school in Texas, Samman moved to California and attended Irvine Valley College for two years. He graduated from the University of California, Irvine in 2020 with a bachelor's degree in political science with a focus on international relations.

After graduating college, Samman worked as an Uber driver during the COVID-19 pandemic while searching for a job in his field. While the pandemic made him feel isolated, he says it created opportunities to slow down and reflect. Samman said he remembers watching the news on May 25, 2020, and observing the creation of the Black Lives Matter movement after the murder of George Floyd. Through this, he learned an important lesson.

"A small change in America can have a big effect around the globe. If you want to change the world, you have to start with Rome and Rome today is America," Samman said.

Despite this revelation, Samman still did not see himself running for office. He received his master's degree in data science with a focus on social sciences from Columbia University in June 2022. In October of that year, he moved back to Massachusetts to take a research position at Harvard Law School. Samman described returning to Massachusetts for the first time since he was a child like a "return to the motherland."

Samman became involved with the Harvard Academic Workers union and helped build its website and collect signatures to get the union off the ground. He said international students feared getting involved with such social movements. At the time he didn't understand why. However, he said the Israel-Hamas war gave him insights into their fears.

"The Palestinian genocide and the student movement at Harvard, the attacks on student activism, on academic freedom ... I started to see the fear that pushed my family to leave Massachusetts and move back to the Middle East," Samman said.

That led Samman to run for the Massachusetts 5th Congressional District seat.

“You either step up and fight for your country or you flee or isolate yourself from politics,” he said.

A focus on values

Before starting his campaign, Samman did significant exploratory work. He knocked on doors and spoke with trusted experts, including Marshall Ganz, a grassroots organizer and Harvard University professor who had worked on the Obama campaign.

Samman said Ganz advised him to base his campaign on values rather than specific policy stances. Samman said he believes this helps constituents know where he stands on all issues without having to speculate.

“If you are quite sure of my values and principles, you’ll know exactly how I’m going to vote,” he said.

According to Samman’s [platform](#), housing is a basic human right. He values access to affordable child care, sensible and humane foreign policy, and putting people first before artificial intelligence. Samman plans to create a parent advisory board so parents can directly communicate with him about issues relevant to them. He also plans to create a constituent service office that provides swift response to reports of what he believes is unconstitutional ICE activity.

“You need to be fast, you need to be active on the ground to save the immigrant,” Samman said.

Samman said his involvement in academia has influenced his values as well. Since the congressional district has a high density of universities and university students, education without barriers and burdens is a priority for him.

Watching Harvard University students disciplined for protesting the Israel-Hamas war and the Trump administration pull funding from universities is unacceptable to him.

“This district is one of the most educated districts in the country. If you’re representing a district that’s very educated, that values freedom of speech, that values academic freedom, you should represent this in Congress as well,” Samman said.

While Samman understands the gravity of running against the second-highest ranking Democrat in the house, he wants to make one thing clear: “I don’t view this as a run against Katherine Clark. I view it as a run against the status quo of the Democratic Party.”

He said he agrees with Clark on many issues but accused her of having a lack of presence and leadership, a problem he said is emblematic of the status quo.

He also said he hopes that midterm elections will bring not just him to Congress but a new wave of Democrats with values similar to his.

Samman holds an 11 a.m. coffee hour chat at Luxor Cafe in Cambridge each Saturday and is planning on holding coffee hours in other communities in the future, saying it ensures that he will hear from all types of people throughout the district so that he can represent their interests and needs.

If elected, Samman intends to hold regular office hours outside of business hours so that working people can attend and get in direct contact with him. He also wants to make sure that Americans can feel hopeful for their future and the future of their country.

“It’s a very important thing that our country is unfortunately lacking,” he said.

# Jane Rinck, 1935–2026, loving wife, mother, and grandmother

Milestones

February 6, 2026



Jane F. (Keefe) Rinck died Monday, Feb. 2, 2026, in Maristhill Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Waltham after a short illness. She was 90.

Jane was born in Jamaica Plain on March 13, 1935, daughter of the late John and Bertha (White) Keefe. Raised in Watertown, she attended the Hosmer School and was later a proud alumna of Mount Saint Joseph Academy class of 1952, where she embraced her Catholic education, made lifelong friends and was the captain of her basketball team.

After graduation, she worked in Boston at both John Hancock and Liberty Mutual Insurance companies. At that time, Jane accepted an invitation to join a work colleague to visit some family in Jacksonville, FL. That trip

would set the course for the next 68 years of her life. It was there that a sharp, young Navy man named Philip J. Rinck, a friend of the family Jane was staying with from nearby Fernandina Beach, agreed to take Jane on a tour of the area. And as the story goes, Jane would write Philip a thank you note, and he wrote back, and thus a long-distance courtship through love letters and phone calls ensued.

Jane and Philip were married 66 years ago, in her hometown parish of Saint Theresa in Watertown, on June 13, 1959. They eventually bought their first home in Waltham, the home they still reside in, where they became members of St. Jude's Parish, raised a family and became active members of the community.

Once their children were all of school age, Jane's clerical proficiency landed her a job as a secretary at Saint Patrick Elementary School in Watertown. It was a job that afforded her the opportunity to use her accomplished organizational skills and be home when the kids returned from school. Jane unfailingly supported the varying needs and activities of all four children, rarely missing any extracurricular events.

Jane's Catholic faith remained central and steadfast all her life. A member of Saint Jude's Parish, she was once Prefect of Sodality; she supported the Finance Committee by counting the weekly monetary contributions each Sunday; she was appointed an Extraordinary Minister to

bring the Eucharist to the infirmed; she taught CCD; and she served on the Altar Guild for decades by impeccably ironing the church linens for services. No one worked an iron better than Jane! Volunteerism was at her core, and together with Philip she prepared meals for The Bristol Lodge shelter in Waltham for 30 years.

Jane was extremely active and social. She and Philip were in a bowling league for years, and Jane played softball in her local Warrendale community back in the 70's. She walked Main Street daily with girlfriends, and then later with Philip, eventually moving off road and onto the safety of the soft high school track. Walking was both a commitment to fitness and a social tradition, one that continued until just this winter.

Jane loved to travel, her two favorite destinations being Disney World and Ireland, and she made sure her entire family would experience a trip together to each happy place. Family was what Jane cherished most, and her devotion to fostering kindness, honesty, humility, good humor and generosity was evident in every decision she made for herself, her children and her grandchildren. She truly "walked the talk" and personified the Bible's Golden Rule: *Do Unto Others as You Would Have Done unto You.*

In heaven Jane is reunited with her daughter, Marie F. Bettano (Sept. 9, 2001) and her brother, Arthur Keefe.

In addition to her husband of 66 years, Philip, she leaves her children, Patricia A. Cutler (Paul) of Natick, Thomas G. Rinck (Tanya) of San Marcos, California and Timothy J. Rinck (Terriann) of Oceanside, New York; her grandchildren, Meaghan Bettano, Olivia Hopkins (Anthony), Bianca Cutler (Joseph Bateh), Sophia Cutler, Brittany Goudreault (Bill), Tyler Rinck (Kaira), Connor Rinck (Maria), Alexandra Rinck (fiancée Zack Droblas), Timothy Rinck and Lauren Rinck; her great-grandchildren, Finn, Aviana and Thomas, Reese and Cameron; nieces and nephews; and her longtime best friend since elementary school, Marie Doherty.

Family and friends will honor and remember Jane's life by gathering for an evening wake in The Joyce Funeral Home, 245 Main Street (Rte. 20), Waltham on Wednesday, Feb. 11 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Her funeral mass will be celebrated on Thursday, Feb. 12 in St. Jude's Church, 147 Main Street, Waltham, at 10:30 a.m. Burial will follow in Saint Patrick Cemetery, Watertown.

# From Waltham to the world's jazz stages: Remembering Rebecca Kilgore

By William Holder

February 5, 2026



A Waltham native whose voice delighted jazz connoisseurs for decades with a technique described as flawless has died.

Rebecca Kilgore, born Sept. 24, 1949, was a 1967 graduate of Waltham High School. She died Jan. 7 in Portland, Oregon, where she had long resided. She was one of two daughters in an artistically inclined family, according to [an obituary in the New York Times](#). Her father, George M. Kilgore, did sales work for a rivet company and was a Unitarian Church choir director; her mother, Jean (Schaufus) Kilgore, managed the home and took on

redecorating projects.

A note in the Waltham High yearbook said her hobby was guitar and she participated in the folk club. “When I was in high school,” she said in a [2024 profile](#) by Christopher Loudon in Jazz Times, “I was into Joan Baez and Judy Collins and people like that. I got a guitar and strummed along. Then I discovered a disc jockey in the area who played classic jazz. I got acquainted with Billie Holiday and Ella Fitzgerald and Anita O’Day and just flipped.

Those singers took me on a complete musical detour. They were my teachers, because I never had any formal training. I consider myself so fortunate to be a torchbearer for that style of singing.” Kilgore’s musical career didn’t take off until 1981 when, while working as a secretary at Reed College in Portland, she was hired to replace a friend in a swing-revival quintet called Wholly Cats. She sang with jazz, folk and country-swing bands, culminating in a long stint at the Heathman Hotel bar in Portland, where she performed with pianist and song writer Dave Frishberg.

She helped to reinvigorate the Great American Songbook, according to the Times. Michael Feinstein, a leading performer of American Songbook standards, recorded a video interview with her in 2014, in which he described her as a “musical detective” who loved to revive obscure songs.

Feinstein praised her ability to create “something completely fresh that makes so many songs that I’ve never heard anybody sing in the last several decades fresh and new and viable again. That’s the hallmark of a great artist.”

In a 1995 interview with The Oregonian, Kilgore said her goal “is that when someone hears me sing a song, they say, ‘Wow, what a beautiful song,’ rather than, ‘Wow, what a great singer.’”

Her fans included the cartoonist Gary Larson, who enlisted her to sing the swing-era ballad “I’ll Be Seeing You” on the soundtrack of his animated TV special “Tales From the Far Side” in 1994.

Kilgore came of age during a time of cultural and political upheaval in the United States when rock ‘n’ roll dominated the radio airwaves. But in her interview with The Oregonian she explained why jazz classics held so much appeal for her.

“The old music’s not saying, ‘I want to sleep with you, I want to have your baby.’ It’s saying, ‘Your eyes are like starlight,’” she said. “I prefer that.”

## **Doris Stascavage, 1934–2026, lifelong Waltham resident**

Milestones

February 2, 2026



Doris V. (Nix) Stascavage, of Waltham, passed away Jan. 23, 2026 in Newton-Wellesley Hospital after an illness. She was 91.

Doris was born on Apr. 16, 1934 in Waltham a daughter of the late Lawrence and Viola (Banks) Nix. A lifelong Waltham resident she graduated from Waltham High School with the class of 1952. She was married to Robert J. Stascavage on Sep. 25, 1954 until his death on Sep. 8, 1997.

She worked in check processing department with Bank Boston for many years and previously worked at Puritan Dress Company. Doris enjoyed travelling including trips to Nova Scotia and New Hampshire and taking many cruises with her cousins Ellen and Janeen. Doris was a tried-and-true New England sports fan with a special passion for the Boston Bruins.

She leaves her sons, Bryan R. Stascavage of Waltham and Alan L. Stascavage (Cheryl) of West Newton; her grandchildren, Justin and Jaclyn Stascavage; her sister, Jean Hilliard of Holliston; cousins including Ellen Stewart of W. Springfield and Janeen Mills (John) of Ottawa, Canada; nieces and nephews; and best friend Jane Saulnier and family of Waltham.

Family and friends honored Doris’ life by gathering for a morning wake at The Joyce Funeral Home, 245 Main Street (Rte. 20), Waltham, on Friday, Feb. 6 followed by her funeral service and burial in Mount Feake Cemetery, Waltham.

# Events and Activities Calendar

February 11-March 10

<p>WED <b>11</b></p>	<p>February 11 @ 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm</p> <h3>Winter Exhibitions Opening Celebration</h3> <p><b>Rose Art Museum</b> 415 South Street, Waltham, MA, United States</p> <p>Join us for a lively winter exhibition opening that brings art, conversation, and community together. Be among the first to experience two exciting new exhibitions: "Photorealism in Focus," a fresh look at a movement that transformed how we see the everyday, and "Yinka Shonibare: Sanctuary," a powerful installation exploring belonging, history, and refuge through the [...]</p>	<p>TUE <b>17</b></p>	<p>February 17 @ 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm</p> <h3>Waltham City Council committee meetings</h3> <p><b>Waltham City Hall</b> 610 Main St., Waltham, MA, United States</p> <p>The Licenses and Franchises Committee meets at 7:00 p.m. The Veterans Services Committee, the Public Works and Public Safety Committee, the Economic and Community Development Committee, and the Long Term Debt and Capital Planning Committee meet upon the call of the Chairperson of each committee. The remaining committees meet in the following order, beginning at [...]</p> <p>Free</p>
<p>WED <b>11</b></p>	<p>February 11 @ 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm</p> <h3>Making pollinator gardens easy</h3> <p><b>Zoom</b></p> <p>Register for the Waltham Land Trust's "Making Pollinator Gardens Easy." Green Urb Gardens, a local business supporting the future of mindful landscaping, will present a simple step-by-step guide to creating your own backyard (or public) pollinator haven. You'll learn about common pollinators in the area, which native plants support them best, and how to use [...]</p> <p>Free</p>	<p>WED <b>18</b></p>	<p>February 18 @ 10:00 am - 11:00 am</p> <h3>Low back pain and posture</h3> <p><b>Waltham YMCA</b> 725 Lexington St, Waltham, MA</p> <p>In this workshop a physical therapist will educate on the components of good posture for a healthy lower back. They will discuss the causes and types of low back pain [...]</p> <p>Free</p>
<p>SAT <b>14</b></p>	<p>February 14 @ 11:00 am - 3:00 pm</p> <h3>Upcoming Repair Cafe: Valentine's Day!</h3> <p><b>Charles River Museum of Industry &amp; Innovation</b> 154 Moody Street, Waltham, United States</p> <p>Bring your well-loved items and our volunteers will try to repair them. Once again, we will be at the Charles River Museum. With their support, we can ensure that this event remains free and open to the public. Please explore this wonderful museum and event space while you are here! Donations and tips will be [...]</p> <p>Free</p>	<p>WED <b>18</b></p>	<p>February 18 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm</p> <h3>Living well with Parkinson's disease</h3> <p><b>Newton YMCA</b> 276 Church St, Newton, MA</p> <p>One of the keys to living well with Parkinson's disease is to exercise and to avoid falls. This talk will focus on evidence-based updates and expert recommendations regarding exercise, balance [...]</p> <p>Free</p>
<p>SUN <b>15</b></p>	<p>February 15 @ 9:00 am - 10:00 am</p> <h3>Friends Beyond Boston: Coffee social at the Café</h3> <p><b>Cafe On The Common</b> Waltham</p> <p>Looking to meet new people over a great cup of coffee? Join us at Café on the Common for a relaxed, conversational coffee social. This event is great for anyone looking to meet like-minded people, whether you're new to the area or just looking to expand your circle. The café's cozy atmosphere makes it a perfect spot [...]</p> <p>Free</p>	<p>WED <b>18</b></p>	<p>February 18 @ 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm</p> <h3>Board of Health meeting</h3> <p><b>City of Waltham Government Center</b> 119 School Street, Waltham, MA</p> <p>The Board of Health meets monthly, year-round. Meetings are typically held on the third Wednesday of each month at 5 p.m. Contact the Health Department to confirm each meeting and [...]</p>
<p>MON <b>16</b></p>	<p>February 16 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm</p> <h3>Not My President's Day demonstration</h3> <p><b>Main and Moody</b> 1 Moody Street, Waltham, MA</p> <p>Please join Indivisible Waltham for a Not My President's Day demonstration at the corner of Main and Moody Streets on Monday, February 16.</p>	<p>WED <b>18</b></p>	<p>February 18 @ 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm</p> <h3>Fiber arts night</h3> <p><b>Waltham Public Library</b> 735 Main St, Waltham, MA, United States</p> <p>Cozy crafting season is here! Join us for a fun night of community and crafting. Bring your fiber arts projects—any project from knitting to embroidery, crochet to cross-stitch, weaving and [...]</p> <p>Free</p>
<p>MON <b>16</b></p>	<p>February 16 @ 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm</p> <h3>Tu Beshvat tree fair and Seder: Rescheduled</h3> <p>Temple Beth Israel invites the Waltham community to celebrate Tu Beshvat, the Jewish birthday of trees, which has been rescheduled to Monday, Feb. 16, at 2:00 p.m. There will be a short "tasting" service reflecting on the blessings of the seasons and the produce of the trees. Local environmental leaders will then present the work [...]</p>	<p>THU <b>19</b></p>	<p>February 19 @ 10:00 am - 11:00 am</p> <h3>Traffic Commission meeting</h3> <p><b>Waltham City Hall</b> 610 Main St., Waltham, MA, United States</p> <p>The Waltham Traffic Commission meets monthly, September to June. Meetings are typically held on the third Thursday of each month, at 10 a.m., with changes to accommodate special meetings and holidays. Meetings are held at City Hall, 610 Main Street, on the second floor, in the council chamber. Members of the public are invited to [...]</p>
		<p>THU <b>19</b></p>	<p>February 19 @ 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm</p> <h3>The History of Hip Hop</h3> <p><b>Waltham Public Library</b> 735 Main St, Waltham, MA, United States</p> <p>Learn about the history of hip hop with Professor Rondae Drafts, Ph.D. Rondae is Executive Director of MUSIC Dance.Edu, specializing in performing arts opportunities and music education throughout New England. [...]</p> <p>Free</p>

THU  
19

February 19 @ 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

### Minutemen Toastmasters of Waltham

**Meadow Green Rehabilitation & Nursing Center** 45 Woburn St. off Trapelo Rd., Waltham

Gain confidence as a public speaker. Our club, within Toastmasters International, works on improving communication and leadership skills in a supportive environment. We meet twice a month, first and third Thursday nights. The first meeting of the month is via Zoom, while the third Thursday meeting is hybrid with the in-person location at Meadow Green. [...]

SAT  
21

February 21 @ 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

### Annual Duck Walk along the Charles

**Will be emailed to those who register closer to the date** 8 Common Street, Waltham

Join the Waltham Land Trust for a walk along the Charles River trail in search of dazzling waterfowl visiting from northern climes, as well as our resident birds. Possible sightings [...]

Free

SAT  
21

February 21 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

### Waltham Concerned Citizens peace vigil

**Main and Moody** 1 Moody Street, Waltham, MA

Please join Waltham Concerned Citizens at the corner of Main and Moody Streets for our regular third-Saturday peace vigil on Saturday, Feb. 21, from 11:00 a.m. to noon.

SUN  
22

February 22 @ 9:00 am - 10:00 am

### Café Meet and Mingle: Bi+ community edition

**Cafe On The Common** Waltham

Hoping to connect with other bi+ people over coffee and conversation? Join Friends Beyond Boston-Waltham Social (20s-40s) for a relaxed and friendly coffee social in Waltham. This edition of our [...]

Free

SUN  
22

February 22 @ 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm

### Music, tea and biscuits with the Ruth and Ben String Band

**Gore Place** 52 Gore Street

Enjoy a Sunday afternoon of "high-energy, old-time music" with the Ruth and Ben String Band. Come early to enjoy some tea, biscuits and good company in the beautifully restored (and heated!) 1793 Carriage House, the perfect venue for down-home music and socializing! The music is very spirited and people of all ages love the band's [...]

\$21

WED  
25

February 25 @ 10:00 am - 11:00 am

### Puppet playtime

**Gore Place** 52 Gore Street

Join Good News Gus and his puppet pals for songs, stories, and activities in the Gore Place Carriage House. This interactive puppet show is both fun and funny; you'll be [...]

\$16

WED  
25

February 25 @ 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm [School Committee meeting](#)

### School Committee meeting

**617 Lexington St** 617 Lexington St, Waltham, MA

The School Committee typically meets twice per month (once each in July and August) on Wednesday evenings. Check the School Committee web site to confirm meeting dates and times. Unless specifically noted, all regular meetings of the Waltham School Committee begin at 7 p.m. and are held in the Cannon Lecture Hall at 617 Lexington [...]

THU  
26

February 26 @ 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

### Chakras, crystals and chill

**Waltham Public Library** 735 Main St, Waltham, MA, United States

Chakras, crystals and chill with Body, Stone and Soul. Join us for a fun and fascinating night! The wonderful Tasha of Body, Stone and Soul is back to teach us [...]

Free

THU  
26

February 26 @ 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm

### Conservation Commission meeting

**Zoom**

The Conservation Commission typically meets twice each month on Thursdays at 7 p.m. Meetings are usually held remotely via Zoom and are open to the public. Visit the commission's web page for more information (Zoom links are included in each posted agenda).

SUN  
1

March 1 @ 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm

### Music, tea and biscuits with Mrs. Wilberforce

**Gore Place** 52 Gore Street

Enjoy a Sunday afternoon of beautiful traditional music from the British Isles and beyond with Mrs. Wilberforce. Come early to enjoy tea, biscuits and good company in the beautifully restored (and heated!) 1793 Carriage House, the perfect venue for music and socializing! The duo of Kyra Davies (fiddle, viola, vocals) and Sean Smith (guitar, bouzouki, [...]

\$21

MON  
2

March 2 @ 4:30 pm - 8:30 pm

### Purim Palooza with Temple Beth Israel

Join the Jewish community of Waltham to celebrate Purim with carnival games, hamantaschen contest, crafts like make your own mask and gragger, and a costume parade! Sign up here to throw [...]

THU  
5

March 5 @ 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm [Waltham Cultural Council meeting](#)

### Waltham Cultural Council meeting

**Zoom**

The Waltham Cultural Council is a part of the Massachusetts Cultural Council's local council program. It allocates funds for arts, sciences and humanities projects and events which focus on Waltham's cultural [...]

THU  
5

March 5 @ 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

### Minutemen Toastmasters of Waltham

**Zoom**

Gain confidence as a public speaker. Our club, within Toastmasters International, works on improving communication and leadership skills in a supportive environment. We meet twice a month, first and third [...]

SUN  
8

March 8 @ 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

### Waltham Philharmonic Orchestra "All-American Concert"

**Waltham Government Center** 119 School Street, Waltham, MA, United States

The Waltham Philharmonic Orchestra will commemorate the 250th anniversary of the United States with a very exciting concert featuring American composers! Tickets can only be purchased online here. Adults: \$28.50. Children ages 5-17 accompanied by an adult: Free.

\$28.50

TUE  
10

March 10 @ 3:30 pm - 5:30 pm

### National Grid — Customer assistance event









**McDevitt Middle School** 75 Church Street, Waltham, MA

Meet with assistance program experts and connect with the resources your family needs, all under one roof, all in one day. Our advocates will be on-site to help you explore options [...]

Free

# Waltham new home sales

Jan. 23–30, 2026

	Sale Date	Address	Sale Price	BR/Baths	Size
	1/23/2026	55 CIRCLE DR	\$750,000	2/1	889 sf
	1/26/2026	97 HARRINGTON RD	\$1,500,000	3/2.5	3420 sf
	1/27/2026	194 COLLEGE FARM RD	\$705,000	3/1.5	1344 sf
	1/28/2026	116 RAFFAELE DR	\$2,150,000	4/4	4670 sf
	1/28/2026	948 MAIN ST UNIT 105	\$396,000	1/1	777 sf
	1/28/2026	70 ROSEWOOD DR	\$1,560,000	3/3	3548 sf
	1/29/2026	160 SCHOOL ST UNIT 3-1	\$630,000	2/2	1222 sf
	1/30/2026	170 CLOCKTOWER DR UNIT 5104	\$230,895	2/1	960 sf