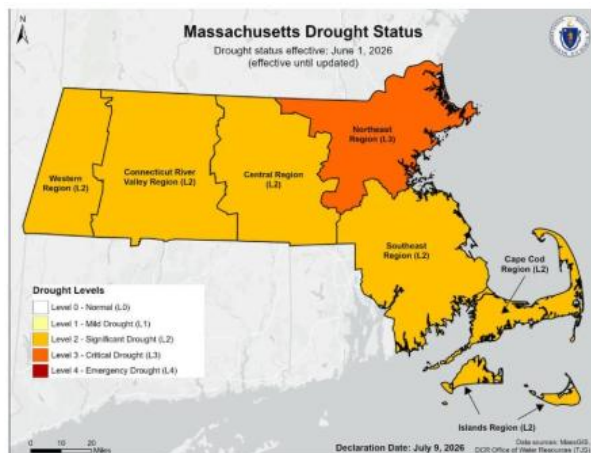


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July 20, 2026



Critical drought declared for Waltham, state's northeast region



Let's get out of opposing corners to plan Waltham's future together



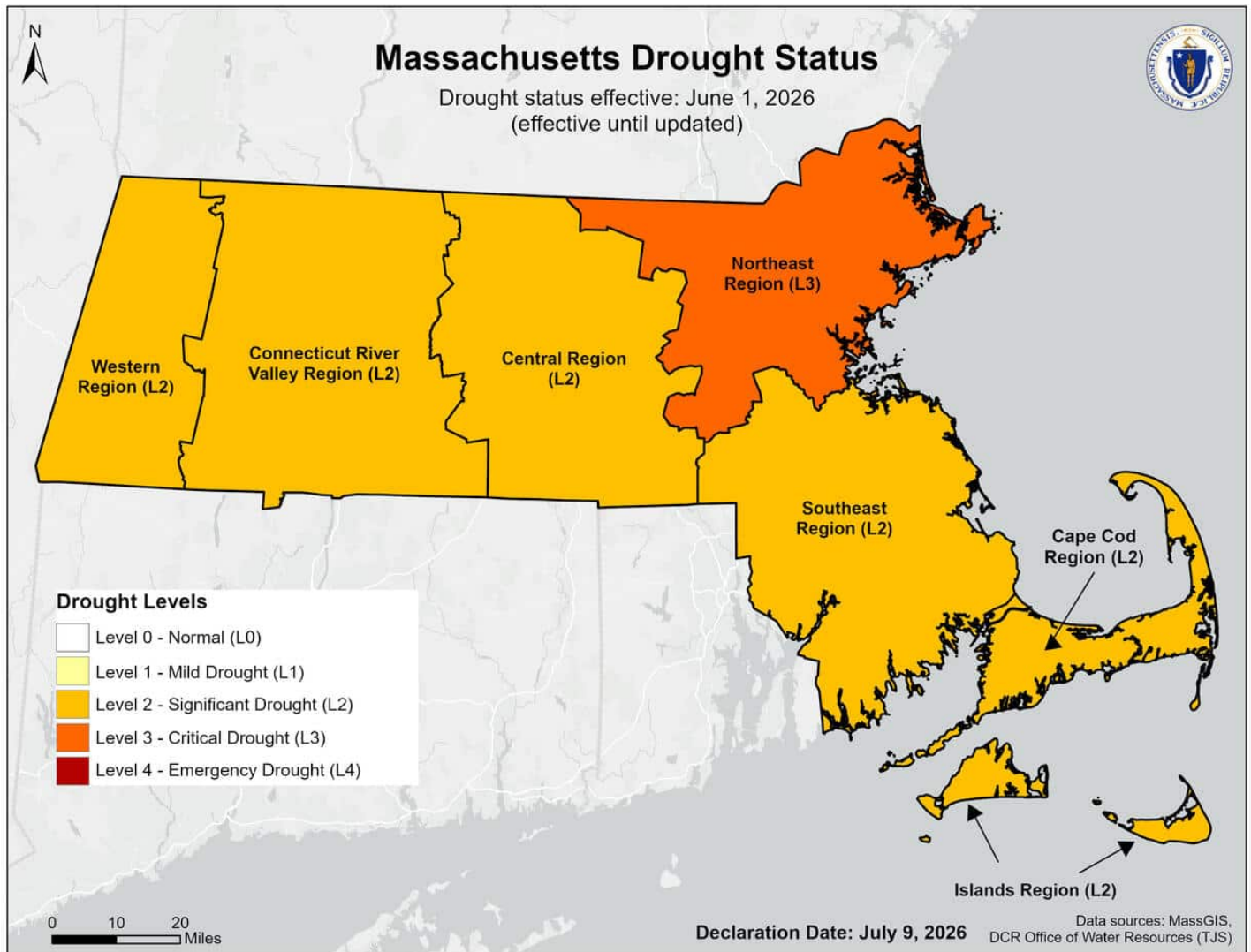
Volunteer profile: The design brain behind The Waltham Times



Boston Dynamics investing \$100M to consolidate in Waltham

Critical drought declared for Waltham, state's northeast region

BY CYD ABNET • ENVIRONMENT • JULY 19, 2026



Massachusetts Drought Map 07-09-26.

The northeast region of Massachusetts, which includes Waltham, is in a level 3 critical drought, according to the state's Office of Water Resources. The rest of the state is in a level 2 significant drought status.

The drought status, shared by Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rebecca Tepper in a [recent press release](#), emphasizes the need to take extra precaution against

brush fire and conserve water where possible.

Combatting fire risk

Drought conditions increase fire risk, according to Waltham Fire Department Lt. Mike Murphy.

“Much of the outdoor vegetation can become fuel for fire. Dry brush like fallen leaves and also mulch can more easily ignite,” Murphy explained.

To reduce risk, Murphy advises residents to clean up piles of leaves and dried-up vegetation and to keep mulch away from residential structures. Adhering to Massachusetts Department of Fire Safety [guidelines](#) while grilling, keeping a fire extinguisher handy while cooking outside and putting out cigarettes in a metal can filled with water can reduce risk as well, he said.

Murphy stressed that outdoor burning is not allowed in Waltham at any time, as is standard for many Boston-area communities. While propane-fed gas fire pits are allowed, wood fire pits are not.

Effects on the environment

The drought has significantly affected Waltham’s local flora and fauna. According to Waltham Land Trust Executive Director Sonja Wadman, the effects are cascading.

“Water sources like the Charles River, Hardy Pond and our brooks shrink, resulting in concentrated amounts of pollutants and exposing critical habitat for fish, migrating birds and amphibians found along the edges of waterways and in wetlands,” she explained.

Wadman also noted that trees and plants are affected by the lack of water and often die as a result. “Our volunteer trail and land restoration stewards are very busy trying their best to keep our recently planted and even more established vegetation moist,” she said.

Changes in gardening

Many gardens require water to thrive, which can pose a challenge during a drought. Waltham Garden Club member Kathy Hines said a cotton rope wick and water-filled buckets can help to keep soil moist.

“I place the water-filled buckets in strategic spots around my garden and run a length of rope from the bottom of the pail to the roots of the plant and bury the end of the rope,” Hines said. “My perennials can last about three to four days absorbing water as needed while I’m away.”

Hines leaves this setup in her garden during the drought, as she believes it helps save water.

Waltham Garden Club member Nancy Eyster-Smith suggests collecting rainwater to use in place of water from a hose. “Some years I can manage to not use my hose in a vegetable garden and flower gardens except for a few times during the summer,” she said. Additionally, Eyster-Smith recommends using mulch to reduce evaporation and planting drought-tolerant plant varieties such as butterfly milkweed, which is native to Massachusetts.



A cotton rope wick and water-filled buckets can help to keep soil moist.

Individual action

While residents can’t change how much precipitation the state gets, they can take actions that help protect the water supply during a drought, Tepper said.

The state Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs compiled a list of actions residents can take to help promote the recovery of the state’s water system:

For regions in Level 3 – Critical Drought

Residents and Businesses:

- Follow state water conservation measures and any local water use restrictions.
- Monitor total household water use shown on your water bill for sudden increases, which often indicate leaks. Use the [MA home water use calculator tool](#) to evaluate household water use.

- Fix any toilet or faucet leaks immediately.
- Check for leaks regularly by:
 - Checking water meters for constant dial movement.
 - Using dye tabs to check for toilet leaks.
 - Conducting regular inspections of all pipes and fixtures, including those located in utility rooms, crawlspaces and other hidden areas.
- Use dishwashers rather than handwashing dishes. Run the dishwasher only on a full load.
- Reduce indoor water use by:
 - Taking showers rather than baths.
 - Reducing shower length and using a shower timer.
 - Running washing machines only on a full load.
 - Turning off the water while brushing teeth and shaving.
 - Replacing old fixtures and appliances with water-efficient ones. Make sure toilets, faucets and showerheads are [WaterSense labeled](#).
- Stop all nonessential water use.

Budget breakdown: Final school budget funds new administrators and rising special ed costs

BY LEA ZAHARONI • EDUCATION • JULY 19, 2026



The final FY27 budget book for Waltham Public Schools, approved during the School Committee’s July 9 meeting, closed the loop on a contentious budget season that saw strategic disagreements between Superintendent Marisa Mendonsa and Mayor Jeannette A. McCarthy.

A central variance between the two visions for the future of the district was the inclusion of new administrative positions both in the central office and at Waltham High School. Mendonsa saw the positions as essential to putting WHS [back on the right track](#), while McCarthy thought the money would be best spent on [more classroom teachers](#).

The book resolves that variance and shows that it will indeed be Mendonsa’s strategy that carries forward into next fiscal year. The cost center covering the district’s central administrative offices rose from \$2.4 million to \$3.4 million — a 40% increase. The document’s line-item notes attribute it to a “reorganization of Central Office positions” and list a new deputy superintendent, an executive director of language acquisition, an executive director of college and career readiness and a human resources generalist (which replaces an administrator of human resources).

It also eliminates a director of English language learning role, replacing it with an executive director of language acquisition. It’s unclear if this role will be occupied by the previous director. As of press time, the district’s website still [lists](#) Marianne Duffy as the assistant director of English language learning, but no director or executive director.

District Adds			
Position	FTE	Location	Cost
Deputy Superintendent	Repurpose	District	\$20,000 (Repurpose Admin of Human Resources)
Executive Director of Family and Community Engagement	1.0	District	\$100,225
Executive Director of College and Career Readiness	1.0	District	\$167,500
Executive Director of Language Acquisition	Repurpose	District	+\$25,000 (Repurpose Director of MLL)
HR Generalist	1.0	District	\$65,000

Elementary Adds			
Position	FTE	Location	Cost
Early Childhood Admin	1.0	WHS	\$130,000
PreK Teachers	2.0	WHS	\$200,000
PreK Paraprofessionals	2.0	WHS	\$78,104
CNA	1.0	MacArthur	\$36,302
Adjustment Counselor	1.0	MacArthur	\$100,000
ESL Teacher	1.0	MacArthur	\$100,000
Classroom Teachers	2.0	Stanley	\$200,000
Special Education Teachers	2.0	Plympton & MacArthur	\$200,000

Secondary Adds			
Position	FTE	Location	Cost
HVACR Teacher	1.0	WHS	\$100,000
Assistant Principal	2.0	WHS	\$274,182
School Counselor	.5	Kennedy	\$0 (Repurpose)
Special Education	1.0		\$100,000

A list of the new positions funded in the FY27 budget book across all schools. Courtesy of WPS.

Though City Council ended up approving McCarthy’s final budget book, which totaled \$132,847,897, it does not have the authority to approve specific line items. It simply appropriates a lump sum to a department, and that department decides how to divvy up the funds. In this case, the School Committee had room to fund extra positions that didn’t appear in McCarthy’s budget, and it did.

Also in keeping with Mendonsa’s growth strategy, Waltham High School will get two new assistant principals — bringing the total to six — who will work with the [recently hired](#) principal William Conard.

Mendonsa said her plan is partly rooted in bringing Waltham up to speed with other districts and their admin ratios. “Our admin ratio, if you compared us to ... the communities around us, Framingham, Natick, etc., we are at the bottom in terms of the ratio between teacher to administrator,” she told the City Council at a June budget hearing.

She elaborated on her reasoning at a June 10 School Committee meeting. “When I propose assistant principals ... it’s because I believe they are the most important investments we can make,” she said. “When the ratio between teachers and administrators is too high, the support is spread too thin.”

In total, 19.5 new positions were added across administrative and classroom roles, totaling \$1,996,313.

Changes in other areas

While the back-and-forth over administrative positions dominated meetings, two other cost centers raised by more than the entire reorganization combined. Special education, a historically expensive area for districts across the state, rose by \$2.85 million, or 10.3%, from FY26 — the largest single dollar amount anywhere in the budget.

Much of that is \$924,000 in salary increases for special ed paraprofessionals, who support classroom teachers. Some \$887,058 is allocated for special ed teacher salary increases. But the largest percentage increase from last year's budget is in out-of-district collaborative placements. Waltham is obliged to pay for tuition at specialized schools when it cannot serve a student's needs, including transportation to and from that school. These placement costs are up 109% from last year, from \$1.42 million to just under \$3 million.

The district has received feedback on improving its in-house offerings and better serving the needs of students within its own programs.

That increase didn't move the bottom line as much as it should have, though, because the state's circuit breaker reimbursement rose right along with it by 80%, up to \$5.6 million. Because out-of-district placements are so costly, the circuit breaker provides financial assistance, and has done so since implementation at the state level in 2004. Once a student's costs exceed a certain threshold, the state covers 75% of the student's tuition and transportation. Waltham's per-pupil costs rose, and thus so did the circuit breaker.

A few line items rose faster by percentage, though making up smaller portions of the budget. Spending on information technology equipment is up 82.5%, from \$43,000 to \$168,000, tied to a technology refresh cycle that administrators alluded to throughout the budget process.

On the other side of the ledger, English language learner services dropped 6.4%, or \$412,000, tied to the cuts of four-and-a-half full-time teacher salaries and two full-time paraprofessional salaries. Mendonsa has said these changes were motivated by a drop in the English learner population in the district.

The total amount for FY27 of \$132,847,897 represents a 7.1% increase over FY26, consistent with the figure approved by the City Council in June. Clerical errors and inconsistencies between budget books halted the School Committee's final approval until July 9, but the School Department can now move forward into the school year with a clear roadmap.



LEA ZAHARONI

Lea Zaharoni is a recent graduate of Brandeis University, where she majored in American Studies and Journalism. She spent most of her time at school working as General Manager of the student radio station WBRS 100.1, which broadcasts live 24/7 on Waltham FM radio. She's also written for Brandeis' student newspaper, the Justice, as well as the Irish Independent in Dublin and Dig Boston. Lea loves exploring new places in town and returning to old favorites, and counts herself very lucky to be a part of the Waltham community.

New police station concept moves forward, with uncertain timeline

BY ARTIE KRONENFELD • PUBLIC SAFETY • JULY 19, 2026



The city has finalized a concept for a new police headquarters at the public safety campus at 155 Lexington St.

The Police and Fire Station Building Committee met jointly on Wednesday to approve a plan for the current police station's redesign.

Updating the Lexington Street facilities, which currently also house the Fire Department and Department of Public Works headquarters, while keeping city services fully functional will be a scheduling ballet. It may be years before builders break ground on the project.



Waltham's Police and Fire Station Committee at its final joint meeting. Photo by Artie Kronenfeld.

The city started discussing a police station update [in 2018](#). The project has since grown to involve a full redesign of the Lexington Street public safety campus, with a new headquarters for the Fire Department and [a separate Department of Public Works facility](#) moved to the former Fernald Estate.

The city has hired architectural planning and design firm Tecton Architects to design the police station, which will be the first new building put in at 155 Lexington St. The new station will go up behind the existing police headquarters in order to minimize disruptions from construction.

But construction on the new station can't begin until the DPW headquarters is moved.

The project management team said the move would happen in steps, so the new police station could feasibly break ground in as few as 18 months. Realistically, though, it may not start for two years or more, depending on how much work the Fernald site requires before the DPW construction team can begin its work.

While waiting on the DPW move, the architects will begin assembling permits and drafting detailed design documents for the police station; the City Council already approved \$10.5 million in additional funding for project design services [last March](#).

The new design

At Wednesday's meeting, principal project architect Jeffery McElravy unveiled the final concept for the police station and explained changes his team had implemented since the committee last met in March.

The station's design is now more compact. The publicly accessible area at the front of the building has shrunk slightly, but the station will still include a room for community gatherings and space for internal expansion, as well as a large visitor parking lot.

In order to fit all necessary facilities into the new building, McElravy moved the station's cell blocks and arrest processing center underneath the building's second-floor firing range. He assured committee members his team could prevent noise from the range from bleeding into the rooms below.

The building also includes a second entrance leading to a wing of the building that will house Fire Department administrative offices and a 911 response center. These rooms have been moved back and forth between the new police and fire headquarters in previous concept drawings, but representatives of both departments approved this new setup, saying it would allow emergency responders sufficiently separate spaces.

McElravy also proposed a location for the future fire headquarters that would allow most of the current station building to remain standing during construction. The new fire station would sit beside the current one, overlapped only with current administrative offices — which by then would be moved to the police building — and a mechanical room that could be temporarily replaced during construction.

The city has not yet contracted out initial design work on the fire station. After this meeting, the committee expects to split into separate police and fire planning committees to further develop plans for both buildings. Fire Chief Andrew Mullin expressed hope that Waltham could similarly finalize design documents while building the police station so that the fire station project could break ground as soon as the first phase of construction was completed.



Principal project architect Jeffery McElravy presents updates to plans for a new Waltham police station. Photo by Artie Kronenfeld.



A layout for a new fire and police station at 155 Lexington St. Photo by Artie Kronenfeld.

Author



ARTIE KRONENFELD

Artie Kronenfeld is a Waltham-based reporter who enjoys writing about policy and administration that affect people's everyday lives. Previously hailing from Toronto, they're a former editor-in-chief of the University of Toronto's flagship student paper The Varsity. You can find them during off-work hours playing niche RPGs, wandering through Haymarket and making extra spreadsheets that nobody asked for.

The week ahead: City sets Monday morning deadline for paying back taxes on 40 properties

BY ARTIE KRONENFELD • GOVERNMENT • JULY 19, 2026

If the property owners on 40 parcels of land around Waltham don't pay their 2025 back taxes by 10 a.m. Monday, the Treasurer's Office said it will file tax liens on the lots.

This marks the final stage of the outstanding tax collection process where residents can still pay off their taxes. After a "tax taking," the city collects any rent and income from the property toward its tax bill; if a property's owner cannot pay the tax bill after a year, the city can begin foreclosure proceedings in the state's land court. According to City Treasurer Tom Magno, as of early June the city was in the process of approximately 20 foreclosure cases.

At this year's [budget hearings](#), Magno emphasized that the city has a number of programs to work with people to pay their taxes. "We have an aggressive collection program, but that doesn't mean we're not sensitive with people. We reach out ... we set up payment plans, we walk them through the process," he said.

Below is a chronological rundown of other city meetings scheduled from July 20 through 24.

Retirement Board

The Waltham Retirement Board will meet to discuss new hires and retirements in the city.

The board will meet Tuesday at 4:45 p.m. in the Hoover Meeting Room at City Hall and will stream the meeting via [Zoom](#).

License Commission

The License Commission grants and reviews permits for serving food and alcohol for entertainment and for some types of gaming machines across the city.

It will meet on Wednesday at 7 p.m. in the public meeting room of the Clark Government Center at 119 School St. Its agenda will be posted Monday on the [Licensing Department page](#) of the city's website.

Charles River Museum exhibit shows Nikola Tesla as fraught businessman

BY LEA ZAHARONI • ARTS & CULTURE • JULY 19, 2026

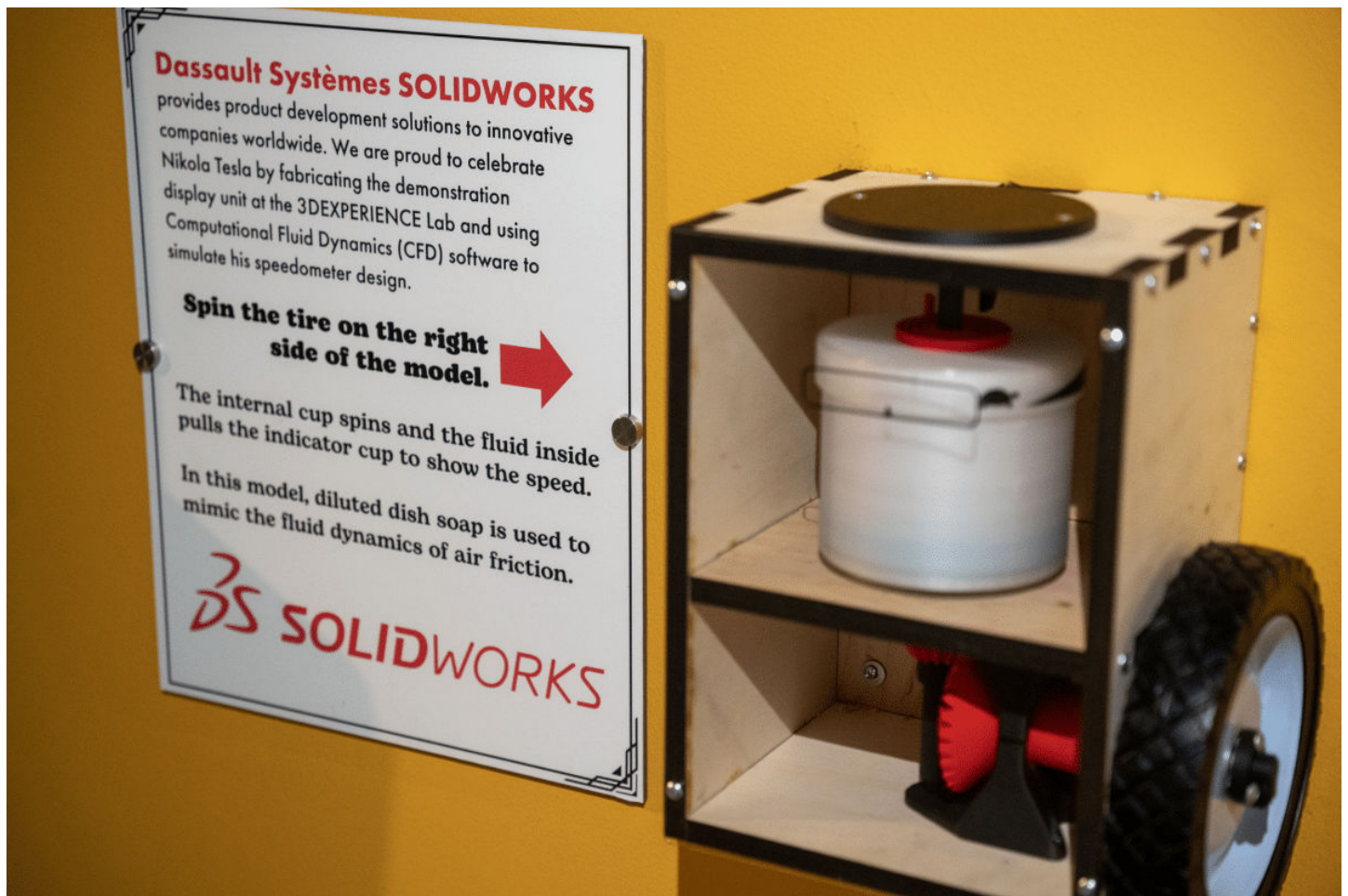


On what would have been Nikola Tesla's 170th birthday, the Charles River Museum of Industry & Innovation opened a new exhibition built around a collection of documents never before seen by the public.

Handwritten letters between Tesla and executives at the prolific Waltham Watch Co. tell the tale of royalty negotiations for his pioneering new speedometer design, offering a glimpse into the enigmatic inventor's humanity.

"Nikola Tesla: The Speed of Innovation" takes a narrower approach than most Tesla retrospectives, focusing tightly on one business dispute: a years-long correspondence between Tesla and Waltham Watch, concentrated around the late 1920s. Originally, the company had acquired a patent for Tesla's innovative and cost-effective air friction speedometer.

The instrument used interlocking cups and air pressure, rather than the magnets and cables typically used by speedometers of that time, to measure a car's speed. But as Henry Ford's factory model forced car manufacturing to expand rapidly, Waltham's car prices had to come down – though Tesla insisted that his speedometer royalty stay fixed.



The Charles River Museum Nikola Tesla exhibit includes an interactive part that visualizes Tesla's innovative air friction speedometer using dish soap, developed by Chinloo Lama and Sal Lama of Dassault Systèmes SOLIDWORKS. Courtesy of Charles River Museum.

Steve Guerriero, director of education for the museum, said the letters have been in its archive since the 1980s when Pasquale “Pat” Caruso, a master watchmaker at the former Waltham Watch factory, saved them during renovations.

Guerriero said the team spent over two years preparing the materials for display. Mechanical engineer Palig Mouradian, a Waltham resident who volunteered her time and Tesla expertise, and director of operations Joe Niedbala led the team. Museum interns accelerated the exhibit's process as their target of Tesla's 170th birthday approached.



Museum interns and volunteers Isaac Ward, Joshua Echevarria, Palig Mouradian, Lain Ordorff, and director of education Guerriero. Courtesy of Charles River Museum.

“We know the name that comes up when you think about Tesla ... but this was a real person,” Guerriero said. The exhibit pays respects to Tesla’s technical brilliance but doesn’t shy away from his shortcomings.

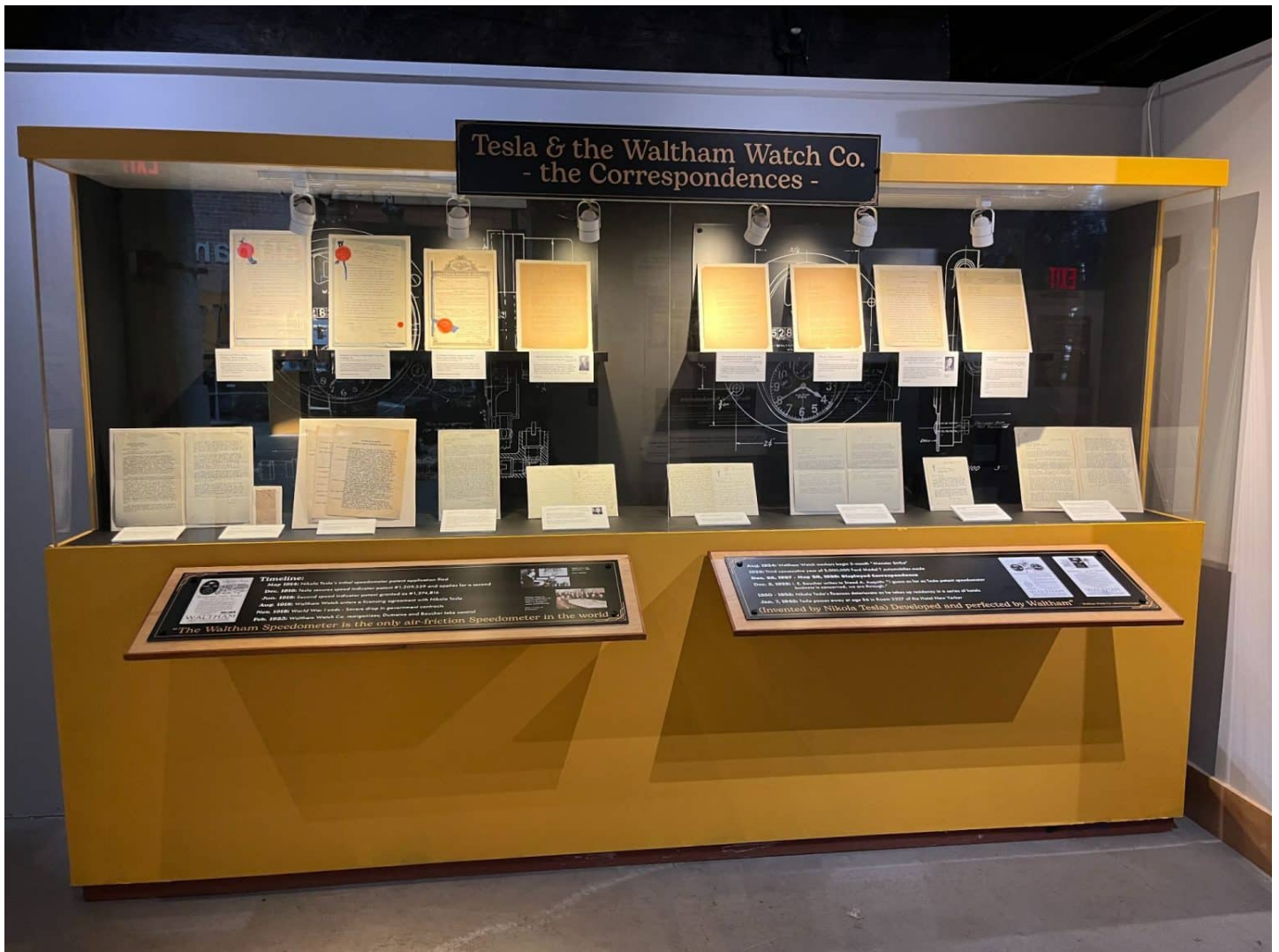
“He’s brilliant, but he’s a terrible businessman,” Guerriero said. “There’s a myth around people who are super brilliant in one thing, that they are super brilliant in all things. And that’s not always the case.”

The letters capture Tesla arguing to protect his 20-cent per-unit royalty rate as a growing market squeezed Waltham Watch’s profit margins on the speedometer. At a certain point, the speedometer’s price fell below \$2, and it was no longer profitable to give Tesla such a sizable cut. The inventor refused to budge, haunted by ghosts of his past financial blunders.

“He cut his royalties once before with Westinghouse Electric, and it cost him millions,” Guerriero said. In the 1880s Tesla had struck a deal with the company over his career-defining alternating current technology, which competed with Thomas Edison’s direct

current system. Tesla gave up a deal that would have had Westinghouse pay him a bonus for every single kilowatt used with his AC tech. That decision cost him millions, and his regret over it reverberated throughout the rest of his life.

“This [dispute with Waltham Watch] is 40 years later ... and he’s still haunted by it,” Gurriero said. “And so you can easily see why he would not want to cut his royalties, because it changed the entire course of his life and work.”



Tesla's handwritten letters are displayed on top, with Waltham's typed replies on the bottom. Photo: Lea Zaharoni.

The exhibit notes in a timeline display that Tesla died broke and alone in 1943 in a New York hotel room, having skipped out on several bills at other hotels. His chronic money troubles also offer context for his abrasive business practices. In one letter he enclosed a multipage document of flattering quotes about himself from famous people and publications, arguing that his name alone “added prestige” to Waltham Watch’s products and should therefore justify a higher price, not a lower royalty.

The dispute also offers a window into Waltham Watch itself, which spent the 1920s fending off bankruptcy during an era of financial turbulence. As executives corresponded with Tesla, the company leaned on government contracts, even constructing fuses for bombs.

Tesla's speedometer was ultimately a side venture that didn't pan out for either party. His patent for it expired in 1933, and Waltham Watch declined to renew, breaking off its relationship with the eccentric genius.

Gurriero said the exhibit's broader themes of creativity, ownership and profit echo in 2026, as intellectual property disputes still happen in the tech world.

Alongside the physical exhibit, the museum has spent the spring transcribing the letters for a planned virtual exhibit, intended to give scholars access to the material for research. "Someone could write an entire doctoral dissertation on this," Gurriero said of the documents.

"Nikola Tesla: The Speed of Innovation" is on display at the Charles River Museum through mid 2027.

A musical prelude to Movies at the Mansion

© walthamtimes.org/2026/07/18/a-musical-prelude-to-movies-at-the-mansion

By Maureen King

July 19, 2026

Thursday evenings in the summer are movie nights at the Lyman Estate. People arrive early to stroll the gardens and enjoy music performed by the Waltham High School show band. The next Movies at the Mansion is on July 23, featuring [‘How to Train Your Dragon.’](#)



Boston Dynamics investing \$100M to consolidate in Waltham

BY NEWSROOM • BUSINESS • JULY 14, 2026



Robot Spot in front of the Boston Dynamics headquarters in Waltham. Courtesy photo.

Boston Dynamics is planning a major expansion in Waltham, adding more than 1,200 jobs and consolidating the company's regional footprint into a new advanced robotics and artificial intelligence center.

The company announced it will invest \$100 million to transform a 323,000-square-foot facility at 1601 Trapelo Road in Reservoir Place into a hub for manufacturing, research, workforce training and AI development. The site sits just across Route 128 from Boston Dynamics' current headquarters on Smith Road.

The company expects to create 1,250 new jobs by 2033 and bring together operations currently spread across three nearby locations, deepening the company's presence in Waltham, where it has long been based.

City officials recently [approved local tax incentives](#) to support Boston Dynamics' continued growth, part of a broader effort to retain and expand major employers in Waltham's Route 128 corridor. The expansion also received a \$25 million state Economic Development Incentive Program award to support construction, manufacturing and workforce training tied to the company's robotics platforms.

"This investment gives our team the space and resources we need to launch our third robot platform this decade," Amanda McMaster, interim CEO of Boston Dynamics, said in a statement. "We will continue recruiting and hiring excellent talent to lead this emerging industry and meaningfully contribute to the greater Boston business community."

State leaders said the project reinforces Massachusetts' leading position in the global robotics and advanced manufacturing sectors.

Governor Maura Healey called the expansion a step toward creating good jobs and strengthening the state's innovation economy, while Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll said it would "support local economic growth and further establish Massachusetts as a destination for advanced manufacturing."

For Waltham, the development represents both an economic opportunity and a continuation of the city's evolution as a center for technology and life sciences along Route 128. The influx of jobs and investment is expected to increase demand for housing, local services and workforce development partnerships.

The facility, owned by BXP, will undergo extensive renovation, with Boston Dynamics planning a phased move-in beginning in mid-2027.

Sweet, senior kitties need a soft place to land

BY THE CAT CONNECTION • COMMUNITY • JULY 14, 2026



Loki and Rover. Photo from The Cat Connection.

Meet Loki and Rover, a pair of sweet, stunning senior kitties looking for a soft place to land.

Police host neighborhood meeting focused on safety, resources

BY JOSEPH SHARKEY • PUBLIC SAFETY • JULY 14, 2026



Waltham police officer Kristen Tracey speaks to community members. Photo by Joseph Sharkey.

Waltham police officer Kristin Tracey met with residents Tuesday morning at 48 Pine St. as part of the department's ongoing community outreach efforts. Her talk provided an opportunity for residents to discuss neighborhood concerns, public safety, crime prevention, quality-of-life issues and available city resources.

Residents also received a building security notice from the Waltham Housing Authority reminding tenants not to allow unauthorized individuals into their building, to verify visitors through the intercom before granting access and to ensure guests are accompanied while inside the property.

The meeting was part of an ongoing effort to visit neighborhoods throughout the city and connect residents with local resources and public safety officials, Tracey said.

“Meetings like this are important to have the community get to know the stakeholders within the city that can help them for services that they need,” she said. “The connection of police with the community is so essential so that people feel safe and informed.”

New Waltham bike and ski shop focuses on community over profit

BY CYD ABNET • COMMUNITY • JULY 14, 2026



A sign beckons customers into Pedals & Powder. Photo by Linda Haas.

A new bike and ski shop has opened in Waltham and emphasizes building community over creating profit.

Brothers-in-law Ken Howard and Tom Holt opened [Pedals & Powder](#) at 85 River St. in December 2025. Since then, hundreds of customers have come through the shop to repair, trade in and buy bikes as well as ski and snowboard equipment.

Bridging the gap

Since the closure of Frank's Spoke 'N Wheel on Main Street two years ago, there hasn't been a bike shop in the city. Arlington residents Holt and Howard stumbled onto Waltham as the perfect location for their venture, drawn by its central location, abundant parking and the absence of other similar shops in the area. Howard comes from a tech background, having previously worked in Silicon Valley and other tech sectors. Holt formerly worked in bike shops on Nantucket and ran the Sandy Pedals Bike Share on the island before moving to the Boston area to start Pedals & Powder.

“I’d describe [the shop] as a service center that also sells used and refurbished bikes,” said Howard of the store. The ski and snowboarding services keep the business busy during the winter when bike services aren’t as popular.

Holt and Howard do custom bike builds, repairs and refurbishments. Additionally, they tune, wax, laminate and perform edge repair on skis and snowboards.

“We don’t do [ski] boots, though,” Holt clarified. “We are not feet people. Too many variables, it’s too personal. Everyone’s feet are different.”



Tom Holt assists Betsy Kimball of Waltham with a minor adjustment. Photo by Linda Haas.



The workbench at Pedals and Powder. Photo by Linda Haas.

A community-based approach to business

When walking into Pedals & Powder, customers are greeted by Fezzik, a French bulldog “shop dog” named after a character in “The Princess Bride.” Holt and Howard are behind the counter alongside racks of bikes, working on repairs in plain view of customers. They believe that this approach is unique, as most bike shops have mechanics separated from the customer.

“We want to talk to you about your bike,” said Holt. “Come hang out with us.”

Holt and Howard want to give customers information to make an informed choice about their bike repairs and purchases. While some bike shops want to push new products to customers, Pedals & Powder mostly sells refurbished equipment. The new equipment they sell is from brands that align with their values.

“We just don’t need more stuff,” Howard said.

The shop largely repurposes used parts for repairs, which keeps costs down for customers. “For some people their bike is their commute, it’s their livelihood,” said Howard. For low-income customers, Holt and Howard help them to get their bike back on the road and functional for work at the lowest cost possible.

Sometimes Holt and Howard explain to customers how to fix the problem themselves. While this isn’t good for profit, it is good for building community and trust which creates future business potential. “That’s what matters. Then when they need something else, they come back,” said Howard.

Gear trade-ins are a part of the Pedals & Powder wheelhouse as well. For families whose kids outgrow bikes and skis quickly, they can trade in their equipment year after year to put toward purchasing gear that fits properly. For adults, trade-ins give the opportunity to upgrade their gear.

While most of their products are refurbished, Holt and Howard envision a demo system in the future where customers can try out newly produced gear for a period of time and purchase it at the end of the trial period if they choose.



Resident french bulldog Fezzik takes a nap. Photo by Linda Haas.



Tom Holt, co-owner of Pedals and Powder. Photo by Linda Haas.

‘Make it your own weird’

Holt and Howard specialize in refurbishing older bike frames with modern updates. A recent project included converting a bike frame from the 2010s into an e-bike. They have also helped customers negotiate purchases of bikes on Facebook Marketplace so they get the fairest deal. For a customer who was trying to decide if she wanted to repair her bike or buy a replacement, Holt was able to buy the same model on Facebook Marketplace in case she decides on a replacement. If she doesn’t, they can sell the bike to another customer.

All repairs and refurbishments are fueled by what Howard describes as “the spirit of the bike community.” According to him, everyone wants their bike to be customized to their own niche needs. The goal is to “make it your own weird,” he said.

With community as a throughline in their practices, Holt and Howard hope to bring together people from all over Waltham and the surrounding communities through their shop. So far, so good, they said.

“People want us to be successful,” Holt said. “They like the idea of a community bike shop.”

Mayor McCarthy joins striking home health workers on picket line

BY JOSEPH SHARKEY • COMMUNITY • JULY 14, 2026



Mayor Jeannette A. McCarthy of Waltham shows support for striking MGB home care workers. Photo by Joseph Sharkey.

Waltham Mayor Jeannette A. McCarthy joined striking Mass General Brigham Home Care clinicians on a picket line in Somerville on Monday, voicing support for workers seeking a new contract.

The demonstration took place at MGB's Assembly Row campus, where clinicians represented by the Massachusetts Nurses Association have been on strike since July 8.

According to the union, workers want improved staffing levels, manageable caseloads, competitive wages and stronger protections for both patients and caregivers.

In remarks to the crowd, McCarthy connected the issue to her own experience, recalling the care her parents received at home.

“I’m here supporting you because you supported my parents in their house when they needed it the most,” she said. “They need to give you a good contract. You need to be paid for what you’re doing,” including time spent on required paperwork outside of patient visits.

McCarthy also emphasized the distinct role home health clinicians play, often working independently and forming close relationships with patients.

“When somebody comes into the home, they usually come by themselves ... and that’s the person that they see and they develop a relationship with that person,” she said. “It’s important that you support each other.”



Striking home care workers at Assembly Row in Somerville. Photo by Joseph Sharkey.

The picket drew healthcare workers, union members, elected officials and community supporters, many carrying signs calling for a fair contract.

MGB Home Care clinicians will return to work as of 7:59 a.m. Wednesday, according to the Massachusetts Nurses Association (MNA) website. This will conclude a seven-day strike but the clinicians plan to press for a new contract.

Comments (1)



SUSAN • JULY 15, 2026 AT 10:56 AM

Interesting she is picketing for other unions. Meanwhile there are about four city unions looking for a fair raise in this city. The city has offered laughable pay increases while the mayor is fighting for other unions. Not a good look and disrespectful to the city workers looking for a fair pay increase. Shame on you mayor!

[Reply](#)

Senate goes local: Rep. Seth Moulton on housing affordability and other Waltham issues

BY ARTIE KRONENFELD • ELECTIONS • JULY 14, 2026



Journalists from The Belmont Voice, Brookline News, Cambridge Day, Lexington Observer, The Waltham Times and Your Arlington met on July 13 with U.S. Rep. Seth Moulton, D-Mass., as part of a joint project to cover candidates for the September primary election for the U.S. Senate.



U.S. Rep. Seth Moulton, D-Mass., answers a question from Michael Fitzgerald, editor-in-chief of Cambridge Day, at a meeting with a group of local journalists. Photo by Artie Kronenfeld.

Seth Moulton wants to modernize the state's Democratic Party.

Moulton is challenging Democratic incumbent Ed Markey for U.S. Senate. Markey has served in Congress for 50 years, including the past 12 years as a senator. Moulton, who lives in Salem with his wife and their two children, has held a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives representing the North Shore since 2014.

Moulton is campaigning on a platform of generational change for the Democratic Party, arguing that, at a comparatively young 49 years old, he's the candidate to deliver it.

He met with reporters from the western suburbs Monday to discuss issues affecting their municipalities, all of which lie within and around the I-95 ring. Here's what he said on affordability, health insurance and more.

On affordability

One big factor contributing to affordability issues in Greater Boston is [the regional housing crisis](#). To address the “fundamental ... supply and demand problem,” Moulton said Massachusetts needs to build more housing.

Instead of trying to build in suburban areas like Waltham, which he said generally resist new construction, Moulton argued Boston should take cues from other major cities worldwide and improve its transit system.

In some cases, he claimed subways and commuter rail services are running at or below 1950s standards. By electrifying rail lines and upgrading equipment, he said the MBTA could cut transit times such that residents could live in areas like Fitchburg, which have space for new development, and still work in Greater Boston.

On health insurance

Meanwhile, health insurance is making a huge dent in the budget of many municipalities, [including Waltham](#).

Moulton argued the government could cut costs and protect residents' right to health care by creating a single-payer option. He champions a “Medicare-for-all-who-want-it” model, which could compete with private insurers to drive down costs.

On immigration

Moulton emphasized that a lot of immigration policy is ineffective and outdated, laying the blame both on Republicans blocking Democratic immigration reforms and on

Democrats failing to reform the system when they've held power.

Although he didn't detail his ideas for policy updates, Moulton positioned himself solidly against the actions of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency under President Donald Trump. He advocates for abolishing the agency and taking its leadership and agents to court.

"It's not enough just to say you're opposed to [ICE] ... we need to hold these people accountable," he said. "You can't have law enforcement who thinks they're above the law."

Moulton pointed to his office's track record in constituent services as an example of how he shows up for immigrant communities, saying he and his staff have worked closely on many individual constituents' immigration cases. He said the office has received four awards from the Congressional Management Foundation, including two for constituent services.

On surveillance technology and regulation

Moulton said he's concerned about the data that large tech companies collect on Americans: "I think all this surveillance is frightening," he said.

When it comes to technologies such as Flock Safety's automated license plate reader cameras being used by law enforcement, including in Waltham, Moulton said he's sympathetic to those worried about security and privacy violations. Still, he said he doesn't want to dismiss potentially effective safety tools out of hand. He suggested starting with regulation at the local level to ensure privacy and individuals' rights before implementing these technologies.

Moulton said these regulations must be written by people who understand the technology and proposed that states should be allowed to implement their own regulations for new technologies, including AI, to encourage innovation.

On creating dialogue

Moulton talked about his experience serving in the Marine Corps during the Iraq War and how it galvanized his stance against the war. "I saw the consequences of failed decisions in Washington. There were people making decisions ... that were totally out of touch with people on the ground."

He emphasized the importance of listening to his constituents, saying he has prioritized holding local town halls during his campaign. Although he loves the "proud individuality"

of Massachusetts municipalities, he also emphasized they need to bridge gaps and come together to address regional issues such as transportation.

On how federal politics affects the local

Before Democrats can make significant change, Moulton said they have to win elections. “As long as Republicans are in charge, they’re going to keep ... attacking blue states, blue cities.”

Moulton talked about his involvement in the political action committee [Serve America](#), where he has helped campaign for other Democratic candidates around the country. He said that although he respects the Democratic establishment, he wants to see change in the party’s current leaders.

“We need stronger fighters, people who are not afraid of these MAGA Republicans,” he said. “We cannot just go back to the way things were ... Democrats need to be more effective.”

On peace between Israelis and Palestinians

Moulton talked about using his military experience in a nonlocal issue that he knows is of widespread interest in Massachusetts: Israel’s response to the Oct. 7, 2023 Hamas attacks.

Israel’s subsequent devastation of Gaza has changed the political landscape for Democratic politics around the area. He said he starts from first principles: that everyone, including Israelis and Palestinians, deserves the same fundamental rights and freedoms. “Then you can have an honest conversation, a rational conversation, about the strategies to get there.”

Moulton said that ultimately, the U.S. should scrutinize its arms deals with Israel with the same standards as its dealings with any other nations. He argued it should support a two-state solution with Israeli and Palestinian governments willing to work toward peace.

Comments (5)



BOB • JULY 16, 2026 AT 7:43 PM

This guy is a clown! We deserve better than him and Markey! What have they ever done for our state? Time for someone new with new ideas and not just the typical talking points. We need to be more educated on our votes! Feelings and compassion leads to false narratives. People are leaving our state in droves and we need to find ways to keep our

people and draw new people to our communities. What has been happening here for generations is not working. Ma is the most expensive state to live. Let's make Ma affordable and then we can work on all the social issues. Time for a change

[Reply](#)



HEATHER BACKMAN • JULY 15, 2026 AT 6:47 PM

Did any of the reporters ask Rep. Moulton if he continues to stand by his previous transphobic comments, or whether he has been listening to what his constituents, particularly any trans constituents, have had to say on how his statements supported and contributed to the severe harm being inflicted on those members of our community? I have been very curious as to whether his thinking has evolved on this matter in the last couple of years.

[Reply](#)



BOB • JULY 16, 2026 AT 7:47 PM

All he said was he doesn't want his daughters changing in the same room as someone born a male. He actually walked those comments back which makes him weak. If that's what he believes, he should just say it. Just like whatever your beliefs are you are allowed to say. Because his belief doesn't match with yours, doesn't makes him wrong or cause harm to anyone. This is America and you're allowed to have opinions!

[Reply](#)



TIMOTHY RILEY • JULY 15, 2026 AT 8:37 AM

A correction is needed – Markey has been in Congress for 50 years, only in the Senate since 2013.

[Reply](#)



JUNE KINOSHITA • JULY 15, 2026 AT 9:42 AM

Yes, we knew this but somehow the error slipped past our editors. We have corrected the error.

[Reply](#)

Let's get out of opposing corners to plan Waltham's future together

BY BRAD ONKEN • IDEAS • JULY 14, 2026



Aerial view of "The Island", a small neighborhood in Waltham, by Jon Collier, under CC2 license.

This past year's city council hearings about the [RCI zoning overlay](#) amendments, alongside the Zoning Board of Appeals [debates regarding the Watch Factory Lofts](#), and the mayor's unexpected [veto of the Bay Colony](#), cast a spotlight on Waltham's housing impasse: the friction between project-by-project reviews and proactive planning.

When we rely on a case-by-case process, we force residents, developers and officials into opposing corners. Whether replacing underutilized parking at the Watch Factory or debating property lines near Lincoln Woods, this fosters a win-lose

mindset. As one resident said during the RCI testimony: “When you live there, you have to fight for your homes.”

No one wants to feel like they have to fight to protect their neighborhood. Yet, when a system relies on project-specific amendments, uncertainty reigns. We saw this when the mayor used gray areas in the city council’s [CommunityScale report](#) to justify her veto. This highlights the core of our problem: a technical update only fixes rules on paper. Without a master plan to establish long-term goals, we risk falling back on the variances, vetoes and special permits that create our current gridlock.

This gridlock doesn’t just stall paperwork — it paralyzes our management of Waltham’s regional housing demand. As an economic engine, Waltham holds a larger share of rental housing than neighboring municipalities.

However, that baseline only tells half the story. Our housing squeeze is the hangover of decades of commercial growth, which brought workers into Waltham without a plan to house them. Even as the office market cools, the massive housing deficit remains.

By replacing reactive zoning with a master plan, we can protect our infrastructure. That will ensure new development never outpaces roadway, utility and school capacity. With that foundation of control, we gain the leverage to expand housing options on our own terms – specifically for the young professionals, teachers and first responders who keep Waltham running.

To move past this project-specific approach toward a collaborative blueprint, I propose three actionable paths:

1. Unite grassroots advocacy with city leadership. Waltham’s housing advocates have laid the groundwork. The Waltham Community Leadership Group (WCLG) vitally elevates unhoused neighbors’ voices, while Waltham Inclusive Neighborhoods (WIN) champions transit-oriented zoning reforms. Additionally, homeowners, tenant organizers, and faith leaders consistently call for systemic change. The city can channel this energy by exploring the creation of a working group this fall to help the city collaboratively map out a long-term growth strategy.

2. Advance the citywide review toward a master plan. The city’s zoning map review has been on hold since late 2025. Now that major overlays are causing gridlock at City Hall, it is time to return to the citywide review and planning drafts this fall. Transitioning to clear, citywide zoning rules is the step that moves us out of opposing corners and allows us to build a master plan.

3. Fund local infrastructure through smart growth. While traffic concerns on Prospect Street and the west side are justified, stopping housing doesn't solve traffic; it prevents well-planned developments that generate revenue to upgrade aging roadways. Vetoes stall negotiated development agreements that bind corporate partners to funding public benefits, such as a new West Side fire station or bridge repairs. This can leave local taxpayers, rather than private developers, to foot the bill for the city's infrastructure demands.

Prioritizing targeted corridors and infill growth will generate the revenue needed to fund improvements such as a multiyear pavement plan and hire the suggested transportation planner to tackle traffic needs.

When we anchor Waltham's growth in facts and collaboration, we can step out of opposing corners and build a path forward.

Comments (8)



HILARY WHITE • JULY 16, 2026 AT 7:53 PM

I think the debate in these comments proves the main point of the article. We can't argue about the details; it's all about the system. I don't think he is pushing for high-density apartments or dismissing the suburban dream. He's talking about improving the process because the project-by-project planning isn't working well for Waltham. The point is we need a collaborative master planning process.

[Reply](#)



NADENE B. STEIN • JULY 16, 2026 AT 3:45 PM

Thinking about the future of our community should be a priority for elected officials and residents alike. Thank you, Brad, for highlighting ways for this to happen.

[Reply](#)



TOM BENAVIDES • JULY 15, 2026 AT 8:42 PM

Great article! Love the vision for collaborative and thoughtful city planning.

[Reply](#)



BOB • JULY 15, 2026 AT 6:41 PM

So someone doesn't want five hundred units in their back yard, they are the problem. Underutilized parking... let's jam some apartments. What's wrong with open space? More apartments means more traffic. It is a fact not an opinion. The MbtA is not reliable and all we hear is more people need to use it. For all those people saying there is a housing crisis. How many more apartments or houses are needed? Give a number and not political talk. How many is needed to satisfy everyone? At some point the city is maxed out. In my opinion we are almost there. The housing crisis is a talking point with no solution and no facts. Jam more apartments into an already crowded city that is beyond its capabilities as far as services this city provides.

[Reply](#)



CARL CINCOTTA • JULY 15, 2026 AT 1:28 PM

The narrative of the pro upzoning proponents is based on dismissing the traditional "American Dream" of living in a suburban single family home with adults owning their own means of transportation allowing the freedom to travel where they need to go in order to carry out normal family activities. They regard single family ownership to be rooted in racism and the private use of private modes of transportation to be anti environmental.

Their answer is high density apartments that provide no to minimal allowances for automobiles with a reliance on public transportation.

Their ideology flies in the face of reality. You hold onto this pipe dream that those who work in the commercial areas of Waltham would much rather live in Waltham instead of commuting. On the other hand they favor high density apartments with limited parking located adjacent to commuter rail assuming these tenants work in Boston.

All of this housing is meant for people not presently living in Waltham and will only serve to increase population and density in a city that is already more than half apartments.

[Reply](#)



RODNEY MULLEN • JULY 15, 2026 AT 8:44 AM

Sensible proposals which will land on deaf ears in city leadership. Until the Mayor and her cronies go, this city is stuck in the past. The small voting block that controls this city wishes they could rewind to the 1960s, but that isn't happening. The majority of residents have moved on long ago them but they cannot let go. Whether it be cycling infrastructure, mixed use development, pot shops, or anything more

modern than the post war boom, the vocal minority of residents and their lackeys in city government will oppose it. Best they can do is build a new parking lot for the library and put another bank on Main St. “Development is good until the point when I move in” – Waltham NIMBYs.

[Reply](#)



GARY MARKOWITZ • JULY 15, 2026 AT 8:42 AM

All excellent points and all workable until you get to the infrastructure issue. Infrastructure like an undersized electric grid and put the kibosh on new development as it clashes with state mandates to shed fossil fuels for all-electric construction. Any housing strategy must include cost neutral electrical infrastructure development to ensure electricity doesn't get more unaffordable.

[Reply](#)



MJB • JULY 15, 2026 AT 1:43 PM

It's the city's job to manage infrastructure. Multi-family housing produces multiple times over the tax revenue per parcel than commercial real estate. There is more than enough money in each of these developments' tax production to fund new infrastructure.

Saddling private developers with the public domain's responsibilities, and ignoring the outsized benefit of creating the housing on infrastructure, the economy and our lives in general, is silly.

Prioritizing carbon neutral development in the midst of a housing crisis is a great way to make sure that no new housing gets built, prices skyrocket, and people are forced to leave. What better impact on the environment than to just have fewer of us to divide the burden over?!

What an insane proposal. It would be a scarier proposal if it weren't already happening as tens of thousands of people already leaving the state for cheaper housing in locales that aren't afraid or unaware that building modern housing is the key to new infrastructure and growth, the very tools necessary to responsibly manage our environment.

If you want better infrastructure and better Environmental management, you need the taxes from the new development. What you're proposing is a downward spiral, putting the cart before the horse

[Reply](#)

World Cup brings international visitors and mixed business impact to Waltham

walthamtimes.org/2026/07/16/world-cup-brings-international-visitors-and-mixed-business-impact-to-waltham

Allie Ladjeva

July 17, 2026



The reception desk at Hampton Inn & Suites in Waltham is decorated to greet World Cup fans. Photo by Georgette Bezio.

As the French national team made Bentley University its [“home away from home”](#) and [Scottish fans arrived in the city](#) for World Cup matches, Waltham felt the tournament’s impact far beyond the stadium.

Several local bars and restaurants have reported an increase in customers since the FIFA tournament began.

“We have seen an overall increase in business in the off times we normally wouldn’t. Such as when there have been 3 p.m. games on,” said Michael Morse, owner of John Brewer’s Tavern.

Because John Brewer’s Tavern operates more as a family restaurant than a traditional sports bar, Morse said the restaurant has experienced an increase in takeout orders around game times.

Local sports bars have attracted international customers as well.

“I have definitely noticed travelers and people who aren’t from Waltham, which is great. We love talking to them, getting to hear their story. And they are coming from different places — we have had a bunch of people from Scotland, Ireland, etc.,” said Rosealine Sarkissian, bartender at Joco’s Bar and Kitchen.

Although games generally brought more customers into the bar, some matches have been more popular than others in Waltham.

“When Scotland was playing, there was a crowd of people that came in through. We do have a big Spanish population here in Waltham, so when the Spanish games are on, we have a bunch of people that come in and watch the games,” said Sarkissian.

With seven World Cup matches held in the Boston area, the region became a hot spot for tourists, some of whom chose to stay in Waltham.

“We’ve welcomed a diverse mix of guests, including families traveling together, international visitors, sports fans, media specific to the French national soccer team, and business travelers whose schedules overlap with the tournament,” said Georgette Bezio, director of sales and marketing at Hampton Inn & Suites Boston Waltham.

Hotels win some, lose some



Soccer-themed decor in the lobby of the Hampton Inn & Suites in Waltham. Photo by Georgette Bezio.

The proximity to Boston, complimentary parking and overall value continue to shape Waltham as an attractive accommodation option, according to Bezio.

However, Hampton Inn & Suites Boston Waltham’s internal market intelligence metrics showed that hotel occupancy across Waltham declined by approximately 7% compared to the same month last year, while the average daily rate increased by approximately 13%.

According to Bezio, even though rates are higher, there has been no increase in overall hotel revenues.

“One factor that likely contributed is that many corporate accounts and group events scheduled far in advance strategically shifted their meetings and travel plans away from the Boston area in anticipation of increased demand and pricing around FIFA,” said Bezio.

Despite the softer occupancy environment, the hotel has added festive decorations, expanded its food and beverage offerings and ensured that French-speaking staff members are on-site to support international visitors and make them feel welcome.

The French national team's presence at Bentley University also brought international energy to the area.

"We've also noticed guests and visitors from a variety of countries staying with us or passing through the hotel, everything from travelers in kilts representing Scotland to guests wearing Norway and Morocco jerseys, really reflecting the global nature of the tournament," Bezio said.

World Cup stars get hair trims from Mobar Cuts

The tournament also created an unexpected opportunity for one Waltham business owner.

Coco Fernandez, owner of Mobar Cuts, a barbershop at 940 Main St., was invited to cut the hair of French team players, including Kylian Mbappé and Ousmane Dembélé.

"It was nerve-racking understanding the caliber of players I was dealing with. Soccer is a global sport — this was a huge opportunity for my brand and my team," Fernandez said in an Instagram post.

Although the tournament's financial impact varied among local businesses, business representatives said the flow of international visitors can have longer-term benefits for Waltham.

"Beyond the immediate impact, events like the FIFA World Cup introduce travelers to Waltham who may not have otherwise visited, helping build future awareness of the city as a convenient and welcoming destination for both business and leisure travel," Bezio said.

Sarkissian hopes the international atmosphere will remain after the tournament ends.

"I think it should be more often that people from other places come around here. I think it's healthy and brings a new change to that lifestyle," she said.

Below: Mobar Cuts posted on Instagram about grooming French soccer player Kylian Mbappé and Moroccan player Chadi Riad.

Housing Authority receives clean audit; Marguerite Avenue units remain in limbo

BY CHARLIE JOHNSON • GOVERNMENT • JULY 16, 2026



The Waltham Housing Authority received a clean federal audit, while the future of two Marguerite Avenue properties remains unresolved as the board awaits further direction from the state Department of Mental Health.

At Tuesday's Board of Commissioners meeting, Executive Director John Gollinger said he was pleased that the financial audit produced no findings.



"It's sort of like getting an A," Gollinger said.

The board also reported that 12 units were vacant at the time of the meeting out of approximately 800 units under its domain.

Gollinger said the authority is reallocating Section 8 vouchers to different housing units because of funding constraints.

"We've been treading water," he said.

A tentative meeting with the state Department of Mental Health is scheduled for July 29 to discern the future of the two Marguerite Avenue units, which are located in the same house. The authority's 30-year lease with the state expired in October 2025.

"We were told to stand down on our efforts to get the property until they had a chance to evaluate the property and determine which way they want to go," Assistant Executive Director Mark Johnson said.

Both units are handicap-accessible and are some of the few in WHA's supply. One of the two units is occupied by a family, while the other remains vacant. At a previous [meeting](#), Gollinger said the authority could face costs for repairs and insurance ranging from \$10,000 to \$20,000 per property. Johnson also estimated that modernizing the properties could cost \$70,000 to \$75,000, while repairing damage left in the vacant home by a previous tenant, who is a person with a mental illness, could require an additional \$20,000 to \$25,000.

On Tuesday, Gollinger noted that some windows were broken and said the authority did not want to invest in the property until the state determined its future. The family in the occupied unit may also need to be relocated depending on the state's decision on what to do with the house.

Additionally, the WHA:

- Approved the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities annual plan. Johnson said the authority's core policies had not changed significantly, while the plan continued to outline goals related to sustainability, decarbonization and reducing energy costs.
- Approved updates to its Section 8 administrative plan and public housing occupancy policies to comply with changes under the federal Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act.
- Reported progress at Beaver Brook Apartments, including renovations to the community room, bathrooms, kitchen windows and walkways.
- Reported preliminary work has begun on a window-replacement project at the Winchester Crane Apartments.

Enjoy the Charles River this summer

BY MARY PRATT • SPORTS & RECREATION • JULY 16, 2026



Cabot Mills by the Charles River dam.

The Charles River slices through Waltham, inviting residents outside to explore and enjoy it. Here are our favorite ways to have fun on and along the Charles this summer.

1. **Get on the water.** Launch your own boat, kayak, canoe or paddleboard at the Woerd Avenue boat launch or rent from Charles River Canoe & Kayak at the

Moody Street dam.

2. **Try your hand at fishing.** Popular spots include the Moody Street, Prospect Street and Elm Street bridges, as well as Purgatory Cove. On summer nights you'll find people on the bridges trying to catch various freshwater fish, including yellow perch, carp and striped bass. Remember, it's pretty much catch and release. (The state's online [Freshwater Fish Consumption Advisory List](#) offers detailed guidelines.)
3. **Dine along the water.** Margaritas Mexican Restaurant and Brelundi both offer outdoor dining in the nice weather with river views.
4. **Take a long walk.** Pathways, including the RiverWalk, run alongside both banks of the river through much of the city.
5. **Or bike along the river instead.** The pathways are open to cyclists (and skaters) as well as pedestrians.
6. **Enjoy some quiet time** at Fox Park off Charles River Road or at Landry Park just off Moody Street near the Francis Cabot Lowell Mill – as soon as its renovation has been completed.
7. **Explore the Charles River Museum of Industry & Innovation** and learn how the Charles powered industry here in the city and made Waltham the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution.
8. **Watch for bald eagles** flying around and fishing in the Charles. After decades away, these magnificent creatures can be seen around Upper Charles River Reservation, near Purgatory Cove, Fox Island and Mount Feake Cemetery. Watch for swans, herons, ducks and geese, too.



Author



MARY PRATT

Mary K. Pratt is an award-winning freelance journalist based in Waltham. She has covered various subjects ranging from community news to fashion to health and fitness, during her career. Her work has appeared in numerous publications, including newspapers, magazines and trade journals. She currently focuses her coverage on business, management and information technology.

Comments (3)



SUSAN HEIST • JULY 19, 2026 AT 6:01 PM

Be careful on the river walk you never know what or who you will run in to. I don't think it's patrolled properly, be careful.

[Reply](#)



MARC RUDNICK • JULY 17, 2026 AT 9:41 AM

I can't imagine compliance is high, but Massachusetts requires anyone over 15 years old to have a fishing license to drop a hook in the Charles. They're free for 15-17 year olds, seniors over 70, and those with certain disabilities. Everyone else pays, and the license needs to be renewed annually. <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/who-needs-a-freshwater-fishing-license>

[Reply](#)



JOE HAUSER • JULY 17, 2026 AT 9:06 AM

I think I will try Number 4 and take a walk along the river today.

[Reply](#)

All you need is Watch City Ukers' Beatles night

BY JULIE M. COHEN • ARTS & CULTURE • JULY 16, 2026



Watch City Ukers gather at the Waltham Common bandstand for an evening of music making. Photo from Watch City Ukers.

The Watch City Ukers has been bringing together ukulele players of all skill levels for 10 years.

This Monday, July 20, musicians of all levels are welcome to strum and sing along during a Beatles theme night at the Waltham Common bandstand.

The Ukers were founded by longtime Waltham resident Marisa Cacciatore in 2016 to create a space for fellow enthusiasts. She began playing the diminutive instrument in 2015 to help her cope with anxiety.

“I found that music and concentrating on music helped,” said Cacciatore. “For me, it was like a different type of meditation.”

She founded and co-hosts the meetup group to bring joy and “help the community. ... If this [playing the ukulele] can work for me, this can work for a lot more people.”

The ukulele itself “was probably introduced to Hawai’i in 1879 by Portuguese settlers from Madeira who brought with them a small guitar called the braguinha,” according to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The instrument later “was modified to suit local musical tastes and the Hawaiian ukulele was born.”

Since then, love for the instrument has spread around the world. Local players have been gathering at the Waltham Common Gazebo and The Waltham Museum (where they ask for a \$5 donation to the museum) to make music and socialize. During the COVID pandemic, they met online.

“We play songs ranging from the 1920s to today’s hits, and all skill levels are welcome ... no one is judged,” said Cacciatore. “Our goal is to share our love of music, keep the community involved, help people make new friends and encourage everyone to learn something new.”

Although the group has not chosen August’s theme, they are contemplating holding an Elvis night in the future.

When Cacciatore is not bringing together ukulele strummers, she’s running a performance group called the A & W Ukulele Players. Created in 2018, she said this group is for advanced players. There are currently 18 members. “We keep growing,” said Cacciatore.

The A & W Ukulele Players performs around the state at farmers’ markets, libraries, schools and senior centers.

Musicians in both groups have told Cacciatore they “can’t wait for the next meetup,” where they enjoy making new friends.

More information

The Watch City Ukers meets on the third Monday every month from 7 to 9 p.m. The next meetup will take place at the Waltham Common Gazebo (610 Main St.) on Monday, July 20, from 7 to 9 p.m. and will feature songs by The Beatles. More information on future locations for meetups will be announced through the group's [Facebook page](#).

More information on the A & W Ukulele Players can be found on the [group's Facebook page](#). Upcoming performances include:

- July 21, 3-6 p.m, Lexington Farmers Market at Fletcher Park
- July 28, 5-6 p.m, open for The Black Velvet Band at the Waltham summer Concert on the Common series
- Aug. 6, 3-7 p.m, at the Framingham Farmers' Market, Framingham Center Common, 2 Oak St.
- Aug. 11, 1-2 p.m, Littleton COA, 33 Shattuck St.

Preserving Waltham's past at the Malone Archives

BY ARTIE KRONENFELD • COMMUNITY • JULY 16, 2026



Former students of [the Bright Elementary School](#) may find the building difficult to recognize. The gym and some second-floor classrooms have been repurposed for elections. The library, now mostly empty, serves as a half-forgotten storage room.

Perhaps most notable, however, are the two climate-controlled vaults in the building's basement: part of a decade-and-a-half-long project to turn the Bright School into a long-term repository for the city's archives.

The City Council voted to [turn the former school over to the Clerk's Office](#) in 2009 to use as a records center. City Clerk Joseph

Vizard said that the building is unique: "Very few cities and towns have a facility like this."

The city is required to keep most government records for multiple years by state law, and must keep others indefinitely. Vizard said the Clerk's Office at City Hall used to contain "cabinets and cabinets and cabinets" of records. Although some city departments still have their own vaults in City Hall, many records, including some of Waltham's oldest documents, now live in the former Bright School, now called the Rosario "Russ" Malone Archives and Records Center.

Former clerk Russ Malone — after whom the center was named in 2019 — and retired custodian Bob Peterson, both played significant roles in the early days of the archives transfer, organizing documents and moving them to their new location on Grove Street.

Waltham has used approximately \$2.13 million in Community Preservation Act funding to create, renovate and modernize the archives building. It used CPA funds to install the vaults in 2012, implemented a fire suppression system around the same time, and paid [for a roof replacement last year](#).

Today, the collection is split into multiple levels of storage. Aboveground, across from the building's elections headquarters, there are filing rooms full of recent city records; below,



The Rosario "Russ" Malone City Archives and Records Center. Photo by Artie Kronenfeld.

in the basement, sit the vaults containing older documents dating back to the Town of Waltham's founding in 1738.

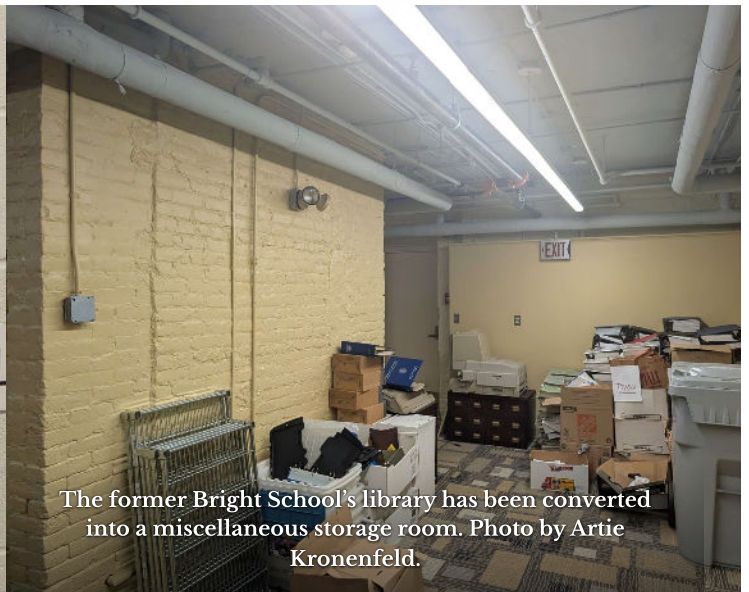
Vizard said the archives are unlikely to expand much further. Although the former school still has rooms sitting empty, they would require significant work to become archives-ready because of moisture issues. The vaults themselves, he says, are already "finicky," and require significant HVAC maintenance.

These days, Vizard said members of his office work on archival projects with interns during the summer and during other slower periods of City Council work. Executive Assistant to the City Clerk Cathy Magliarditi spearheaded a project to commission a custom digital filing system for easy access, and the office has used AI tools to digitize all the ordinances of Waltham's City Council — and its previous Board of Aldermen — since their inception. In 2022, the office also brought in the [Northeast Document Conservation Center](#) to identify any outstanding long-term needs for the building and its contents.

At this point, the Clerk's Office is focused on restoring older documents. Vizard said they have enough materials to "keep [us] busy" for ten years.



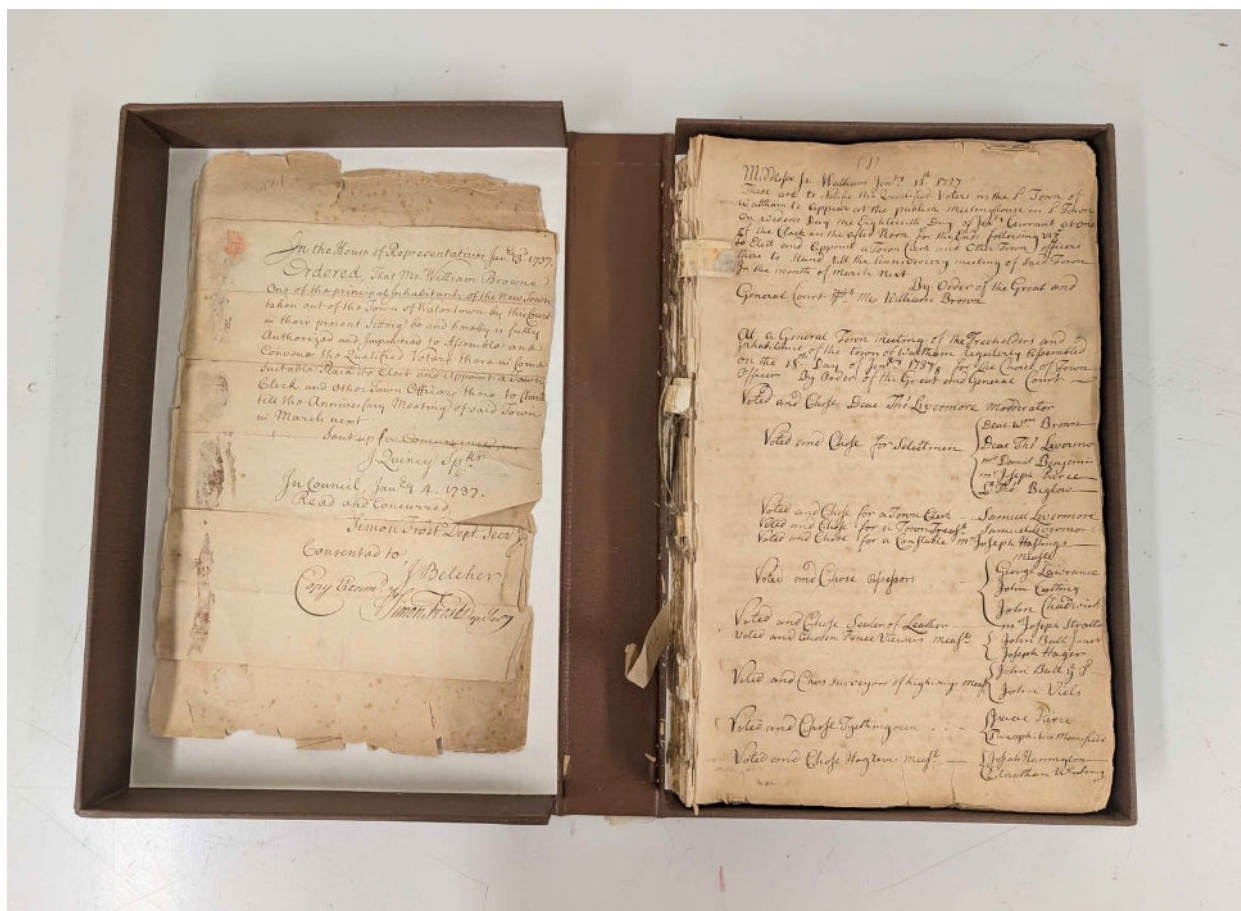
The entrance to a vault storing Waltham's historical documents. Photo by Artie Kronenfeld.



The former Bright School's library has been converted into a miscellaneous storage room. Photo by Artie Kronenfeld.

Waltham life, three centuries ago

Most recently, his office acquired \$6,895 in CPA funds to restore Waltham's First Book of Town Records, a project they hope to finish with the NEDCC by winter. At a [June City Council meeting](#), Vizard regaled councilors with stories from the 18th-century ledger about family histories, early construction projects, town banishments and quartering French troops in the lead-up to the American Revolution.



Waltham's First Book of Town Records. Photo by Artie Kronenfeld.

At the moment, residents working on local history projects can write to the Clerk's Office to ask to visit the records. Vizard admits that few residents have asked to peruse Waltham's archival documents, which mostly document the standard ins and outs of Waltham life — city ordinances, meetings, births, deaths, contracts, tax records and the like.

In recent memory, he said, only one person has asked to use the archives for a local history project: retired librarian Marjanneke Wright, when she was [documenting the lives of Black Waltham residents enslaved by local landowners](#).

Vizard said the building's location — directly across from the Grove Hill Cemetery, where many figures mentioned in the archives lie to this day — reminds him of ties these documents have to the community. He said he's still hoping to "strike gold" by finding some new and interesting piece of Revolutionary War history. In the meantime, his office will continue to work through restoring Waltham's oldest records over the next decade — hopefully, preserving them for centuries to come.

Historical Commission paves way for a new Sweetgreen, discusses coming losses at Fernald property

BY LEA ZAHARONI • NEWS • JULY 16, 2026



The city's proposal to move the Department of Public Works to the grounds of the *former Walter E. Fernald State School* may result in demolition of the West Building, seen in this aerial photo by Thomas Coyne.

The Historical Commission signed off on Sweetgreen Boston LLC's latest step toward a new Waltham location, and warned of the implications of a city plan to relocate the Department of Public Works to the former Fernald State School.

Michael Connors, representing Sweetgreen, asked the commission to sign off on a development prospectus for a new building, readdressed as 96 Tower Road so emergency-responders would be able to locate it, within the [1265 Main Street](#) commercial development.

The commission had previously reviewed the building in June in connection with a Cava restaurant proposal, and once again, they unanimously found the site not historically significant. Sweetgreen can now proceed with their development process, which includes appearing before Conservation Commission and applying for a fast-food permit.

Fernald campus: no vote, but growing concern

Commission chair Mort Isaacson brought a concern to the group regarding tentative plans to move the Department of Public Works to the historic property.

Though the plan was [initially presented](#) at a June City Council meeting, Isaacson said that no one had contacted any Historical Commission members, and he had to obtain the details secondhand from Ward 6 Councilor Sean T. Durkee.

“This is something the city has needed for a long time. There are good reasons to do it. Unfortunately, it is probably going to involve the demolition of some historic buildings,” Isaacson said.

These historic structures include the West Building, which was partly built by Fernald residents themselves, which Isaacson says has a “great deal of historic value.” Unfortunately, he said, the building is crumbling and is “a ruin,” and will likely be demolished.

Isaacson also pointed out the [Howe Library](#), which has remained in decent shape throughout the decades, despite some significant vandalism.

Waltham man arrested for third time in three weeks following alleged car break-in

BY CYD ABNET • PUBLIC SAFETY • JULY 16, 2026



Waltham district court.

A Waltham man is facing felony charges after an alleged car break-in in Warrendale, making this his third arrest in three weeks.

On July 12 at 8:03 p.m., police responded to reports of an [unknown man walking through backyards](#) and looking into windows in the area of Byron Road. According to the police report, the caller had been sitting inside his house when the male walked into the caller's backyard and began looking into the windows of nearby houses. When the caller went out to confront the male, he ran away, leaving an orange bike propped up against the caller's garage.

A group of officers was able to catch up to the man, identified as Jonathan Quintanilla, 26, homeless, of Waltham, near the site of a reported car break-in on Bruce Road. The man who had called in the break-in said he had seen Quintanilla open the door of his car, sit inside the car for 20 seconds, then get out, closing the door behind him.

According to the police report, the man then observed Quintanilla get onto a bike and ride away. Quintanilla was ultimately arrested. Quintanilla was previously arrested on [June 29](#) and [July 1](#) for trespassing in Waltham.

Quintanilla is being charged with breaking and entering into a vehicle during the daytime with the intent to commit a felony. He is being held without bail for 90 days at Middlesex County Jail based on a motion submitted by the state and allowed by Judge Ellen M. Caulo. It is unclear how he pleaded based on the information available in the MassCourts database. He will face a pre-trial hearing for this case on Aug. 12.

Additional court activity

Michael Gray, of Waltham, pleaded not guilty to a charge of possession of a class A drug. The charge is in relation to an event that took place on Waltham Common. He was released on personal recognizance by Caulo and will face a pre-trial hearing for his case on Aug. 25.

Liana C. Alonge, 41, of Waltham, had a charge of possession of a class B drug dismissed by Judge Amanda Ward on July 2. The charge was in relation to an [alleged incident](#) that took place in Waltham in April. It is unclear based on information available via MassCourts why the charge was dismissed.

Mark Springstead, 68, of Waltham, had a charge of possession of a class B substance subsequent offense dismissed by Caulo on July 14. The charge was in relation to an [alleged hand-to-hand drug deal](#) that took place in February near Moody Street Liquors. It is unclear based on information available via MassCourts why the charge was dismissed.

Eight years and counting: ZBA extends residential renovation timeline

BY ARTIE KRONENFELD • GOVERNMENT • JULY 16, 2026



Vernon St. Google Maps Street View.

After some back-and-forth at the Zoning Board of Appeals, a home renovation project on Vernon Street has received permission to continue ironing out its final details.

In 2018, the board granted Donald and Marie Alexis variances to add a two-story addition to their zoning-nonconforming Vernon Street home, allowing them to build slightly into the lot's side setbacks and exceed the maximum lot coverage typically allowed in the zone.

Since then, the project has encountered multiple delays. In 2022, the board allowed the Alexis family to modify their plans, giving them until 2024 to complete the newly-redefined renovation. Since then, the project has returned to the ZBA for multiple timeline extensions.

When Donald Alexis came in front of the board at its Tuesday meeting to request a sixth extension, he explained that construction on the house was done, but he found he needed to go back and fix some mistakes introduced by a contractor before the house could pass the Building Department's final inspections.

Board members expressed frustration at how long the project had taken, pointing out that the last permit extension included a clause saying the board wouldn't extend it further.

"I've done plenty of things in the city myself too, and they don't take this long," said board member Matt Devaux. "I'm not saying I won't grant it, but you've got to get it done."

Board member Glenna Gelineau petitioned for leniency, arguing that withholding the variances wouldn't do anything constructive. "I don't think it's anything he's done intentionally," Gelineau said. "[Making] him reinvent the wheel makes no sense to me."

The board voted 4–1 to extend the time period to complete the project, with board chair John Sergi voting against it.

Kingston Road renovation

The board also granted developers Scott Douglas and Callaghan McCarthy variances to add an additional floor to a house on Kingston Road, a residential crescent street off of Trapelo Road.

Douglas explained they intended to renovate the house, which already encroaches slightly into the lot's setbacks, into a two-and-a-half-floor building and maintain it to sell later. He said they'd recently done a similar project on Piety Corner's Maravista Avenue.

Two neighbors came up to ask questions about the project. One asked about plans to clean up and maintain the house's backyard; one asked the board to impose conditions on the project requiring the owners to keep the yard clear of weeds, repair or replace a decaying border fence and install privacy glass on any new second-floor windows facing her house.

Douglas said they had contracted a landscaper to keep the property's yard clear, and planned to clean up the yard and replace the fence to make the house presentable for sale. The owners and neighbors exchanged contact information to discuss any concerns further.

The board voted unanimously to grant the variance.



Author



ARTIE KRONENFELD

Artie Kronenfeld is a Waltham-based reporter who enjoys writing about policy and administration that affect people's everyday lives. Previously hailing from Toronto, they're a former editor-in-chief of the University of Toronto's flagship student paper The Varsity. You can find them during off-work hours playing niche RPGs, wandering through Haymarket and making extra spreadsheets that nobody asked for.

Proposed Fernald golf course gets committee's OK pending restriction

BY LEA ZAHARONI • GOVERNMENT • JULY 19, 2026



A nine-hole “pitch and putt” golf course at the former Fernald State School site received Conservation Commission approval last week.

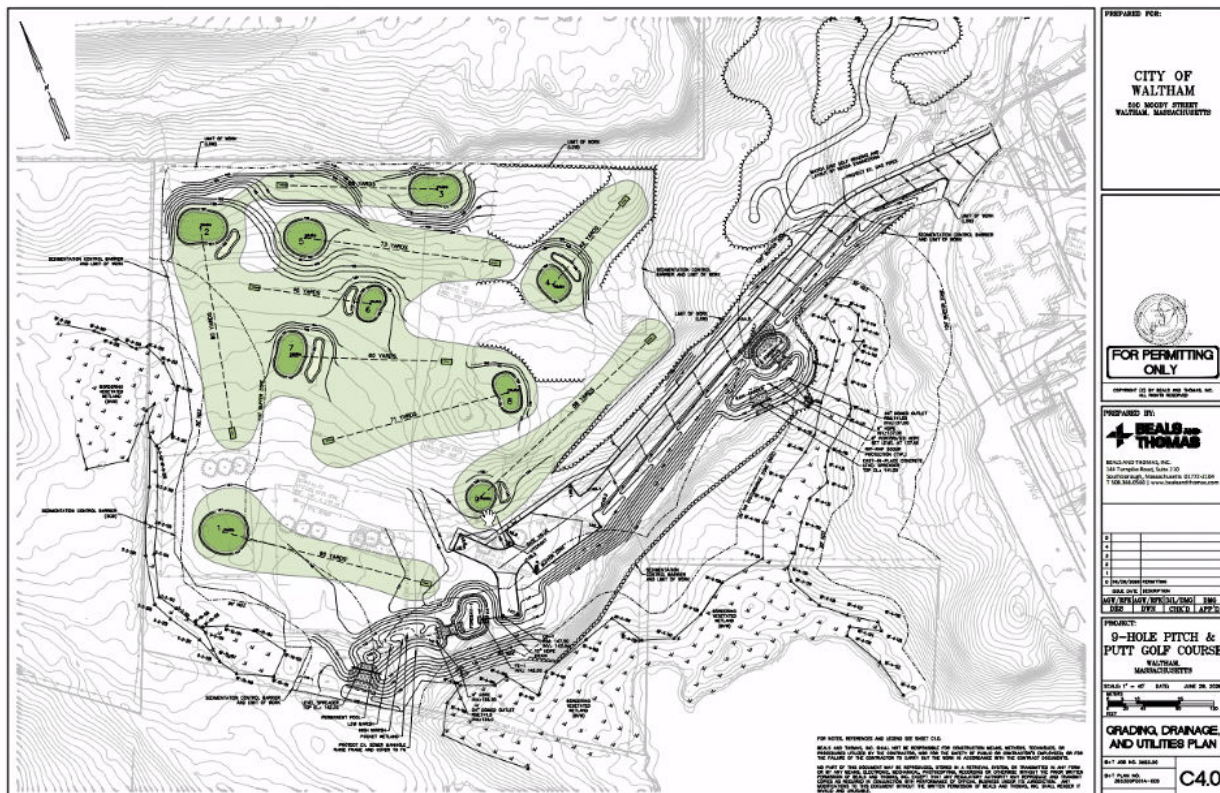
The board gave its OK after pushing for an explanation on why a legal protection promised for the property over a decade ago still hasn’t been filed.

The city’s [original plan](#) for this part of the Fernald property was a full golf driving range, which the commission had already approved as part of a set of Fernald developments, including a [controversial playground](#).

David LaPointe of Beals and Thomas, the development firm hired by the city, said this plan was abandoned after the recreation department concluded that ball-containment netting — reportedly up to 75 feet high — would pose a risk to birds.

Because that original driving range was bundled together with other projects, LaPointe had to withdraw his application for the commission’s review, and refile a new one that only covered the golf course.

The new proposal also works with existing topography, cuts parking in half to 19 spaces, and uses synthetic turf greens and tees. Seven trees would have to come down for landscaping work but would be offset by 15 replacements and 23 planted throughout the site.



A map of the proposed nine-hole course. Courtesy of Beals and Thomas.

LaPointe also reaffirmed an earlier commitment to clean up debris near a wetland on the site. Julia Abbott, the commission's conservation agent, called it a clear improvement over the prior design and had no substantive concerns.

Despite Abbott's assessment of the new proposal, commissioners discussed at length a conservation restriction that was supposed to have been placed on the Fernald property when the city [bought it](#) from the state in 2014.

A conservation restriction is a permanent, legally binding document placing a limit on how land can be used and is meant to lock in protections for open spaces. Because the city purchased the Fernald property using [Community Preservation Act](#) money, it is [required](#) to submit a conservation restriction for the land, and the sale is not technically final until it does so.

There is no universal conservation restriction; rather, each one is written with a specific piece of land in mind. Twelve years after it was supposed to be filed, LaPointe said he does not know what has happened with the restriction. "I'm not really familiar with the status of the conservation restriction ... It's the mayor who's handling that," he said.

Commissioner Anja Shafer asked why the restriction has not gone through and whether it was appropriate to keep approving construction without it. Chair Bill Doyle recalled that this situation had happened before with the first version of the golf course proposal. In that instance, the commission had tried to condition its approval on the conservation restriction being completed first.

The city then appealed that call to the state Department of Environmental Protection. DEP ultimately sided with the city, overruling the commission on the grounds that it lacked authority to require the restriction.

Based on this, the commission voted to approve the pitch and putt course but with the condition that the city must provide a legal justification for proceeding without the conservation restriction in place. The commission requires a response before its Aug. 13 meeting.

Nothing's Impossible Baseball scores 15-plus years of inclusive activity

BY GREG LEVINSKY • SPORTS & RECREATION • JULY 19, 2026

JuJu Simmons approached home plate with her bat in hand.

“Uh oh,” a fielder yelled, “here comes the home run!”

As she’s done for more than half of her life, the 22-year-old Simmons whacked a ball into the field at Nipper Maher Park and made her way around the bases. A 2022 Waltham High School graduate, Simmons is considered an “OG” of Nothing’s Impossible Baseball, a program for athletes of all ages with physical and developmental challenges.

“I keep coming back not just because I love baseball, but because of the community,” Simmons said.



JuJu Simmons, 22, has looked forward to baseball every week since the program’s beginning. Photo by Greg Levinsky.

The league itself began in 2010 with a collaboration between John Huff and Heidi Barberio. The former led the city's baseball league, and the latter had worked with children with disabilities and knew of a group of athletes hoping for a baseball league of their own. Within a couple weeks, the program filled up and play began at Nipper Maher Park.

Each Friday evening players, supporters and volunteers gather just before 6 p.m. for a joyful hour-plus of outdoor activity and camaraderie. Nothing's Impossible Baseball welcomes athletes with disabilities to participate in America's pastime in a low-key, no pressure but always fun environment. There are no age restrictions, and while most participants reside in Waltham, players from communities as near as Newton and as far as Billerica have joined in. Every player is paired with a volunteer throughout the evening, and parents and siblings are invited to join.

This year's opening day was July 10. The season runs through Aug. 21, including an end-of-season banquet as part of the penultimate session. Between 25 and 35 athletes, all but one or two of whom are Waltham residents, participate each week. The volunteers, save for the occasional non-Waltham affiliated baseball team, also come from the city.

Every moment is memorable at Nothing's Impossible Baseball, and Huff and Barberio remember so many. They recalled an athlete from the first year who was in a wheelchair and made it his goal to circle the bases without assistance by year's end. He did it.

"It's fun just to see them smile," said Dave Carvelli, who has since stepped into a leadership role.

Players wear red shirts with the Nothing's Impossible logo and name tags. Everyone bats, and volunteers make sure to announce their names with gusto. When not playing in the infield, participants enjoy a game of catch in the outfield, one of Simmons' favorite parts of the night. Cheering never stops.

Eleven-year-old Parker Roy, a rising fifth grader at Northeast Elementary School, looks forward to baseball each week and "running the bases like Sonic the Hedgehog." He's befriended peers of all ages, including Nick Depace, 33.

"There's so much joy everywhere," said Roy's mother, Jen. "He just runs out the door each week."

Another longtime participant, Depace recently moved from Belmont to Waltham.

What keeps him coming back?

"Having fun with my friends," he said.

Volunteer profile: The design brain behind The Waltham Times

BY LINDA PINKOW • COMMUNITY • JULY 19, 2026

“I come from a long history of rabble-rousing people in the media world, and local news has always been very, very important to my whole extended family,” said Caroline Grossman, a longtime Waltham resident. That lineage drove her to join the volunteer team at The Waltham Times. Today, she is the design director of The Waltham Times and vice chair of the board of directors.

Grossman grew up in New York and Connecticut and came to the Boston area for college. She and her husband, Andy Greene, moved to Waltham 38 years ago when their first child was two. They appreciated their close-knit neighborhood and the welcoming staff at FitzGerald Elementary School.

Grossman and her family have always believed in the power of local journalism to keep a community informed, connected and engaged in civic life. So when she heard about a small group of people talking about starting a local nonprofit news site, she and Greene joined enthusiastically.

Grossman designed The Waltham Times logo, graphics, signs, merchandise and other outreach materials. Her designs are inspired by the city’s history and culture.



Caroline Grossman. Courtesy photo.

“Waltham is such a wonderful mix of incredible history and innovation, and tradition, and new energy coming in with its diverse cultural richness. I wanted that vibrant mix of old, new, diverse, traditional Waltham and new Waltham to be reflected. All of those voices,” she said.

Grossman wants to encourage everyone to consider becoming a volunteer with The Times. It’s an opportunity to meet and work with other people who are enthusiastic about Waltham. There are many volunteer opportunities ranging from weekly efforts to short-term tasks, like helping out at events this summer.

“What’s been extraordinary for me is the people I’ve been honored to meet and work with,” she said. “And the conversations that I’ve gotten into with complete strangers about The Waltham Times, but also our city, have been wonderful!”

Lizzy's vies for title of 'America's Best Ice Cream'

BY NIC TSOLAS • FOOD • JULY 19, 2026



On a bustling street in downtown Waltham, Lizzy's Homemade Ice Cream has secured a place for itself within the lives of older and younger residents alike. Since its opening in 1995, the shop has served as a community staple and a classic hangout spot for the city's youth.

When you arrive at the shop on Moody Street, you'll understand why.

Before you even walk in, the shop's cozy atmosphere is visible at the storefront. The windows feature brightly colored ice cream drawings, grabbing any passerby's attention almost instantly. A statue of a dairy cow greets you at the door, and as you walk inside, you'll notice that the walls are adorned with photos and newspaper clippings of the past.



Lizzy's storefront is a familiar sight on Moody Street. Photo by Nic Tsolas.

This summer Lizzy's is a contestant in [an online tournament](#) to pick "America's Best Ice Cream," representing the state of Massachusetts. The competition is being conducted by a company called The64.com, which invites people to cast votes for the best product or store in a range of categories, from chicken wings to bakeries.

Lizzy's heritage and ownership help it stand out.

A high school job becomes the family business

Lizzy's current owner, Waltham native Miriam Benitez, began working for the company when she was in high school. Benitez continued her work through high school and into college, before leaving home for some time. When she returned to Waltham after college, she came back to the shop and was hired full time as the general manager.

Benitez held that position until 2016, when the founder, Nick Pappas, was ready to retire. He sold the shop to Benitez and her family, who have continued to bring life to the business since then. There is now a second branch in Harvard Square.



A cow greets visitors into Lizzy's. Photo by Nic Tsolas.

"My family really fell in love with the business, so we gave our all," Benitez said.

The shop features 39 ice cream flavors and includes vegan, gluten-free and no-sugar-added options. It also sells a variety of other desserts, such as sorbets and cheesecakes, as well as hot drinks.

Benitez and her team make all of these products in-house. Their secret? They produce their goods in small batches using high-quality ingredients, giving them a homemade taste that customers love.

“I have dairy intolerance, so the vegan option was a great choice,” said Melanie Ann, a Waltham resident and longtime customer of Lizzy’s. “The [vegan] ice cream is very light, flavorful, sweet but not too sweet, and has a little bit of a coconut undertone to it. It’s very good.”

“Today I ordered salted caramel pretzel,” Quinn Pham, a Waltham student, said. “I usually don’t like combinations of things that are sweet and savory, but I think that they executed it really well in this ice cream.”

Are you a fan of Lizzy’s? They have made it to the next round of voting for “America’s Best Ice Cream.” You can support them to reach the next round [here](#).

Firefighters tackle Beech Street fire

BY JOSEPH SHARKEY • PUBLIC SAFETY • JULY 19, 2026



Waltham firefighters responded to 28 Beech St. at 1:14 p.m. on Saturday following reports of a building fire with smoke coming from the rear of the structure.



Waltham Fire crew at the scene of the Beech Street fire. Photo by Joseph Sharkey.

Upon arrival, crews encountered smoke showing and upgraded the incident to a working fire. Firefighters stretched hose lines, secured a hydrant and located a fire involving the rear-door threshold of the home.

The fire was quickly knocked down before it could spread further. Crews remained on scene checking for extension and completing overhaul operations. Companies began returning to service shortly after the fire was under control.

No injuries were reported. The cause of the fire remains under investigation.

Public safety report: Scams cost Waltham residents thousands of dollars

BY CYD ABNET • PUBLIC SAFETY • JULY 19, 2026



A group of unrelated scams resulted in Waltham residents losing thousands of dollars earlier this month.

The first report came in on July 7 at 6:08 p.m., with police responding to someone calling from a Central Street address. The caller had responded to an ad for an apartment on TikTok, eventually making two payments via Zelle and WhatsApp to rent the apartment. The caller eventually realized it was a scam and there was no apartment. Police are investigating.

On July 9 at 4:06 p.m., police responded to another report of a scam. A Cooper Street resident had received a notice on his computer that his computer had a virus and he needed to call the provided number to resolve it. The man provided the personal information that was asked of him, resulting in \$55,000 being taken from his bank account. He realized it was a scam and wanted the police to document it, but did not want further help.

On July 10 at 1:56 p.m., police responded to a scam reported by a Willow Street resident. The resident had received a message from Apple saying her account had been compromised. She contacted the number provided and shared her bank information believing that would resolve the issue. The scammer removed \$7,000 from her bank account. Police are investigating the incident.

On July 11 at 4:08 p.m., police responded to a call from a College Farm Road resident also reporting a scam. The resident had received a text message about a charge on his credit card. After replying to the text message, he received a series of phone calls. Eventually he gave the person on the other end of the line his bank account information. The scammer removed \$25,000 out of the man's account. Police are investigating the incident.

A summary of additional police and fire activity from July 8 to July 14 is as follows:

On July 8 at 3:51 p.m., police responded to Clematis Avenue, where someone reported a man going door-to-door claiming to be a city inspector. After confirming with Waltham city officials that there wasn't anyone doing inspections, police were able to locate a man and confirm that it was a misunderstanding. The man was sent on his way.

On July 9 at 1:02 p.m., police responded to Waltham Crossings at 126 Smith St. The call came from a staff member who reported that a resident had almost fallen victim to a scam, noting that he was able to intervene and thereby prevent it from happening. The staff member wanted to document the incident.

On July 9 at 2:03 p.m., fire crews responded to a residence on Cross Street. Upon arrival, they saw flames coming from the building. The fire seemed to be emanating from the first-floor deck and had extended into the first floor. All residents who were home made it out safely. Crews were able to extinguish the fire, ventilate the building and check to ensure the fire had not spread.

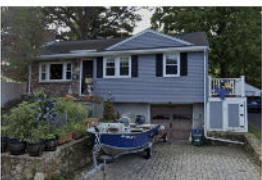
On July 9 at 7:48 p.m., an officer allegedly witnessed a man urinating onto the Circle of Remembrance veterans memorial. Hermelindo Munoz-Ramirez, 49, of Waltham, was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and vandalizing a veterans memorial.

On July 13 at 9:24 a.m., fire crews responded to a residence on Newton Street. Upon arrival, crews discovered that a fire had begun on a stovetop inside the building and extended to the kitchen cabinets. All residents made it out of the building safely. Firefighters extinguished the fire and ventilated the building. The cause of the fire was determined to be an unattended cooking fire.

On July 14 at 11:01 p.m., police responded to reports of a fight on Bacon Street. The caller reported seeing two people get out of a car and begin physically beating each other up. Officers were able to locate two men who, according to the police report, turned out to be friends arm wrestling.

All information was obtained from spokespeople with the Waltham Police and Fire departments, [the publicly available police blotter](#) and police reports available at Waltham District Court.

Waltham home sales, July 7–10, 2026

	Sale Date	Address	Sale Price	BR/Baths	Size
	7/7/2026	195 College Farm Rd	\$810,000	3/1.5	1296 sf
	7/7/2026	74 Galen St	\$750,000	2/1	1293 sf
	7/8/2026	67 Ash St	\$1,080,000	4/4	1529 sf
	7/9/2026	37 Central St Unit 2	\$400,000	2/1	1128 sf
	7/9/2026	22 Grove Rd	\$945,000	4/2	1568 sf
	7/10/2026	42 Virginia Rd	\$912,000	2/2	1824 sf
	7/10/2026	220 Grove St Unit 1	\$820,000	3/2.5	1560 sf
	7/10/2026	32 Eddy St Unit 3	\$573,000	2/1	1055 sf

Events Calendar

July 19-August 15

For the latest and complete listings, see WalthamTimes.org/events.

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
19  Prospect Hill Park July Volunteer Day Date: Sunday July 19th Time: 10am-noon This month's project: progress on the plant canopy! • Participating online personal savings • Volunteering pairs between the local food bank and the Prospect Hill Farm Bank, 114 Totten Street Rd. On grounds for activities: • Free water • Free lunch and drink • Free parking • Free first aid kit On Prospect Hill Farm Bank: • Free water • Free lunch and drink • Free parking • Free first aid kit 10:00 am - 12:00 pm Volunteer day at Prospect Hill Park	20 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm Watch City Ukers: Beatles! All You Need is Uke!	21 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm Waltham Fields Community Farm: Mobile Outreach Market (Mercado de Verduras) 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm Let the games begin! 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm Concert on the Common: Classic Groove	22 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm License Commission meeting 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Free outdoor Zumba class 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Mill Talk: Yankees, immigrants, and the path to political power—The mill towns of Dedham and Waltham	23 10:00 am - 11:30 am Housing: Know your rights 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm Mini golf in the library Mini golf en la biblioteca 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm Teen Super Smash tournament with One Up Games + 3 More	24	25 9:30 am - 2:00 pm Waltham Farmers' Market 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm Bike Together Waltham — July group ride 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm Weaving on a loom
26	27	28 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm Waltham Fields Community Farm: Mobile Outreach Market (Mercado de Verduras) 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm Concert on the Common: Black Velvet Band	29 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Free outdoor Zumba class	30 8:00 am - 10:30 pm Movies at the Mansion: 'Jurassic Park' 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm Science Heroes: Digging it! Héroes de la ciencia: ¡A excavar! 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm Science Heroes: Digging it! Héroes de la ciencia: ¡A excavar!	31	1 9:30 am - 2:00 pm Waltham Farmers' Market
2	3 7:30 pm - 10:00 pm Waltham City Council meeting	4 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm Waltham Fields Community Farm: Mobile Outreach Market (Mercado de Verduras) 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm Concert on the Common: Watch City Cadillacs	5 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm Waltham Rotary Club lunch meeting 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Free outdoor Zumba class 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm Rock Band Camp annual concert	6 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm Minutemen Toastmasters of Waltham	7	8 9:30 am - 2:00 pm Waltham Farmers' Market
9 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm Second Sunday open house tours at the Golden Ball Tavern Museum	10	11 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm Waltham Fields Community Farm: Mobile Outreach Market (Mercado de Verduras) 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm Concert on the Common: Tom Bruhl Trio	12 11:00 am - 12:00 pm Stories for adults: 'Birthday celebrations with Grandma' 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm Yoga at the Rose 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm School Committee meeting	13 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm Conservation Commission meeting	14	15 9:30 am - 2:00 pm Waltham Farmers' Market

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The advertisement has a dark blue background with a large, faint clock face. In the top left is a small logo for 'The Waltham Times'. The main text in white reads: 'It takes many hands to deliver trusted local news. Won't you add yours?'. Below this is a photo of a fluffy, light-brown dog wearing a dark baseball cap with 'Waltham Times' on it. The dog is holding a red, plush octopus toy in its mouth. To the right of the dog is a QR code. Below the QR code is an orange button that says 'GIVE TODAY'. In the bottom left corner is another QR code with the word 'SUBSCRIBE' below it. In the bottom right corner, on an orange background, is the text 'Get the latest Waltham news, FREE in your inbox'.

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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