

# ED ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ FLYNN



Dear Neighbors,

With Labor Day behind us and Summer beginning to wind down, I would like to provide an update on the work my office and I have been doing as of late. Throughout the summer, I was fortunate to attend many wonderful events in District 2, while continuing to work on legislative matters at the City Council that impact our neighborhoods and quality of life. Below are some of the highlights:

## **South Boston IPOD & Zoning Update**

In July, Councilor Flaherty and I released a statement announcing the extension of the South Boston Interim Planning Overlay District (IPOD) until October 31st, 2019 ([You may find here at Caught in Southie](#)). The South Boston elected officials have heard from our constituents and understand the need to continue to advocate for 3 Family (3F) zoning, a minimum lot size, and further community process. We continue to work closely with Mayor Walsh and his administration on these issues and **a public meeting will be held this Monday, September 9th from 6pm-8pm at the Tynan School**. Please join us to make your voice heard on this critical issue for our neighborhood.



# BOSTON CITY COUNCIL

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July 23, 2019

Dear Neighbors,

We would like to thank you for your engagement around the expiration of the Interim Planning Overlay District (IPOD) and the existing deficiencies within Article 68. Whether it was at numerous abutters and civic meetings, or through e-mails and phone calls, we heard your concerns and we stand with you. Your feedback is critically important for our efforts to improve Article 68 to ensure it is a zoning code that allows for reasonable and responsible growth while preserving what makes South Boston such a special and unique place to live. We agree with the assessments many of you made about instituting zoning for the South Boston community as 3F (3 Family), a minimum lot size, as well as the need to obtain additional feedback from the community at a neighborhood meeting.

Please note that the South Boston elected officials have been working diligently on this issue with Mayor Walsh and his Administration, the Inspectional Services Department (ISD), the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA), and the Office of Neighborhood Services (ONS). We are encouraged by the recent extension of the IPOD until October 31, 2019, and thank Mayor Walsh and his Administration for extending the IPOD.

This extension ensures that technical corrections to South Boston's zoning regulations can be carefully considered and drafted for future enactment. Further, IPOD protections ensure continued neighborhood scrutiny of projects that, while perhaps zoning compliant under the current scheme, may not be appropriate to abutters and surrounding neighborhoods. We look forward to working with Mayor Walsh, the appropriate City agencies and the community on this critical issue for the future of our neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Ed Flynn  
Boston City Councilor, District 2

Michael Flaherty  
Boston City Councilor At-Large

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## Community Preservation Act Update



Councilor Flaherty, Director Christine Poff's CPA team and I recently held a community meeting with residents and civic groups in Southie on the Community Preservation Act; affordable housing, historic preservation, and open space projects. We discussed available resources, the timeline, eligible projects, and other pertinent information. Please note the application round will close on Sept. 27th. For more information, please call CPA at 617-635-0277.

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## Hearing Order on Transportation Network Companies



OFFERED BY COUNCILOR ED FLYNN

### CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

#### ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS TRANSPORTATION NETWORK COMPANIES OPERATING IN BOSTON

- WHEREAS:** Transportation Network Companies (TNCs), such as Uber and Lyft, provide ride-sharing services that are convenient and used by many to commute in Boston, and they are now a ubiquitous sight on our streets as recent reports indicate an average of over 115,000 trips per day in the city; *and*
- WHEREAS:** Recognizing that TNCs have become an integral part of our overall transportation system, residents have also expressed that this evolving industry continues to present concerns related to traffic, public safety and Vision Zero, the environment, and consumer protection; *and*
- WHEREAS:** Recent data from the Department of Public Utilities show that there was a 25% increase in total rides from 2017 to 2018, with 81.3 million rides completed in Massachusetts in 2018; *and*
- WHEREAS:** More than 42 million rides began in Boston in 2018, which was a 21% increase from 2017, accounting for the most rides in any city in the Commonwealth, and a 2018 report from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council estimated that 59% of all ride sharing trips are adding additional vehicles on our region's streets; *and*
- WHEREAS:** The prevalence of TNC vehicles from all over the region is putting more cars on our roads, contributing to the difficulty of MBTA busses to move our workforce efficiently, and exacerbating our issues with traffic, which was recently reported to be worst in the nation; *and*
- WHEREAS:** Some cities are enacting regulations on TNCs, with New York City having one of the most restrictive laws that places a cap on the number of TNCs, such as Uber and Lyft, in the city for one year, and establish a minimum wage for drivers, while other municipalities have imposed fees on TNC rides, and cities like San Francisco have piloted geofencing at appropriate areas of the city to limit pickups, reduce congestion, and discourage double parking; *and*
- WHEREAS:** The lack of designated TNC pick up and drop off areas results in double parking or vehicles pulling over in the middle of the street, and in bus and bike lanes, which poses risks to the safety of all on our roads and Vision Zero due to blocked travel lanes and additional congestion; TNC drivers may also be unfamiliar with the neighborhoods of Boston and residents often report speeding on our streets; *and*

Recognizing the integral role that Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) such as Uber and Lyft now play in our overall transportation system, I filed a hearing order to discuss issues relating to TNCs operating in Boston. The hearing will focus on concerns from residents regarding this evolving industry; measures to address traffic and congestion, public safety and Vision Zero, the environmental impact, and consumer protection.

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## Hearing Order on Public Health Disparities in Communities of Color



OFFERED BY COUNCILOR ED FLYNN

CITY OF BOSTON  
IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS PUBLIC HEALTH  
DISPARITIES IN BOSTON'S COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

- WHEREAS: The Boston Public Health Commission's most recent *Health of Boston* report finds that African American, Asian American, and Latino residents of Boston are significantly more likely than White residents to suffer from poor public health outcomes, *and*
- WHEREAS: Compared with White residents, Black residents experience higher rates of preterm births, low birthweight births, infant mortality, asthma emergency department (ED) visits, obesity, hypertension, hepatitis B, tuberculosis, influenza, HIV infection, diabetes hospitalizations and deaths, heart disease hospitalizations, and assault-related ED discharges; *and*
- WHEREAS: Compared with White residents, Asian residents experience higher rates of low birthweight births, hepatitis B, and tuberculosis, and are less likely to complete pap tests, mammograms, and sigmoidoscopy/colonoscopy within the recommended time frame, and a lower percentage of Asian Boston public high school students report being physically active compared with White students, *and*
- WHEREAS: Compared with White residents, Latino residents experience higher rates of preterm births, low birthweight births, infant mortality, tuberculosis, HIV infection, influenza, asthma emergency department (ED) visits, obesity, hypertension, diabetes hospitalizations, and assault-related ED discharges; *and*
- WHEREAS: A recent report by the Union of Concerned Scientists finds that Asian American, African American, and Latino residents in Boston suffer from high exposure to *PM<sub>2.5</sub>*, a fine particulate matter that significantly increases an individual's risk of lung cancer, heart disease, asthma and other respiratory conditions, *and*
- WHEREAS: In Massachusetts, Asian Americans residents are exposed to 36 percent more vehicle pollution than White residents, African Americans are exposed to 34 percent more vehicle pollution, and Latino residents to 26 percent more pollution; *and*
- WHEREAS: High exposure to pollution compounds underlines the public health disparities impacting communities of color, *and*

I believe that all residents should have equal access to resources that help keep them healthy; however, significant public health disparities exist in communities of color. The most recent *Health of Boston* report by the Boston Public Health Commission finds that African American, Asian American, and Latino residents of Boston are significantly more likely to suffer from poor public health outcomes. I will continue to work closely with residents, advocates, and the city to address these disparities and look forward to this discussion.

## Hearing Order on Gas Leaks

I'm proud to partner with Councilor O'Malley to call for a hearing to examine the issue of gas leaks in the City of Boston. In 2018, utility companies reported more than 16,000 unrepared gas leaks to the MA Department of Public Utilities, with more than 1,800 unrepared leaks in Boston. While these figures are staggering, independent researchers typically find 1.5 to 3 times the number of gas leaks than what was reported by utility companies. Moreover, gas leaks seep into the ground and kill our trees, and can lead



OFFERED BY COUNCILOR ED FLYNN

CITY OF BOSTON  
IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS GAS LEAKS  
IN THE CITY OF BOSTON

- WHEREAS: Natural gas leaks have long been an issue in the City of Boston and the state, with utilities companies reporting more than 16,000 unrepared leaks at the end of 2018 to the Department of Public Utilities, and more than 1,800 unrepared leaks in Boston; *and*
  - WHEREAS: The actual number of leaks may be greater than what is reported, with advocates noting that independent researchers typically find 1.5 to 3 times the number of leaks that are reported to DPU; *and*
  - WHEREAS: In a recent study published in the journal *Geophysical Research Letters*, researchers found that Boston and other older cities in the Northeast are responsible for twice the amount of methane gas emissions than federal authorities estimated; *and*
  - WHEREAS: Recent reports indicate that Methane gas is a greenhouse gas that is approximately 86 times more powerful than carbon dioxide in trapping gasses and heat, and reducing methane emissions can have significant impact on combating climate change; *and*
  - WHEREAS: Advocates have long stressed that gas leaks are an issue of social and environmental justice due to their detrimental effect on our trees and canopies, as the methane being emitted seeps into the ground, deprives trees of oxygen, and ultimately kills the trees; *and*
  - WHEREAS: Gas leaks are also a public safety and health concern, as they pollute the air our residents breathe, and big enough gas leaks can lead to fires or explosions like the tragic events that occurred last year in the Merrimack Valley; *and*
  - WHEREAS: The City Council recognizes the importance of addressing gas leaks, as the Council passed "An Ordinance Regarding the Elimination of Gas Leaks in the City of Boston" in 2016, and called for a hearing on gas infrastructure safety and prevention of dangerous gas leaks in 2018; *and*
  - WHEREAS: Although it was a contractor issue, the city should continue to address the issue of gas leaks and natural gas incidents, such as the recent evacuation of Temple Street in Beacon Hill, which serve as stark reminders of the safety risks that gas leaks can pose; *and*
- NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED:**  
That the appropriate Committee of the Boston City Council holds a hearing to discuss gas leaks in the City of Boston, its impact on our environment, trees, public safety and health, as well as ways to effectively prevent and repair gas leaks. The appropriate city, state, and federal officials and members of the public shall be invited to testify.

to fires and explosions like we saw last year in the Merrimack Valley. This is an issue of public safety, public health, social and environmental justice.

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## Community Events in our Neighborhoods

There were so many terrific events in District 2 this summer that helped bring our neighbors and communities together. I was honored to attend many of them and celebrate the diversity and vibrancy District 2. Here are some of the highlights:

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Women's Equality Day Celebration hosted by the Women's Suffrage Celebration of Massachusetts, honoring Sheros: African American Suffragists

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Perkins School back to School Bash at the Tierney Center

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Friends of Fort Point  
Channel Festival



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National Night Out in South Boston, the South End, and Chinatown





## The August Moon Festival



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I was proud to host visits to City Council by the SuperTeens from the Quincy Community Center in Chinatown and Tynan Community Center in South Boston. We also enjoyed spending time with students from the Josiah Quincy School as well.







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If I can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact my office at 617-635-3203 or [ed.flynn@boston.gov](mailto:ed.flynn@boston.gov).

