

# CRC NEWS 2017



THE PARKLANDS ARE YOURS—ENJOY THEM, SUPPORT THEM!

## DESIGNING A SWIM PARK

The Swimmable Charles program is now planning for a permanent facility. It was an enormous year for swimming in the Charles as we:

- Commissioned a North Point Park Feasibility Study,
- Produced a “Swim the Charles” video,
- Hired a Master’s Student to complete daily water quality tests for two-years, and
- Hosted two community design & planning charrettes.



City Splash 2016 was our 4th successful community swim in as many years. We’ve welcomed over 1,000 swimmers into the river!

## ADVOCATING FOR SAFETY

The Conservancy’s Underpasses Coalition pushed the proposed modifications to the Anderson Memorial Bridge past a major hurdle recently: the Mass. Historical Commission ruled that they accept the “adverse effect” of constructing an underpass, and gave MassDOT authorization to proceed with the design process, without formal consultation. The underpass will dramatically improve safety conditions at the bridge’s intersection with N. Harvard Street.



The Dr. Paul Dudley White bike path on the Boston shore will allow safer recreation and bicycle commuting once an underpass is built.

## VOLUNTEERING IN THE PARKLANDS

The Conservancy’s Volunteer program held 65 service events, engaging over 2,000 volunteers!

We’re excited to have over 500 volunteers working with us at our annual Charles River Earth Day Event!

For the fourth season running, CRC partnered with Youth Empowerment Services (YES) to help kids earn a skateboard through volunteer work.



Since the Lynch Family Skatepark’s opening in 2015, skaters have earned boards, helmets, and lessons by volunteering in the parklands.

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## The Boston Globe

Founded 1872

OPINION

### Our beautiful, boring Charles River

By Mike Ross  
GLOBE CONTRIBUTOR  
DECEMBER 22, 2016

The Charles River is beautiful, but it's boring. Extremely boring. I now know this after visiting Prague's Vltava River.

In the dead of winter you might see a handful of brave runners streaking down the Charles's running paths. Maybe some winter geese, too. In Prague, you'll see far more life.

Along the Vltava's banks are vibrant Christmas markets where customers line up to purchase hot mulled wine and delicious sugar covered pastries called trdelnik that bake over an open fire and steam when you bite into it. There are restaurants that are open late into the evening and where blankets and open fires keep diners warm.

There are vendors perched above the cascading bridges, selling souvenirs and mementos. In short, the river is

an active ribbon where the city comes alive.

Somewhere an environmentalist, wary of inviting for-profit businesses into Boston's riverfront park, is groaning about the commercialization of nature. But it isn't an issue ...

...Boston has a history of activating its environmental spaces, but sometimes it takes a firm nudge from private citizens and the nonprofit sector...

... It wouldn't take much for the Charles to be reimagined. There's some work underway already ... Further west, the banks should be developed with businesses that face riverward. We need open-air cafes and restaurants that celebrate — not wall off — the vistas.

As local enthusiasts acknowledged ... ours is already one of the busiest rivers in the country for boaters. It's time it became one of the most engaging for people along its banks.

Mike Ross is an attorney and former Boston city councilor. He writes regularly for the Globe.

### LETTERS

### Unlocking the Charles River

JANUARY 04, 2017

IN HIS op-ed, Mike Ross laments that the banks of the Charles River are not as lively as those of the Vltava River in Prague ("Our beautiful, boring Charles River," Opinion, Dec. 22). While this observation was the fruitful result of what sounds like a fun trip to Europe, one doesn't need to be a world traveler to know that one aspect of the shoreline of the Charles inhibits its activation. The parks on the river's edge are very difficult to reach from the adjacent neighborhoods, since they are cut off by highways such as Storrow Drive and the Mass Pike. Such connectivity to neighborhoods exists in cities with more lively riverfronts, including Prague and Paris. In Boston, nowhere is this problem

more pronounced than in the stretch between the Boston University and River Street bridges. The I-90 Allston Interchange Project, if properly designed, could dramatically improve connectivity between the river and the Allston neighborhood. Rebuilding I-90 at grade could allow Commonwealth Avenue and Brookline to be connected to the Charles near the Agganis Arena, for example, which would provide the opportunity to create a riverfront more like the one Mr. Ross imagines. Let's not miss this once-in-a-lifetime chance.

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