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Businesses stymied by pot panel, they say

‘Rudderless’ CCC slow to finalize crucial rules

By Diti Kohli
GLOBE STAFF

Samantha Kanter dreams of opening a restaurant that serves weed-infused dishes, with cannayoga classes in the back. It should be allowed in Massachusetts, she said. Social consumption — gathering places where people can use marijuana products on-site — was legalized by voters in 2016, blessed by the Legislature six years later, and touted in January as a 2024 priority by a cannabis regulator.

But Kanter is still waiting. The Cannabis Control Commission, or CCC, which oversees the pot industry in the state, has not finalized rules for social consumption, leaving businesses adrift and consumers restless. Without clear rules, Kanter has no path to pursue a cannabis license for the restaurant she envisions.

“They haven’t made any movement. They have not given us any proper excuse or even feedback. They keep pushing deadlines back, when we’re held to deadlines every day,” she said. “The CCC has no repercussions for this. All faith I have is lost.”

It’s just one example, advocates and industry insiders say, of how the dysfunction at the CCC is hurting companies, customers, and the

CANNABIS, Page A10

Buildings test new ways to power up for cleaner future

By Ivy Scott
GLOBE STAFF

On a sloping plot of land down the street from Nubian Markets sits The Kenzi, an affordable housing complex for older adults in Roxbury that opened its doors to the first residents in June. From the outside, it appears to be a building like any other. Inside, though, a giant battery, just bigger than a refrigerator, is changing the way building owners and architects think about emergency power.

The technology, a solar-powered substitute for the diesel generators many buildings rely on during power outages, is the first in Massachusetts. It is part of an emerging trend of Boston building owners turning to the latest green technology to slash the use of fossil fuels, as the city tries to meet a looming goal of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

Downtown, Emerson College is slated to become the first college in the nation to partner with what’s called a district energy provider to heat all its buildings with renewable energy. In Dorchester, the Franklin Field Apartments are also testing a new approach to heating, drawing on warmth from deep below the earth’s surface with geothermal wells. And in Jamaica Plain, the JFK Elementary School is piloting a similar first-in-the-city geothermal program, wrapping up the first drilling tests at the school last month.

BUILDINGS, Page A5

Democrats say they won’t be ‘swift-boated’ again



Tim Walz has been accused by the GOP of misrepresenting his service.

Quick to defend Walz’s military record from attacks, unlike with Kerry in 2004

By Jim Puzzanghera
GLOBE STAFF

WASHINGTON — At the 2004 Democratic National Convention, then-Massachusetts Senator John Kerry took the stage and began his acceptance speech with a simple but powerful gesture to highlight his Vietnam War service.

“I’m John Kerry,” he told the

roaring crowd at Boston’s Fleet Center (now TD Garden) before snapping his right hand to his forehead in a military salute, “and I’m reporting for duty.”

But the distinguished Vietnam record that Kerry had made the centerpiece of his campaign quickly came under attack by a shadowy outside veterans group, one that helped sink his White

House bid.

Now, with the first military veteran on the Democratic presidential ticket since Kerry, that tactic is resurfacing. And it’s being led by Republican Donald Trump’s campaign and its chief, who was a key part of the 2004 attacks on Kerry.

Within a day after Minnesota Governor Tim Walz was unveiled as the Democrats’ vice presidential pick, Trump’s running mate, Ohio Senator JD Vance, led the Republican attack

on Walz’s 24-year service in the Army National Guard.

But Democrats said they’ve learned from 2004, when Kerry’s campaign responded slowly to what they called smears by the group called Swift Boat Veterans for Truth after the type of small river patrol craft that Kerry commanded in the war.

Those 2004 attacks had such an impact the strategy became its own political term of art — swift-boating — and Democrats

WALZ, Page A6

FIGHTING FOR FAMILIES



JOHN TLUMACKI/GLOBE STAFF

A day before the state is to begin evicting migrant and homeless families from overflow shelters after a five-day period, dozens of activists gathered Thursday at the State House to deliver a letter signed by health care providers and community organizations urging Governor Maura Healey to reverse the new policy. **B1.**

Facing challenges, Stop & Shop aims to reinvent

Most of the stores will be renovated, but chain’s problems may run deeper

By Diti Kohli
GLOBE STAFF

In Allston Yards, the newly renovated Stop & Shop location is a picture of the best the grocer has to offer.

Buffalo tenders and pepperoni flatbreads line an expanded prepared foods counter, and watermelon and greens are walled off in fridges — not simply chilled in the open — to save energy. The row of cashier lines can all be converted to self-checkout in minutes. There’s a kosher-certified bakery, wider aisles, and higher ceilings.

“A palace of produce,” spokesperson Jennifer Barr said during a tour of the store. (She lives nearby and frequently shops there.) “It’s like a dream.”

But is it enough?

Once the darling of Northeast grocery chains, Stop & Shop recently announced it will close 32 underperforming stores by November across New England, New York, and New Jersey. It may be a

sign of trouble brewing: The chain, owned by Dutch food giant Ahold Delhaize and managed in Quincy, will operate 359 stores after the current wave of closures. It already runs 20 fewer than it did in 2018, according to its annual reports.

In an earnings call in May, JJ Fleeman, chief executive of Ahold Delhaize USA, said that Stop & Shop is “not where we want to be or need to be” and that “the value proposition and pricing . . . are simply not strong enough.”

Those developments have stoked fears that the chain could go the way of other once-loved grocers that have faded into obscurity, such as Grand Union and A&P.

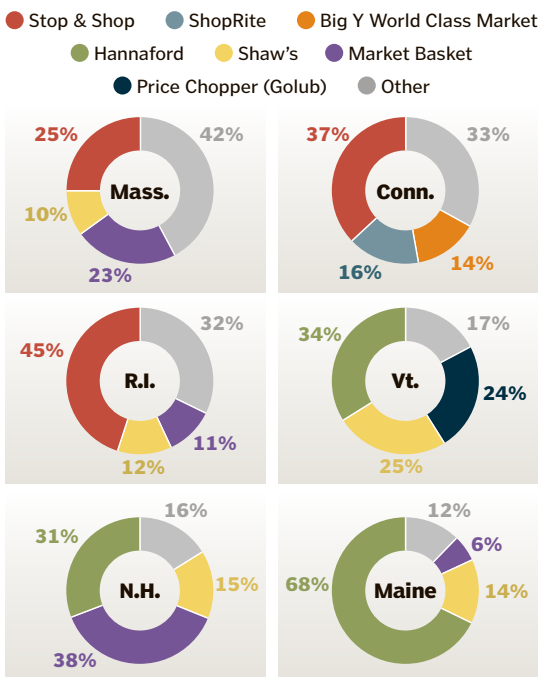
“This isn’t my first ride at the rodeo,” said John Niccolai, president of the United Food & Commercial Workers Union chapter that represents Stop & Shop workers in New Jersey. “I’ve seen many companies going into a death spiral, and this is the beginning of it.”

But Stop & Shop president Gordon Reid believes a reinvention is underway.

The company intends to renovate most of its stores in a bid to modernize, with more than 190 already completed. New locations are opening, including an Acton store that should be finished

STOP & SHOP, Page A7

Top 3 supermarket chains in each New England state



SOURCE: Placer.ai • Data is from February 2023.

GLOBE STAFF



DANIELLE PARHIZKARAN/GLOBE STAFF

FRESH START FOR PATS

Football was back Thursday night at Gillette Stadium as New England opened up its exhibition schedule with a 17-3 win over Carolina. Top pick Drake Maye, the potential quarterback of the future, got a few minutes but was lifted after one series, as all the quarterbacks got their shot. At left, wide receiver Javon Baker took a selfie with new friends after the game. **C1.**

Battered Vermont prepared for more flooding, with Debby’s remnants closing in. **A2, B1.**

The US men’s basketball team had to rally late to get by Serbia in the semifinal. **C1.**

Both suspects in a foiled plot to attack Taylor Swift shows in Vienna appeared to be inspired by the Islamic State and Al Qaeda. **A3.**

Free community college for all comes as a huge relief to students

By Hilary Burns
GLOBE STAFF

Jhollyeric De Freitas, 21, decided to pursue a college degree in computer networking and cybersecurity after the birth of his son earlier this summer.

Money is tight for De Freitas, who lives in an apartment with his mom, a Brazilian immigrant, and works full time at his father’s restaurant in Gloucester as a cook. So it was an enormous relief when he learned last week that his tuition would be free, and he could save more money for his family while pursuing financial independence.

His son “deserves to grow up in a house one day, and it’s hard to do that

without a diploma and a good job,” De Freitas said.

News that the new \$58 billion state budget signed by Governor Maura Healey included free community college for students of all ages seemed almost too good to be true for De Freitas and many other current and prospective community college students.

The program, MassEducate, expands an initiative launched last year to make community college free for students 25 and older, which drove enrollment growth at the public, two-year schools for the first time in several years. Massachusetts’ 15 community colleges serve about 90,000 students, the majority of whom work

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Pool queue

Friday: Showers, then nice. High 78-83. Low 72-77.

Saturday: More sun, warm. High 84-89. Low 65-70.

Sunrise: 5:45 Sunset: 7:53

Weather and Comics, G6-7. Obituaries, C9.