Book Launch & Talk:
*A People’s History of the New Boston* by Jim Vrabel

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Boston, MA—On September 10 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., the West End Museum will host the official book launch for *A People’s History of the New Boston* by Jim Vrabel. The book provides a grassroots perspective on the tumultuous 1960s and 1970s, when residents of the City engaged in an era of activism and protest unprecedented in Boston since the American Revolution. Vrabel will read excerpts and lead a discussion. West End residents and others mentioned in the book will be invited to speak. Light refreshments will be served. The event is free and open to the public. Pre-registration is required at thewestendmuseum.org/whats_on/event-registration.

Vrabel is a longtime Boston community activist and historian, and author of *When in Boston: A Time Line & Almanac* and *Homage to Henry: A Dramatization of John Berryman’s “The Dream Songs.”*

“This is a story that ached to be told, and Jim is the perfect person to finally give it voice. We are proud to have him at the Museum to unveil and discuss this important book,” said Curator and Museum Board President Duane Lucia.

More about *A People’s History of the New Boston*:
Although Boston today is a vibrant and thriving city, it was anything but that in the years following World War II. By 1950 it had lost a quarter of its tax base over the previous 25 years, and during the 1950s, it would lose residents faster than any other major city in the country.

Credit for the city’s turnaround since that time is often given to a select group of people, all of them men, all of them white and most of them well off. In fact, a large group of community activists—many of them women, people of color and not very well off—were also responsible for creating the Boston so many enjoy today.

Using interviews with many of those activists, contemporary news accounts and historical sources, Vrabel describes the many ways in which residents exerted their influence on the city that was being rebuilt around them. Topics include the fights against urban renewal, highway construction and airport expansion; for civil rights, school desegregation and welfare reform; and over Vietnam and busing. Vrabel tallies the wins and losses of neighborhood Davids as they took on the Goliaths of the time and reveals the legacy of that activism.

“Vrabel has resurrected the voices of so many everyday (and yet extraordinarily fierce!) neighborhood folks who have stood up to the powers that be and grabbed the reins of leadership on all issues that directly impacted their lives. In this book, history is not only prelude to present, it is inspiration to all of us that we can indeed change our future.” — Michael Patrick MacDonald, author of *All Souls: A Family Story From Southie*

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About the West End Museum:
The West End Museum is dedicated to the collection, preservation and interpretation of the history and culture of the West End neighborhood. The Museum’s permanent exhibit, “The Last Tenement,” highlights the immigrant history of the neighborhood through its decimation under Urban Renewal in 1959; two additional galleries feature rotating exhibits. The Museum is located near North Station at 150 Staniford St, Suite 7. Hours: Tuesday - Friday 12:00pm - 5:00pm; Saturday 11:00am - 4:00pm. Admission is free.