



Boston City Council
ED FLYNN
Councilor - District 2

October 13, 2026

Commissioner Rob Santiago
26 Court St, 6th Floor
Boston, MA 02108

Mayor Michelle Wu
1 City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

RE: Blue Square Request, G Street & East 8th Street in South Boston

Dear Mayor Wu and Commissioner Santiago,

I am following up on my letter from September 24th regarding a Blue Square request from a military family in South Boston, who sought to honor the memory, service, and sacrifice of a Navy Corpsman who saved many lives in the Iraq War. For many years, a foundation established in his name has worked tirelessly to both raise awareness on the hidden wounds of war and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), as well as raising tens of thousands of dollars to provide scholarships to our local youth. As you recall, Boston Veterans Services already committed months ago to conduct a ceremony with military honors, as traditionally done for those Blue Squares dedicated to veterans and service members. However, the family was also asked by the Office of Neighborhood Services (ONS) to submit 200 signatures, conduct a community process with an abutters meeting, and get sign off from his local civic group.

At the very same time, ONS informed District City Councilors that they will now decide which development projects will require an abutters meeting before going to the Zoning Board of Appeal (ZBA), and which will not. As a retired veteran who served nearly 25 years in the U.S. Navy, it is unconscionable that we ask for more community process from a military family for a dedication than we do for all ZBA and development projects. Veterans and military families should not be required to hold an abutters meeting, or meet with a local civic group, to honor the service and sacrifice of a loved one.

Last week, to ensure that veterans and military families are not being unfairly held to different standards of community process, Boston City Councilors At-Large Erin Murphy and Henry Santana joined me to call for a hearing to discuss the dedication of hero squares and blue squares that honor veterans and military families being placed solely under the purview of Boston Veterans Services moving forward. The Boston City Council unanimously signed on to this proposal (12-0). Please note, just this morning, despite the long-standing support of Boston Veterans Services and unanimous support at the Boston City Council, ONS has again asked this family to schedule an abutters meeting in early November.

All dedications honoring veterans and military families should be handled solely by Boston Veterans Services beginning immediately. The City of Boston has always held shared values of honoring our veterans and military families. But after the Boston City Council set a precedent to cut \$900,000 from Boston Veterans Services in 2023, and the City of Boston proposed a 14.6% reduction to Boston Veterans Services in the FY27 budget, and now ONS has asked for more community process for military dedications than ZBA cases - it is fair to question whether these remain shared values.

Sincerely,

Ed Flynn
Boston City Councilor, U.S. Navy (Retired)