



PHOTO: MELINA SCHULER

Rutland Sq. & Union Park Losing Blue Bins

by **Melina Schuler**
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Open-air blue recycling bins will be phased out in the Rutland Square and Union Park neighborhoods over the next two months because of concerns about trash buildup on the streets.

“When they are open to the elements, the elements take them,” said Stephen Fox, Rutland Square Neighborhood Association chair, about recyclables that are put in the 19-gallon blue bins that do not have lids.

Fox also said that the bins make it easier for people to rummage through looking for

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collectibles, which leads to “unnecessary spillage” on the street. The Rutland Square Neighborhood Association pays an independent contractor to clean the neighborhood once a week.

“From a financial, aesthetic, sanitary position, this is in everybody’s best interest,” Fox said.

Being targeted are Concord Square, Rutland Square and West Newton Street between Columbus Avenue and Tremont Street, Fox said. He estimated that 20 to 40 blue bins are in use there.

Members of the Union Park Neighborhood Association unanimously voted to abolish the use of blue bins in September, according to UPNA Vice President Norm Knickle,

“Especially on windy days, people would put out blue bins, and the bottles and paper would blow around the park,”

Knickle said.

Union Park Street between Washington Street and Shawmut Avenue, and Union Park Square and Shawmut Avenue between Waltham and Upton Streets are the targets of the initiative.

Residents on the targeted streets can use 32-gallon clear plastic bags, wheeled recycling carts provided by the city or old trash barrels less than 32 gallons affixed with an official city sticker as an alternative to the small blue bins, said Susan Cascino, the city’s recycling director. Residents who are not able to use a cart or barrel because of space constraints will have to defer to plastic bags, Cascino said. The bin elimination will only affect the two parts of the neighborhood, although the city is no longer buying or providing blue bins citywide.

According to city officials, Union Park and Rutland Square residents will be notified with flyers over the next two to three weeks. If a resident continues to use a blue bin once they are phased out, the blue bin will be picked up with the recyclables.