

LETTERS | AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MAYOR

May this be a turning point for Roxbury and the city as a whole

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MEDIA COVERAGE mentioning Roxbury during the mayoral campaign offers excitement about our voices being heard ([“In Roxbury, mix of pride, skepticism as candidates court votes,”](#) Page A1, Nov. 3) and our arts becoming more widely known.

What must not get lost is the role that Roxbury’s residents will play. Although Tuesday’s winner has months until he assumes office, it’s not clear how he will create a sustainable network between City Hall and community-based organizations. That infrastructure will be critical for developing an equitable and transformational policy that is aware of and responsive to the community.

Both candidates have made numerous appearances in Roxbury. Unfortunately, the narrative of their visits has seemingly reduced the voices of residents to little more than that of background singers in a traveling band. This can change through strategic policy making and inclusive hiring and appointments that draw upon and encourage growth of the existing talents and assets of Roxbury.

Given the rapid pace of change in Roxbury, there is a great deal at stake for residents. I encourage Tuesday’s winner to immerse himself in the spirited, messy, and ambitious conversations that make living in Roxbury both dynamic and cherished by many. I also look forward to the next mayor leading the evolution of Boston’s understanding of its own identity, to the point that Roxbury and its residents cease to be the city’s cautionary tale and instead serve as its exemplars.

Derek Lumpkins

Executive director

Discover Roxbury

