



Boston City Council

Erin J. Murphy

Councilor At-Large

Councilor Erin J. Murphy Statement on East Boston Building Collapse and Citywide Call for Safety Reform

As your citywide Boston City Councilor, I am deeply concerned by the partial collapse of the brick façade at 57 Webster Street in East Boston early Wednesday morning. Thankfully, no injuries were reported, but that was sheer luck. Bricks rained down onto the public sidewalk, including in front of a neighboring building that has since been evacuated. This is not just a wake-up call for East Boston; it's a warning for every neighborhood in our city.

This collapse was not a freak incident. A 311 complaint was submitted as early as June 19, reporting falling debris from the site. A more substantial collapse was noted around July 11. While scaffolding had been installed, it failed to protect the public. That is unacceptable and demonstrates that our current safety protocols and oversight measures are not enough.

I am calling for an expedited, full structural inspection by the City's Inspectional Services Department and Fire Department to determine the root causes of this collapse and assess whether negligence was involved. Residents have already reached out to express their concern and deserve transparency and timely updates from city departments. They should not have to wait for another emergency to understand the risks on their own block.

But we must be clear: this is not just about one building in East Boston. Just weeks ago in Chinatown, heavy stone slabs fell from the fourth floor of a building at 34 Harrison Avenue, crashing onto the sidewalk. Thankfully, again, no one was injured, but it easily could have been tragic. Earlier this year, at 75 Kneeland Street, large pieces of concrete tumbled from a twelfth-floor windowsill, prompting emergency sidewalk closures and scaffolding installation. And in 2022, a ceiling collapse in a Dorchester home forced families to evacuate overnight. These are not isolated incidents. This is a citywide safety issue, and the consequences of inaction are becoming increasingly clear.

I am urging the administration to immediately undertake a citywide review of building safety protocols, 311 enforcement follow-up, and scaffold permit oversight. We must proactively inspect aging and at-risk buildings before someone is seriously hurt—or worse. As a citywide Councilor, I represent every neighborhood in Boston, and all of our residents deserve to walk down the street without the fear of bricks or concrete crashing down from above. I will continue working with city departments and neighbors across Boston to make sure public safety is prioritized and upheld. This moment demands urgent and proactive leadership—not excuses.

Sincerely,

Erin J. Murphy

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