

PARKWAY

NEIGHBORS

Youth Council flies

By James Harder
EDITOR

BOSTON — If the youth of Boston soon find themselves getting more bang for their buck when it comes to bus passes, they may want to thank 17-year-old Orla Higgins of West Roxbury for it.

As a member of the transportation subcommittee on the Mayor's Youth Council, Higgins has been advocating for several months for expanded bus and T passes for city youth.

"They (the passes) expire at 6 at night," Higgins explained. "That isn't enough time if you have extracurricular activities. If you live within two miles of your school you can't get a bus pass ... It's also not valid on weekends."

Higgins brought these problems to Mayor Thomas Menino's attention last November when the Youth Council met with the mayor to discuss the findings of the council's various subcommittees.

The discussion appears to have paid off. The Youth Council's transportation subcommittee is scheduled to meet Feb. 27 with representatives from the state's

Transportation Department and the MBTA to discuss possible expansion of the youth pass. The subcommittee also wants to set up a permanent youth advisory board to the MBTA to make sure that the concerns of young people are kept in mind.

Higgins talked about the achievements of the Youth Council last Thursday at a press conference at City Hall to promote the second annual Mayor's Youth Summit on March 9. Other local members of the council are Liz Sullivan, 18, of Roslindale, and Tom Malone, 16, of West Roxbury. Daniel Kibler-Stearns of Roslindale was not at the conference.

The Mayor's Youth Council is open to teens from across the city. In West Roxbury, the council meets at the Area E-5 police station. In Roslindale, it meets at the Roslindale Community Center.

Each local council is assigned a mentor from the Boston Bar Association, Northeastern University or the city of Boston. These mentors help facilitate meetings. In West Roxbury the mentor is Eve Piemonte-Stacey while in Roslindale it's Brian Glascock.

About every six weeks, repre-



STAFF PHOTO BY JAMES HARDER

In the Eagle Room at Boston City Hall, Thomas Malone of West Roxbury, Liz Sullivan of Roslindale and Orla Higgins of West Roxbury meet with other teen-agers from across the city on the Mayor's Youth Council. Daniel Kibler-Stearns of Roslindale is not pictured.

sentatives from the local councils meet with Mayor Thomas Menino. That's when the council members

get to sound off about the issues they think are facing city youth — like the bus passes.

Some of the issues, such as gang violence and education, are more complicated and can't be resolved immediately. Now, the council is focusing on the Youth Summit.

The Youth Summit will be held on Saturday, March 9, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Boston Latin School. Boston youth ages 12-18 are invited to attend and enjoy a day of workshops, youth speakers and entertainment.

The purpose of the Youth Summit is to offer young people a chance to learn what Boston has to offer them. Last year's Youth Summit, was attended by more than 1,200 Boston youth. Fifty agencies set up information tables in the resource area.

The morning of the summit will include a continental breakfast, youth speakers, comments from Menino, a special guest speaker and skill building workshops. Some of the workshop topics include "Resume Writing and Job Applications," "Teens and Police," "College," "Youth and the Media" and "Teens and Domestic Violence." All of the workshops will be led by a Boston youth and a professional from a youth service agency. The afternoon session will include lunch, youth performances and an all-day resource/information fair.

The Youth Summit is free due to the sponsorship of the city of Boston, Bank of Boston Blue Cross/Blue Shield and Nynex. To register call Boston Community Centers at 635-4920, Ext. 2300. Registration deadline is today, Feb. 21.