

### Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood Revitalization Plan

Resources for Homeowners to Deal with Foreclosure or Redeveloping Foreclosed Properties

#### **Local Programs**

##### **City of Salem - Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program**

Housing rehabilitation assistance program for low- and moderate-income homeowners for 1-4 unit homes

[http://www.salem.com/Pages/SalemMA\\_DPCD/housing](http://www.salem.com/Pages/SalemMA_DPCD/housing)

##### **City of Salem – North Shore American Dream Down Payment Initiative**

First time homebuyers (with incomes less than 80% area median income) program which provides down payment assistance

[http://www.salem.com/pages/salemma\\_dpced/addguidelines.pdf](http://www.salem.com/pages/salemma_dpced/addguidelines.pdf)

##### **City of Salem – Pre-foreclosure Counseling and Working with Servicers**

Salem offers information on where programs are offered and great variety of resources available

[http://www.salem.com/Pages/SalemMA\\_DPCD/additionalresources/other](http://www.salem.com/Pages/SalemMA_DPCD/additionalresources/other)

#### **State Programs**

##### **Mass Housing Partnership – Enhanced Soft Second Program**

Offers attractive interest rates for homebuyers purchasing foreclosed properties

[http://www.mhp.net/homeownership/lender/soft\\_second\\_guidelines.php](http://www.mhp.net/homeownership/lender/soft_second_guidelines.php)

##### **Mass Housing – MyCommunity Refinance Loans**

Allows homeowners with adjustable-rate mortgages to take a proactive step toward stability before their loan becomes a burden

<https://www.masshousing.com/portal/server.pt?mode=2&uuID=%7B053B0514-F267-4944-B7BF-7C396F32102F%7D>

##### **Mass Housing – Home Saver Loan Programs**

Counseling and loan program that helps borrowers who are unable to repay their mortgage

[https://www.masshousing.com/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=228&&PageID=2563&mode=2&in\\_hi\\_userid=2&cached=true](https://www.masshousing.com/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=228&&PageID=2563&mode=2&in_hi_userid=2&cached=true)

##### **Mass Housing – Purchase/Rehabilitation Loans for Eligible Families**

Rehabilitation grants available to income-eligible households (up to 120% of area median income) and first time homebuyers for the purchase and rehabilitation of foreclosed properties

[https://www.masshousing.com/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=228&&PageID=2563&mode=2&in\\_hi\\_userid=2&cached=true](https://www.masshousing.com/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=228&&PageID=2563&mode=2&in_hi_userid=2&cached=true)

## **Resources for Homeowners to Deal with Foreclosure or Redeveloping Foreclosed Properties (Continued)**

### **Federal Programs**

#### **Neighborhood Stabilization Program Grants**

Administered by Mass Department of Housing and Community Development and City of Salem. Details of homeowner eligibility and program components still being worked out.

[http://www.chapa.org/?q=foreclosure\\_view\\_details/46](http://www.chapa.org/?q=foreclosure_view_details/46)

#### **Making Home Affordable Program**

Help borrowers whose loans are held by Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac refinance into a more affordable mortgage or favorably modify a existing one.

<http://makinghomeaffordable.gov/>

#### **First Time Homebuyer Tax Credit**

\$8,000 first time homebuyer credit

<http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=206294,00.html>

### **Other Resources**

#### **Citizens' Housing and Planning Association**

Clearing House for Information on Foreclosure Prevention Programs and assistance for homebuyers and tenants.

<http://www.chapa.org/>

**MEETING NOTES**

Meeting Date: May 5, 2009

Meeting Topic: Small Group Discussions of Issues, Opportunities and Constraints during the Public Meeting

Meeting Location: Carlton Elementary School, Salem, MA

Project: Salem Bridge Neck Neighborhood Planning Study

Attendees: Community members, The City of Salem Department of Planning and Community Development, The Cecil Group and subconsultants

Prepared by: Margarita Iglesia and Meghan Grafton

Copies: Department of Planning and Community Development Project File

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Over 100 people attended these group discussions, which were held at the Carlton School. This was the first public meeting for the Salem Neck Neighborhood Planning Study. During the meeting the members of the Consultant Team were introduced, and the findings of an initial assessment of current housing, commercial and planning conditions in the neighborhood were presented to the participants. Additionally, the participants were divided into five small groups. A mapping exercise and discussion to share the neighborhood’s issues, opportunities, and constraints took place in each group. Goals and priorities for the neighborhood were also discussed.

*Section I* of these notes is a summary of the concerns shared by the participants of the small groups, in which we have tried to reflect our findings and learning from the discussions as closely as possible. *Section II* contains a comprehensive list of the issues, opportunities, and constraints as they were noted by the group facilitators during the small group discussions.

**Section I**

**Issues:**

- Utilities are an eyesore, especially some Verizon poles in which they added a new pole and attached the old one to it which makes them stand out even more.
- Some houses are in disrepair and some properties have absentee landlords, which is often reflected in their exterior condition.
- Sidewalks and street crossings need to be improved, ideally beyond the boundaries of the traffic and streetscape improvements planned for Bridge Street.

- Parking needs to be improved; in particular there is a lack of on-street parking for businesses.
- The neighborhood should become a destination, in order to retain and expand the business customer base.

**Opportunities:**

- Historic character, this was the first settlement in the City.
- Commuter Rail access within walking distance.
- Pride in history and architecture, with many buildings contributing to the neighborhood historical character.
- A certain number of properties available for purchase present an opportunity for homeownership and building improvements.
- The neighborhood is located within walking distance to everything and close to downtown.
- Friendly neighborhood.
- The neighborhood is changing for the better.

**Constraints:**

- Power lines cross the Neck in the vicinity of the Clippership Inn.
- Utility Corp/Appearance [?] of the industrial uses.
- Absentee landlords and rundown buildings detract from the general quality of living.
- Bureaucracy [?]
- High commercial real estate taxes may pose an obstacle for some businesses.
- Lack of a controlled signage program detracts from the overall design and image quality.
- Decisions sometimes seem to be based on money and not on what is best for the neighborhood.
- Traffic is heavy at some times, although commercial activity has decreased since the Bypass Road was built.
- Bridge Street divides more than connects the east and west sections of the neighborhood.
- Overcrowding of some properties

- [already listed above] Perception of security is not good in some areas (car break-ins, graffiti, some people are afraid to walk at night).
- Vandalism of vacant properties and landscaping contribute to detract from the neighborhood's image and appeal.

**Goals and Wishes:**

*General themes for goals and wishes were attracting business and tourists, improving the appearance of the area, improving green space, and zoning concerns.*

The following is a summary list of the goals and wishes compiled at the meeting, grouped by categories. It is intended as a condensed version of the goals and wishes listed in *Section II*, and it has been edited to clarify some of the ideas based on our recollections as group facilitators. However, this summary should not be assumed to be comprehensive. Please refer to *Section II* for a complete list of goals and wishes.

**Appearance and Maintenance:**

- Get Verizon to fix the poles
- Relocate utilities underground
- Cleaning
- Reuse of empty buildings, good maintenance
- New and wider sidewalks
- [doesn't say where] Great signage - remove bad signs
- Gateway to Salem – make it beautiful
- Historic marker sign
- New name - Harbor View?
- Bridge Street beautification
- Solve traffic problems, especially at Webb Street
- Discourage graffiti
- Clean and orderly - less graffiti – less traffic

**Attract business and tourism and improve the neighborhood feel:**

- Welcoming signs
- Outdoor restaurant/ café seating
- Nice like "Cabot Street"
- Destination - not a pass through
- Destinations to attract visitors
- Marketing of businesses on Bridge Street
- New businesses for tourists
- Period lighting

- Ice cream shop/ stand
- Tourist destination - Antique shops
- Self-guided walking tour
- Fishing destination
- Parking on Bridge Street allowed
- Retail and transportation signage
- Better connections to Beverly, other Salem neighborhoods
- Better signage for directions
- Fix Swampscott sign
- Get rid of Orange Street cleaning sign
- Events at new Bridge Park
- More family/park/block party events
- Safe for walking and bikes
- Keeping a mix of types and affordability
- Consolidated Business District
- Control the wildlife (squirrels, skunks)
- Bring a flower shop, Trader Joe's
- Feel connection to Salem Common
- Slower traffic
- A more affordable neighborhood
- Market / shop
- Movie theater
- Motel redevelopment
- Carts/restaurant/ice cream parlor
- [already listed]Boat access (ideally to Collins Cove)
- Fishing pier
- Safety - Tracy walk-way [?]

### **Green Space:**

- More green space
- Walk all the way to the restaurants and the park
- Bike path used in a better way
- Better sidewalks
- More pedestrian friendly
- Better landscaping
- More trees
- Natural features and views / parks and trees

### **Zoning:**

- Density - maintain lower level density
- Worried about zoning changes - avoid big project

### **City Action:**

- City to show that they have heard Citizen's input, follow up and act on recommendations
- See action spreading fast - no more meaningless studies

### **Section II**

#### **Issues**

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Utility construction	Dangerous crossing for kids
Development at Bridge Park	Sidewalks are bad
North End Street Walk	Verizon telephone poles-double telephone poles
Late night businesses	Salem building and properties - need redevelopment
Disrepair of houses on Bridge St	Need for trash barrels
Redundant light posts/phone polls	Parking is lacking / invading residential area
Unfinished pier - not accessible	Blight
Traffic coming off new bridge	Need to improve conditions at dilapidated properties
Lack of parking-whole neck	Clustered foreclosures
Northey / Bridge St. Intersection is dangerous (mentioned 3 times)	Deserted buildings on Bridge Street
Need better restaurants	Snow removal problems
Better retail corridor	
Need a laundromat	
Absentee landlords	
Proximity of aura-related businesses to residential	

#### **Constraints**

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Power lines	Traffic
Rundown buildings	Bridge Street divides more than connects
Utility Corp/ industrial uses appearance	Overcrowding of some properties
Absentee landlords	Graffiti need to clean
Dealing with utilities and wires crossing streets	Run down properties
Bureaucracy	Car break-ins
High commercial real estate taxes	Some people are afraid to walk at night
Getting more open space	Vandalism of landscaping
Lack of controlled signage program	Vandalism of vacant properties
Lack of care for houses businesses	Snowy sidewalks on Bridge Street
Decisions based on money-not on what is best	

#### **Opportunities**

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Building South Bridge Street	Water on both sides
Power lines underground	Water views and water smell
Webb Street Park	Historic homes/ beautiful houses
Better lighting	Walkable

1st settlement  
Commuter rail  
Collins Cove  
Great potential to be beautiful  
Electrical utilities buried  
Pride in history and architecture  
Local restaurants  
Jail renovation  
Park on one end (gateway, green)  
Properties available (need to steer to owners vs. investors)  
Streetscape, sidewalks

Bike path (Committee meeting on May 13)  
Walking distance to everything  
Local to downtown  
Very friendly  
Neighborhood is changing- for the better  
Have a hospitality place (could be improved)  
Park at the end of Bridge Street

### Goals and Wishes

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City to listen  
City to act on recommendations  
City to show that they have heard and follow up  
Density - maintain lower level density  
Worrier about zoning changes - means big project  
See action fast - will spread - no more meaningless studies  
See what other groups said  
Cleaning  
New sidewalk  
Walk all the way to the restaurants and the park  
Reuse of empty buildings, good maintenance  
More green space  
Welcoming signs  
Wider sidewalks  
Outdoor restaurant cafe  
Nice like "Cabot Street"  
Bike path used in a better way  
Get Verizon to fix the poles  
Send utilities underground  
Control the wild life (squirrels, skunks)  
Fishing destination  
Flower shop, Trader Joe's  
Feel connection to Salem Common  
Better sidewalks  
More pedestrian friendly  
Better landscaping  
Destinations  
Fishing pier  
Period lighting  
Ice cream shop/ stand  
Tourist destination - antique shops  
Self-guided walking tour  
Great signage - remove bad signs  
Gateway to Salem - beautiful

More trees  
Cleaned up  
Slower traffic  
Marketing of businesses on Bridge Street  
New businesses for tourists  
Affordable for us  
Keeping a mix of types and affordability  
Better connections to Beverly, other Salem neighborhoods  
Better signage for directions  
Fix Swampscott sign  
Get rid of Orange Street cleaning sign  
Events at new Bridge Park  
More family/park/block party events  
Consolidated Business district  
Market / shop  
Movie theater  
Motel redevelopment  
Carts/restaurant/ice cream parlor  
Parking on Bridge Street  
Bridge Street beautification  
Retail and transportation signage  
Discourage graffiti  
Clean and orderly - less graffiti – less traffic (Webb street)  
Safe for walking and bikes  
Natural features and views / parks trees  
Parking  
Boat access  
New sidewalks  
Historic marker sign  
New name - Harbor View  
Improved appearance  
Safety - Tracy walkway  
Destination - not a pass through

Incentive for more retail and  
restaurants that will support foot  
traffic  
More like Rantoul Street - small  
businesses  
Cleaner improved utilities  
Bridge Street as a walking place  
Water oriented park at Bridge end  
Day care at Commonwealth and  
Bridge Street - pedestrian crossing

Small business assistance  
Slow traffic on Bridge Street  
Improved business aesthetics  
Diverse retail  
Bike Lane-improved access  
Urban wilds  
Small retailers  
Pleasant walks on Bridge  
New park

## MEETING NOTES

Meeting Date: June 9, 2009

Meeting Topic: Small Group Discussions of Concepts and Recommendations during the Public Meeting

Meeting Location: Carlton School, Salem, MA

Project: Salem Bridge Neck Neighborhood Planning Study

Attendees: Community members, The City of Salem Department of Planning and Community Development, The Cecil Group and subconsultants

Prepared by: Margarita Iglesia and Meghan Grafton

Copies: Danielle McKnight, Department of Planning and Community Development

Project File

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Over 40 people attended the second public meeting for the Salem Neck Neighborhood Planning Study. Participants were provided with an agenda for the evening's meeting, a six page summary of notes from the first meeting, and a handout on housing assistance programs. After a brief introduction, the members of the Consultant Team shared the findings from the first Public Meeting and a summary of opportunities and constraints for the Bridge Street Neck neighborhood. An assessment of current commercial conditions and trends was presented followed by concepts and ideas for revitalization. The participants were divided into four small groups for discussions of those concepts and recommendations.

*Section I* of these notes is a summary of the concerns shared by the participants of the small groups, in which we have tried to reflect the main topics of the discussions as closely as possible. *Section II* contains a comprehensive list of the feedback regarding the concepts and recommendations that was recorded by the facilitators during these small group discussions. In both sections the feedback has been organized into four topics concerning development: Residential, Business, Open Space, and Miscellaneous.

## **Section I: Summary of Key Points**

### **Residential**

- Residential development could be good as long as it is low density, low profile (crowding should be discouraged)
- Need guidelines for building maintenance and improvement, but not historic requirements. Hearings at the historic commission are so difficult - requirements are too strong.
- The City needs to enforce the code in rental units in the middle district- too many families are living in units that are designated as single family.
- Envisioning the Brake and Clutch site as residential in the long term is a good idea.

### **Business**

- An ice cream parlor/snack stand near the new park would be great.
- Bed and breakfast done well could be a positive use in some areas (there are currently two in Winter St. and one in Northey)
- Could the boat storage relocate? They are close to residential properties and sometimes get noisy. Moving them to another location within the Neck, surrounded by businesses would be good.
- Northern end should have art galleries in addition to more restaurants.
- More development focused around an anchor and complementary businesses and attractions should go in northern end
- A good food/grocery store could be good (such as Trader Joe's).
- Create a destination within the neighborhood.

### **Open Space**

- This should be a walking neighborhood (traffic out is a benefit)
- A bike and pedestrian path should go along the residential sections along Collins Cove all the way to the proposed park at the north end- the bike path needs to go to more places.
- There is potential for improved greenspace in the lots at the end of Saunders Street.
- Collins Park could be a great amenity but the City needs to fix it up. It is underutilized and neglected. Tree, better lighting and gardens should be added.

### **Miscellaneous**

- Design guidelines should be created to set height, scale, look and feel.
- A boat landing should go in at the northern end.
- Festivals could become a summer attraction.
- Greater commitment to fight crime and drug dealing – people coming in from out of area
- There should be improvements made to the side streets.
- Focus on abandoned and empty buildings.

- Zoning shall allow good development like second story residential above retail.
- The neighborhood should improve upon the historic character-but it has to be affordable.

## **Section II: Complete List of Suggestions**

### **Residential**

- Residential development could be good as long as it is low density, low profile
- The density of residential properties is important (crowding should be discouraged)
- Transformation from single residential to multiple residential would not be good; more single family homes are needed.
- The city needs to enforce the code in rental units in the middle district-too many families are living within units that are designated as single family.
- The Bridge Street Neck neighborhood should try to mimic the feel of the residential neighborhood that is between Conner's Cove and the Common.
- Not enough focus on home ownership
- Brake and Clutch as residential is a good idea.
- No change in neighborhood scale and character
- Side street improvements are needed.
- New multifamily residential at plumbing site
- Undeveloped area between Hubron and Thorndike should become residential.

### **Business**

- An ice cream parlor near the new park would be great.
- An upscale food store could be good (such as Trader Joe's).
- Classy music and/or entertainment in the business district would be okay.
- Bed and breakfast done well could be a positive use in some areas (there are currently two in Winter St. and one in Northey)
- Design guidelines to set height, scale, look and feel.
- Northern end should have art galleries in addition to more restaurants.
- Signage-street, amenities, flags/banners
- More development in northern end focused around an anchor and complementary businesses and attractions
- Create a destination within the neighborhood.
- A water taxi from the proposed park to Beverly would bring in tourists and support businesses.
- Parking at northern end needs to be addressed in order for businesses to grow.
- Physical attractiveness and pedestrian improvements would create better stopping environments
- Improve appearance at northern end
- Find uses like Essex in terms of antiques
- There is not enough assistance provided to older businesses for upkeep

- More business should open around Coffee Time-people come from out of town to go to Coffee Time.
- Some type of Salem Museum could go in northern end-Maritime, art, Salem Fire.
- Commercial façade improvements are needed.
- Waterfront restaurants/park with appropriate scale development 2 floors

### **Open Space**

- Collins Cove pedestrian access is necessary.
- Greenspace for the section of property between March and Burnside.
- There was once a Victorian garden overlooking Collins Cove. A flower garden along the water would be great.
- Public access/beach behind “Street Market”
- Connect bike trails-take trail to Winter Island/Willows.
- The bike path needs to extend to more places.
- A bike and pedestrian path should go along the residential sections along Collins Cove all the way to the proposed park at the north end.
- The bike path should be extended past the Willows and along Collins Park.
- Waterfront walk at north end with beach access
- Collins Park could be a great amenity but the City needs to fix it up. It is underutilized and neglected. Tree, better lighting and gardens should be added.
- The bike path and walking paths should connect the neighborhood to the commons.
- There is potential for improved greenspace in the lots at the end of Saunders Street.
- Collins Cove beach needs to be improved.
- Graffiti at Collins Cove needs to be cleaned up and prevented.

### **Miscellaneous**

- Could the boat storage relocate? They are close to residential properties and sometimes get noisy. Moving them to another location within the Neck, surrounded by businesses would be good.
- Don't discourage boating; it would be great to have a place to dock and visit a restaurant (floating dock).
- This should be a walking neighborhood (traffic out is a benefit)
- Need guidelines for building maintenance and improvement, but not historic requirements. Hearings at the historic commission are so difficult - requirements are too strong.
- Peabody has no historic feel anymore.
- Bridge Street has the historic character (own a 1795 house)
- People need to maintain historic character, but it has to be affordable.
- Festivals could become a summer attraction.
- The neighborhood could become a destination for artists and create a community of artists with cottages and galleries.
- Bridge Street needs to feel safe.
- Loitering in old plumbing building needs to be stopped.
- Insufficient parking on side streets needs to be addressed.

- The neighborhood should have historical markers/pamphlets with map for a historic walk through the area.
- The neighborhood needs to create an identity for itself. Some people think the neighborhood says “Cars”-with so many businesses dealing with and servicing cars.
- More parking for residential and commercial areas is needed.
- The City needs a greater commitment to fight crime and drug dealing – people coming in from out of area
- 47 Bridge Street not specifically addressed
- Would like to place utility wires underground as part of the plan
- Look at connecting sidewalks in the neighborhood.
- Speeding up Lathrop Street needs to be stopped.
- Utility pole reduction
- New mixed use development
- Focus on the stretch of Bridge Street between Lathrop and Merrill for improvements. Focus on abandoned and empty buildings.
- Townhouses or shops could go in front of the buildings at the corner of Lathrop and Bridge
- Middle scale adequate density to make change feasible in the Brake and Clutch lot site.
- A key property for the neighborhood (the old bridge/future park area at the north end) is now vacant.
- Improve-Burnt out building at the corner of Osgood and Bridge Street
- Mixed use is good in the Brake and Clutch site.
- Location planning for the Brake and Clutch Site is important.
- Storefront residential/live work for the Brake and Clutch site
- Focus improvements on the lower end of the Bridge Street
- Zoning shall allow good development like second story residential above retail.



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