



# FYI SALEM

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## From the Mayor's Desk



Welcome to the latest issue of FYI Salem! Inside you can find out more about our sixth annual textiles recycling drive and how you can comment on the upcoming FY2017 CPA Plan.

On the last page, you can read some of my thoughts behind the proposed purchase and improvement of the currently vacant parcel at 289 Derby Street along the South River. This long empty lot represents a unique opportunity to create a public waterfront recreation space that enhances the Derby Street corridor and serves as a bridge with the Point neighborhood on the opposite side of the river. It's even possible to develop the space in a way that gen-

erates potential revenue for regular maintenance and upkeep into the future, with programs, special events, and more. The state has committed a \$750,000 parks grant to enable us to build this public space, should the City Council approve its acquisition.

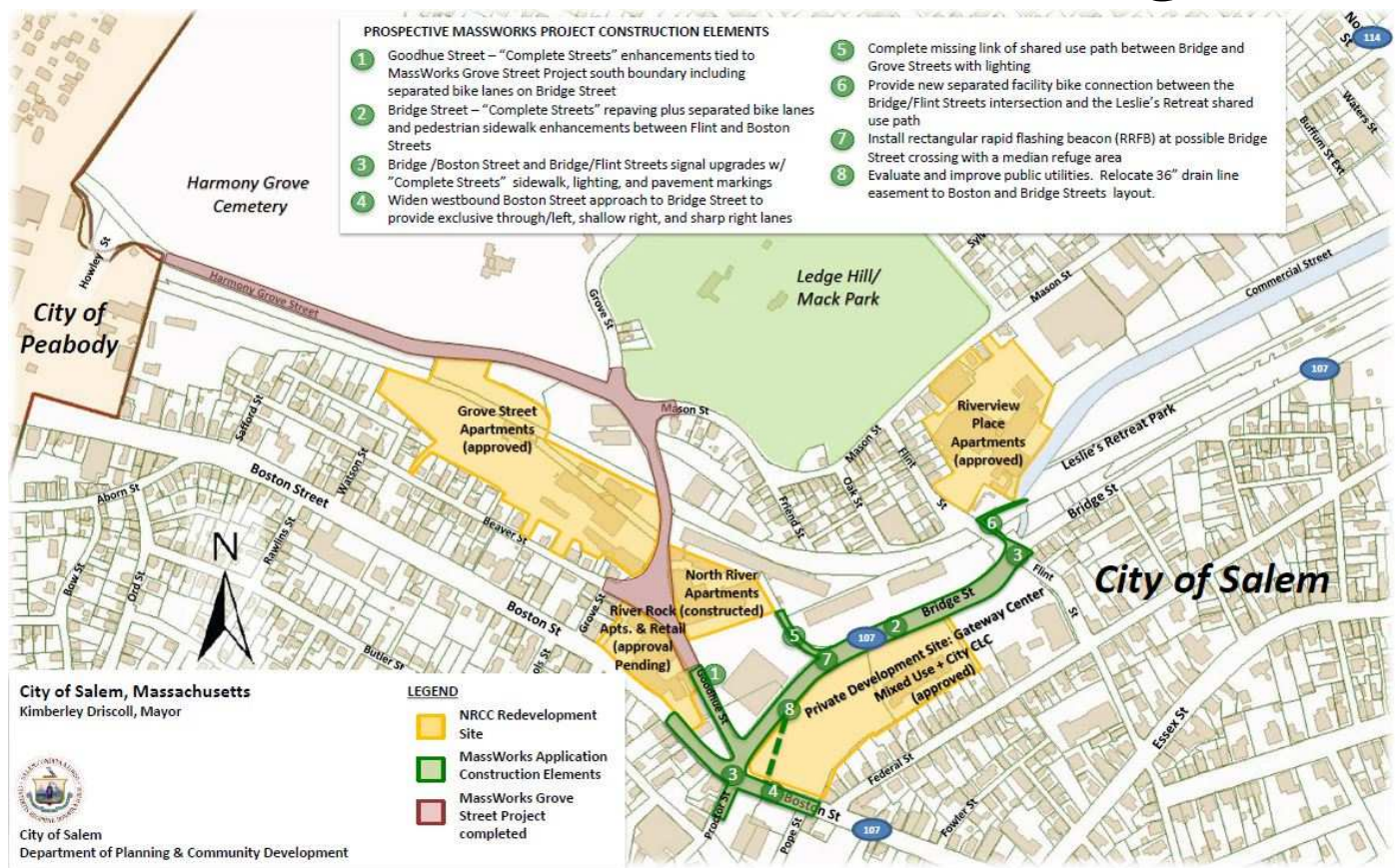
Also inside this issue, read more about today's major announcement that the City has received a \$3.5 million MassWorks grant to carry out a major upgrade to the Boston Street and Bridge Street intersection. The MassWorks program is a state grant that funds road and infrastructure projects that are complemented by responsible private developments. In the case of this award there are two such developments: the joint construction of the Gateway Center and the City's Mayor Jean Levesque Community Life Center and the redevelopment of the former Flynn Tan property. Previous MassWorks grants have funded work at Riley Plaza and along Goodhue Street.

In the latest episode of the FYI Salem podcast, we celebrate Salem Restaurant Week and talk with local restaurateurs Tim Haigh, Larry Leibowitz, and Matt O'Neil. You can listen to the interview at <http://www.salem.com/mayors-office/pages/fyi-salem-podcast> or subscribe on iTunes or your preferred podcast service. Simply search for "FYI Salem" and sign up! During the interview we discussed their restaurants and their visions for their businesses, as well as Salem's transformation into a dining destination.

Lastly, with the holidays approaching, I would like to encourage you to shop local first this holiday season! Saturday, November 26 is Small Business Saturday in Salem and across the nation. In addition, parking at all City lots, garages, and meters will be free from November 24-27, so when you're planning your post-Thanksgiving Day shopping, plan to come to downtown Salem first!

Kim Driscoll  
Mayor  
City of Salem

# \$3.5M Grant for Boston & Bridge



Proposed 2016 MassWorks Application Construction Elements

On November 16, Housing and Economic Development Secretary Jay Ash joined Salem Mayor Kim Driscoll to announce the awarding of a \$3.5 million grant from the state’s MassWorks program to implement significant improvements at the Boston Street and Bridge Street intersection and along Bridge Street to Flint Street.



Secretary Ash and Mayor Driscoll talk about the planned improvements.

The grant leverages the impending construction of the Gateway Center and the City’s Mayor Jean Levesque Community Life Center on Bridge St, where site work began last week to prepare for construction beginning in Spring 2017.

The funds from the grant will enable the City to complete a number of substantial upgrades to this busy corridor, including providing for bicycle and pedestrian enhances consistent with the City’s nationally recognized Complete Streets Policy, new signals and crossings at the intersection, utility relocations, lane realignments to improve traffic flow, and the completion of the shared use path connection from Leslie’s Retreat Park to the corridor.

“I am extremely pleased that the City has been awarded this substantial grant,” said Mayor Driscoll. “It will



Secretary Ash, State Senator Joan Lovely, Mayor Driscoll, and State Rep. Paul Tucker.

enable us to complete a wide variety of much needed improvements to make this corridor a true complete street, without tapping local taxpayers to do so. The result will be a roadway that is better suited for the new developments in the neighborhood, and safer for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.”



# Textile Recycling Drive

In honor of America Recycles Day, SalemRecycles is partnering with Goodwill Massachusetts and the Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles Association to host the City of Salem's sixth Clothing and Household Textiles Recycling Drive on Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup> in Riley Plaza from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm.

This is your opportunity to donate all usable and questionable items in one central location.

This year, as you sort through your "not so wonderful" used clothing and textile items, the City of Salem is happy to offer

this a solution to help ease your mind and keep those items from heading for the trash.

Every week we recycle our papers, glass and metal, but we tend to overlook the textiles we have in our homes.

Items such as clothing, dish cloths, curtains, and even shoes can be repurposed into other items such as rags, insulation and carpet underlayment.

As long as these are clean and dry (a must) they can find a second purpose.

To find a complete list of all acceptable pieces that you can do-

nate please visit [www.salem.com/recycling](http://www.salem.com/recycling).

And to learn more about other environmentally friendly programs and resources in Salem, please visit [www.greensalem.com](http://www.greensalem.com).



## CPA 2017 Draft Plan

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) has released its Draft *FY17 Community Preservation Plan and FY16 Annual Report*. The Community Preservation Plan is used to guide the CPC's decision-making when reviewing and recommending projects for Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding. The Plan includes an overview of the CPA in Salem, evaluation criteria, and a timeline. The plan also serves as an annual report – summarizing the status of funded projects and including copies of the re-

quired State reports.

The CPC invites public comment on the draft plan by Dec. 2. Following the receipt of comments, the Plan will be finalized and proposals for CPA funding accepted.

Eligibility Applications may be submitted any time. However, to be considered for the FY17 funding round, applicants are encouraged to submit their Eligibility Applications no later than January 9. For projects determined eligible, applicants will be invited to submit a Funding Application. The CPC's tentative deadline for Funding Applications is March 17. The goal of the CPC is to review proposals and make award recommendations in May.

CPC Chair Kevin Cornacchio stated, "In our first three years, CPA has helped fund 37 public and private projects across the city. The issuance of the draft Plan begins the

next round of funding and the opportunity to fund additional projects that might not otherwise be able to proceed."

"The Community Preservation Act in Salem has had a tremendously positive impact on our community, having raised over \$2.5 million in funds dedicated for housing, historic preservation, and open space and recreation projects in our city that might otherwise not have been possible," said Mayor Kim Driscoll. "The members of the Community Preservation Committee have been thoughtful stewards of this vital funding source and I thank them all for their dedicated volunteer service to Salem."

The draft plan can be found at <http://www.salem.com/community-preservation-committee>. Comments may be sent to the Department of Planning and Community Development, 120 Washington St., Salem, MA 01970 by noon on December 2.



# Salem's South River

*"Modern, alive cities with water frontage are realizing the tremendous advantages – if properly developed – this gives them over inland communities... A hundred cities in America and abroad have taken or are planning to take over and develop their water fronts, arranging so that they are accessible for health and recreation purposes, and at the same time of increased utility... [In Salem] it is just at these points...where [there is] the least opportunity and more need than perhaps anywhere else in the city, for the health and rest-giving effects and enjoyment of the water."*

*First Annual Report of the Salem City Plans Commission, December 26, 1912*

Over the last few weeks, the City Council has debated the merits of whether to accept the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee to acquire a parcel on Derby Street with the goal of transforming it into a dynamic open space that offers a link from our downtown to our waterfront. The recent award of \$750,000 in state grant funds for improvements to this site if acquired by the City means that we'll have the ability to get to work on this transformation right away. This could be an active, vibrant space hosting events and activities designed to reactivate the South River with kayaks, small boats, viewing areas for events like Water Fire or light shows, outdoor dining, music or theater performances. We expect to be able to complete another section of the harbor walkway and establish a strong pedestrian corridor along the channel to the downtown Riley Plaza area, the Point Neighborhood, as well as to and from the Visitors Center and Pickering Wharf.

Accomplishing this kind of goal can be challenging in a densely settled urban area. The acquisition and redevelopment of the parcel at 289 Derby Street into a gateway park along the waterfront provides a rare opportunity to acquire in perpetuity open space along the waterfront in a manner that first originated with Salem planners in a 1979 Nathaniel Bowditch Park Plan, followed by the 2000 Salem Harbor Plan, and its 2008 update. Creation and preservation of open space along the downtown waterfront is identified as a high priority and is a goal that is expressed multiple times throughout the Harbor Plan. The City's Master Plan also calls out support for making our harbor a focal point, stating that "The harbor is the City's front door and a focus on that is needed." While it may be hard to envision this lot as something other than what it is at present – we know it can be so much more. A transformed space along the water will help to clean up and secure the area, provide benefits to the entire community and can serve as a catalyst for continued future investment in and along this corridor.

The parcel has been appraised at \$1.4 million, largely driven by the anticipated value that would come from this site should it be developed as condominiums, as would have occurred via a previously permitted project, or in some other commercial manner – for instance, a bank drive thru proposal has also been discussed as a possibility for this site. Clearly, developing this site for condominium or commercial use would offer tax revenues to the City. For every million dollars in commercial value, the city collects approximately \$30,000 annually in property taxes. As Mayor, I know that new growth and tax revenues are something the City relies on to help pay our bills and provide school, public safety and public works services. I have labored over the last decade to eliminate prior deficits, improve city finances, and 'balance our books' with an eye on the needs of today, as well as our aspirations for the future.

As a community, we also place a high value on quality of life and investing in great public spaces can provide the dual benefit of capturing new growth, while also contributing to an enhanced urban infrastructure. There is ample evidence to suggest that an improved Derby St. lot will also enhance and increase the values of the nearby parcels.

Of course we want to make sure that any land we purchase does not pose an environmental risk. The sellers invested in some clean up when they acquired the parcel and we are currently performing our own due diligence. Once that review is complete, we will be back before the Council to discuss the opportunity to acquire this waterfront parcel.

For more than a dozen years, this waterfront parcel has sat vacant and underutilized, along one of our most traveled corridors, which is now bustling with new restaurants, stores, and so much more. This is a unique opportunity to continue the forward momentum along this portion of Derby Street and around the South River; to leverage funding from the state to create a new public gathering space that reactivates access and use of the South River Channel, and to truly connect the downtown to the Point, Pickering Wharf and the Essex Street Corridor. I hope we will seize the chance to become a "modern, alive" city that realizes the "tremendous advantage" our waterfront frontage provides, as our City Plans Commission hoped for in 1912.

