



FYI SALEM

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From the Mayor's Desk



There has been a lot of interest in the proposed Sanctuary for Peace Ordinance that is now before the City Council. We've posted detailed information, research and legal documents, a FAQ, and copies of the Ordinance and the related Police policy all online at www.salem.com/sanctuary.

In this issue of *FYI Salem* you'll find information about an upcoming public meeting where people can learn more about Phase 2 of the Bertram Field upgrades and offer their feedback. This work will focus largely on the buildings at the field—concessions, restrooms, and so forth.

I'm very excited to share an update with you about revisions to Salem's flood maps. Last July we petitioned FEMA to revise their new maps and they've just this month come out with their changes. As a result, several hundred home and property owners in Salem will see their flood insurance premiums reduced or eliminated, as their base flood elevations or designations are changed.

I also wanted to let you know that we've formally filed changes to our rental inspections Ordinance with the City Council. The changes move our Certificates of Fitness inspections onto a more predictable and standardized schedule. Currently they are only conducted when—and if—a landlord calls to report that they have a change in tenant. The new, more regular schedule, will ensure we are better able to address potentially problematic properties before they become a safety issue for the tenant, a lia-

bility for the owner, and a nuisance for the neighbors. The changes also extend the requirement for a Certificate to short-term rentals, like AirBnB. You can read the proposal starting on page 31 of: <http://www.salem.com/mayors-office/files/mayors-filings-city-council-april-23-2017>. More details about this proposal appear elsewhere in this newsletter.

Finally, on the latest episode of the FYI Salem podcast I sat down with Jay Finney, Chief Marketing Officer of the Peabody Essex Museum. We talked about PEM's expansion project now underway, current and upcoming exhibitions, and the role and benefit of the museum to our community in general. Find the podcast 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!

Kim Driscoll
Mayor, City of Salem

25 MPH Speed Limit

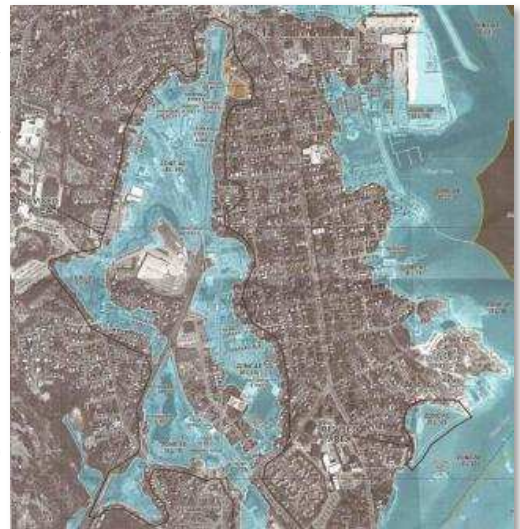


Following a vote of approval by the City Council earlier this month, the default speed limit on all City streets in Salem will be reduced to 25MPH effective April 4. Streets that are posted with other speed limits will continue to be regulated by the posted speed limit.

Research has found that only 50 percent of pedestrians struck by vehicles traveling 30MPH survive, but that over 80 percent who are struck by vehicles traveling 20MPH survive. The aggregate impact of reducing a community's baseline speed limit is to make its streets less deadly and safer for those on foot and bicycle, as well as those behind the wheel.

Flood Map revisions approved

In 2015 the City retained a consultant to study of the then recently issued FEMA flood insurance maps. A preliminary review found potential errors and the Mayor requested \$41,150 in funding from the City Council to have a full analysis completed. The Letter of Map Revision was filed with FEMA in July 2016 and FEMA has now issued their map revisions based on the City's appeal. The changes will go into effect in July after an appeal period. Base flood elevation levels in certain parts of the City will be lowered and, as a result, property owners in the impacted areas will see a full or partial reduction in flood insurance premiums. While the precise amount that will be saved by Salem homeowners cannot be quantified, it will likely be more than the \$41,150 that the City invested in the appeals process.



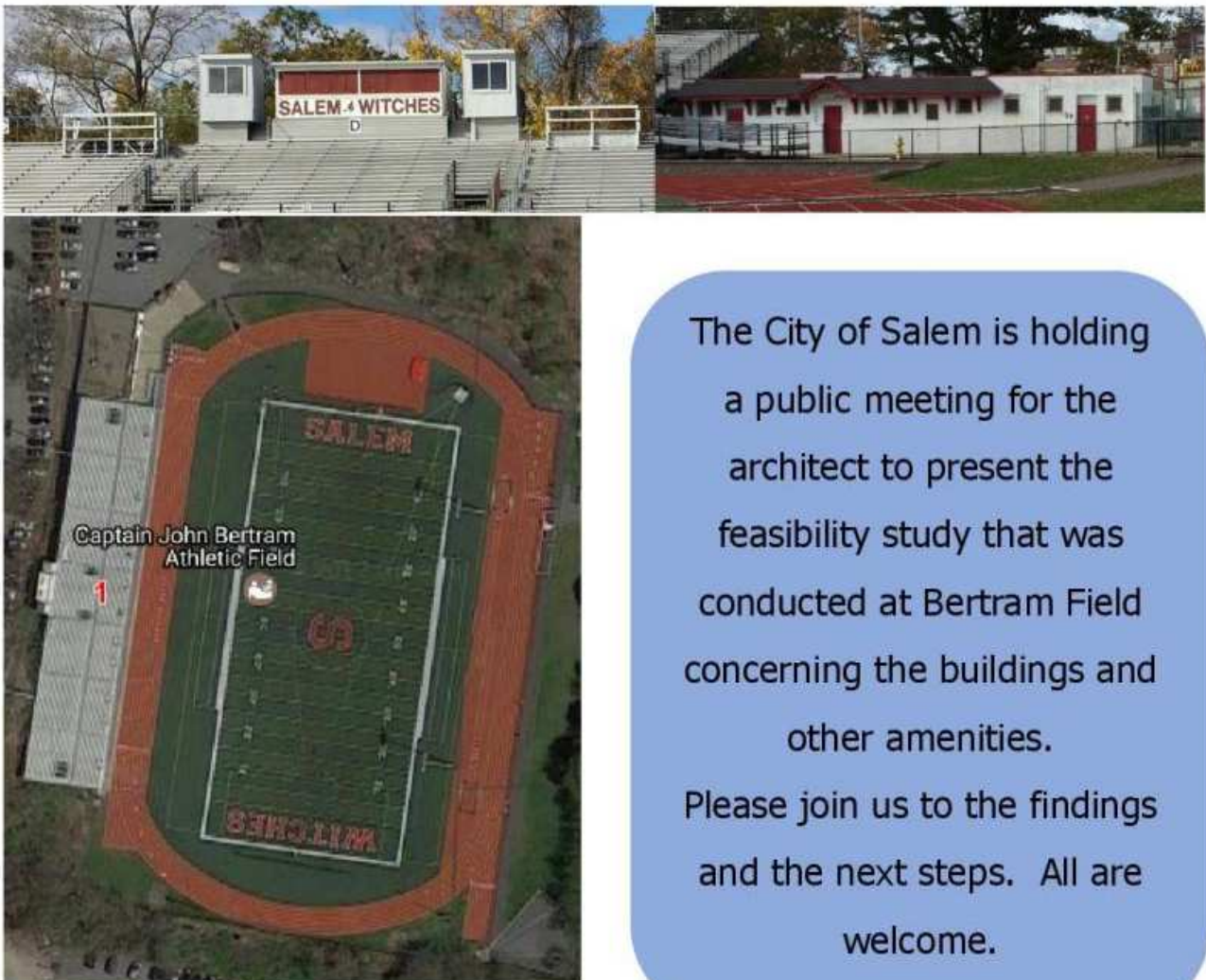
In all, an estimated 650 parcels will be positively impacted from the revisions. About 30 will be removed completely from the FEMA flood zone and an additional 280 will be partially removed. The remaining 340 will see a more modest benefit as their flood zone designation is changed or their base flood elevation is lowered.

"I would like to thank the City Council for their partnership in this work and to our Planning Department staff, especially Tom Devine, who helped guide this process over the last almost two years," said Mayor Kim Driscoll. "Hopefully these revisions will provide some degree of financial relief to Salem property owners. We will also be able to move forward knowing that our flood maps as a City are now more accurate overall."

The FEMA revisions and maps are available online at <http://www.salem.com/conservation-commission/pages/flood-map-revisions>

Public Meeting for Presentation and Discussion of Bertram Field Phase 2 Renovation Feasibility Study

6:30 p.m. on Monday March 27th at
Salem High School Auditorium
77 Willson Street



The City of Salem is holding a public meeting for the architect to present the feasibility study that was conducted at Bertram Field concerning the buildings and other amenities. Please join us to the findings and the next steps. All are welcome.



Please contact Jenna Ide, Director of Capital Projects and Operations at jide@salem.com or 978-619-5699 with any questions or comments about this meeting or these projects.

Residential Rental Inspections

The text below is from a letter written by Mayor Kim Driscoll to the Salem City Council, outlining her proposed changes to rental inspections.

This Ordinance ends the practice of relying on landlords to voluntarily self-report a change in tenant to trigger an inspection. In FY2015 we conducted 538 such inspections; however, based on Census data we know there are 9,727 rental units in the City. The proposed Ordinance establishes a three-year schedule for these inspections. Owner-occupied 2- and 3-family homes will continue to only require inspection on a change in tenant, and dwelling units that have no previous violations will be placed on a five-year inspection schedule, provided there is no change in ownership or tenant. Owner-occupied units and for units that already undergo annual HUD inspections because they are a federal housing voucher unit are exempt.

The Ordinance additionally extends the requirement for these Certificates and inspections to short-term rental units (AirBNB, VRBO, etc.). Any residential property owner who intends to rent out a dwelling unit for a period of time equal to or exceeding 14 days in any one year will be required to notify the Health Department and undergo the same fitness inspection as any other rental unit. Such short-term rental inspections will also take place every three years or on a change in ownership, but not upon a change in tenant.

The Ordinance allows for problem properties to be inspected annually and the penalty for renting out a unit without a Certificate of Fitness is increased from the current \$20 per day to \$50 per day, an amount that is both more in line with comparable communities and, importantly, identical to the amount charged for the inspection fee.

The intention of this Ordinance is to ensure that rentals in Salem meet the highest standards for structural integrity, public health, and safety. Not only will it bring added security to renters, it will help landlords keep their investments in good repair and condition and, perhaps most importantly, ensure the quality of life of the surrounding neighborhood is not diminished. The current process, where changes in tenancy are voluntarily reported, does not provide for an objective, standardized inspection schedule for rental units and could be abused by landlords who wished to avoid inspections.

This proposal is another positive step in our efforts to ensure the quality of Salem's residential properties. Three years ago we launched a Problem Properties Task Force and two years ago we began an aggressive receivership program to rehabilitate the worst abandoned properties in Salem. Last year became only the fourth Massachusetts city to join the Innovation Field Lab, a program of the Ash Center for Democratic Governance & Innovation at Harvard's Kennedy School.

As a partner in the Innovation Field Lab, Salem has a full-time fellow from the Ash Center, as well as a class of graduate students, working with the City to develop and implement management tools and strategies to address problem properties in Salem. The specific focus for the initiative has been improving the condition and quality of investor-owned rental properties and abandoned/foreclosed properties through the problem properties efforts. This work has resulted in the development of the CityNexus program for calculating property risk scores so the City can be pro-active in addressing nuisance properties, and an online database for tracking building and health code violations.

Ensuring that all of Salem's neighborhoods meet high standards for livability is a major priority. I believe these changes, to make these inspections required on a more standardized basis, is an appropriate step toward accomplishing that goal. The inclusion of short term rentals should provide equal treatment for these types of rentals, while also giving renters the comfort of mind in knowing that all residential units in Salem meet all appropriate standards for habitation and use. The steps outlined in the proposed Ordinance will ensure that all rental units, no matter the duration or intention of their rental use, are safe for those who will occupy them and respectful of those who live near them.



Mayor Kim Driscoll at the ribbon cutting of the first abandoned residential property in Salem rehabilitated through the receivership program.