

Neighborhood Improvement Advisory Council - Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 12, 2022, 7:00 P.M.

Called to Order: 7:04 p.m.

Members Present: Dennis Colbert, Flora Tonthat, Barbara Mann, Richard Lindeman, Cynthia Jerzylo, Nina Cohen

Staff Present: Dominick Pangallo (Office of Mayor Driscoll)

Approval of December 8, 2021 minutes: Approved

Special Guest: Julio Mota, the new Latino Affairs Coordinator and Constituent Services Director in the Mayor's Office, introduced himself to the members.

Amanda Chiancola, Deputy Planning Director, presented on the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board's ongoing work studying a potential condominium conversion/tenant protection ordinance. In her presentation Amanda summarized the state condo conversion law and the data on conversions in Salem. She then outlined the options the Board is considering for its draft ordinance to propose to the City Council and how they are collecting feedback from landlords, tenants, and others in the community. Council members asked about short term rentals and their impact on rental stock, if the City would purchase converting units to preserve the rental, what other measures the Board is also discussing to expand access to affordable housing in Salem, how they were collecting public comment, the reasoning and concerns with the length of time in the proposed notice period, and if and how the ordinance might impact the SSU South Campus disposition.

Neighborhood Association Updates:

Willows – January meeting was postponed. Group is hoping to get some additional information on the Leefort Terrace project.

Greater Endicott Street – Traffic calming application for Winthrop Street is before the Traffic & Parking Commission tonight.

Federal Street – Increased coyote activity in the neighborhood. Would like to see if the City can move the Fall street sweeping to later in the season and if the traffic calming installations can be made permanent.

Barnes/Clark/Wyman – Following the Tropical Products project through the Planning Board process, concerned about rock crushing on site especially and hoping the Board will establish noise and hour limitations if they allow crushing to take place.

Bridge Street Neck – Gonyea Park has applied for 15 trees through the Greening the Gateway Cities program. The association is interested in more expansive improvements (accessibility, amenities, etc.) for the park, as well.

Chestnut Street – Annual meeting is in January. Seeing good success with the traffic calming measures. Snow removal on Norman Street along the north sidewalk was not done well, especially along the commercial properties.

Salem Common - Traffic/Accessibility: Waiting to hear back from Traffic Dept after 9/10 meeting. Hoping that: Playground/WSN crosswalks plan will happen including reflective paint. Rubber speed bumps will be in place around Common & on side streets. Rerouting 1A via legislative action to Wash St/Bridge St Ext. Bridge St. neighborhood association also supports, Common & Neighborhood Issues: Completed: City removed

Holiday Tree & wreathes – thanks! Hawthorne Baluster: Broken for some time now – needs repair. Graffiti: By Hawthorne entranceway & on interior of Bandstand. Lawn: Overall refresh needed including possible path expansion. Tire Ruts: Repairs still needed. Upcoming Enhancements on Common: Arch: Brick pad w/rose inlay, irrigation & sign install completed – thanks! ADA Benches: SHC approved 4 new benches & relocation of others. Open. Lighting: SHC has requested fixtures/bulbs similarity Electrician. Open. SCNA Events: Holiday Concert at The Bridge@211 On December 19th – big success! Benefited Salem Food Pantry, The Bridge@211 & SCNA. Winter Brunch at Hawthorne on February 13th from 11 to 2. Speakers: Councilors Alice Merkl & Caroline Watson-Felt. Annual Meeting online or at TBD location to be held in March date TBD. Both Brunch & Annual Meeting COVID restrictions dependent. Visit salemcommon.org/events.

City Updates:

- COVID testing: 2nd round of at-home test kits will be distributed over the course of the rest of January; see salem.com/testing for the schedule. SCAN testing, which is PCR testing at the CLC, for Salem residents only, will continue at the CLC next week – dates/times will be announced later this week.
- Not a City announcement, but still worth sharing: starting 1/15 private health insurance companies are required to reimburse individuals for qualifying at-home test kits, up to 8 per person per month; we have a link to the federal announcement about this policy at salem.com/testing.
- Per Board of Health order of December 22, starting 1/15 proof of vaccination will be required to enter certain types of business establishments in Salem. Details about what types of businesses and what constitutes proof of vaccination can be found at salem.com/safesalem.
- Several upcoming public forums of note (all details can be found at salem.com/news):
 - Salem Public Schools facilities master plan: 1/19 at 2PM & 6PM, and 1/20 at 8AM & 6PM.
 - Housing Road Map forum on senior housing: 1/25 at 6PM.
 - North River path forum: also 1/25 at 6PM.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 9, 2022, 7:00 p.m.

Adjourned: 8:12 p.m.