

**Neighborhood Improvement Advisory Council - Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, February 9, 2022, 7:00 P.M.**

**Called to Order:** 7:03 p.m.

**Members Present:** Barbara Mann, Dennis Colbert, Flora Tonthat, Anne Sterling, Christy Evans, Ellie Rounds Bloom, Dick Lindeman, Nina Cohen

**Staff Present:** Dominick Pangallo (Office of Mayor Driscoll)

**Approval of January 12, 2022, minutes:** Approved

**Special Guest:** Dr. Steven Zrike, Superintendent of Salem Public Schools, provided an update on current initiatives and programs with Salem's schools. He discussed the prioritization of equity and cultural competency, recruiting and diversity in hiring, expansion of the pre-K program and early college and career technical programs, and the district's efforts to develop students into critical learners and thinkers. Dr. Zrike also spoke about the schools' continuing work to bolster students' social and emotional support, the new facilities master plan, and grow and strengthen family engagement efforts. He took questions from NIAC members about: snow removal, solar panels on school buildings, bus schedules, supporting teachers in addressing student behavioral issues, addressing racism and expressions of racism on school property, how residents and neighborhood groups can engage with the schools, partnerships with Salem State University, and if the district was outreaching to private daycare providers as part of the pre-K expansion effort.

**Neighborhood Association Updates:**

- Barnes/Clark/Wyman: Still no sand barrels. Planning Board will draft conditions for the Tropical Products project at the February 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. Also monitoring the project at Clark and Old Village Drive.
- Northfields: Looking for shoveling help for seniors. Heard the Ferris property might be for sale. Would like to see if Councillors might sponsor a teen shoveling incentive to help clear crosswalks and hydrants.
- Bridge Street Neck: Still pursuing improvements and trees for Gonyea Park.
- Mack Park: Some confusion about who is responsible for removing snow on sidewalks and by when. Group is meeting every other month now at the community room at Halstead Station.
- Federal Street: Snow removal also a challenge. Concerned about run off from the temporary snow storage located at the Boston Street/Bridge Street lot.
- Greater Endicott Street: Traffic calming with temporary speed bumps and speed limit reduction/signage on Winthrop Street, and permanent bump outs of corner at Winthrop and Broad. 5 Broad Street reuse advancing and will bring related traffic calming elements to that corner, as well as a gas main and road paving improvement project. Snow piled on flex posts at Margin Street.
- Salem Common: Traffic/Accessibility - Working with Traffic Dept & Councilor Watson-Felt. 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 - Hawthorne Baluster: Broken for some time – spring DPS repair list. Graffiti: By Hawthorne & on Bandstand – spring DPS list repair list. Lawn: Refresh filling tire ruts & possible path expansion – spring DPS list. Lighting: Fixtures/bulbs repaired by City Electrician. Upcoming Enhancements on Common - Arch: Painting & landscaping funded by SCNA – requires new SHC approval. Benches: 4 ADA benches installed as well as planning for additional benches. SCNA Events - Winter Brunch at Hawthorne on February 13th from 11 to 2. Speakers: Councilors Alice Merkl & Caroline Watson-Felt. Annual Meeting to be held as online meeting on 3/24 or 3/31 TBD.

## City Updates:

- The Board of Health has rescinded the indoor mask requirement and the “proof of vaccination for entry” rule for certain establishments as of yesterday. The mask requirement inside City buildings will end on Monday February 14<sup>th</sup>. COVID-related information, data, and links to vaccine sites will continue to be posted at [www.salem.com/covid](http://www.salem.com/covid).
- The Commonwealth has not yet announced if the Stop the Spread COVID testing program will continue beyond its current expiration date of March 31, 2022. The City will share any announcements relative to the program continuing or coming to an end.
- FEMA is holding a public webinar about coastal erosion and sea level rise on February 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm. More details and the link to join can be found at [www.salem.com/news](http://www.salem.com/news).
- Lots of updates about some arts programs going into Old Town Hall over the coming months, including a visual art exhibit with artists talk and a dance class, all of which are free to the public. Find more at [www.salem.com/oldtownhall](http://www.salem.com/oldtownhall)
- Applications are now being accepted for the Salem Scholarship fund for Salem residents going to college in the fall. Applications are online at [www.salem.com/scholarship](http://www.salem.com/scholarship) and are due by May 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, March 10, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

**Adjourned:** 8:06 p.m.