



FYI SALEM

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From the Mayor's Desk



Welcome to another issue of the FYI Salem newsletter!

In this edition you can find out more about some upcoming improvement projects planned for one of our busiest downtown corridors—the length of Essex Street from North Street to Town House Square. After National Grid completes some gas main replacements under the street, the City is gearing up for an improvement project that will give this important roadway a much-needed refresh.

Last week our Mass in Motion team launched the Salem Food Policy Council, a new effort to bring together all the agencies, organiza-

tions, and community leaders engaged in feeding the most needy in Salem.

The Council will spend the next year working on a critical Community Food Assessment that, we hope, will provide the foundation for new policies and programs that will help reduce food insecurity and increase access to healthy food options for everyone in Salem.

Also last week we were honored to welcome the Director of AARP Massachusetts, Mike Festa, to Salem to present the City with our official certification as an Age-Friendly community from the national AARP and the World Health Organization.

The recognition came after a year-long public process that culminated in the publication of an action plan, *Salem For All Ages*, that we began implementation of earlier this month.

In this edition of FYI Salem you'll find a copy of a

Salem News column authored by myself and Patricia Zaido, who chairs the Salem For All Ages task force.

Finally, on the latest episode of the FYI Salem podcast I sat down with President Patricia Meservy of Salem State University. Earlier this month President Meservy announced that she would be retiring at the end of this school year, after a decade leading the university. You can listen to 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.

As always, thank you for staying up to date with the latest news from City Hall. If you know anyone who might be interested in receiving this newsletter by email, they can sign up at <http://www.salem.com/subscribe>.

Kim Driscoll
Mayor
City of Salem

Essex Street Upgrades

National Grid began replacing the gas main and services that run along Essex Street from North Street to Washington Street. The work is expected to last eight to ten weeks, weather depending.

While there will be some disruption to traffic flow during this project, once it is completed it will enable the City to conduct a major improvement project along this length of Essex Street and in Town House Square.

The work is still in the earliest planning stages, so final designs have not been completed, but the hope is to be able to carry out a road resurfacing and re-striping, sidewalk repairs, new traffic signals at North Street and Essex Street, and, if feasible, street trees, lighting, and signage upgrades.

The project is being funded partially by City capital funds and partially by the proceeds of the sale of land for the new mixed-use and hotel development currently under construction on Riley Plaza.



Improving Food Security

Earlier this month Salem Mass in Motion (MiM) convened the first meeting of the Salem Food Policy Council. MiM is a grant-funded community health and wellness initiative run out of the Office of Mayor Kimberley Driscoll.

The Food Policy Council, comprised of representatives from stakeholder organizations, nonprofits, and community organizations, will work on policies and program development intended to improve food security among Salem's neediest populations, reduce food waste, strengthen access to healthy food options, and expand the City's existing urban gardening opportunities.



As a first step in preparing its action plan, the Council is conducting a community food assessment that includes a review of food options in restaurants and grocery stores, a review of public health data, a GIS analysis on access to standard and emergency food sources, and a community survey. Salem residents are invited to complete the survey online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/H7R6JTN>. Learn more about Salem Mass in Motion by visiting <http://www.salem.com/mass-motion-salem>.

Salem for All Ages

The following column appeared in the Salem News on January 20, 2017, following the official certification of the City's "Salem for All Ages Action Plan."

This week, AARP Massachusetts Director Michael Festa came to Salem to present our certification from AARP and the World Health Organization as an Age-Friendly City. In October 2015 Salem started this process by officially joining the WHO's Age-Friendly Network, becoming one of the first cities in Massachusetts to do so and the first on the North Shore. The goals of a livable, safe, and vibrant city serve to lift up all our residents, no matter their age or ability. They also provide the roadmap toward one that is prepared for the changing demographics that we see in our community's future.

While 1 out of every 5 Salem residents are over the age of 60 today, that figure will climb to 1 in 4 by 2030, increasing to as many as 12,000 people. Many are moving to Salem, attracted by our cultural and historic amenities, our active waterfront and downtown, our walkability, and our numerous community, social, and health care service providers. Many more, however, are living here already. They are the rising seniors who are mobile, active, and love the community where they live. They want to age in place – perhaps not in the exact home where they are living today, but definitely right here in Salem.

To achieve certification from WHO, a public process culminated in an action plan to make Salem a more welcoming, livable place for people of all ages. Over 6 public listening sessions, a survey that garnered 446 responses from residents age 50+, three focus groups, and an exhaustive document review of all the City's existing plans, the *Salem For All Ages* Action Plan was developed.



Salem For All Ages focuses on the key "domains" of an age-friendly city: supportive community and health services, civic engagement and participation, employment and volunteer opportunities, respect and social inclusion, appropriate housing in a range of affordability, vibrant outdoor spaces and public places, and effective, sensible transportation options. Within each domain there are action steps in order to achieve its vision. Implementation and evaluation of the plan will be carried out by a task force of community volunteers and City officials that has already met to begin work. They are supported by a Leadership Council made up of community leaders, as well as those who work directly with our senior population.

As first year priorities, the task force will work on five specific projects: a communications plan to share information about resources available to Salem seniors, a study on intra-city transportation, a centralized location for sharing information about volunteerism opportunities, a master plan for the maintenance of existing senior housing options, and a focus on accessibility improvements targeting sidewalks and bus stops.

Salem's seniors and those who will become seniors over the coming decades are a dynamic group. They want to

Salem Mayor Kim Driscoll and members of the Salem for All Ages task force and leadership council receive the City's official certification from the AARP.

be active, civically engaged, and have their voices heard. This action plan is the culmination of a public process that involved community stakeholders, local organizations and non-profits, neighborhood groups, service providers, businesses, residents, and elected officials. It sought as many perspectives as possible, so that the recommendations it puts forth can be as diverse and as forward-looking as the people who live here. An age-friendly city treats everyone with respect, regardless of how old they are. It helps people stay healthy and active, even at the oldest ages. It makes it easy to stay connected to those around you and those you love. And it helps those who can no longer look after themselves to live with dignity and enjoyment.

Salem is now part of a growing network of hundreds of cities and towns across the globe, all of whom recognize that planning for a livable community for seniors means planning for a livable community for all. In Salem, this process started by listening and working collaboratively with seniors and those who support with our senior population. That will continue as the action plan is implemented. Together, we can create accessible physical environments, inclusive social environments, and an enabling and empowering service infrastructure.

In Salem, we are thoughtful about how we approach the future. Great cities do not happen by accident. They take careful planning, public input, and meaningful action. The *Salem for All Ages* Action Plan meets those standards. And we believe it will truly make Salem an even greater City for all.

Kimberley Driscoll, Mayor of Salem & Patricia Zaido, Co-Chair SFAA Task Force

The Generation Games

Everyone Can Play!

Sponsored by Salem Park, Recreation & Community Services Department; SSU's College of Arts & Sciences; and the Sport & Movement Science Department



Come join the fun!

The Generation Games are about bringing multiple generations of people together to participate in sports & recreational activities. Teams of moms, dads, grandparents, children, and friends will be coming together to have fun, exercise, and grow together. We are looking for participants of all ages to participate in this inter-generational, fun family event! The highlights of the weekend include:

- Opening Ceremony & Concert
- Snowshoe Walk/Run
- Human Foosball & Life-Sized Games
- 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament
- Water Polo/Water Volleyball
- Flag Football Tournament
- Outdoor Snow Activities/Contests
- Blacklight Dodgeball
- And many more fun-filled activities

All events are *free* and will be held in locations around Salem including:

- SSU's Twohig Gymnasium
- Olde Salem Greens Golf Course
- Salem Commons
- Salem Senior Center
- SSU's Gasset Center Gymnasium
- Lynch/van Otterloo YMCA

For more information, please email, facebook, or call us at:

salemgenerationgames@gmail.com

facebook.com/salemgenerationgames

(978) 744-0924 (Salem Park, Recreation & Community Services Department)

To register, please go to:

surveymonkey.com/r/9XVY5FW