



FYI SALEM

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From the Mayor's Desk



Dear Salem resident,

Thank you for reading the latest issue of the FYI Salem newsletter!

While there are a few updates in this issues of the newsletter, I wanted to focus in particular on the current discussion regarding accessory dwelling units (ADUs)

An ordinance is pending before the City Council that would add more flexibility for Salem homeowners interested in creating an ADU or 'in-law' apartment options.

At present, the City allows in-law units in only a few neighborhoods, only via special permit, and only for family members and care givers.

Under the current ordinance, once the in-law unit is no longer occupied by a family member or care giver, it must be destroyed by the homeowner.

The new ordinance would allow accessory dwelling units by right in more parts of the City, provided the unit is less than 800 square feet, has adequate parking on site/off street, is not used as a short term rental, and does not impinge on any required zoning setbacks.

Many communities are finding that ADUs are a low-impact way to diversify housing options, provide more affordable homes for young families and older adults, and can also help a homeowner with additional income through renting out space in their home.

Accessory apartments are so unobtrusive that they usually can't be seen from the street. Because of their size and scale, they are typically more affordable (i.e. folks typically pay less for a basement unit, garage or attic space).

At present, over half of Salem

renters are paying more than 30% of their monthly income for housing, which is considered housing cost burdened and leaves little room for expenditures on other necessary items. The cost of renting an apartment in Salem has risen dramatically and demand is far outpacing supply in the Salem and Greater Boston housing market.

While we often talk about the need for more affordable housing, this is one concrete way to expand housing options in Salem to meet the needs of the people who live and work here.

More info on our housing efforts on this issue, including a copy of the ordinance, can be found at this link <https://imaginesalem.org/accessory-dwelling-units>

Thanks once again for taking the time to read the FYI Salem newsletter!

Kim Driscoll
Mayor
City of Salem



The City Council is Going to Reconsider Accessory Dwelling Units

What is an Accessory Unit?

An *Accessory Dwelling Unit* is a secondary, small home on the same property as the main house. Accessory units are referred to by many names, including:

- granny units,
- in-law apartments, and
- second units.

Accessory units take on many shapes and styles. For example, an accessory unit could be located in:

- A basement or an attic,
- Above a garage,
- In a carriage house, or
- Attached to a house.

Why are the requirements going to be reconsidered?

It's hard for a lot of people in Salem to find a place to live. The City is looking at ways to create new housing units for these people. One way is through accessory units which provide homes for people who don't need a full house or a big apartment. The units tend to rent for less money than a typical apartment and the rent from the unit can help the homeowner too—think of a senior on a fixed income or a young family buying their first home. Accessory units accomplish this without requiring large new buildings or infrastructure. However, very few accessory units have been created because the requirements are very limiting.

WHO BENEFITS FROM ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS?

Salem Residents

Salem residents benefit from having entry level teachers, firefighters, nurses, service and hospitality industry employees (to name a few) who can live and work in their community.

Young Families with Kids

Young families could use an accessory unit for a live-in nanny or for a grandparent.

Seniors & Empty Nesters

The rental income from an accessory unit can make it feasible for someone on a fixed income to stay in their home and remain here in Salem.

Salem Businesses

Accessory units provide a housing option for employees of local businesses.

How Would You Benefit from an Accessory Dwelling Unit?

Share your story with the City Council and the Mayor by emailing the City at imaginesalem@salem.com or send a letter to the:

DPCD
City Hall Annex 2nd Floor
98 Washington Street
Salem, MA 01970

Current Requirements

- Requires a Special Permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals.
- Tenant must be a family member or caregiver.
- Homeowner must live on the property.
- The accessory unit must be removed when the tenant leaves.

How are Accessory Dwelling Units created in Salem today?

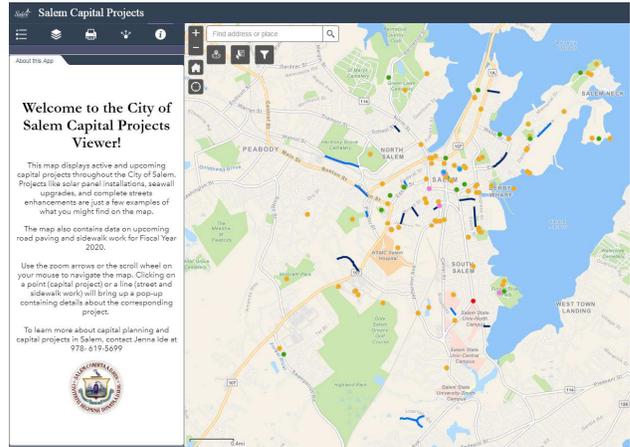
Currently, Salem homeowners are allowed to create an accessory unit solely for a family member or caregiver by obtaining a Special Permit from the Zoning Board.

For more information, please contact Amanda Chiancola with the City of Salem Department of Planning and Community Development at (978) 619-5685 or achiancola@salem.com or visit www.imaginesalem.org.

Capital Projects

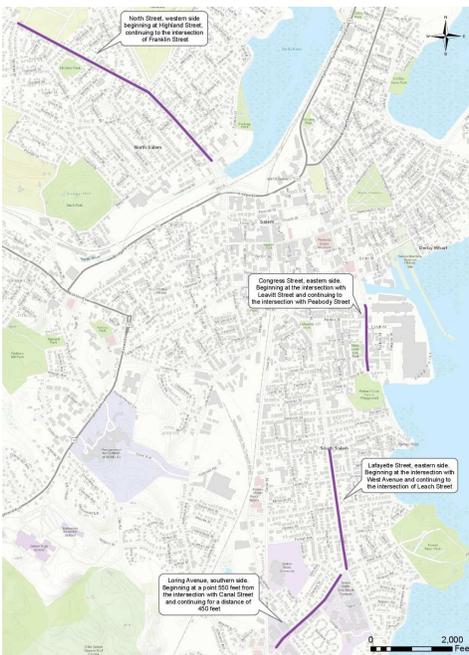
With the start of the new fiscal year, Salem Mayor Kim Driscoll has announced that a new online map showing all of the capital projects underway in the current fiscal year has been published at www.salem.com/projectsmap.

Clicking in the map will open a window showing additional details about the selected project, including location, department, current phase, and estimated cost. The 151 projects captured by the capital projects map total \$115 million in investments to improve Salem’s parks, public spaces, streets, sidewalks, and public buildings, and enhance the City’s ability to deliver local services and maintain a high quality of life for Salem residents.



“It hadn’t been the City’s practice to include capital improvement plan in the annual City budget until I first took office and I’m proud that it was an important, forward-looking reform that we instituted early on,” said Mayor Driscoll. “A capital plan and forecast provide a responsible and transparent tool for planning for future obligations, while still being mindful of the present-day needs that help us best serve Salem residents. This financially strategic approach to planning is just one of the reasons that Standard and Poor’s raised our bond rating to the strongest level in Salem’s history five years ago. It’s also a reflection of our dedication to policies that foster positive economic growth, stable financial management practices, and sustainable and transparent budgeting. This new map provides even greater transparency with respect to capital projects in Salem and better helps us share important information about the work that’s underway across our city.”

The share of the City’s budget that is debt payment has been reduced by more than a third since 2006. The debt payment for FY2020 is 4%, or \$310,000, less than it was in FY2019.



Space for People

About 47% of the City’s land area in downtown Salem is dedicated to cars—parking them, driving them, moving them around. In an effort to encourage people to explore new ways to get into or through downtown Salem, this summer the City will be setting up temporary bike lanes on North Street, Loring Avenue, Lafayette Street, and Congress Street on weekends starting July 20th. In addition, five “parklet” spaces will be set up downtown and in the Point neighborhood—three by the City and two by the North Shore CDC.

School Updates

Message from the Acting Superintendent

Recently a process to inform the selection of an interim principal for Salem High School was completed. The process included stakeholder engagement as detailed below.:

June 10-21: Online survey available on website—What characteristics/attributes are most important for an interim principal at SHS next year?

June 10-21: Interim principal job posted.

June 10-14: Review Team formed—2 students, 2 parents, 2 staff, 2 School Committee members.

June 20-25: Review Team • First meeting on June 20th. Members interviewed candidates on June 24 and 25 and provided feedback to the Acting Superintendent.

June 26-28: Acting Superintendent conducted interviews and checked references.

We were fortunate to have a strong response to the interim job posting as we received a total of thirteen applications. Six candidates were interviewed by the Review Team, and four finalists met with me.

After careful review of the candidates' materials, survey data, feedback provided from the Review Team, and notes from my own interviews, I am pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Samantha Meier as the interim principal for Salem High School for the 2019-20 school year. Dr. Meier has significant urban public school experience having worked in the Revere Public Schools for the last 19 years.

Her teaching and leadership experience is impressive and spans several key roles:

- Deputy Principal—Revere High School—2018-present
- Principal— Garfield Middle School (Revere) —2015-2018
- Vice Principal—Revere High School—2006-2015
- Science teacher—Revere High School—2000-2006

A skilled and passionate leader, Dr. Meier puts all students at the center of her decision making. Throughout her career she has demonstrated the ability to authentically engage students, teachers, and parents as partners in the work. In addition, Dr. Meier has shown she is capable of establishing strong routines particularly as they relate to shaping a positive school culture.



Dr. Meier graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from Cornell University and has Master of Education and Doctor of Education degrees from the University of Massachusetts (Boston).

We are excited for Dr. Meier to join the SHS team. She will begin as interim principal on July 8th. A “Meet & Greet” will be hosted at Collins Middle School in the Mary Manning Learning Commons at 6:00-7:00 PM prior to the regular scheduled School Committee meeting on July 15th. Students, staff and parents are encouraged to attend the “Meet & Greet”.

-M. Kate Carbone, Acting Superintendent

Read a letter of introduction from Dr. Meier at <https://tinyurl.com/y63wapdw>.