



City of Salem, Massachusetts
Mayor Dominick Pangallo

Neighborhood Improvement Advisory Council - Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, July 12, 2023, 7:00 P.M.

Called to Order: 7:03 p.m.

Members Present: Wendy Meigs, Gabe Ciociola, Barbara Mann, Linda Stark, Tom Kusterer

Staff Present: Lisa Peterson (Office of the Mayor)

Special Guests: Patricia Zaido, Co-Chair of Salem for All Ages, and Kerry Murphy, Salem for All Ages Health Sub-Committee Chair presented an update from Salem for All Ages.

Salem for All Ages Update:

- Attendees are invited to visit SalemforAllAges.org.
- Note that the Resource Guide is being updated and soon will be sent to all Salem residents the year that they turn 65.
- Salem for All Ages helped bring the Salem Skipper (local shuttle) to fruition, and it has now offered more than 200,000 rides.
- **The Health subcommittee** is focusing on Active Aging and Preventative Health.
- They are aiming to expand their walking program to every neighborhood (they are creating walking maps, and are looking to find “walking champions” for each neighborhood. There is a new “Safe Walking Advocacy Group” in Salem. Kerry Murphy is available to come to individual neighborhood association meetings to explain and give out the flyer.
- **The Age Discrimination subcommittee** is focusing on Age Discrimination, which is rampant in the US, and it has gotten worse since COVID. They are looking for members in each neighborhood. Contact Patricia at patriciazaido146@gmail.com or Kerry at kmurphy@salem.com.
- Finally, Salem for All Ages is planning to roll out a recognition program called “Salem’s Unsung Seniors.”

Neighborhood Association Updates:

- **Salem Common Neighborhood Association (Gabe Ciociola):** There is a leak in the cellar of the Bandstand; They are going to send us notes; There will be a 1920s lawn party on Saturday, September 16; a yard sale on September 23 & 24; and movie nights July 26 and through August. There are missing speed hump on Washington Street North and at Williams and Mall Streets.
- **Historic Derby Street Neighborhood Association (Wendy Meigs):** They are having meetings with Crowley; The next public meeting will be in September (September 11 at 7:00pm at the House of the Seven Gables – the Mayor will be the Speaker); the Merry-time Festival is coming up and they will have cardboard boat races (Saturday, August 19 from 12-7); In the Senior Tax Write-Off Program, the Salem Pantry used to be eligible – is there a reason it is not now?
- **Greater Endicott Street Neighborhood Association (Barbara Mann):** At the High Street Playground, there is trash piling up on the basketball court (can a trash barrel be added – a third one – on the baseball court?); the NIAC website has not been updated in a while. Can we add gesna.salem@gmail.com?

Regarding the Lifebridge/Harborlight Expansion Project: 40R Zoning; Major hurdles around zoning; ‘Smart Growth Overlay District’, High percentage of affordable units; 40R approach would be able to modify the City’s existing standards; taking a public park is not something that 40R allows. GESNA is having weekly meetings.

- **Linda Stark (Downtown Resident):** There is an overflowing, embarrassing trash barrel in front of the Mall – can the city do anything?
- **Downtown Neighborhood Association (Tom Kusterer):** Just getting the neighborhood association reformed and off the ground.

City Updates:

- The new Mayor (and former chair of this committee!) Dominick Pangallo sends his regards;
- There was a Jefferson Avenue water main break this week that impacted water service across the city – it’s nearly fully returned to normal;
- Forest River Pool is now open! Residents can get a pool pass for the season; free swim lessons; and other programs. Fees are: \$5.00 for the day; Membership ranges from \$25.00 for an individual and \$125.00 for a family, and membership offers full access all season; Guests are welcome to accompany residents (\$10/\$5 pp); Financial assistance is available for membership;
- City Council passed a sustainable packaging ordinance – no Styrofoam for restaurants, grocers, etc as of September 4, 2023;
- The recent 4th of July celebration was wonderful – we managed to fit it in between the rain. Aside from the night of the 4th itself, illegal fireworks complaints are way down, which is great news! If you do hear of any, call the non-emergency number for the police: 978-744-1212;
- Salem recently expanded our Bluebikes program by 3 stations! We now have additional stations in Vinnin Square, Bridge Street Neck, and Derby Street;
- Salem was once again named a “Tree City USA” by the Arbor Day Foundation. To determine if you qualify for a free tree, visit MAUrbanCanopy.org/town/salem;
- Salem Public Library no longer charges overdue fines;
- Salem joined a regional effort to address gender and racial wage gaps – the city was happy to contribute our stats to the study in an effort to help move us all closer to parity;
- Veterans now park for free anywhere in Salem (aside from garages and private lots) – anyone with a Veterans plate qualifies;
- The Mayor’s office has launched a newsletter. The “Salem Compass” is published every two weeks. Sign up on SalemMA.gov to get it delivered right to your inbox, or read all current and previous issues at that link as well.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 13, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

Adjourned: 8:00 p.m.