



City of Salem, Massachusetts
Mayor Dominick Pangallo

Neighborhood Improvement Advisory Council - Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 11, 2023, 7:00 P.M.

Called to Order: 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Tom Kusterer, Richard Lindeman, Wendy Meigs, Christy Marcum, Flora Tonthat, Dennis Maroney, Maryann Curtin, Barbara Mann, Susan Moulton, Cynthia Jerzlo,

Also Present: Alan Hanscom, Linda Stark

Staff Present: Lisa Peterson (Office of the Mayor)

Special Guests: Chief Lucas Miller – Salem Police Department

Approval of 9/13/23 Minutes (Tom Kusterer moves, Wendy Meigs Seconds): 6 – 0 – 1, minutes approved.

Chief Miller, Salem Police Department Presentation:

- Chief Lucas Miller gave an overview of all the ways that the Salem Police Department is working to make the month of October and Haunted Happenings safe and enjoyable for visitors and residents. He explained that the city is using *Placer AI* data to accurately estimate crowd size each day and throughout the month. He emphasized that the weather is the best predictor and indicator of crowd size each day. He made sure that neighborhood representatives knew that when streets are blocked off, the blocks are not meant to keep residents out. If a resident needs to reach their home, they should flag down a detail officer, call the police non-emergency phone number, or carefully move the barrier themselves, returning it immediately after getting their vehicle through the blocked area. Chief Miller then answered questions from participants about the encampment of unhoused individuals behind Wendy's; campers in Fort Lee; rules about decibel levels by screaming individuals as well as vehicles; and whether signs can be affixed to barriers blocking streets.

Neighborhood Association Updates:

- **Downtown Neighborhood Association (Tom Kusterer):** The D.N.A. has questions about police and parking. Due to how busy it is in October, the association has had nowhere to meet this month. They feel that traffic has been well-controlled so far.
- **Federal Street Neighborhood Association (Richard Lindeman):** The association raised \$1,400 to treat 7 ash trees. They are concerned about tourists parking along Federal Street (has been better than last year). There are missing barrels in Leslie's Retreat. Trees along Bridge Street came down. Christmas in Salem (SCNA) December 1, 2 & 3.
- **Historic Derby Neighborhood Association (Wendy Meigs):** What is happening in the Blaney Street lot? How is it zoned (for parking)? Could there be better signage at the table?
- **Bridge Street Neck Neighborhood Association (Flora Tonthat):** 11 Northey Street has received a number of citations – it is clearly operating as a Short Term Rental – need to receive a Cease and Desist order. Flora's neighbor left lots of construction materials on the sidewalk.

- **Salem Common Neighborhood Association (Dennis Maroney):** He is happy regarding raised beds on the Common. Christmas in Salem is coming – there will be a large wreath on the arch. November 26 12-2 the Common will be decorated for the holidays. Kids Fun Fest will be on the Common the last two weekends of October and there will be a concert on the Common. Ray Jodoin will be helping address an infestation of grubs in the middle of the Common.

- **[Provided electronically:**

- **“Initiatives**

- **SAFE CBA For Offshore Wind:** City engaging with SAFE & SOWA advisory group which SCNA is a part of. Conservation Commission decision likely to cause delays.

Recommend that NIAC add to November meeting agenda.

- **Upgrades & Traffic Calming:**

- Speed bumps, stanchions & flashing signs requested at playground corner
- Paving & walkway painting around Common on Washington Square needed
- Traffic monitoring on Winter Street as part of decision to reroute 1A

- **Salem 400+:** SCNA attended 9/20 planning session & provided input.
- **Raised Beds On Common:** SCNA donated to Girl Scouts/Maitland project sponsored by Councilor Varela. Now fully planted & looks great. Thanks all!
- **Washington Arch:** Arch Restoration honored to win HSI Preservation award

Events

- **Kids Fun Fest:** All set for Oct 21/22 & 28/29: 11 AM to 5 PM
- **Common Holiday Decorating:** Nov 26th 12-2
- **HSI Christmas In Salem:** SCNA support HSI house tours Dec 1st, 2nd & 3rd
- **Holiday Concert:** Bridge@211 on Dec 17th 3 to 5 with bake sale

Common Issues & Enhancements

- **Bandstand:** Phase 2 (restore dome; add flowerbeds) exploring w/Mike C
- **Lawn:** Working with Ray J on current infestation & remediation after HH
- **Fence:** Working with Patti K & Mike C on needed near/long term solutions
- **Washington Arch:** Exploring lighting with Ray J & decorating for holidays
- **Raised Beds:** Planting completed. Edges to be rounded & plaques added
- **Future:** Explore possible adult recreational/fitness installation on Common]

- **Greater Endicott Street Neighborhood Association (Barbara Mann):** GESNA had a block party on October 1st – over 100 people attended. The neighborhood association is wondering why the Italian flags came down and went back up again.
- **Willows Neighborhood Association (Cindy Jerzylo):** Next meeting there will be a Pioneer Village presentation: 2nd Tuesday of November at Winter Island. There have been illegal campers.

City Updates:

- Haunted Happenings is here!
- The city will be replacing diseased trees in Forest River Park. Keep in mind that it will be an active construction site while some are being taken down. New trees are planned for the Spring.
- The city is holding free Narcan trainings for the public and city employees. Feel free to reach out if you can think of a good public event to bring a Narcan training/distribution.
- The city has installed a Free Little Library right out front of City Hall. All books are welcome and it is especially focused on sharing books that have been banned or challenged. The public is invited and encouraged to participate.
- Salem residents and people who work in Salem are eligible for a free 30 day pass through Bluebikes. The pass is available during October, and is intended to help ease travel through downtown during October. The 30 day window can be activated and used anytime during the year.
- The city has issued planned and anticipated road closures for the month of October – issuing them ahead of time is a new initiative this year.
- In response to a private local recycling site closing recently, the city has installed a very large dumpster at the transfer station for disposing of cardboard (Saturdays 7:00-3:00; Sundays 9:00-5:00 through December 17)
- Keolis (the Commuter Rail) is offering increased train capacity on the weekends – more trains than ever.
- The Tree Commission is reminding everyone that there is a healthy way to mulch your trees – avoid “tree volcanos” with using just enough mulch to show the root flare.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 8, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

Adjourned.