

MEETING NOTES

Meeting Date: June 9, 2009

Meeting Topic: Small Group Discussions of Concepts and Recommendations during the Public Meeting

Meeting Location: Carlton School, Salem, MA

Project: Salem Bridge Neck Neighborhood Planning Study

Attendees: Community members, The City of Salem Department of Planning and Community Development, The Cecil Group and subconsultants

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Project File

Over 40 people attended the second public meeting for the Salem Neck Neighborhood Planning Study. Participants were provided with an agenda for the evening's meeting, a six page summary of notes from the first meeting, and a handout on housing assistance programs. After a brief introduction, the members of the Consultant Team shared the findings from the first Public Meeting and a summary of opportunities and constraints for the Bridge Street Neck neighborhood. An assessment of current commercial conditions and trends was presented followed by concepts and ideas for revitalization. The participants were divided into four small groups for discussions of those concepts and recommendations.

Section I of these notes is a summary of the concerns shared by the participants of the small groups, in which we have tried to reflect the main topics of the discussions as closely as possible. *Section II* contains a comprehensive list of the feedback regarding the concepts and recommendations that was recorded by the facilitators during these small group discussions. In both sections the feedback has been organized into four topics concerning development: Residential, Business, Open Space, and Miscellaneous.



Section I: Summary of Key Points

Residential

- Residential development could be good as long as it is low density, low profile (crowding should be discouraged)
- Need guidelines for building maintenance and improvement, but not historic requirements. Hearings at the historic commission are so difficult - requirements are too strong.
- The City needs to enforce the code in rental units in the middle district- too many families are living in units that are designated as single family.
- Envisioning the Brake and Clutch site as residential in the long term is a good idea.


Business

- An ice cream parlor/snack stand near the new park would be great.
- Bed and breakfast done well could be a positive use in some areas (there are currently two in Winter St. and one in Northey)
- Could the boat storage relocate? They are close to residential properties and sometimes get noisy. Moving them to another location within the Neck, surrounded by businesses would be good.
- Northern end should have art galleries in addition to more restaurants.
- More development focused around an anchor and complementary businesses and attractions should go in northern end
- A good food/grocery store could be good (such as Trader Joe's).
- Create a destination within the neighborhood.

Open Space

- This should be a walking neighborhood (traffic out is a benefit)
- A bike and pedestrian path should go along the residential sections along Collins Cove all the way to the proposed park at the north end- the bike path needs to go to more places.
- There is potential for improved greenspace in the lots at the end of Saunders Street.
- Collins Park could be a great amenity but the City needs to fix it up. It is underutilized and neglected. Tree, better lighting and gardens should be added.

Miscellaneous

- Design guidelines should be created to set height, scale, look and feel.
 - A boat landing should go in at the northern end.
 - Festivals could become a summer attraction.
 - Greater commitment to fight crime and drug dealing – people coming in from out of area
 - There should be improvements made to the side streets.
 - Focus on abandoned and empty buildings.
 - Zoning shall allow good development like second story residential above retail.
 - The neighborhood should improve upon the historic character-but it has to be affordable.
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Section II: Complete List of Suggestions

Residential

- Residential development could be good as long as it is low density, low profile
- The density of residential properties is important (crowding should be discouraged)
- Transformation from single residential to multiple residential would not be good; more single family homes are needed.
- The city needs to enforce the code in rental units in the middle district-too many families are living within units that are designated as single family.
- The Bridge Street Neck neighborhood should try to mimic the feel of the residential neighborhood that is between Conner's Cove and the Common.
- Not enough focus on home ownership
- Brake and Clutch as residential is a good idea.
- No change in neighborhood scale and character
- Side street improvements are needed.
- New multifamily residential at plumbing site
- Undeveloped area between Hubron and Thorndike should become residential.

Business

- An ice cream parlor near the new park would be great.
 - An upscale food store could be good (such as Trader Joe's).
 - Classy music and/or entertainment in the business district would be okay.
 - Bed and breakfast done well could be a positive use in some areas (there are currently two in Winter St. and one in Northey)
 - Design guidelines to set height, scale, look and feel.
 - Northern end should have art galleries in addition to more restaurants.
 - Signage-street, amenities, flags/banners
 - More development in northern end focused around an anchor and complementary businesses and attractions
 - Create a destination within the neighborhood.
 - A water taxi from the proposed park to Beverly would bring in tourists and support businesses.
 - Parking at northern end needs to be addressed in order for businesses to grow.
 - Physical attractiveness and pedestrian improvements would create better stopping environments
 - Improve appearance at northern end
 - Find uses like Essex in terms of antiques
 - There is not enough assistance provided to older businesses for upkeep
 - More business should open around Coffee Time-people come from out of town to go to Coffee Time.
 - Some type of Salem Museum could go in northern end-Maritime, art, Salem Fire.
 - Commercial façade improvements are needed.
 - Waterfront restaurants/park with appropriate scale development 2 floors
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Open Space

- Collins Cove pedestrian access is necessary.
- Greenspace for the section of property between March and Burnside.
- There was once a Victorian garden overlooking Collins Cove. A flower garden along the water would be great.
- Public access/beach behind “Street Market”
- Connect bike trails-take trail to Winter Island/Willows.
- The bike path needs to extend to more places.
- A bike and pedestrian path should go along the residential sections along Collins Cove all the way to the proposed park at the north end.
- The bike path should be extended past the Willows and along Collins Park.
- Waterfront walk at north end with beach access
- Collins Park could be a great amenity but the City needs to fix it up. It is underutilized and neglected. Tree, better lighting and gardens should be added.
- The bike path and walking paths should connect the neighborhood to the commons.
- There is potential for improved greenspace in the lots at the end of Saunders Street.
- Collins Cove beach needs to be improved.
- Graffiti at Collins Cove needs to be cleaned up and prevented.

Miscellaneous

- Could the boat storage relocate? They are close to residential properties and sometimes get noisy. Moving them to another location within the Neck, surrounded by businesses would be good.
 - Don’t discourage boating; it would be great to have a place to dock and visit a restaurant (floating dock).
 - This should be a walking neighborhood (traffic out is a benefit)
 - Need guidelines for building maintenance and improvement, but not historic requirements. Hearings at the historic commission are so difficult - requirements are too strong.
 - Peabody has no historic feel anymore.
 - Bridge Street has the historic character (own a 1795 house)
 - People need to maintain historic character, but it has to be affordable.
 - Festivals could become a summer attraction.
 - The neighborhood could become a destination for artists and create a community of artists with cottages and galleries.
 - Bridge Street needs to feel safe.
 - Loitering in old plumbing building needs to be stopped.
 - Insufficient parking on side streets needs to be addressed.
 - The neighborhood should have historical markers/pamphlets with map for a historic walk through the area.
 - The neighborhood needs to create an identity for itself. Some people think the neighborhood says “Cars”-with so many businesses dealing with and servicing cars.
 - More parking for residential and commercial areas is needed.
 - The City needs a greater commitment to fight crime and drug dealing – people coming in from out of area
 - 47 Bridge Street not specifically addressed
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- Would like to place utility wires underground as part of the plan
 - Look at connecting sidewalks in the neighborhood.
 - Speeding up Lathrop Street needs to be stopped.
 - Utility pole reduction
 - New mixed use development
 - Focus on the stretch of Bridge Street between Lathrop and Merrill for improvements. Focus on abandoned and empty buildings.
 - Townhouses or shops could go in front of the buildings at the corner of Lathrop and Bridge
 - Middle scale adequate density to make change feasible in the Brake and Clutch lot site.
 - A key property for the neighborhood (the old bridge/future park area at the north end) is now vacant.
 - Improve-Burnt out building at the corner or Osgood and Bridge Street
 - Mixed use is good in the Brake and Clutch site.
 - Location planning for the Brake and Clutch Site is important.
 - Storefront residential/live work for the Brake and Clutch site
 - Focus improvements on the lower end of the Bridge Street
 - Zoning shall allow good development like second story residential above retail.
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