
The FEDERALIST

The Federal Street Neighborhood Association is a registered, non-profit group which serves the residents of the Federal Street Neighborhood

Vol. 13

May 2003

Neighborhood roundup

Beautifying Boston Street

Several members of FSNA have participated in the Boston Street Gateways Task Force which was organized by the Mayor's Office in April. It was formed to focus attention on ways to improve the attractiveness of Boston Street, from the Peabody line to Cooper's Garage at Essex Street, one of the major gateways into Salem. The mayor focused available City of Salem resources on getting the Flynntan site cleaned, designing a more attractive temporary fence at the Flynntan site and do other cleanup projects. The mayor's wife, Mary Usovicz and the mayor's deputy, Tom Philbin, led a tour of Boston Street to review and crystallize ideas that had been discussed.

Martin Imm substituted for Meg Twohey in the walking tour. David Hart also represented the FSNA. Unfortunately, from the FSNA viewpoint, the total focus of the tour was on the Bridge to Peabody section of Boston Street. Martin's report follows:

Mrs. Usovicz had some city resources under her command on the tour and, after additional meeting time of the Boston Street Gateways Task force, expects there will be sufficient City funds available to make some significant improvements during the next year or two. The major City project to be done this year will be to reestablish a large section of missing sidewalks on the West side of Boston Street (on west side, centered on Boston Street Auto body), with associated curbside planting strips and reduced curb cuts. At Flynntan there also will be a low (cheap, because it won't be a long-term fixture) wooden fence installed to replace the chain link, a wildflower mix planted on the upper, open section and a City tree nursery established at the lower, at present, black-topped section. Unfortunately, these items will use up this year's available City funds, and the Bridge Street-to-Cooper's Garage section will be the focus next year.

Improvements in some other parts of the same sections of Boston Street were discussed and will be advocated by the Task

Force and supported by the City. Examples include such things as replacing paved parking strips with tree plantings and grass and/or sea stones. We also learned there are some grants available to commercial property owners on Boston Street to make cosmetic changes of their buildings to improve the aesthetics of this important entrance corridor. This will also be promoted with business owners by Task Force members and supported by the City. It may be possible to focus on the Bridge to Cooper's Garage section of Boston Street with these efforts as well. The volunteer architects on the Task Force had many good ideas that wouldn't cost too much and which could be promoted with business owners to make a difference in how the street would look if carried out. I believe the grant money could be used on the whole of Boston Street.

Coordination of the Task Force's work is being handled by Ellen Dubinsky in City Hall 978-745-9595, ext. 342. She will add any interested parties to her e-mail and mail lists for updates, meeting dates, etc.

*Respectfully submitted,
Martin Imm*

Opinions on the Blue Line?

The representatives from the various Neighborhood Associations throughout Salem known as the Alliance of Salem Neighborhood Associations, which meets monthly, have become very concerned about the possibility of a Blue Line extension to Salem.

The North Shore Transit Improvement Steering Committee has, for over a year, been studying five alternatives for improvement of transportation on the North Shore. The alternatives are as follows:

1. No action
2. Upgraded and improved commuter rail and bus service
3. Blue Line extension to Lynn/Salem via Commuter Rail Eastern Route
4. Blue Line extension to Lynn/Salem via Narrow Gauge Right-of-Way (3 and 4 distinguish between two possible track routes, both running for the most part parallel to the exist-

SPECIAL EVENT

Bowditch Open House

Sunday, June 1 Open house at Historic Salem's Bowditch House with a reception at the Salem Athenaeum to celebrate work in progress on the exterior of the house, 2-4 pm

First FSNA Block Party planned for June 7

All Federal Street neighbors are invited to gather on Saturday, June 7, in Federal Court for our first FSNA block party. The party will begin at 1 p.m., hamburgers and hot dogs will be provided along with soda and juice for kids and people are asked to bring a community dish and their favorite party beverage. Please bring along a lawn chair or two — and don't forget to label them. We will also need volunteers for set up and cleanup, so please sign up now. Respond, s'il vous plait, to Pam McKee by calling 978-762-6109 or e-mail her at mckee_pam@hotmail.com. The rain date will be June 8.

Special FSNA Development Meeting

Tuesday, June 17, 7 p.m. at the Grace Church. We will discuss progress of the North River Planning Group, Boston Street, Public Storage Site, Blue Line Train coming to Salem, and many other pending development issues that are taking place in and around our neighborhood.

Neighbors on Chronicle

Friday, May 30, at 7:30 p.m., Channel 5 — Chronicle TV Show on the Orchard House restoration. Our neighbors David Hart and Dick Luecke have each contributed to this restoration.

ing commuter rail tracks with a terminus at the foot of Mill Hill at Mill and Canal streets.)
 5. An intermodal connection between the Commuter Rail and the Blue Line near Wonderland station in Revere.

While the Alliance members are unanimous in their opposition to a Blue Line extension to Salem for obvious reasons — creating a Wonderland North here in our city which is already besieged with traffic gridlock — it is necessary to have input from the respective neighborhood groups before taking a public position against a possible Blue Line extension to Salem. (The administration supports this plan and the City Council has voted against it, 9-1.)

Therefore, we ask you as members of the Federal Street Neighborhood Association to report back before June 14 with your position on this important issue which will greatly affect our quality of life here. The FSNA asks that people respond only if they are NOT in agreement with the Alliance position. For more detailed information, go to the project website at: www.mbta.com/projects_underway/nsti.asp

P.S. The two alternatives favored by the Alliance appear to be #2 (improved commuter rail) and #5 (intermodal connection between existing commuter rail and the Blue Line in Revere, allowing for easy access to the airport and downtown Boston). An additional consideration would be having the Blue Line stop at Lynn, where there would be a seamless transfer to the commuter rail.

Witch House reopens

On May 17 the Witch House held a Grand Re-Opening celebration. Admission was waived for all at this special

day-long event that kicked off the 2003 public season at the Witch House. Doug Bollen of the Parks and Recreation department and Kimberly Alexander, architectural historian and consultant, are working with a team of historic house professionals formerly with the Peabody Essex Museum. Nick Carlisle, Jon Markowitz, and Donna Thorland have over a decade of innovative historic house management between them and will reorganize operations at the house.

The team were producers of the Peabody Essex Museum's lately mourned Eerie Events, a theater festival of professionally staged original ghost stories in historic houses. The trio hope to produce a version of the show, which used to attract an audience of 10,000 people over seven nights, for the city this fall. Nick Carlisle is best known for his work with the well-regarded sketch comedy site, tboob.net, and wrote much of the comedic material for Eerie Events. Jon Markowitz has a background in live and recorded music as well as directing, acting, and designing lighting installations. Donna Thorland wrote and directed Eerie Events for six consecutive years of record-breaking profits and attendance.

The Witch House, an excellent example of 17th century architecture, was the home of Judge Jonathan Corwin, and is the only structure still standing in Salem with direct ties to the Witch Trials of 1692. Saved from demolition in 1944 by a group of concerned citizens, the house is owned by Historic Salem and administered by the Department of Parks and Recreation of the City of Salem. It is open May through November.

New PEM needs volunteers

The Grand Opening of the Peabody Essex Museum is only a few weeks away! The new PEM will be a wonderful place to visit, explore and, of course, volunteer. There are some new volunteer opportunities available, so please consider the following... Visitor Services Volunteers. Both of these opportunities are great for people who want to be "where the action is" and work with the public and museum staff. The Museum would prefer volunteers willing to put in half or full days. Weekend and weekday times are available. These are "regular" volunteer positions and will continue after the Grand Opening celebrations end. Attendance at Visitor Services training sessions will be required.

- Information Desk - volunteers will answer questions, assist visitors with Acoustiguides (tapes), and offer general assistance to our visitors.
- Membership Desk - volunteers will answer assist members with any problems, answer questions about membership benefits and levels.

Please call Audrey Pransky, Manager of Volunteer Programs, at 978 745-9500, ext. 3162, or e-mail her at: audreypransky@pem.org.

Apartment for rent

Town house apartment for rent: 120 Federal St., 1st and 2nd floor of historic 1783 Federal house — includes LR, DR, kitchen, 2 bedrooms, 1 1/2 baths, washer & dryer, 4 fireplaces, sunporch and garden. Available in June. For information, call Meg Twohey 978-744-6702.

Become a member of Federal Street Neighborhood Association

Throughout 2002, FSNA has provided our monthly newsletter, *The Federalist*, to over 240 residences in the greater Federal Street area. As you've read, there are a few neighbors are at the core of the operations who try to keep you informed and in touch with what is going on in our neighborhood. We know that many people have families and are

busy trying to make ends meet, so if you cannot help by volunteering your time, please join us by filling out the membership form below. Keep in mind that the annual dues help to cover the administrative costs (including the newsletter) that keep our group going. Eventually, we'd like to provide the newsletter via e-mail as well, so, if you

like that concept and have the capabilities, provide your e-mail address below. The Federal Street Neighborhood Association is also connected to a Web site where you can find up-to-date meeting schedules and citywide issues being addressed. Simply go to www.salemcitizens.org.

Name _____

Address _____ e-mail _____

Cost of a membership:

\$7 for an individual

\$10 per family

Please make your check payable to the Federal Street Neighborhood Association, and mail it to David Hart, FSNA Treasurer, 104 Federal Street, Salem, Mass. 01970.

