

The FEDERALIST

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

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Traffic flow to be discussed, change possible

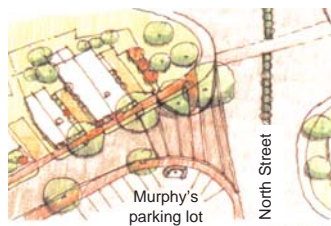
For the past six months, the Federal Street Neighborhood Association has been working with our ward councilor, Regina Flynn, and the City of Salem to make our neighborhood a safer place and to improve the quality of life for the residents. In February, Bob Ouellette, Will Wrightson and Stan Szwartz met with Regina, Tom Philbin and the mayor to discuss proposals to make neighborhood improvements. The major concern has always been cut-through traffic and speeding. During the meeting, we discussed numerous ideas such as brick sidewalk installations/upkeep, building a "neckdown" at the corner of Federal and North Street (see architectural drawings provided by Gray Architects-Salem), using cobblestone crosswalks at intersections to slow traffic, and reversing traffic direction on some of our side streets.

Since that time, we have had numerous meetings and discussions with our Councilor Flynn, contractors, material suppliers, and numerous municipalities that install and maintain brick and cobblestone sidewalks and corridors. We have also provided architectural drawings of a neck-down at the North Street intersection, a map of sidewalks in our



Above left, Federal Street now; above right with proposed neckdown. Below is a drawing of the proposed layout.

Gray Architects-Salem



neighborhood that have been tarred over instead of bricked, and photos of numerous trees that have been hacked to pieces/death by the utility companies. To summarize our objectives:

- 1) Install the neckdown at the intersection of Federal and North streets
- 2) Schedule cooperative efforts with the City to improve/install brick sidewalks where needed. Martha Jarnis and Ziggy Hartfelder did a brilliant job to create this plan, now we need the City to move the plans forward.
- 3) Reverse traffic flows through the neighborhood. Note: Because of the City of Salem's inability to make Bridge Street a functional and effective bypass road (for over six years now),

Federal Street has been supporting all the cut-through traffic coming over the bridge. This is no longer acceptable. As Joe Walsh and the City plan to design and develop the entry corridors to the city, we need to keep this traffic on North Street and move "cut-through to Boston and Essex Street" traffic onto Bridge Street. We have put together a traffic flow proposal which we will present at our next meeting, Oct. 15, 7:30 p.m. at Grace Church (Essex Street) for those interested in helping us improve the quality of life and safety in our neighborhood.

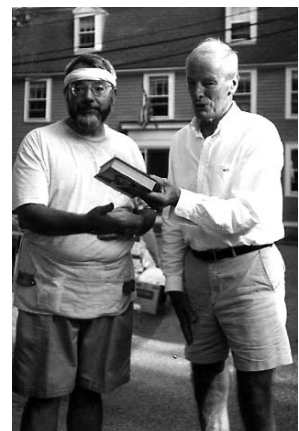
4) The City of Salem has appointed a new Manager for Open Spaces. We would like to review the locations of trees that are in desperate need of help or cutting down as soon as possible. If you have any ideas or would like to contribute your time, skills, and energy to any of these improvement projects, please let us know.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The next FSNA meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 15, at 7:30 p.m. at the Grace Church on Essex Street. A representative from the Salem Police Dept. will be there to discuss Crime Watch in our neighborhood and address any ongoing issues and concerns with the Salem Police.

The City held the first of several important meetings last week to begin public meetings on the North River Canal Corridor Master Plan (for Bridge Street and adjacent sections of Boston and North streets) and for rezoning around Salem harbor. FSNA representatives on the North River Canal Master Plan Committee include John Carr, Mary Lee Storrs and Joyce Wallace. In addition, the Salem Neighborhood Alliance held a meeting on the proposed MBTA garage.

FSNA yard sale a resounding success



We are grateful to our customers, our neighbors and the weather for making the FSNA yard sale Sept. 21st such a success. Highlights included shoppers and helpers such as, from left, Elaine von Bruns, Pat Durkee, Dick Lueke, Jane Arlander, Jane Stauffer, Rita Markunas' brother-in-law, Tom, and Bill Burns. Thanks to Rita for organizing the day; to Pat and Dan for their garage; to Betsy and Bill Burns who had a sale site in their driveway, and all the others who helped. All told, the sale netted \$1,201.

The Cotting-Smith Assembly House

by Justin Whittier

"It is altogether a beautiful estate, ...most dignified in its looks and none more beautiful can be found in Salem." Such was the pronouncement in the 1880s of Federal Street neighbor Henry Kimball Oliver upon the Assembly House.

In 1782, Salem was without a public hall to house the rising tide of gaiety in the young America, and so some 20 men joined their finances to erect the Assembly House. These joint proprietors included such Salem worthies as Elias Haskett Derby, Edward Holyoke and Joshua Ward.

Built according to the then-current model that provided for music, dances, plays, lectures, gaming and the like, the Assembly House was intended to be a center of social and cultural life. From the reports of William Pynchon that "Music and dancing engross the whole conversation of the town," — for the bill might one night include the edifying performance of "Mr. Barlett's scholars" and the next, the more entertaining "musick [of] a drunken Irishman..." — we may fairly



Cotting-Smith House

suppose that it fulfilled its office.

The Assembly House began its 167-year term as a private dwelling in 1798 when Jonathan Waldo bought out the shares of his fellow proprietors and sold to Samuel Putnam, later judge of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts.

Shortly before or after the sale, Samuel McIntire undertook to redesign the building. Of its earliest form there is no surviving record, and though from the account of the Rev. William Bentley it may be determined that the Assembly House was provided with elegant paintings, fireplaces on each side of the entrance and raised benches, it seems to have been of a very utilitarian character.

In all likelihood, the ballroom ran across the entire width of the back of the house with ceilings 20 feet high, the drawing rooms were in the front of the house straddling the entry hall and staircase, which accessed first the musician's gallery and then the second-floor chambers.

McIntire would add four pairs of Ionic pilasters to the second-story facade, a pediment to the hip roof which enclosed a semicircular fanlight, a balustrade to the roof and a symmetrical array of windows with six-over-six panes of 14-by-10-inch glass. The ballroom was divided into two floors.

As a whole, Assembly House is taken as an important example of McIntire's early Adamesque style, though some alterations occurred through the years: The front portico, with its grapevine frieze and Ionic columns (meant to match McIntire's pilasters), was added in the mid-1800s, and, in 1920, the rear east room was extended by several feet and the northeast back of the house received an addition.

In 1965, the house along with furniture and furnishings was given to the Essex Institute by Mary Silver Smith.

