



FRIENDS OF SAXONVILLE

NEWSLETTER • SPRING 2015

Town Focuses on Future Saxonville Village Revitalization: Public Input Desired

by Steven Weisman

Over the next four months, Town government is investigating future economic development in Saxonville Village. The Town has committed funds and secured a consultant to carry out a planning and market study of the Village Center and surrounding area. The Cecil Group, a Boston-based urban planning firm, will seek input from the community, through interviews and public meetings, to understand Village issues and opportunities. The goal will be to develop a shared community vision for future local economic and community development.



This Town initiative has been driven in part by questions the Friends of Saxonville organization has been asking. Saxonville is on the move, with major new housing construction at Danforth Green, Town acquisition of over 80 acres on new open space on the Sudbury River, potential

redevelopment of the former State Lumber property at School and Concord Streets, expanding commercial activity at the historic Saxonville Mill, changing tenants at Pinefield Shopping Center, street and bridge improvement projects all around McGrath Square, the pending restoration of the Athenaeum as a new Community Hall, and near term loss of the McAuliffe Library to Nobscot.

We wonder, amidst all this change, how can we protect and enhance the physical and cultural resources that make Saxonville special while, at the same time, continue its rich history as a place where a diverse population lives, works, and plays?

The key questions the Town hopes to answer are:

- What could and should the Village's commercial center be?
- What could and should the Village center look like?
- How do we get there?

In February, the Town, with FOS support, will host the first of three public meetings in Saxonville to introduce this initiative and learn what Village residents think and want. Two more meetings are planned for later in the spring to report on findings.

Meeting details will be available shortly. We hope to see you there and hear what you think. ❖

FOS Annual Meeting

by Paula Longden

All are welcome to attend our annual meeting on Thursday, April 9 at St. George Church located on School Street in Saxonville. There will be light refreshments beginning at 7:00 pm while people have time to socialize. The meeting will begin at 7:30 with a presentation (topic to be announced). Watch your emails or visit our website at www.Saxonville.org for updates.

After the presentation, we will talk about our accomplishments during the past year and what our plans are for the upcoming year. We hope you can attend and look forward to having a great annual meeting! ❖

Vibes from the Village by Brian LeFort

We have a great deal of activity going on in the village. From construction to long term planning, it is an interesting and exciting time for the residents of Saxonville. Not to be lost in the flurry of activity is the newly opened Nikos Family Pizzeria Restaurant (former location of Zeta's Pizzeria) in McGrath Square. Residents can enjoy a variety of pizza, subs, and much more. ❖

Construction, Construction, Construction by David Longden



Water Street © Damianos Photography

Here is an update of projects in our neighborhood:

- **Danforth Green (PUD):**

This 300+ unit housing project broke ground in 2014. Foundations have been poured and several buildings are being constructed. Brendon Homes

has sold dozens of houses, townhome-style condos and apartments at "Montage at Danforth Green," with initial occupancy expected by mid-2015. Construction is expected through 2016.

- **Houses on Hialeah:** Separate from Danforth Green, three single-family houses have been built, and several more lots are laid out for future construction.

Meadow Street: Several new single-family houses have been built on the north end of Meadow Street. This Fox Creek development is adjacent to Danforth Green.

- **School/Concord/A Street Intersection:** This "double" intersection was recently rebuilt with most of the work paid for with money provided by developers. Traffic lights are due to be activated this spring.

- **Cochituate Rail Trail:** Supported by FOS, the trail is ex-

pected to open this spring, after traffic lights are installed at the OCP crossing. The towns of Framingham and Natick are discussing the possibility of building a bridge across Route 30 to connect the two town's trail sections.

- **Water/Central Streets Retaining Wall:** The town will continue work there in the spring. The sidewalk will be rebuilt, and a stone façade and fence will be added to the wall. A new sidewalk will be added to the river side of Water Street. Landscaping and streetlights will be installed as well. This work should be finished in 2015.

- **Central Street Bridge:** It will be demolished and construction of the replacement will begin in the spring. The bridge will be most likely closed until August 2015, opening (hopefully) before next winter.

- **Health Club at Breyer's:** Demolition of the former Breyer's Ice Cream factory has begun to make way for a 3-story health club complex with improvements to the roadway and intersections on OCP.

The town and local developers are rebuilding the infrastructure of our village with a commitment to and belief in the future of our community. It will be a very different place in a couple of years, with new features, traffic patterns, homes and businesses. The image may change, but the heart and soul of the village still remain. ❖

Saxonville Discovers Mass Ballet! by Steven Weisman

Friends of Saxonville presented "Nutcracker Sweet" on December 6 at Mass Ballet in the Saxonville Mill. The event, including opening reception, dance recital, and desserts (the Sweets!), had over 100 attendees. This was the most recent of the Friends' Discover Saxonville events, which are organized to showcase different aspects of Village life and bring people together for a good time.

Mass Ballet has had a long residence at the Mill and is a supportive business partner of FOS. The School offers a mix of classes for children from pre-K to age 18, as well as for adults. For this performance, Mass Ballet's talented students danced selections from Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Suite, wowing the crowd with their dancing and costumes. Studio owner Meg Powers provided commentary on dance selections and dancers.

The "Nutcracker Sweet" program was also a bene-



Nutcracker Sweet by Mass Ballet © John Stasik

fit to raise funds in support of the restoration of Saxonville's historic Athenaeum by the Town of Framingham.

Following the

ballet performance, FOS Board member Steven Weisman provided an update on the Town's efforts and presented the latest design plans for the Athenaeum's restoration as a Community Hall and meeting place for organizations from across the Town. FOS extends our sincerest gratitude to our host and performers, sponsors, contributors, volunteers, and to all of the attendees that joined us for a wonderful evening. ❖

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