

► Salem, N.H.

# New zoning could mean major changes to Depot

By JILLIAN JORGENSEN  
jjorgensen@eagletribune.com

SALEM, N.H. — Proposed zoning changes could bring a new look to the Depot, a neighborhood that has already seen some big changes this year.

"I think it's exciting, in the sense that between the train station building and the Tuscan Kitchen building, you've got the start of something very special going on there," town Planning Director Ross Moldoff said.

The new zoning would be an overlay district, meaning it would be optional for the property owners in the Depot. The exact borders of the Depot district have not been determined, but Planning Board Chairman Jim Keller said they would extend beyond the intersection of Route 28 and Main Street.

The zone would extend south to at least the former Coca-Cola plant on Route 28, north a few blocks on Route 28, west to Pleasant Street and several blocks east on Main Street.

The zoning overlay would offer developers some privileges not previously allowed

in the district, but it would also come with conditions. The overlay would allow residential uses — so developers could create mixed-use buildings with stores on the ground level and apartments above.

"It allows taller buildings, just up to four stories," Moldoff said. "Right now, you can do only three stories."

Parking requirements are not as strict if developers meet certain guidelines. Large stores and gas stations would not be allowed. There are also pedestrian and bicycle access requirements.

"It's not an area for big box stores. It's more pedestrian-oriented, kind of like a village or small downtown area," Moldoff said. "(The ordinance) imposes standards that we don't have for normal development."

Developers would also be responsible for connecting roads not part of the town's plan for redeveloping the Depot. A connector road is planned for each quadrant of the Depot.

"There are some big questions as to how is it going to work, and the answer is, 'We

don't know yet,'" Moldoff said.

Joe Faro, a Windham entrepreneur who recently opened the Tuscan Kitchen restaurant in the Depot and purchased several other large parcels there, said the overlay is "a great idea." Faro presented the Planning Board with a conceptual plan for a pedestrian-friendly downtown development proposed for his properties.

The plans included retail, office and residential space, a park called Tuscan Villa, and a specialty store known as Tuscan Market. The plans also call for building one of the proposed connector roads, bringing Pleasant Street through his property to connect it with Route 28. Much of the work would require the overlay to be in place.

"I think that the Depot rezoning will also incentivize other large parcels that have been dormant for a long time into potentially redeveloping," Faro said. "Not just our parcels, but others."

Keller, the Planning Board chairman, said the road improvements that would be

made for the developments such as the one Faro has planned in the Depot could relieve traffic congestion. It's a way to respond to residents' concerns about traffic while also paying for some public improvements with private money.

"We want to, if we can, encourage some very creative planning in terms of parking and configuration and pedestrian movement," he said.

Some vacant properties, such as the Coca-Cola plant, could get a boost from the ordinance because there would be new potential for the buildings, Keller said. Property owners are not required to participate, he said.

"I don't really see any downside," Keller said.

The board will hold a public hearing on the proposed ordinance Jan 11. It will appear, with other zoning ordinance changes, on the town ballot in March.

■ ■ ■

*Join the discussion. To comment on stories and see what others are saying, log on to eagletribune.com.*

December 5, 2010

## Impact fees fueling Salem's efforts to reduce traffic congestion

By Jillian Jorgensen

[jjorgensen@eagletribune.com](mailto:jjorgensen@eagletribune.com)

SALEM — Traffic could be moving more smoothly at one intersection, thanks in part to \$60,000 in impact and mitigation fees from the construction of the new Tuscan Kitchen restaurant.

At a board meeting Monday, selectmen approved the use of the funds to connect the traffic light at Pleasant Street and Main Street with a town-wide Intelligent Traffic System and coordinate the signal there with the intersection at Main Street and Route 28.

The project will cost \$85,000, with \$25,000 coming from Tuscan Kitchen impact fees, \$35,000 in mitigation that was a condition of the restaurant's approval by the Planning Board, and \$25,000 from the Depot Trust Fund, according to Community Development Director William Scott.

Coordinating the light at Pleasant Street will help reduce the traffic that can get stacked up between the Depot and the Pleasant Street lights, Scott said. To make things run smoothly, the lights will be timed so that when the Depot light is green, the Pleasant Street light will be green as well.

"Coordinating those two lights is critical right now," Scott said.

Town planner Ross Moldoff said impact fees are an important source of funds for road improvements for the town.

"We've collected millions of dollars and made millions of dollars worth of road improvements," he said.

The construction of a new Lowe's near the state line came with nearly \$2 million in road improvements paid for by the company.

In the past, impact fees only applied to commercial properties on the Pelham Road and Route 28 corridors. That changed this March, and the fees now cover residential buildings and properties all over town. In addition to impact fees, some town projects, like Tuscan Kitchen, are also asked to perform traffic mitigation, or what the town calls "front door improvements."

"To get people in and out of your project, you have to do what's needed to make sure the traffic doesn't get any worse," Moldoff said.

Recently, impact fees from projects like Tuscan Kitchen and Lowe's been used to expand the town's planned Intelligent Transportation System, which will use fiber-optic cables, sensors and cameras to coordinate traffic lights all across town.

The system, funded by grants, will likely be up and running in early spring, Scott said. During the Lowe's construction, crews wired lights with fiber-optic cables so they would be ready when the ITS system reached that end of Route 28.

At Pleasant Street, the money from Tuscan Kitchen will connect that light to the ITS system. The work on the intersection will be done in January.

"Obviously, we wanted to stay away from the shopping season," Scott said.

The fiber-optic cables are strung above ground, but the work will require switching to blinking yellow or red lights at the intersection. It should last about 15 minutes, he said.

"They'll choose certain times of the day to avoid peak traffic," Scott said.

The goal of the work at the Depot — and the ITS work across town — is to get traffic moving more smoothly.

"It allows the lights to coordinate, so when one is getting stacked up, it releases to go to the next one," Scott said.

It also allows the town to change the timing plans for the lights to different pre-set models for different situations.

"If there's an accident on I-93, we can flush traffic through the town from one exit to the next," Scott said.

The core ITS system is being funded by a \$750,000 federal high way grant. Another \$260,000 energy efficiency grant will stretch the system down Route 28 to Lowe's.

# Salem landowner challenges planners' decision in court

By JILLIAN JORGENSEN

jjorgensen@eagletribune.com

**BRENTWOOD** — Two appeals filed by a Salem property owner over plans for the former Tweeter store on Route 28 are being heard by a judge in Rockingham Superior Court.

Adam Abbas, who owns property including the Chili's next door to the site, appealed two Planning Board decisions related to the former electronics store. The building has been vacant for months. The Krystal Ballroom dance studio wanted to move in as a tenant and turn the building into a dance studio.

Planners approved the change of use at a meeting in January, during the "public matters" section of their agenda — which does not require notifying abutters, like Abbas.

Abbas' attorney, Bernard Campbell, said the approval came just six weeks after the Planning Board shot down Abbas' request to close off an access road that connects the Chili's parking lot to the Tweeter building's lot. Abbas was told he would need to modify the site plan, do studies and notify abutters.

"It's incomprehensible," Campbell said.

The situation prompted Abbas to file his first appeal last winter.

After that was filed, the Planning Board met again in May to discuss the change of use — this time as a public hearing. When the applicants for Krystal Ballroom came forward with a site plan, it was approved, with some conditions that hadn't been there for the vote in January.

But Abbas took issue with another decision the board made at the hearing in May over parking. The site has 23 parking spaces now, and the Planning Board decided the closest building use to a dance studio they had outlined in town regulations were colleges, universities and vocational schools. If the Krystal Ballroom fell into that category, it would not require any more parking spaces. The board also issued a conditional use permit to allow the current amount of parking.

But Campbell argued yesterday the business would be more like a skating rink or bowling alley, and should have closer to 50 parking spaces. He also said the consideration of a conditional use permit should have been part of the legal notice about the meeting, and the project did not meet the requirements for one.

Judge John Lewis will review both lawsuits and issue a ruling on the matter.

## ► Salem

# Chamber could move

By JILLIAN JORGENSEN

jjorgensen@eagletribune.com

**SALEM** — Selectmen approved a lease Monday that will likely bring the Chamber of Commerce to the center of town, in the newly restored Depot train station.

Chamber Executive Director Donna Morris said she was excited about the possibility of the move — though she cautioned the lease had not yet been signed.

"I'll feel so much better after the lease is signed," she said.

Acting Town Manager Henry LaBranche told the selectmen the lease was for up to five years, and would cost the chamber \$900 a month for the first three years. The rent could increase 3 percent in each of the final two years of the lease.

The chamber also will pay 60 percent of the utility costs of the building, a figure LaBranche said would probably equal about \$120 a month.

The lease would be effective Dec. 15, LaBranche said, so the chamber could begin moving into the building before occupying it after the new year.

The train station building has been meticulously restored by a group of volunteers over the last five years.

It also will house a small museum of railroad and Salem memorabilia.

"The project came out gorgeous," Morris said of the renovations.



Salem acting Town Manager Henry LaBranche told the selectmen the lease was for up to five years, and would cost the chamber \$900 a month for the first three years.

The building will house the chamber on one side and the museum on the other.

Morris said the two would complement each other, and that people coming to learn more about the town's businesses also could learn more about its history.

"It's kind of nice that we're in a train station, and the train stations are the heart of what brought commerce and industry to the area," she said.

The new location would offer the chamber increased visibility in "the heart of Salem," Morris said.

Their offices now are at 244 N. Broadway, and Morris declined to say how much the chamber pays in rent at that property.

# Atkinson lights its holiday tree tomorrow

**ATKINSON** — The ninth annual Light the Tree Community Holiday Celebration will be tomorrow from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Atkinson Resort and Country Club.

The event will include hayrides, caroling, music, ice carving, hot chocolate, cider and holiday cookies. Santa lights the tree at 6:30 p.m. and then greets kids in the Legacy Ballroom.

The event is free; it's sponsored by the country club and



its beginnings in 1901 to its closure in 1991.

Filmmaker Bill Rogers of 1L Media teamed up with Laconia State School historian Gordon DuBois to produce the film.

csni.org or call 229-1982.

## Windham High to perform 'The Crucible'

**WINDHAM** — Windham High School students will present "The Crucible" on Friday, Saturday and Sunday in the school auditorium.

A cast of 25 student actors and 12 technical crew members are involved in the production,

this school year.

"The Crucible" will be performed Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday at 1:30 p.m. Tickets are unreserved and available starting one hour before curtain at the box office: \$10 for adults and \$5 for students/senior citizens.

Upcoming shows include a musical in early March, "The Chaperone," and a May outdoor production of "A Midsummer

10/30/10 Tribune



JAN SEEGER/Staff photos

Beth Roth, chairman of the Salem Board of Selectmen, stands next to developer Steven Lewis, center, as he cuts the ribbon during the grand opening ceremony of the Glenridge low-cost senior housing complex yesterday.

# Affordable housing project opens in Salem

By JILLIAN JORGENSEN  
jjorgensen@eagletribune.com

SALEM — Local and state officials cut the ribbon yesterday for a 26-unit housing development that will provide affordable homes for seniors using federal tax credits.

Glenridge Apartments, off Veterans Memorial Highway, will see its first tenant move in today. It was built by developer Steve Lewis and his partner, Gino Baroni, who received tax credits from the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program.

Those funds are competitive. Each year, they are awarded by the federal government to each state, based on population. In New Hampshire, they are allocated by the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority. This year, the program had more funding than usual, thanks to the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

"I don't think we'll see many projects like this happen because it's very difficult to get the tax credits," Planning Director Ross Moldoff said.

He said the project was great for Salem, and for a state that did not have much affordable senior housing. Of the units in the housing, 80 percent must be rented to people who make 50 percent or less than the area median income. For a single person, that's \$35,880 annually. The

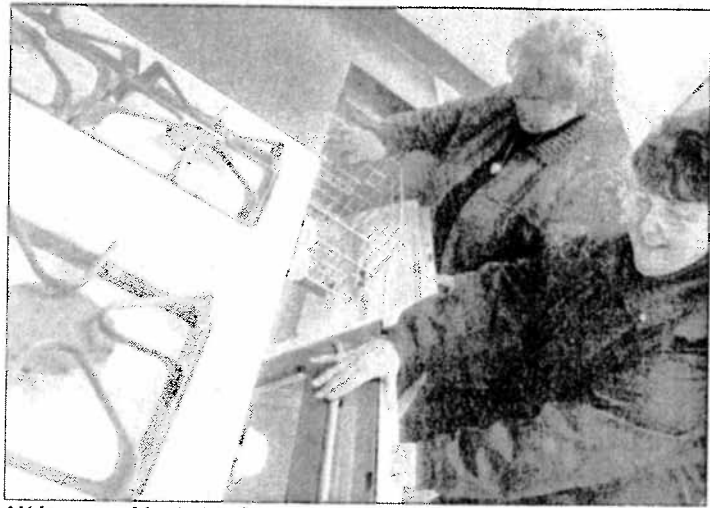
rest of the units must be rented to people who earn 50 percent or less than the area median income.

Lewis said he chose to build affordable housing beside his Braemoor Woods development to overcome the "foolish, ignorant" belief that affordable housing lowers property values.

"There are million-dollar houses on top of the hill," he said.

Rent in the development will be subject to a federal cap that aims to keep the price at less than 30 percent of a tenant's income, said Dean Christon, executive director of NH Housing Finance Authority. Legally, it must remain affordable housing for 99 years.

The multi-family housing also incorporates green building technology, stormwater management, and low-impact landscaping that includes rain gardens and bio-retention basins to save water.



Atkinson residents Maria Morin, left, and Claire Morin look over the new apartment their sister, Irene Carey, will be moving into this weekend.

Tribune 10/18/10

# Former Cisco building sells for \$12.2M

## Property off Route 97 has been vacant for years

By JULIAN JORGENSEN

SALEM — The property that formerly housed Cisco Systems has been sold for \$12.2 million. It was sold back to the company that originally sold it to Cisco for \$45 million in 2000, according to property records.

The property at 9 Northeastern Blvd. has been vacant since Cisco moved out in 2005, transferring the 95 employees remaining there at the time to Boxborough, Mass. It was purchased late last month by Equity Industrial Partners, a company that acquires, develops and

leases warehouses, for \$12.2 million, according to records from the Registry of Deeds. "We look forward to working with the new owners in their goal to reutilize the property and I think, obviously, it's another good sign for Salem," Planning Director Ross Moldoff said. "We'll be happy to help them in whatever way we can."

Moldoff said when the building was owned by Digital Equipment Corp., from 1975 to 2000, between 1,500 and 2,000 people were employed there. It also was one of the town's biggest

Please see SALE, Page 6



Cisco's building at 9 Northeastern Blvd., Salem, once sold for \$45 million. Last month, a company picked up the sprawling structure for \$12.2 million. File photo

## SALE: Ex-Cisco building unloaded for \$12.2 million

Continued from Page 1

taxpayers. Equity Industrial Partners previously owned the property for just over two months in 2000. It purchased the property from Digital Equipment for \$29.1 million on March 29, 2000 — and sold it to Cisco Systems for \$45 million on June 6, 2000, according to assessing records. Since the property became vacant, its assessed value has decreased, according to town

assessor Normand Pelletier. It was assessed at \$33 million in 2006, but is currently assessed at \$23.3 million, Pelletier said. "It's mostly because of the condition of the property," Pelletier said, after the property sat vacant for years. There are other factors in the lower assessment, he said, including the economy and the market for such a large facility. He said the property is slightly smaller now because Cisco Systems sold off some property

to the state for Interstate 93 development. The property is approximately 100 acres and has one building of more than 500,000 square feet. Pelletier said he thought the assessed value would go back up when the building is refurbished and redeveloped to house multiple tenants, which he has heard was in the works. Moldoff said the sale of the property was just one of many

instances of long-vacant buildings being sold or leased. "We've seen a good amount of that in Salem this year," Moldoff said. "But there's still more to go."

Calls to Equity Industrial Partners for comment on the sale were not returned yesterday.

Join the discussion. To comment on stories and see what others are saying, log on to [eaq1etribune.com](http://eaq1etribune.com).



# Design guidelines to aid town plans

BY CHELSEY POLLOCK

chelseypo@gmail.com

SALEM – After several months of planning, town staff and consultants have prepared a draft version of new design guidelines intended to shape future development in town.

The proposed guidelines, which have been posted to the town's project website – [www.salemnprojects.org](http://www.salemnprojects.org) – will be reviewed by the Salem Planning Board on Oct. 12.

The design guidelines incorporate the town's existing regulations, pairing items with photographs of good and bad examples of each.

Salem Town Planner Ross Moldoff says the photos, most of which are taken from the Salem area, will help streamline the site plan approval process.

"I don't know if it would be a huge change in what we see now, but it would just be more guidance for the developers and engineers who are designing the plans," he said. "It's one thing to go through these regulations with people in text in a zoning ordinance, but the board members now will have some examples they can point to and applicants will have some examples they can look at while they are designing."

The town received a \$10,000 grant from the state Department of Transportation to develop the guidelines and

has been working for the past few months with Maine-based planning consultant Terry DeWan, of Terrance J. DeWan & Associates.

In June, Moldoff and DeWan held a public input session with local developers, business owners and residents to talk about what they would like to see in the guidelines.

With that input in mind, Moldoff said he and DeWan have finalized some guidelines specific to Salem.

The guidelines are broken into five chapters, including site planning, architecture, landscaping, lighting and signage. Moldoff said he asked DeWan to specifically include sections to account for Salem's Depot Village area and the anticipated rise of multi-family housing units in town.

In a general sense, the guide includes overall goals, such as that development projects preserve existing features and open spaces, but also lays out specific requirements, for example that 60 percent of a street-facing facade in the Depot Village area contain clear windows with views of indoor retail or dining space.

After hearing from the planning board on Oct. 12, Moldoff said he will plan another public input night and will shoot for final planning board approval by the end of the year.

# Salem Planning Board impressed with coaster presentation

By JILLIAN JORGENSEN  
jjorgensen@eagletribune.com

**SALEM** — A new roller coaster proposed for Canobie Lake Park is one step closer to approval after the Planning Board meeting Tuesday.

"It was pretty positive," Planning Director Ross Moldoff said of the board's reaction to the park's plans. Plans submitted to the town

say the ride will be a Compact Euro-Fighter coaster, made by Gerstlauer Amusement Rides, a German design company. The coaster starts out with a 97-degree drop, and then can be customized to include loops, over-banked curves, zero-G humps and other "thrill elements," according to the company's website.

The Planning Board was impressed with how far the

Canobie consultant went — across an ocean — to make sure the coaster would meet town guidelines for noise and traffic.

"I think they were very impressed that the park had gone all the way to the Netherlands to see and view and videotape the ride," Moldoff said.

Consultants from Canobie took noise measurements in the amusement park in the Netherlands where a similar coaster is

set up, Moldoff said. The noise survey satisfied the Salem board, he said.

Deputy police Chief Shawn Patten spoke to the board about traffic coming from the park, and said the department was very happy with its working relationship with Canobie Lake Park.

"They clear the traffic much quicker than they used to," Moldoff said.

*"I think they were very impressed that the park had gone all the way to the Netherlands to see and view and videotape the ride."*

Planning Director Ross Moldoff But the board will await the

results of a traffic study, determining how much extra traffic the new coaster might generate, before approving the new structure.

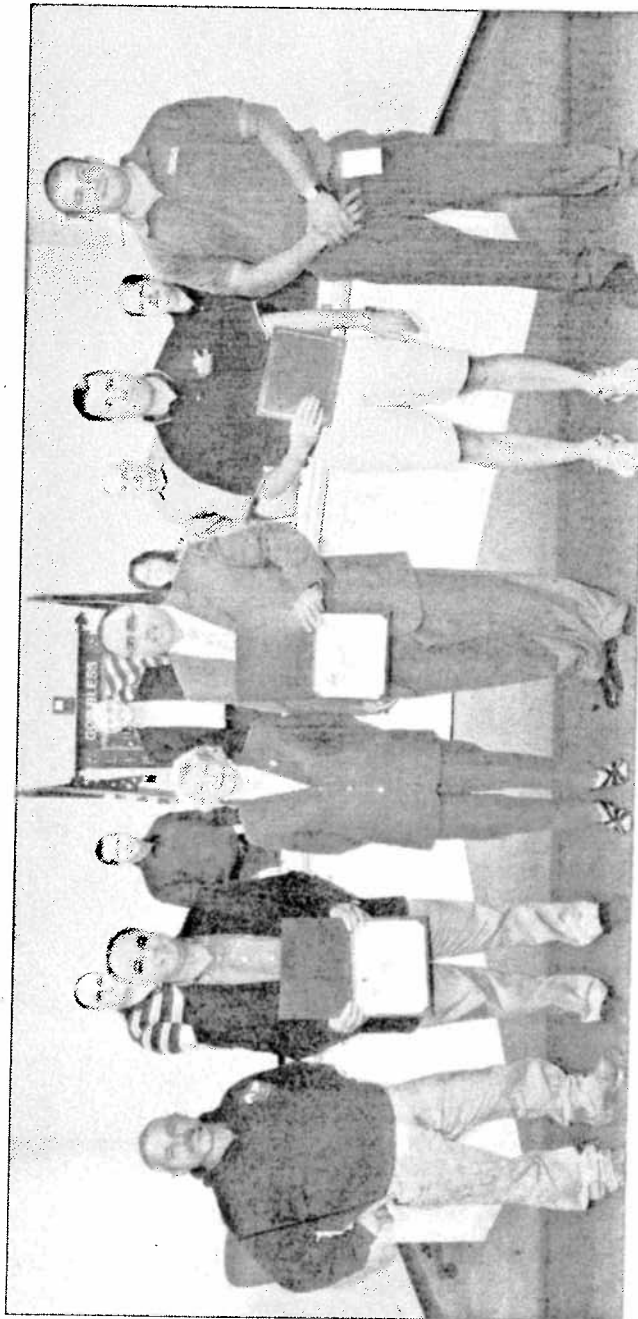
Moldoff said he thought that if approved, the coaster construction would begin this fall.

Join the discussion. To comment on stories and see what others are saying, log on to eagletribune.com.



# Business

## Landscape artists



Betty Gay Photo

Every year the Salem Planning Board collaborates with the Salem Garden Club to recognize outstanding landscaping at commercial buildings. This year some of the winners are, from left, Frank Bonanno, landscaper; Bill Walsh of Cruise Travel Outlet; Doris Flaherty, the award presenter from the Salem Garden Club; Ray Milliard, director of Salemhaven; and Matt DeChane, operations manager of The Workout Club; and John Belko. A landscaper, Belko was recognized for volunteering to create flowering gardens in barrels near Rockingham Race Track. The other two winning properties not represented here are Brooks Properties and Chase Paymentech. In back are Planning Board members Mike Lyons, selectmen's representative; Jeffrey Gray; James Keller, chairman; Phyllis O'Grady; Robert Campbell; and Ed DeClerq.

## Business briefs

### Salem, Haverhill chambers host expo Oct. 21

**SALEM** — The Greater Salem Chamber of Commerce and The Greater Haverhill Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with sponsor Pentucket Bank, are excited to announce the Cross Border Chamber Business Expo on Thursday, Oct. 21, from 3 to 7 p.m., at Rockingham Park in Salem.

Exhibitors will have the chance to showcase their businesses to 200 other exhibitors and hundreds of attendees. This event is open to the general public with no charge for admission. All exhibitors get an 8-by 10-foot space with a 6-foot table,

cloth/skirt, two chairs, a backdrop, and free corner sign.

Attractions for the event include free raffles, free dining, special guest appearances by former New England Patriots Garin Veris and Nelson, and more attractions being added daily.

The exhibit fee is \$1,000 for Chamber members, \$2,000 for nonmembers, and \$199 for nonprofits.

Contact Muriel Cote, Greater Salem Chamber of Commerce, to register or for more information at 899-0100 or e-mail [Muriel@gschc.com](mailto:Muriel@gschc.com).

### Prudential Verani hosts coat drive

**SALEM** — Prudential Verani Realty, 236 N. Broadway, Salem, is hosting its ninth annual coat drive.

hats, mittens, scarves) longer need or want. Muriel Cote, Greater Salem Chamber of Commerce, is the contact person for the drive.

## Obituaries

## Canobie wants to add new coaster

By CHELSEY POLLOCK

Union Leader Correspondent

14 hours, 4 minutes ago

Print  
Email  
Mobile

Share on Facebook  
ShareThis  
Reader comments

**SALEM** – The Planning Board will consider the addition of a new roller coaster at Canobie Lake Park tonight, in what is the amusement park's first major request of the town in three years.

The new roller coaster, which is called the Gerstlauer 320 Compact Euro-Fighter ride, would stand 75 feet tall at the peak with a footprint of about 150-by-200 feet on a grassy section near the park's Yankee Cannonball roller coaster, according Salem Planning Director Ross Moldoff.

Plans show the compact coaster to be about a third of the size of the nearby Yankee Cannonball, he said, with a dark green track held up by columns made to look like birch trees.

During tonight's meeting, Moldoff said he will show the board a video of the proposed coaster.

To find a similar coaster to study, park consultants had to travel to Duinrell park in Wassenaar, Holland, according to a report from Harris Miller Miller & Hanson Inc., a Burlington, Mass.-based noise and vibrations consultant.

In August, consultants measured the sound produced by the coaster during off hours, recording an average noise of 45 to 46 decibels from 220 feet away, according to the report. At Canobie Lake Park, the nearest property line sits 220 feet to the east of the proposed coaster site.

Town regulations say the coaster is not to exceed 55 decibels between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. at nearby residences.

According to the Harris Miller Miller & Hanson report, the Euro-Fighter coaster is about a quarter as loud as the typical steel or wooden coaster because the steel rails are filled with sand to dampen the sound and vibrations as the wheels move along the track.

The coaster is intended to replace the similarly compact Galaxy Coaster that was removed several years ago, according to plans.

Vanasse and Associates, a transportation engineering firm from Andover, Mass., has also been hired to complete a traffic study, which is expected to be delivered to the town in the next few weeks.

An initial memo between Vanasse and town staff indicates the new coaster is not expected to increase traffic to the already congested area.

In 2007, Moldoff said Canobie Lake Park staff last came to the town with a site plan change request to expand a "fairground style" parking area. After several meetings, that request was granted, he said.

The Planning Board will review the proposal at its regular meeting tonight at 7 p.m. in the Knightly Meeting Room at Salem Town Hall.

© 2010, Union Leader Corporation. All rights reserved.  
All trademarks and copyrights on this page are owned by their respective owners. © 1997-2010.

## DEPOT: Proposal will help

■ Continued from Page 1

— including gas stations or movie theaters with more than three screens.

Any property owner using the overlay also must implement the road connections that have been developed in the Depot Redevelopment Plan, which includes the expansion of roads in the four quadrants of the Depot.

"Ideally, it reduces the core amount of traffic that goes through that major intersection,"

Keller said. But it also opens up more

space for developers, Keller said. Some have already incorporated the connector roads into conceptual plans.

At a Planning Board meeting last month, developer Joe Faro showed the board his idea for the Depot properties he purchased. Faro proposed a pedestrian-friendly downtown, making use of the overlay district, with stores and restaurants topped by office space and apartments.

The plans also take the road connections into account, continuing Willow Street through to Route 28.

"Honestly, Joe has done us

a great service by illustrating what we want to see there," Planning Director Ross Moldoff said.

The Depot district would include other properties ripe for redevelopment, Moldoff said, like the old Coca-Cola bottling plant on Route 28. Moldoff said the Planning Board spent a great deal of time deciding

whether to use the voluntary overlay district or make the changes mandatory. He said the voluntary plan meant the town could still see the Depot change

*"We're not going to change everything in the Depot in a year or two. They'll look at the incentives, like the multifamily housing or the four stories of height, and they'll say, 'Yeah, we want to use the ordinance.'"*

Planning Director Ross Moldoff

without major resistance from property owners.

"We're not going to change everything in the Depot in a year or two," Moldoff said. "They'll look at the incentives, like the multifamily housing or the four stories of height, and they'll say, 'Yeah, we want to use the ordinance.'"

The ordinance has been under development for more than a year.

It will ultimately have a public hearing in January and, if the Planning Board votes it through, will appear on the town warrant for voter approval in March.

## Overlay district could change face of Salem Depot

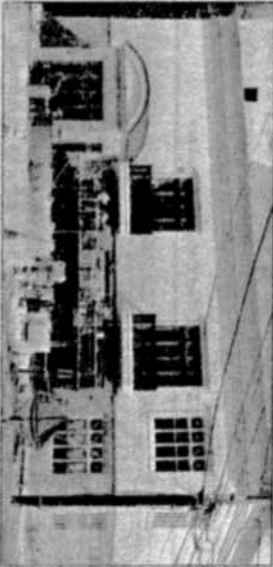
By JULIAN JOHNSON  
johnsont@heraldtribune.com

**SALEM** — Local property owners and residents can comment on a zoning ordinance that planners hope will usher in a new downtown in the Depot.

"There's really two things it does — one is it sort of solidifies the plan for the area in terms of traffic circulation and roadways, those kinds of things," Planning Board Chairman Jim Keller said.

"Secondly, it really helps identify the character and the nature of the area in terms of what we're looking for."

The Depot zoning overlay would be voted on July 1 — meaning property owners who wanted



Construction of Tuscan Kitchen restaurant on Main Street in Salem, is continuing.

to keep the current zoning rules could. But the overlay, though it has restrictions, comes with plenty of prerequisites designed to encourage a

mixed-used, pedestrian-friendly environment. If a property owner used the overlay, he or she could build buildings up to four stories or 60 feet tall, and could build multifamily housing of up to 12 units per acre.

There is no minimum frontage, lot size or setback requirements, and parking requirements would be 75 percent of what they normally are, with an allowance of 50 percent under some conditions.

But there also are requirements: The first floor of any building must be commercial; retail stores and office buildings would be limited in size; parking must be to the side or rear of a building and screened from traffic.

Certain uses would not be allowed in the overlay district

see DEPOT, Page 11

# In business

9/23/10 Tribune



ALLEGRA BOVERMAN/Staff photo

Construction on the new Market Basket supermarket on South Broadway is coming along. The store is expected to be open by the end of March.

## Salem's Route 28 is bustling

By JILLIAN JORGENSEN  
jjorgensen@eagletribune.com

**SALEM** — With vacant stores being filled, old plazas getting major face lifts and new ones being built, Route 28 is bustling again.

"It really has been a great year," said Donna Morris, executive director of the Greater Salem Chamber of Commerce. "It's really a renaissance that's going on down there, along the whole strip."

Salem is slated to welcome several other businesses in the next few months. A new Lowe's will open in the Stateline Plaza Nov. 12. Tuscan

*"It's been like a banner year... This year, we've seen a lot more retail activity than we've seen in many years."*

Planning director Ross Moldoff

Kitchen, an artisan Italian restaurant that will occupy the former DeVito's building near the intersection of Main Street and Route 28, also is scheduled to open in the middle of November.

Meanwhile, construction is under way on a new Market Basket on the

site where the last store carrying the DeMoulas name stood. CVS and Advanced Auto Parts stores are under construction on Route 28.

The state-of-the-art Market Basket is slated to open early next year. Ultimate Electronics opened this summer in the old Circuit City building, and a Sports Authority opened in the old Linens N Things, both on Route 28. A restaurant, pet store and used book store filled some of the vacant storefronts in the old Furniture World plaza.

"It's been like a banner year,"

Please see **BUSINESS**, Page 7



## BUSINESS: Salem witnesses growth in retail operations

Continued from Page 1

planning director Ross Moldoff said.

He said that's especially true when compared to the last several years, when many stores left town and buildings sat vacant.

"This year, we've seen a lot more retail activity than we've seen in many years," Moldoff said.

It is especially encouraging, he said, to see development all along the retail strip.

"It's not an individual store here or there — these are big projects," he said.

Morris, with the Chamber of Commerce, said location was one key reason why businesses chose Salem.

As to why so many chose to break ground or open their doors this year, she said she thought confidence in the economy was returning.

"I think the confidence is back," she said. "What we were seeing, for this generation, it was unprecedented."

With construction prices low, the economic downturn was the right time for many businesses to launch projects, Morris said.

"If you have a good product and a good opportunity, and you find the right market for it, it's the time to go for it," she said.

Joe Faro, owner of the Tuscan Kitchen, agreed an economic downturn is the right time to invest.

"If you want to get out of a recession, folks need to start investing again," Faro said yesterday.

He said Tuscan Kitchen is slated to open in the middle

of November, in time for the holiday rush. But construction is still underway, so there's no grand opening date set.

Faro said Salem is a good spot for his restaurant because it's the "gateway to New Hampshire," and gets traffic heading into and out of the state.

"I think that the location is a great spot because, of where it is — the Depot district is something that I think has a really big future," he said. "I see a much more pedestrian-friendly environment there that will be very conducive to doing business there."

Farther south on Route 28, Lowe's will anchor the State-line Plaza.

Gerard Littlejohn, a company spokesman, said the new Salem store will hold a grand opening Nov. 18.

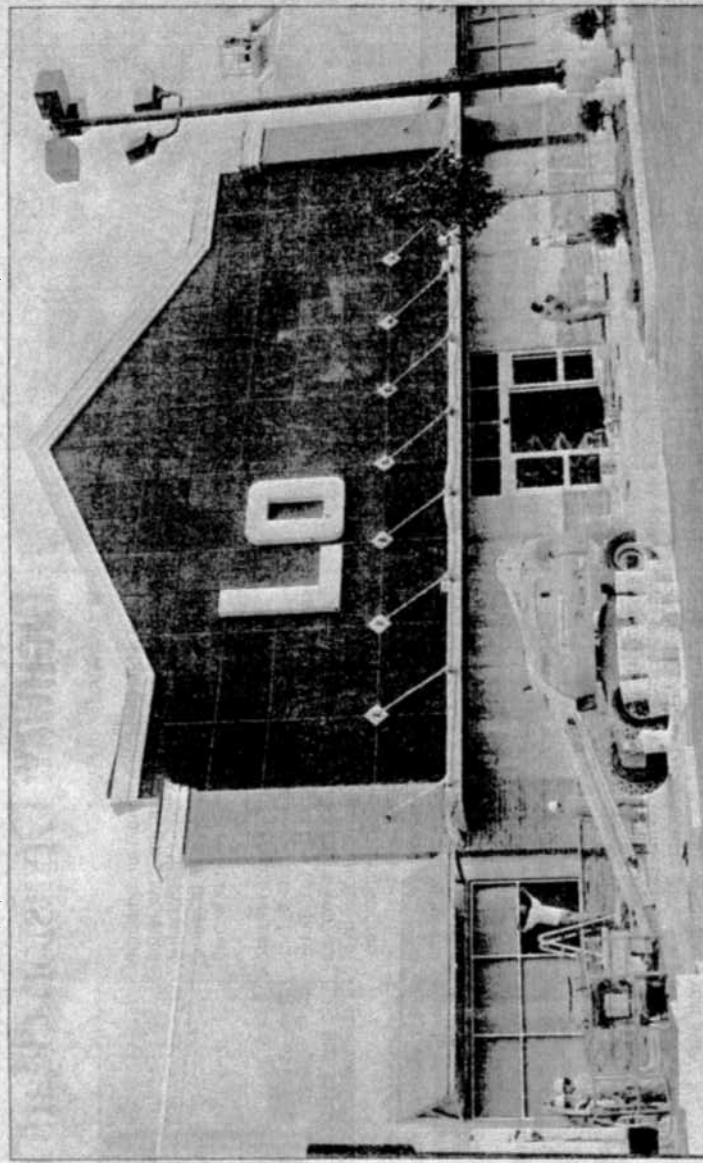
He said the company considers "hundreds of factors" when deciding when and where to open new locations.

"They always include home ownership in that area, population, access to major roadways, easy access in and out of the parking lot, growth in the community," Littlejohn said.

As for Market Basket, slated to open in the middle of the first quarter of 2011, it was simply time to update one of the company's older properties, according to Jim Lamp, a company consultant.

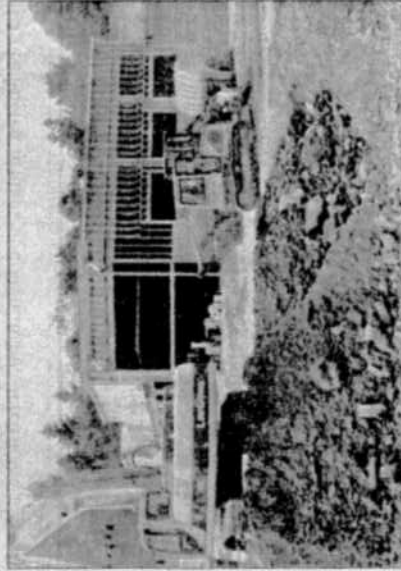
"We're constantly upgrading our stores, and this one was one that we were trying to do for a long time," he said. "The timing was right."

Join the discussion. To comment on stories and see what others are saying, log on to eagletribune.com.

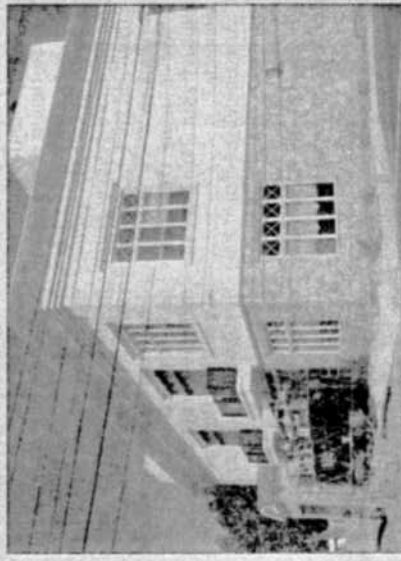


The construction of Lowe's on South Broadway will be complete for the grand opening on Nov. 18.

ALLEGRA BOVERMAN/Staff photos



A new CVS pharmacy is being built at the corner of South Broadway and Hampshire Road.



The Tuscan Kitchen will occupy the former DeVito's building near the intersection of Main Street and Route 28.

9/22/10 Tribune

# Canobie Lake Park eyes new roller coaster

By JILLIAN JORGENSEN  
jjorgensen@eagletribune.com

**SALEM** — Put your hands up, planners, it's roller coaster time. Canobie Lake Park is in the planning stages of adding a new roller coaster, but it needs the town's permission to move forward.

"The type of ride is exciting and

I think it will be a good addition," park spokesman Chris Nicoli said yesterday.

A hearing about the park's coaster plan is on the agenda for next week's Planning Board meeting.

Planning Director Ross Moldoff, who typically deals with requests for subdivisions and sign permits,

said roller coasters are a nice change of pace.

"It's one of the fun parts of the job, actually, when Canobie Lake Park comes in for a new ride," he said.

Moldoff said plans submitted to the town show the roller coaster located near the Canobie Mall, in what is now a grassy area.

"It's not a large roller coaster. It's nowhere near the size of the Yankee Cannonball," Moldoff said, referring to the park's famous wooden coaster, which would remain Canobie's largest.

Still, it looks like the new ride might pack a punch. It's a Compact

Please see RIDE, Page 10

in the coming weeks. Baker says in  
"This is an important issue for

Euro-Fighter coaster, made by Gerstlauer Amusement Rides, a German design company.

The coaster starts out with a 97-degree drop, and then can be customized to include loops, over-banked curves, zero-G humps and other "thrill elements," according to the company's website.

Nicoli said the new coaster was still in "the planning phase."

"I think this is a good step for us and we're excited," he said.

At the close of every season, park visitors start thinking about what new items they'd like to see next year, he said.

"Everybody, every year, kind of always says, 'What do you have new?'" Nicoli said. "It's almost assumed that amusement parks need to have something new."

And those people are almost always hoping to see a new roller coaster.

"I think everyone asks all the time," he said. "Even if we had many of them, they'd still want more."

Moldoff said the park has done a noise study and traffic study — and Planning Board members will get to see the coaster in action.

"They have a video of the ride that they're going to be showing at the Planning Board meeting," he said.

Moldoff said the noise study and video were taken from a similar version of the ride at an amusement park in the Netherlands.

"It ends up being a particularly quiet ride," he said.

He said the coaster is slated to be about 75 feet tall, just under the town's 80-foot limit. The addition of the ride to the park is on the agenda for the Planning Board meeting Tuesday.



8/31/10 Tribune

# How to drive away development

There are some early — and promising — plans for the development of commercial land off Exit 5 in Londonderry.

The town needs commercial development to build its tax base. Town officials are supportive of development off Interstate 93. But they need to be wary of attaching so many conditions to proposals that they drive developers away.

Michael DiGuiseppe of Londonderry Land Development LLC has preliminary plans for a 10-acre parcel at the intersection of Vista Ridge Drive and Rockingham Road. DiGuiseppe told the Planning Board recently of a proposal for a 6,000-square-foot restaurant and 60,000 square feet of retail space.

Although the plan is little more than a concept at this point, members of the Planning Board already are concerned about elements of the proposal. Some expressed worries about aesthetics; others, about traffic.

Board member Mary Wing Soares said smaller separate stores would be more aesthetically appealing than a larger, single unit. Chairman Art Rugg said he didn't want "anything monolithic looking."

This is the kind of nitpicking that makes developers want to run for the hills.

If Londonderry officials want the tax revenue commercial development can provide, they must remember Voltaire's admonition: "Don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good."

# Affordable housing plan on the table

◆ **Clough Farm:** Project is first of its kind under new work force housing ordinance passed in March.

By CHELSEY POLLOCK  
Union Leader Correspondent

**SALEM** — Developers hope to break ground on a new affordable housing development next spring, in what would be the first project of its kind since the town adopted a new ordinance in March.

The project, called Clough Farm, would build 32 affordable housing units at 8 Braemoor Woods Road in Salem. Nine of those would be one-bedroom units according to the plan, and the remaining 23 units would have two bedrooms.

Included in the plans are a playing field, playground and community garden. The proposal also includes building sidewalks to connect the development to nearby Veterans Memorial Parkway and Cluff Road.

Developer Steven Lewis of Atkinson presented the project to the Salem Planning Board last night on behalf of Clough Development LLC.

The Clough Farm project fits into Lewis' larger plan for the Braemoor Woods development,

See Housing, Page B2

## Housing

which includes a similar senior housing project set to open in September.

Both projects were funded using tax credits through the federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program. Lewis said the program requires that 80 percent of the units be reserved for people who make no more than 60 percent of the local median income. The remaining 20 percent of the housing must go to people who earn less than half of that median income, he said.

But in Salem, Lewis said the median income number is surprisingly high.

"I think people think that these people come from refrigerator boxes, but the me-

dian income level in this area is \$85,000," he said.

"You could make \$40,000 and still receive a rent-capped unit."

Because the project is funded with federal dollars, Lewis said it will be administered by the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority, which will audit the project each year and ensure that all residents still meet the income requirements.

In 2004, the planning board approved a proposal to construct 10 townhouses on the parcel as part of the larger Braemoor Woods development.

And though economic troubles have created a new market

for affordable housing, Lewis said he decided to change the proposal after the town passed a workforce housing ordinance in March.

"I would've done this regardless of the economy because I've been an affordable housing advocate for many years," he said.

Lewis said Salem's new ordinances are more strict than in other towns, particularly with its requirement that projects be at least partially funded through local, state or federal programs.

"I think people are interested in this kind of housing, but it's very complicated," he said. "I don't think you'll see a flood of proposals, but I think people

will be watching this one."

And though planning board members offered few comments on the proposal last night, Chairman James Keller thanked Lewis for getting the ball rolling.

"Thank you for bringing the project forward," Keller said. "As with your other projects, it's of high quality and we appreciate that."

Lewis said he plans to have a full proposal before the planning board in the next month or two, which he said would hopefully be approved by the end of the year.

If all goes well, Lewis said he plans to begin the 10-month construction project in April 2011.

(Continued from Page B1)

Lawrence Eagle-Tribune - August 22, 2010

## Property owner wants to turn Depot into Salem's downtown

By Jillian Jorgensen  
jjorgensen@eagletribune.com

SALEM — Right now, the Salem Depot is a mess of old buildings and parking lots located near busy, congested roads. But Joe Faro sees the potential for something far greater.

"Salem never had a downtown," Faro said. "And this is the start of that."

Faro, a Windham entrepreneur who ran a successful pasta plant, Joseph's Gourmet Pasta and Sauces in Haverhill, purchased a slew of properties near the intersection of Main Street and Route 28. The buildings were formerly owned by the late Steve DeVito, who ran DeVito's restaurant in a large building that Faro is now transforming into Tuscan Kitchen, an Italian restaurant slated to open in November.

But Faro's plans go beyond Tuscan Kitchen. When he received his final approval for the restaurant from the Planning Board earlier this month, he also showed them conceptual plans for a pedestrian-friendly downtown development across the properties he purchased that would include retail, office and residential space.

"It's a very unique development," Faro said recently at his under-construction restaurant. "I don't think there's anything like it in Southern New Hampshire."

The new development would include Tuscan Market, a store selling the kinds of Italian specialty foods and wines you get at Tuscan Kitchen. A park, Tuscan Villa, is also planned, and Faro has envisioned it as a spot for outdoor weddings and food and wine festivals. He said it would be a "serene space" in an area now considered anything but.

"The outdoor setting here really lends itself to a nice and new community feel," he said.

Faro would plan to make use of a proposed Depot zoning overlay, an optional zoning requirement. Though it would bring with it some restrictions — no gas stations or big box stores — it would allow developers to build three-story buildings. He said those buildings would feature either one- or two-story retail stores, topped with office space and condos or lofts. Each building would be a bit different.

"The key to a downtown is the diversity in the architecture, and in the uses of that architecture," he said.

In planning the development, Faro said he looked at similar areas in Hingham, and even Patriot Place in Foxborough.

"It's just so cool and comfortable to walk in," he said. "I can go here, I can go there, it's inviting."

The new development would also include some significant infrastructure improvements for the town, including extending Pleasant Street to Willow Street onto Route 28. The plans will take time, however. The zoning overlay that would allow much of the construction hasn't been finalized yet and will have to go before voters in March.

Until then, Faro is concentrating on Tuscan Kitchen, a 604-seat restaurant that would include a wine bar and function rooms that could host everything from business meetings to weddings.

Last week saw the arrival of what will be one of the focal points of the restaurant — a wood burning oven that Faro and his business partner and executive chef, Jim Rogers, will use to cook bread and other dishes. There will also be a wood grill and a wood rotisserie to roast meats and game, along with a custom-made pasta machine.

"Everything we do is from scratch," Faro said. "Everything we do, we make it ourselves, to the point that we make it in front of you."

Bread will be started downstairs in a bakery, but finished right in front of guests, he said. There will also be an array of antipasti options and a full menu highlighting the cuisine of Italy's various regions.

"We're passionate about those old world techniques," Faro said.

The main dining room downstairs will have 210 seats, and 60 outdoor seats under a trellis beside an outdoor fireplace. The face of the building will be done in Tuscan limestone imported from Italy. Inside, the decor will include columns, fireplaces, a large selection of Italian wines stored along the walls, and a mural of a vineyard at sunset painted by a local artist.

He said he hopes to have the restaurant open by Nov. 15.

Continued from Page 1

anywhere to anywhere."

But just the restaurant was on the agenda last night. The Italian eatery, which would include function rooms, would seat 604. However, Faro and engineer Mark Gross have said it would be rare, if ever, that there would be that many people there at one time. DeVito's was approved for 282 seats.

The board unanimously approved the project, with a slew of conditions, after hours of discussion last night and at previous meetings, largely focusing on potential parking and traffic problems at the site. The restaurant is on Main Street, near Pleasant Street and the Route 28 intersection, which can be a traffic nightmare.

"It's a disaster now, and (people) want to know, when you open this up, is it going to be a bigger disaster?" Robert Campbell asked last night.

But the traffic consultant hired by the town, Martin Kennedy, said

Salem

8/11/10 Tribune

## New restaurant OK'd by planners

By JILLIAN JORGENSEN

jorgensen@eagletribune.com

SALEM — The Planning Board last night approved Tuscan Kitchen, a new restaurant slated to open in the space formerly occupied by DeVito's, and which will double the seats in the Depot restaurant building.

Joe Faro, an entrepreneur from Windham who previously owned Joseph's Gourmet Pasta and Sauce in Haverhill, purchased the restaurant and several other nearby properties owned by Steve DeVito. Faro told the board last night he plans to develop the properties into a downtown area full of shops, boutiques and luxury loft apartments and condominiums, fitting in with the town's vision of a pedestrian-friendly Depot.

"We're really looking for people to park and then walk," Faro said. "It's a two-minute walk from

Please see TUSCAN, Page 4

that after several tweaks to traffic mitigation plans, Faro and his traffic consultant, Jason Plourde of Greenman-Pederson Inc., had come up with an acceptable plan. "The goal is to keep traffic moving smoothly and efficiently along (routes) 28 and 97," Kennedy said.

He said initial mitigation plans reduced backups at the driveway where people would enter Tuscan Kitchen, but pushed delays farther down town roads. Kennedy said if the delay must be somewhere, it should be at the driveway, so the mitigation plans were changed to ensure that happens. Kennedy said there still would be traffic delays getting into or out of the restaurant.

The restaurant will regulate traffic at several intersections using traffic cameras and by paying to add the light at Pleasant Street and Main Street to the new Intelligent Traffic System the town is installing this fall. The system will synchronize lights, allowing traffic to

flow more smoothly.

After the meeting, Plourde said if you are stopped at one light on Route 28 or Main Street near the restaurant, the next few lights should be green.

Still, members of the board did have concerns about people having trouble making left turns onto Main Street when exiting the parking lot and about traffic backing up on Main Street while awaiting valet parking. Exiting the parking lot also can be done by traveling to Willow Street through other parking areas on Faro-owned properties and onto Route 28. There is no light at that intersection and one is not planned in the near future.

In addition to \$55,200 in impact fees paid to the town, Gross said paying for the ITS at Pleasant Street would cost another \$55,000. "We're investing \$110,000 with this project just in traffic mitigation alone," Gross said.

Board members also brought up parking and woe caused by DeVito's. Faro maintained the

new restaurant was "180 degrees" in a different direction.

"It's in our best interest and it's critical to us to make sure these problems do not repeat themselves," Faro said.

The site plan for the restaurant includes more than 300 parking spaces, with a neighboring 11-unit apartment building already razed to make way for cars.

Ron Belanger said it was in the town's best interest not to impede someone who wants to develop the Depot to the town's specifications.

"How would anyone want to come down here and go through this going up Route 28?" he asked. "I think the plan is great. I think the vision for the whole area and what they are doing there is going to be a message to anyone who wants to come to Salem."

# Affordable housing on horizon

BY CHELSEY POLLOCK

chelseyppo@gmail.com

SALEM - The town has had affordable housing ordinances on the books since the mid-'80s, but town planners say the updated version passed at Town Meeting this year is already spurring developer interest.

"The ordinance had not been used in at least 15 years by anybody," said Salem Town Planner Ross Moldoff on Wednesday, June 23. "It was a little bit of a cumbersome procedure. The idea was sound - we give a density bonus and they give us back affordable housing in one form or another - but there hadn't been any interest."

Not so anymore, said Moldoff.

Voters passed an update to the affordable housing ordinances to comply with new state law in March, and Moldoff said he has already talked with four developers interested in starting affordable projects in Salem.

"I think we'll see something in the next two or three months," he said. "And it would certainly mean that the ordinance is working."

The new ordinance includes several key changes.

The old version offered a 50 percent bonus in the number of bedrooms allowed on a site under existing zoning, as long as the entire project was deemed affordable.

Now developers will also have the option of going for a 30 percent bedroom bonus, that only requires the additional units to be affordable.

But the town will stick with an earlier limit on new affordable development, Moldoff said, ensuring that only 1 percent of the housing stock be affordable. Moldoff said that 1 percent mark roughly translates to about 110 housing units per year.

"It's kind of a balancing act," he said. "You want to comply with state law and provide some way for people to build affordable housing; but on the other hand, you don't want to have the negative impacts of too many units or too big a project."

Planning Board Chairman

James Keller said he thinks most residents would support more affordable housing coming to town, within reason.

"My sense, based on feedback I've been getting, is that the general population in town is always eager to support affordability," Keller said in an interview last week. "But they also realize that we have formulas and methodology in place so that the types of projects we are seeking to attract are high-quality projects."

"It's not the types that some people tend to associate with other types of housing for low-income folks," he said. "This is very different, and our job is to ensure that."

But that's a big job for town planners and board members, Moldoff said, who usually can wash their hands of administrative responsibilities once a project is complete.

One of those new tasks will be making sure the units are selling at or below the "affordable" level and to income-qualified buyers.

The Salem ordinance sets that the benchmark at 30 percent of the median income for a four-person household in the local area.

According to the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority, Salem falls into the Lawrence, Mass., region, which has a median income of \$85,300 for a family of four and a comparable "affordable" housing price of \$268,000.

The Housing and Finance Authority is a quasi-government corporation that provides services for those looking for affordable housing and is one of several groups that municipalities can hire to oversee affordable housing projects.

Moldoff said the cost of hiring an outside administrative firm would be tacked on to the cost of the development itself.

The Housing Authority is no stranger to the town, as the group gave Salem planners an \$8,000 grant last year to revamp the affordable housing ordinances. Moldoff said the town worked with Hawk Planning Resources in Concord to update the regulations to meet state requirements and to include more flexibility.

"I think this is more a work

of art than a work of science because we're not builders and we're not developers," Moldoff said. "We don't know what will work, so there's got to be some flexibility built into the ordinance."

And once those details have been ironed out, Keller said bringing in an outside firm could be the best way to ensure developers follow the rules.

"I am always a firm believer in letting the experts manage stuff the experts manage," Keller said. "I would advocate leveraging experts to manage it and not attempt to manage it and oversee it in town."

The board has yet to make a final decision about the supervision of affordable housing in Salem, and Moldoff said he expects the discussion to continue in the coming months.





TIM JEAN/Staff photo

Jackie Rattanavong, left, and Mark McCaffrey of Ultimate Electronics carry a TV into the store still under construction at 428 S. Broadway in Salem. The store is moving to the old Circuit City building.

## GROWTH: Businesses expand

Continued from Page 1

in the plaza last fall.

Not all the new stores slated to open in the coming months are occupying old buildings. Construction crews have torn down DeMoulas on Route 28 and are now laying the foundation for a new Market Basket at the site.

The old store was the last to display the grocery chain's family name. The new supermarket will take the building from 56,000 square feet to just under 91,000 square feet. There will be prepared hot food, a full bakery, a deli and sandwich counter, and a coffee bar.

Other construction projects are bustling close to the border. A new Lowe's is the main project under way in Stateline Plaza. The store will open before the end of the year, according to Lowe's spokesman Gerard Littlejohn.

"Construction has started and we're on track," he said.

The store will be 103,000 square feet, he said, and stores of that size usually create about 120 jobs. The jobs are a mix of full- and part-time work, but all positions offer full benefits.

At South Broadway and Hampshire Road, three homes

were torn down to make way for a new CVS/pharmacy and Advance Auto Parts, Moldoff said.

He said he thought all the building activity would mean jobs.

"I think there's construction jobs and I think there's regular jobs when the stores open," Moldoff said. "Whether those jobs are just making up for jobs that have already been lost in retail stores or if it's a net gain, I don't know."

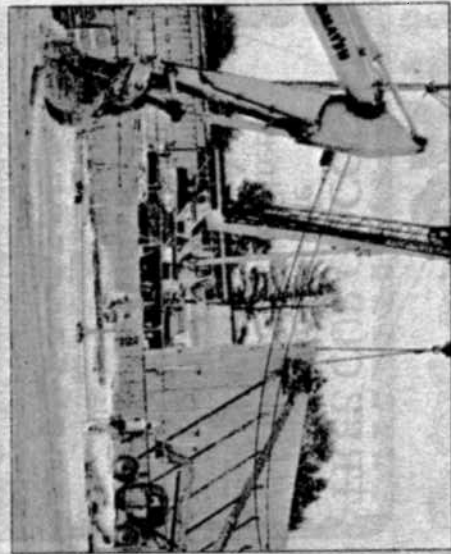
He said all the new development was a "good thing" for the town.

"We're working hard to get these vacant buildings reoccupied," Moldoff said. "It doesn't do anybody any good to have these buildings vacant."

All the new stores must meet the town's rules and regulations, but Moldoff said the Planning Board has worked with many applicants to make that process easier.

"I think that's a very positive sign for the community to have people and companies who want to invest in it," he said.

Join the discussion. To comment on stories and see what others are saying, log on to [eagletribune.com](http://eagletribune.com).



TIM JEAN/Staff photo  
Workers use a crane to install giant concrete sections for a wall at the new Market Basket supermarket in Salem.

## Businesses expanding in Salem

By JULIAN JORGENSEN  
[jorgensen@eagletribune.com](mailto:jorgensen@eagletribune.com)

**SALEM** — Last winter, empty buildings left behind by big box retailers that had gone out of business were a common sight in Salem. But by this winter, many of them could be bustling again.

"I've never seen anything in terms of this amount of construction, other than the construction of the mall," Planning Director Ross Moldoff said.

New stores are preparing to move into buildings that formerly housed stores like Linens 'N Things and Circuit City, which went out of business nationwide.

"Those vacant buildings are getting occupied, particularly the retail ones," Moldoff said. Linens 'N Things temporarily

housed a used bookstore, but a more permanent tenant, Sports Authority, is expected to open there this summer. The company is hiring employees for the store.

People will have a new option for buying computers, electronics and other gadgets when Ultimate Electronics takes over the former Circuit City on Route 28.

The Route 28 Mall, the plaza where Furniture World was, sat almost entirely empty for months. But in the past several months, the plaza has started to fill up. A Got Books Used Book Superstore, Discount Pet Supply and Balducci's Wood Fired Pizza have all opened, alongside White Street Paint and Walpa-per, which was the only tenant

Please see GROWTH, Page 4

6/23/19  
174 banc

# Building design guidelines considered at Salem public forum

By JILLIAN JORGENSEN  
jjorgensen@eagletribune.com

SALEM, N.H. — The town's design guidelines are full of phrases such as "residential architecture" meant to guide developers. But sometimes, they're more confusing than anything.

"A lot of times these things are iffy," Planning Director Ross Moldoff said.

Pictures are more concrete. The town will develop a booklet to make the guidelines clearer. Moldoff and landscape architect Terrence DeWan of Yarmouth, Maine, led a public forum yesterday to receive input from the community.

The guidelines would show desirable examples of landscaping,

pedestrian paths, architecture, lighting and signs on local properties. In discussing the town's best — and worst — sites, Moldoff, DeWan and the two dozen people who attended also considered how far the guidelines should go.

"Most of the exemplary sites in Salem, the Planning Board didn't make them exemplary," Moldoff said, but exemplary plans from designers did.

Many people at the public forum raised concerns about how certain landscaping or parking lot designs would fare during harsh New England winters.

Cliff Conti of New Hampshire Signs in Londonderry said guidelines have unintended consequences and can restrict people who want to do good work.

Bernie Campbell said the town also needed to worry about its edge over other border retail meccas.

Some said the guidelines wind up resembling laws when plans are awaiting approval. DeWan said that is the benefit of having clear outlines.

"They need to know up-front what's going to be required, and what's going to be expected, and what would be nice," he said.

Chris Goodnow, a real estate consultant, said some guidelines did not fit all projects. While the

town prefers New England-style pitched roofs, flat roofs are better for maintenance — and often more attractive — in industrial parks.

"At the end of the day, Salem, large parts of this community, are not Colonial New England," he said.

Moldoff said the public's comments will be taken into consideration when the booklet is drafted and further hearings will be held. The document must be completed by the end of the year.

6/16/10  
Telbune

## Around the Towns

### Fines await owners of unregistered dogs

Animal Control Officer Marlene Bishop said the town will fine owners of 1,500 dogs who missed the annual deadline to register their pets and now owe \$25.

"We don't know that all the dogs on the list are unregistered; some could have moved or died," said Bishop. "But notices are ready to go out. You know, \$25 is a lot to pay in this economy, especially when the cost of registration is only about \$8."

In general, dog registrations are up compared with this time last year, with more than 3,000 currently documented.

Bishop feels she's winning the battle over lapsed registrations. Those who fail to pay the fine and register their dogs will face court costs on top of the fine, Bishop said.

People can register online, mail in a check or visit the animal control office at 45 Fordway St. The office is open weekdays from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. and until 7 p.m. on Wednesdays.

"We're not trying to make this hard on any one," Bishop said. "It's just important to know that dogs are registered and up to date on their rabies. The two go hand in hand."

### Mass. man bought guns illegally

A Massachusetts man has pleaded guilty to charges he used false documentation to buy firearms from a Windham dealer last year, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office in Concord.

In May and June of 2009, prosecutors said, Michael Caruso, 31, of Lowell, Mass., presented a licensed Windham firearms dealer with a false driver's license and further documentation indicating he lived in Derry. Prosecutors say the dealer sold him four firearms during the two months.

Caruso was living in Lee, Mass., at the time of both incidents and was prohibited from purchasing firearms in New Hampshire, authorities said.

Caruso is scheduled for sentencing Sept. 8 and could face a maximum prison sentence of 10 years and fines up to \$250,000, authorities said.

Massachusetts State Police and the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives participated in the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorney Mark Irish is prosecuting the case.

— Chelsey Pollock  
Union Leader Correspondent

### Spitting incident results in charge

An Illinois man has been arrested for allegedly spitting in a man's face last weekend.

Police have charged Brandon Casey Smith, 28, of Antioch, Ill., with one count of simple assault for the incident.

Around 11:30 a.m. Friday, police responded to a 13 Tavern Court for a reported argument between two men. Upon further investigation, police learned Smith allegedly spit in the face of another individual.

## Bella's friends harness airwaves

**Fundraiser on radio:** More than \$40,000 will help Londonderry girl who lost limbs to illness.

By ALEC O'MEARA  
Union Leader Correspondent

LONDONDERRY — The Mack's Apples farm stand was live and on the air yesterday as part of the largest fundraiser thus far for 8-year-old Bella Tucker and her family, with more than \$40,000 raised.

Bella, a budding gymnast and student at South Elementary School, lost both her arms and legs to a bacterial blood infection last month and has been hospitalized since Easter. While



Christopher Rossi, 9, is interviewed by Frank FM radio personality Sarah Sullivan after donating a piggy bank containing his life savings, about \$20, to the Bella Tucker Fund.

parents Peter and Selena Roarty have remained tethered to their daughter as she recovers from her illness, there are concerns about the renovations that will be required at the family's home to accommodate Bella's needs.

The cost of just the installation of an elevator to the second floor of the home has been estimated at \$30,000, family spokesman Tammy Kozlowski

See Bella, Page B2

## 'LIKE HANGING OUT WITH PICASSO'

Turning wood into wonders

By CAROL ROBIDOUX  
Union Leader Correspondent

Sisters Marie and Leda Drouin watch intently as master wood turner Binh Pho demonstrates the fine art of airbrushing.

In and of itself, the technique is not unusual. But applied to his handcrafted works of wooden whimsy, the outcome is exquisite — seen in items such as delicately detailed teacups with detachable filigree handles and demitasse spoons decorated with dragonflies and peacock feathers, symbols of luck and dreams, respectively, in his homeland of Vietnam.

"In this piece, the dragonfly is playing with the poppy. The whole piece is like a playground for the dragonfly," said Pho.

See Wood, Page B2



Above, Chicago-based wood artist Binh Pho gives local woodturner Donna Zils Banfield some tips on how to use an air brush to enhance her work. At left is one of Pho's creations — in progress, intricately carved and painted tea cups featuring symbolic images of dragonflies, poppies and peacock feathers.

APRIL PHOTOGRAPHY

## 'Potential suspect' in arson caught on camera

**Surveillance photo:** Fire destroyed the main administrative building at Camp Y-Wood in Salem.

By CHELSEY POLLOCK  
Union Leader Correspondent

SALEM — Police have released new still shots taken from surveillance footage of a Salem camp cabin last month showing a man walking around the structure shortly before it burned to the ground.

About 4:30 a.m. May 28, residents on Captain's Pond alerted fire personnel to the blaze after seeing a "large yellow glow" in the sky, said Salem Fire Marshal Jeff Mantelsson.

By the time firefighters arrived at 58 Liberty St., a cabin building was engulfed in flames, he said.

The cabin served as the main administrative building and the only fully enclosed structure at Camp Y-Wood, which is run by the YWCA of Greater Lawrence.

The cabin and its contents — medical supplies, paper files, six brand new bicycles and assorted electronic equipment — were destroyed in the blaze.

Lee Woolfury, deputy director of the YWCA of

Greater Lawrence, said camp staff are working to remove the debris and put up a temporary building before campers arrive June 29.

Hours before the Camp Y-Wood fire, firefighters responded to another cabin fire at a private residence a quarter mile away.

Although now a single-family residence, that prop-

See Photo, Page B2



Authorities have released this surveillance photo of a man seen near the site of an arson fire in Salem. Police described the man as a "potential suspect" in the crime.

CRIMINAL

## Booklet to clarify Salem's design rules

By CHELSEY POLLOCK  
Union Leader Correspondent

SALEM — If a picture is worth a thousand words, town planners are hoping a new booklet illustrating property design guidelines will streamline the site plan approval process.

"We already have the regulations, but it's just text on a piece of paper," Town Planner Rose Muldoon said yesterday. "When you can see a graphically with a diagram or an illustration or a photograph, that's a much more powerful tool, we find."

The town received a \$10,000 grant from the

See Design, Page B2

## Some school lunch tabs go unpaid

**Plaistow:** About a dozen students have balances of close to \$200.

By JASON SCHREIBER  
Union Leader Correspondent

PLAISTOW — As students prepare to leave Timberlane Regional Middle School tomorrow for the start of summer vacation, some will be leaving behind a big food bill.

The school is one of many across the state trying to encourage parents to pay the outstanding balance left on their child's school lunch tab.

"This is an issue that schools are grappling with all over the place," said Michael Hogan, Timberlane's middle school principal.

A final batch of letters went home in about 40 middle school parents last week notifying them about unpaid balances remaining on their child's school lunch account. About a dozen of those students have balances of around \$200, while the rest owe \$12 or more, Hogan said.

Students who owed about \$10 or less didn't receive the letters, which informed parents that as of Monday their child could no longer charge to their account if it had a balance.

"Our hope was parents would pay

down accounts, but we realize there are parents who are struggling, and we want to work with them," Hogan said.

Since the letter went home and daily announcements were made at school, Hogan said, parents have been settling the accounts. However, he said, not all balances will be paid off by the end of school and some students could return in the fall to face an unpaid balance.

Hogan said he has not seen more parents unable to pay their balances this year. Some of the same families that have struggled in the past are

See Lunch, Page B2

## Suit fights town OK of pub's roof deck

**Derry board:** Judge is asked to overturn decision involving Halligan Tavern.

By JAMES A. KIMBLE  
Union Leader Correspondent

BRENTWOOD — An abutter to a downtown restaurant and pub has filed a lawsuit alleging Derry officials illegally approved a roof deck for dining and drinking, according to court papers.

Lawyer John Griffin filed a lawsuit asking a judge to overturn a May 5 Derry Planning Board decision that granted owners of the Halligan Tavern permission to add a roof deck to its building.

Griffin represents owners of a building at 7 Central St., which is maintained by Property Portfolio Group LLC of Wilton.

The manager of that company is Barbara Woodward, according to state records.

Griffin says owners of the apartment building were able to participate in the Planning Board meeting at which the expansion for the tavern was approved, but the presentation lacked details.

"The application contained no informa-

See Lawsuit, Page B2

## Prosecutors want to seize vehicle, cash in drug case

**Windham woman:** Police say Kim Nuzzo sold cocaine, pills in Salem.

By JAMES A. KIMBLE  
Union Leader Correspondent

BRENTWOOD — State prosecutors want to seize about \$4,100 in cash and a Chevrolet Blazer from a Windham woman accused of selling cocaine and prescription pills in Salem, according to court documents.

The Attorney General's Office filed a petition in Rockingham County Superior Court to get the items based on a criminal case pending against Kim Nuzzo, 42.

Nuzzo was indicted last week by a Rockingham County grand jury on four felony counts of possession of a controlled drug.

She was arrested in March by Salem police as part of a weeks-long investigation with

See Nuzzo, Page B2





# URBAN OASIS

6/15/10  
TRIBUNE



MARY SCHWALM/Staff photo

Traffic whizzes by on Rockingham Park Boulevard in Salem as Joanne Lakin of Atkinson plants donated perennials on a traffic island along the busy road. Lakin has volunteered her time to clean up the town's traffic islands.

## Volunteer 'adopts', plants flowers on 10 traffic islands

By JILLIAN JORGENSEN  
jorgensen@engletribune.com

SALEM — Some of the town's most heavily traveled roads are looking a little brighter lately.

Joanne Lakin of Atkinson grew up in Salem and runs a landscaping business. So when she noticed some of the traffic islands in her hometown were in rough shape, she adopted one. Then another. Then eight more. She's hoping others will join her effort to beautify the town.

"If everyone does one little thing, it'll get done," she said.

Her first traffic island was at Route 28 and Range Road. She pulled out weeds, laid mulch and planted some perennials.

"They don't get watered except for

the rain, so I picked some real tough plants that will last," she said.

After her success with that island, the town suggested another one in need of work.

At Old Rockingham Road and Route 28, an island had a marker for Nicholas Arvantis, who was killed in 2006 while serving in Iraq. His grandmother lives nearby and asked town officials whether more could be done to spruce up the spot.

"I went right over," Lakin said. "It's different than any old island."

Yesterday, she planned to tackle a daunting task: eight traffic islands along Rockingham Park Boulevard. Freshwater Farms donated perennials for the project.

Please see ISLANDS, Page 4



Salem Department of Public Works employee Scott Menario delivers donated perennials to the islands on Rockingham Park Boulevard in Salem.

## ISLANDS: Sprucing them up

■ Continued from Page 1

"And the town of Salem is lending me some helpers, a couple of workers so we can get it done in one day," she said.

The toughest part is removing the weeds and trash from the islands, she said, but it's worth it.

"The cleanup is the hardest part," she said. "You just mulch it over and it'll look beautiful."

Lakin, whose first gardening job was a flower box full of marigolds when she was 12, owns Lakin Landscaping and Design. She decided to take on the projects when she ran out of space to garden in her own yard.

"It's working out great," she said. "You either find (gardening) relaxing or you don't. And I do."

She said people generally don't notice the drab islands when they drive past.

"We probably pass 10 of them a day without even realizing it,"

she said.

But people noticed when she was working on the islands, she said. Every red light became a pep rally.

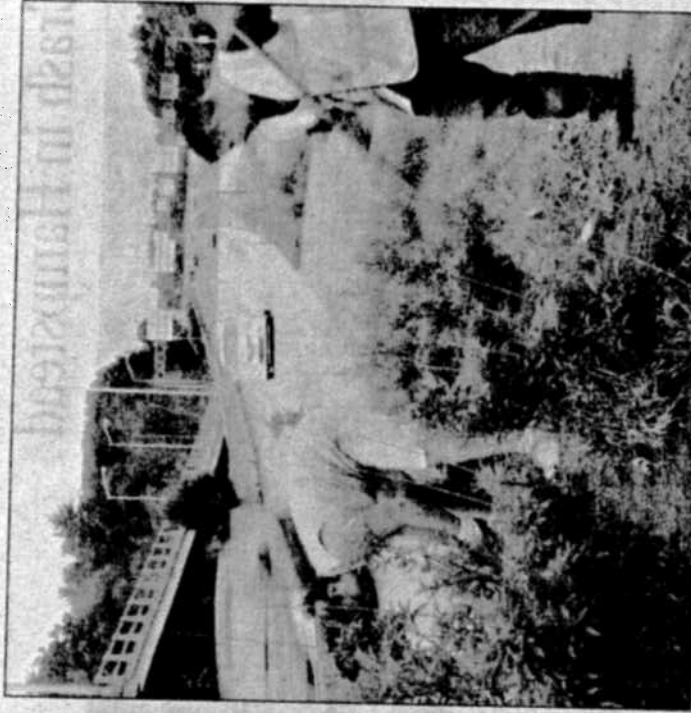
"People that were stopping at the light would roll down their windows and they said thank you," Lakin said. "Such a little thing goes a long way."

That's why she's hoping others — professional landscapers or people who just enjoy gardening as a hobby — will take on some other island. It doesn't take long or cost much, she said, but it makes a big difference.

"They should go to their town hall," she said. "They're probably going to get an assignment within hours."

Planning Director Ross Moldoff said he is happy to hear from people who want to help.

"It's fun to work with people who volunteer their time to make the town more beautiful," he said. "There are plenty of spots in town that could use some help."



MARY SCHWALB/Staff photo

Volunteer Joanne Lakin, left, of Atkinson weeds and Salem Department of Public Works employee Jimmy Defilippo of Methuen rakes debris on a traffic island in Salem. Lakin and others are cleaning up the islands and planting new flowers free of charge.





June 13, 2010

Breaking News

• Teen arrested for climbing into the back of Haverhill ATM - 31 Minutes Ago

## Salem's industrial and office parks are bustling

By Jillian Jorgensen  
jjorgensen@eagletribune.com

SALEM — It may not be Cambridge or Boston, but tucked away inside office and industrial parks a community of high-tech, medical and niche businesses is bustling in Salem.

Salem's business reputation has more to do with commercial businesses — like the retail stores that line Route 28, or the Rockingham Mall, one of the biggest contributors to Salem's tax base. Less noticeable are the industrial properties set off the road in business parks. From radar components to higher education, a slew of business that don't quite cater to the everyday consumer might routinely go unnoticed, but play a large role in the town — even the global — economy.

Planning Director Ross Moldoff said he suspected the town's easy access as the first town in New Hampshire off Interstate 93 was a draw for many of the businesses.

"It's close to Metro Boston, and 495 and 128," Moldoff said. "But it's still New Hampshire, and there are tax



50 Northwestern Drive  
Eagle-Tribune



Tim Jean/Staff photo  
Local businesses  
Agamatrix, Hyland  
Software, Micro-  
Precision Technologies,  
Inc., A.P. Extrusion, Inc.,  
and Saber Machine  
Design Corp., have  
offices at 10 Manor  
Parkway, Salem. It's  
one of several office  
buildings in the  
industrial park. Eagle-  
Tribune



2 Manor Parkway Eagle  
-Tribune



Tim Jean/Staff photo.  
The Salem campus of  
Hesser College is in the  
Manor Parkway  
industrial park. Eagle-  
Tribune



11 Keewaydin Drive  
Eagle-Tribune

advantages to locating a business here."

While the retail properties in Salem get most of the attention, business in industrial parks has been booming. Moldoff said one of the town's larger industrial parks, on Pelham Road, has only a few open spots. A potential expansion off Keewaydin Drive could open up another 300,000 square feet, but Moldoff said that plan is tentative.

"I think in the next 10 years, one issue in Salem is going to be that there's not much room left for industrial development," Moldoff said.

Many elements combine to make Salem attractive

Chris Goodnow, a commercial real estate consultant, said the state's lack of an income tax has been one reason businesses have located in Salem.

"That's a powerful driver," he said.

Other draws include the state's quality of life. Salem's proximity to the high-tech community springing out of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology was another draw, he said.

"The proximity to Cambridge is a big deal," Goodnow said.

It was for AgaMatrix, a leading designer of diabetes products, which moved to Salem in 2006.

"The company sort of came out of the MIT community, the startup community," said Stuart Blitz, director of worldwide commercial development. "We needed more space, and when you need more space, you get outside the city."

He said Salem's favorable business climate made it a better place for AgaMatrix to grow than Cambridge.



12 Manor Parkway  
Eagle-Tribune



Southern New  
Hampshire University at  
25 Pelham Road Eagle-  
Tribune



29 Northwestern Drive  
Eagle-Tribune

*Welcome to our  
discussion comments feature. To join  
the discussion, you must first  
register with Disqus and verify your  
email address. Once you do, your  
comments will post automatically. We welcome  
your thoughts and your opinions, including  
unpopular ones. We ask only that you keep the  
conversation civil and clean. We reserve the right  
to remove comments that are obscene, racist or  
abusive and statements that are false or  
unverifiable. Repeat offenders will be blocked.  
You may flag objectionable comments for review  
by a moderator.*

## Add New Comment

DISQUS

Type your comment here.

Post as ...

AgaMatrix is one of several producing cutting-edge medical products in Salem.

Advanced Polymers is a medical device component manufacturer that makes, among other things, the world's thinnest, strongest and smallest heat shrink tubing, Amanda Dinis, an administrative assistant, said via e-mail. The company has been in Salem for 20 years.

The company's cofounders, Mark and Elisia Saab, lived in Lawrence, Dinis said, and thought Salem was "an up-and-coming small town." The industrial park where the company is located had only a few businesses when they started, but now it's nearly full.

Business extends beyond state and national borders

Few towns can boast of having a single high-tech sonar or radar business, but Salem has several.

Earlier this year, Gov. John Lynch toured Geophysical Survey Systems Inc., a company that produces ground-penetrating radar used in construction, archeology, and search and rescues. U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H., later toured LNX Corp., a company that creates radar components and systems and does about half its business with customers in other countries.

It's one of several global companies in town. Air Planning brokers charter air travel.

"Our business is global, without any local business to speak of," CEO Scott Bickford said in an e-mail. "Once in a great while, we are involved with some business that has a local connection, which is always nice."

He said the company serves government agencies, professional and collegiate sports teams, bands, "celebrities and luminaries," and other high-net-worth customers who prefer to fly on chartered planes.

## Showing 11 comments

Sort by Newest first

[Subscribe by email](#)

[Subscribe by RSS](#)



poorsalemnh Yesterday 04:27 PM

Perhaps we should conserve the open space at Rockingham, seeing as it is the only open space left in town. Why can't we tear down one of the many unused strip malls in town and use that for your tech park!

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



WStan Yesterday 08:25 PM [in reply to poorsalemnh](#)

The Rock is unique - it sits right at Exit 1 which is a quick trip to Manchester or Boston.

I wouldn't mind tearing down the old Circuit City mall and Rockingham Lumber next door...the area must be an old Indian Burial site or something because everything that has ever opened up there has closed. Make that acreage open space for the enjoyment of locals.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



salem12345 Yesterday 08:41 PM [in reply to WStan](#)

there is a new business moving into circuit city's old place, and I agree the lumber yard has to go.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



poorsalemnh Yesterday 08:38 PM [in reply to WStan](#)

You are right the track is unique it should be preserved in some way. It is part of our history. Salem would not be there had it not been for the track. I am all for tearing down the unused strip malls for open space, but not for using the track as a tech park, or another giant subdivision.

[comments powered by DISQUS](#)

"Salem is conveniently located between Boston and Manchester, which makes it a great location for businesses whose client and vendor base is not local," Bickford said. "The (Interstate) 93 expansion was also a compelling reason to locate in Salem. We also have appeal to prospective employees in both states."

Some businesses fly under the local radar

For those looking for the kinds of educational chops needed to work in the upper ranks of these companies, there's even an Ivy League education available in Salem.

Cornell University leases space in Salem for students pursuing the Cornell-Queen's Executive MBA. The degree, issued as a partnership between Cornell's Johnson School and the Canadian Queen's School of Business, takes 16 months to earn.

Danny Szpiro, director of the program, said the school began recruiting in New Hampshire in 2008, and its first students began studying about a year ago. About 40 percent of the coursework happens during three visits to Cornell's Ithaca, N.Y., campus.

The rest is done in local "boardroom learning teams." All across the United States and Canada, the teams watch live broadcasts of a professor, who is in a television studio rather than a classroom. A second screen shows learning aids, like slide shows.

"We wanted to be able to be in a place where we could still get people from the greater Boston area to be able to join the program in New Hampshire," Szpiro said. "Salem looked like a good location both geographically and from a operating cost point of view."

Salem assessor Normand Pelletier said business, industry and public utilities make up about 28 percent of Salem's tax base.

"It hasn't grown too much lately, but over time it has," he said.

Commercial, industrial and public utilities made up just 20 percent of the tax base across the state in 2009, according to data from the Department of Revenue Administration.

But while Salem may receive more in revenue from non-residential properties than most other towns, Moldoff said industrial businesses already may have started looking elsewhere.

In 2000, the town's master plan found that 12.5 percent, or about 16,000 acres, of the land in Salem was used for non-residential purposes. There were just 155 acres left. While retail businesses can spruce up old storefronts, industrial businesses cannot.

"A lot of the industrial users are going to other communities. They can't find the land," Moldoff said. "Say you want to build a new building, there's just not a lot of sites left in Salem."

...

Join the discussion. To comment on stories and see what others are saying, log on to [eagletribune.com](http://eagletribune.com).

EagleTribune.com, North Andover, MA 100 Turnpike St. North Andover, MA 01845

# Restaurant plan sparks concerns over traffic

By JILLIAN JORGENSEN  
jjorgensen@eagletribune.com

SALEM — Tuscan Kitchen, a new restaurant planned for the old DeVito's building, would have double the number of seats — and that's got some Planning Board members worried about traffic.

The board reviewed updated plans last night for the Italian restaurant proposed by Joe Faro, a Windham entrepreneur and former owner of Joseph's Gourmet Pasta and Sauce in Haverhill.

The restaurant would be on Main Street near the Route 28 intersection in the already busy Depot area. Mark Gross, an engineer with MHF Design Consultants, said the restaurant would have 604 seats. DeVito's received approval for 282 seats.

"I think one of the bigger issues is traffic circulation," Gross said.

Planning Director Ross Moldoff said the developer would likely pay about \$50,000 in traffic impact fees to the town.

Gross said about 150 of those seats would be in function rooms used primarily for private parties. An additional 60 seats would be outside and not used most of the year.

Please see **RESTAURANT**, Page 10

## RESTAURANT: Plans for former DeVito's call for double the number of seats

■ Continued from Page 1

For that reason, two traffic studies were presented. One is for "normal operation," with just the 364 indoor seats filled, and one for a "worst-case scenario," with all indoor and outdoor seats full, including in the three function rooms.

The studies included previous traffic counts for DeVito's.

Rebecca Brown, an engineer with Greenman and Pederson Inc., presented the traffic studies the firm conducted for Faro.

Under the "normal operation" scenario, she said there would be 22 more vehicles arriving at the restaurant than there were at DeVito's during weekday peak hours. During Saturday midday peak hours, there would be 27 more.

Under the "worst-case scenario," that number jumped to 84 additional vehicles on weekdays and 106 on Saturdays.

As for the traffic on nearby roads during normal operation, there would be an additional vehicle on Main Street every 10 minutes and on Pleasant Street every 60 minutes.

Under the worst-case scenario, there would be an extra car on Main Street every three minutes and on Pleasant Street every 12 minutes.

But Brown said a reduction in traffic is planned by upgrading

*"He's going to want to manage his own property so there isn't a traffic problem. Because if there is, people aren't going to come."*

Mark Gross, an engineer with MHF Design Consultants

signals at Pleasant Street to keep vehicles moving. With those changes, it would actually take 30 to 50 seconds less to travel east or west on Main Street, between Martin and Sullivan streets, under normal operation, she said. But under the worst-case scenario, up to 50 seconds could be added to the eastbound trip.

Vice Chairman Robert Campbell said he hoped to see further mitigation in future plans.

"I'm concerned that we're underestimating the traffic ... by not counting a bunch of seats," Campbell said.

Gross said Faro didn't want to see any significant traffic backups in the area.

"He's going to want to manage his own property so there isn't a traffic problem," Gross said. "Because if there is, people aren't going to come."

There are plans to alleviate the site's parking problem.

"The owner felt it was necessary to provide some additional parking," Gross said.

An 11-unit apartment building next door on Main Street would be torn down to provide additional spots. Extra parking in front of the restaurant would be added, and parking in a connected lot for a nearby office building would be available after 5 p.m. Another lot, which was formerly parking for Craft Mania, would be used for overflow parking. More than 300 spots would be available on site.

"Parking is getting better," Moldoff said.

The driveway also would be widened and moved slightly, but the utility pole there will remain. Gross said they would put in an island, splitting the entry-only driveway into two lanes.

"I think that looks like an abomination, and I think somebody ought to make it go away," Campbell said. "I don't think the pole belongs in the middle of the driveway."

Although it was a public hearing, no residents spoke. The plans are to be presented to the board again with additional details.

Join the discussion. To comment on stories and see what others are saying, log on to eagletribune.com.



# School to ignore town ban

## Plans to move forward with electronic sign

By JARRET BENCKS  
jbencks@eagletribune.com

SALEM — There's a town ordinance banning the electronic sign the school district wants to install in front of Salem High School. But the district will go through with its plan anyway.

"It's not to say I want to be a bad neighbor," Superintendent Michael Delahanty said yesterday. "I intended to talk to (town Planning Director Ross Moldoff) or have folks from the high school talk to him, and find something that can reach our needs and does not fall too far afield from what the intentions were of the town."

The town approved an ordinance in 2005 that prohibited electronic signs after bright, flashing billboards started popping up in front of shops.

A memo to the Planning Board, written by Moldoff, outlined concerns that electronic signs distracted drivers and were not aesthetic. Voters then adopted the ban at Town Meeting.

The district wants the new sign to inform the community of upcoming school events, Delahanty said. He pointed to a recent play at the high school, "Once Upon a Mattress," that had hundreds of empty seats. Having a better sign at the school probably wouldn't have filled all the seats, but it could have brought more people to the show, he said.

"We're not trying to diminish the quality of the neighborhood or lower the standards of the community," Delahanty said.

Please see SIGN, Page 6

## SIGN: Design still under consideration

Continued from Page 1

The sign ordinance, and all other zoning ordinances, do not apply to school district property, chief building official Sam Zannini said. The district still is expected to get a permit from the town and have the sign inspected, Zannini said.

Though the Planning Department has no

authority over the school district's plans, Moldoff still expects a discussion between the town and the district.

"I think there will be some conversations with the school district," he said.

The sign's design still is being considered. It would be purchased through a \$20,000 donation from the family of Marine Staff Sgt.

Edmond Lo, a Salem High School graduate who died in Iraq last year.

The old sign would be refurbished and moved to the front of the police station to be used as a community message board.

Join the discussion. To comment on stories and see what others are saying, log on to [eagletribune.com](http://eagletribune.com).



# Planners target illegal storage trailers in Salem

4/21/10  
Tribune

By JILLIAN JORGENSEN  
jjorgensen@eagletribune.com

SALEM — Storage trailers sit in parking lots along Route 28, beside business in industrial parks and near department stores at the mall. Some Planning Board members are hoping to see them disappear for good.

"The thing that has bothered some of us is that they tend to become permanent fixtures, and they don't look good," planner Bob Campbell said.

The trailers are not permitted, according to the town's zoning ordinance, unless approved on a site plan. Last week, several members of the board said they would not approve a site plan presented to them with two storage trailers on it. Other businesses using them have been given violations by the town's code enforcement officer.

Campbell said it was less of a crackdown and more of an ongoing fight against the trailers.

"Certain businesses have a tendency to, after the building is built, start putting storage trailers on the site in places that they aren't supposed to be," Campbell said.

Since they are often in parking lots, Campbell said, the storage trailers also disrupt the flow of traffic and reduce the number of parking spaces.

He said the board was not targeting delivery trailers — even those that, during the busy holiday season, might have to wait a week or so to be unloaded.

Campbell said approving the site plan the board saw last week, which included storage trailers, would have made it legal for them to be there. The owner of the property agreed to remove the storage trailers.

But board member Ronald

Belanger said last week it was unfair to punish one person when so many others were flagrantly violating the rules.

"Right around the back of the mall, you see storage trailers put there and they even have electricity piped into them," he said yesterday. "And (the town doesn't) even bother them."

But at the meeting last week, Chairman Jim Keller said many of the businesses Belanger mentioned at the meeting had been cited for violations.

Belanger said if the trailers are out of sight and screened, he doesn't have a problem with them. But it would be even better, he said, if the town could regulate and charge property owners a fee for the trailers.

"I would certainly rather see space in a building used for jobs, for people to be working inside, rather than storage," he said.

Town Planning Director Ross Moldoff said many people in the town are technically violating the zoning ordinance by using the trailers.

"The reality is that a lot of people have them," he said.

So far, the board has shown little interest in regulating the trailers, he said.

"They want to get rid of them," Moldoff said.

Campbell said property owners may find the cheap, unregistered trailers a convenient solution for storing "junk" they don't want inside. But if they need more space, he said, they should add it to their building.

"(Trailers) are a substitute for getting a proper building modification," he said.

And if property owners don't follow the rules, they will be cited, he said.

"If the site plan shows grass and you end up with three trailers there, and the grass ceases to exist and becomes some gravel or mud hole ... we deal with it," he said. "We have a code enforcement officer to deal with it."

■ ■ ■  
*Join the discussion. To comment on stories and see what others are saying, log on to eagletribune.com.*

# Eagle Tribune

E WINNER

WWW.EAGLETRIBUNE.COM

NEW HAMPSHIRE

75 CENTS/\$4.50 PER WEEK  
HOME DELIVERED  
978-946-2200

**S NO GETTING AWAY**  
ed in Salem bank robbery.

Page 5

**FREE HOT OR ICED COFFEE, PAGE 2**

**GOOD NEWS FOR  
BRUINS FANS**

GM Peter Chiarelli smiles  
as team lands second pick  
in NHL draft. Page 13



4/14/10

► Salem

## New look planned for Depot area

### Italian restaurant is proposed

By JILLIAN JORGENSEN  
jjorgensen@eagletribune.com

**SALEM** — The Planning Board got a taste of some big changes proposed for the Depot area last night.

Joseph Faro, who purchased seven properties in the area, including the former DeVito's, presented plans to the board as part of a conceptual discussion about the property. He plans on overhauling the restaurant to build his new eatery, Tuscan Kitchen.

Plans also call for demolishing an apartment building during the project's first phase, with the ultimate goal of developing the "downtown" many in town hope to see.

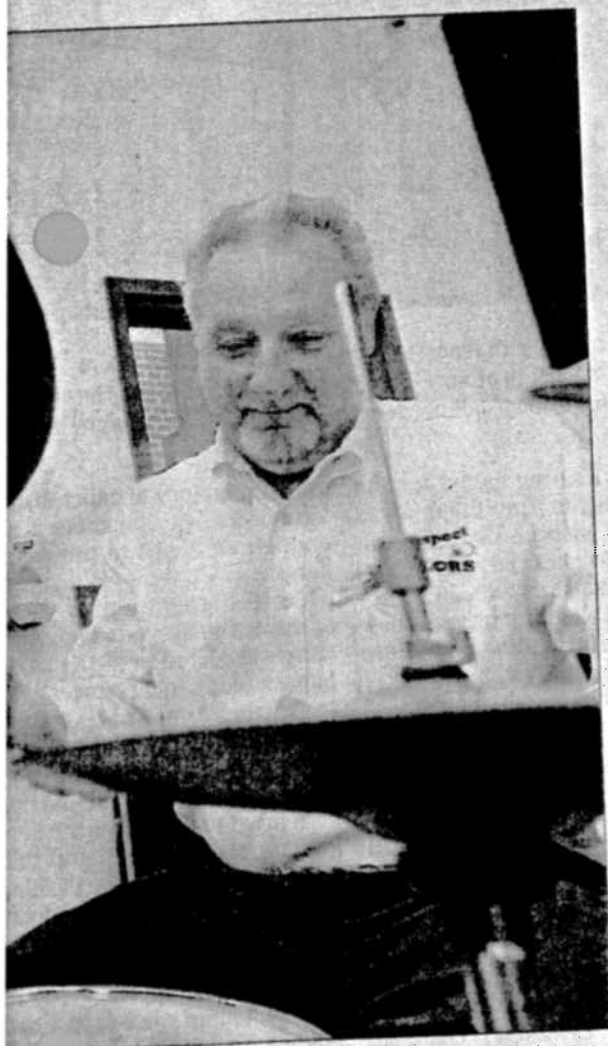
"We're very much looking forward to becoming part of the community," Faro said. There is no formal time frame for the project.

The properties were formerly owned by Steve DeVito, who died in a motorcycle accident in 2008. Faro bought them in February for \$3.9 million. Faro has had prior success in the pasta business. He owned Joseph's Gourmet Pasta and Sauces in Haverhill before it was sold to Nestle in 2007.

He is partnering with his former operations manager, Jim Rogers, to run Tuscan Kitchen, which Faro said would feature a regional Italian menu.

"Everything is made from

Please see **SALEM**, Page 12



TIM JEAN/Staff photos

and, prepares for the concert Friday at the Timberlane

Timberlane Community



Salem Planning Board members discussed plans last night for the former Devito's restaurant building at 67 Main St. The building has been purchased by Joseph Faro, a developer and restaurateur.

## SALEM: New look planned for Depot area

■ Continued from Page 1

scratch there on site," he said.

Diners will see much of it, he said, with open kitchens and stoves surrounded by seating.

"We're making pasta in front of the guests," he said. "We're baking bread in front of the guests."

Upstairs, Faro said, the space would be more like an Italian bistro, but the same food would be served. There also will be space for private parties, he said.

The new restaurant also would feature 60 outdoor seats. The overall seat count increases from 282 to 520, engineer Mark Gross said.

Parking and traffic issues have long plagued the area, but Gross presented plans for 220 spaces within 400 feet of the front door, including in a municipal parking lot across the street.

Faro plans on tearing down an 11-unit apartment building next

door on Main Street. After the meeting, Faro said he did not yet have a time frame for when that demolition would occur, but the building only has four tenants now.

The restaurant also would use additional parking on some of the other properties Faro bought, including the old Craftmania. Gross said they would create about 80 spots for employee, valet and overplay parking. They also would use the parking lot at an office building at 51 Main St. after work hours when the lot is usually empty.

Gross said the plans called for the beginning of a streetscape sought by the Depot Revitalization Committee, which he serves on. It would include benches, trees and decorative streetlights, he said.

"It'd be really starting to create that downtown look along Main Street," Gross said. "I think this is kind of the anchor

for that."

He said the plan also calls for two other possible buildings on the property, but they would come in later phases. Gross said the goal would be for a mixed-use site with retail and residential property.

Since the discussion was conceptual, the board did not need to take any action.

Board member Bob Campbell raised traffic concerns, which he said were never settled in the original plans for DeVito's.

Campbell said he would hold the developers to the same standard the board recently used for the development of the new Lowe's in town — they could not cause any additional traffic. Gross said more traffic studies are in the works.

Join the discussion. To comment on stories and see what others are saying, log on to [eagletribune.com](http://eagletribune.com).

## POTHOLES: R

■ Continued from Page 1

street, every day," Russell said.

People who work in the industrial park on Northwestern Drive said the condition of the road has been an ongoing issue.

Jim Dennesen of Dennesen Industrial is a landlord on the street. He said he nearly lost a tenant last year due to potholes in the area.

"All over having to come over that particular piece of road," he said. "And this is a company that brought 43 jobs into Salem from Massachusetts."

He said the potholes were both a business and a safety concern. Large trucks are often in the area, he said, and they try to dodge potholes by swerving in the direction of oncoming traffic.

Dave Fielding, who works at Onvio LLC on Northwestern Drive, said one pothole on the street had grown to be about 6 feet across and 2 feet deep.

"Every year in the same place, it's wicked bad," he said.

Last year, a coworker lost one of his wheels in a pothole a bit farther down the road, Fielding said.

"The other day, I was riding my motorcycle and you've got to swerve around them all," he said. "It's like going for the motorcycle test again."

## FIRE: About 25



## PLANNERS: Aeed looks to develop property

■ Continued from Page 1

application for design review. That means any subsequent changes to this kind of housing at the local level will not apply to this project.

workforce housing, including rental multi-family units."

Windham voters defeated two local ordinances in March that sought to tailor work force housing to local conditions.

hear his proposal.

He said he is not seeking a waiver of impact fees or any other variance, so, at least at this point, he sees no reason to go to the zoning board.





## Lowe's project to start in Salem

By Jillian Jorgensen

[jjorgensen@eagletribune.com](mailto:jjorgensen@eagletribune.com)

March 11, 2010 03:02 am

SALEM — Work on the new Lowe's at Stateline Plaza is scheduled to begin next month and once the store opens, it is expected to provide more than 100 new jobs.

Gerard Littlejohn, a Lowe's spokesman, said the store would have 102,000 square feet of regular retail space and a 28,700-square-foot garden center. A store of that size typically represents an investment of \$12 million in a community and brings up to 120 jobs, Littlejohn said.

Lowe's expects to break ground in mid- to late April. The store should open late this year, Littlejohn said.

Lowe's will not be the only store in the Route 28 plaza. Namco, a pool and patio company, and Sovereign Bank also will be in the plaza. David Fleming of W/S Development said the bank would move into temporary quarters during construction.

"We are moving them into a temporary office in May, which will be on site," Fleming said. "We will begin demolition of the existing Sovereign Bank in June."

Construction of the new building would start in July, with the goal of opening the new bank in December, he said.

Namco will remain open during renovations, Fleming said.

The project also includes road improvements, Town Planner Ross Moldoff said. Developers will move the traffic light in front of the plaza south and better coordinate the signals. The road also has been widened, with an additional northbound lane and right-turn lane onto Hampshire Street. The cost of those improvements, to the developer, is about \$2 million.

Moldoff said the Planning Board spent a lot of time and effort on the proposal and finding solutions to traffic concerns.

"Lowe's came up with a plan to mitigate the traffic impact, and I think we're all very happy to have the project going forward and to be getting the road improvements that were proposed by Lowe's," he said.

Moldoff said there are more retail projects happening in Salem now than in a typical year, despite the weak economy. Sports Authority and Ultimate Electronics are moving to town, and DeMoulas will be replaced by a larger Market Basket. A CVS/pharmacy also is coming to southern Salem, and vacant stores in the Furniture World plaza are filling up, he said.

"That's a lot of construction projects in a year, in a good year," Moldoff said.

He said he wasn't sure if it was an anomaly or a sign of things to come, but said it is a good sign for the town.

"People are obviously being employed, tax revenue is going to be generated when the businesses open, and those are good things for Salem," he said. "New products and services are being offered to the community."

•••••

Join the discussion. To comment on stories and see what others are saying, log on to [eagletribune.com](http://eagletribune.com).

Copyright © 1999-2010 cnhi, inc.

Photos



Work continues on the parking lot in front of Namco Pool and Patio on Route 28 in Salem, near the Methuen line. Construction of Lowe's will begin soon. Staff Photographer



## Rockingham Park: After 103 years, live racing comes to an end

By DAN TUOHY AND JIM FENNELL

New Hampshire Union Leader

9 hours, 21 minutes ago

**SALEM** – Live racing is no more at The Rock, the legendary track where Seabiscuit and War Emblem once ran.

Rockingham Park, where they started racing horses in 1906, informed the state yesterday that it would no longer hold live racing, but continue with simulcast thoroughbred, harness and greyhound racing.

"It's a sad day, a dark day for New Hampshire," said Timothy J. "Ted" Connors, chairman of the New Hampshire Racing and Charitable Gaming Commission.

Edward M. Callahan, Rockingham Park's president and general manager, said the decision was made after state budget constraints imposed additional regulatory costs on the track for the operation of live harness racing.

The decision had to be made now for the benefit of all the horsemen and workers who must make arrangements for the summer, Callahan wrote in a letter given yesterday to Paul M. Kelley, director of state Racing and Charitable Gaming.

Callahan said the decision will affect about 850 horsemen and 100 seasonal employees. Rockingham Park still has about 280 employees, including gaming and food service employees, used for a variety of events held at the facility, including Texas Hold 'Em games, bingo, home shows and, most recently, a snocross race.

"It's awful," Callahan said in an interview. "It's a terrible feeling. This is an industry that affects how many farms there are in the state, it affects all the feed and grain outfits, the tack shops. There are still a number of horsemen in the state who are ultimately going to have to go some place else."

Frank Burke Jr., owner of nearby Dodge Grain on Route 28, said three generations of his family have been providing feed to Rockingham Park.

"We fed 500 to 600 horse in a one-mile-square area," Burke said. "What better place for a feed store?"

Burke said the store suffered a bigger loss when tough times at The Rock led to the end of live thoroughbred racing in 2002. The track opened the 2003 season with harness racing exclusively. Burke said the store fed upwards of 1,800 horse when the thoroughbreds were running there.

Burke said the store does considerably more business with Suffolk Downs in East Boston, Mass., and business may pick up even more there if the Massachusetts Legislature allows casino gambling at that track.

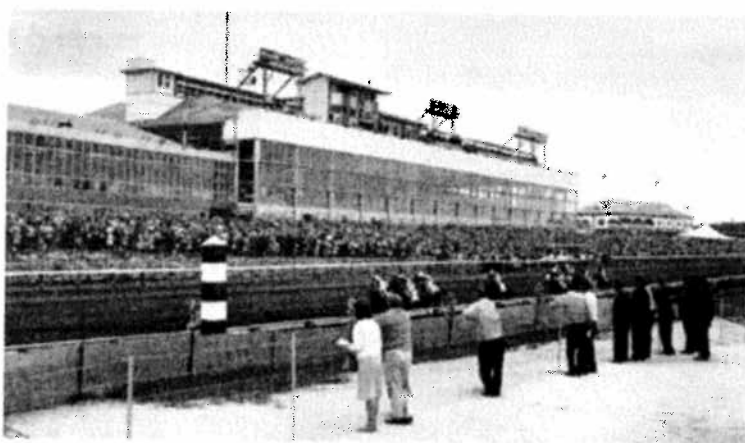
Rockingham continues to advocate for expanded gaming in New Hampshire to allow video slot machines at the storied track.

Live harness racing at The Rock generated \$266,973 for the track in fiscal year 2009 -- down \$117,171 from 2008 -- according to wagering statistics kept by the gaming commission in Concord. By comparison, simulcast racing generated more than \$11.3 million in betting, the majority on thoroughbred races.

Callahan said betting on simulcast racing jumped about 20 percent when there were live cards. However, he said the cost of regulating live racing, including meeting veterinarian and judging standards, just become prohibitive from a business perspective.

"All in all it ends up being a half million dollars to run a 50-day meet," he said. "It becomes more and more difficult each year trying to attract horses, because pretty much the rest of the East Coast has supplemental income with slot machines."

Yesterday's news hardly caused a stir among the few dozen clubhouse regulars there wagering on simulcast racing.



"We don't care, we're here for the simulcasts," said Frank Trainor of Atkinson, a track regular who was there yesterday with his brother, Tom Trainor of Windham.

"If they still had thoroughbreds, it might be better," Tom Trainor said.

Thoroughbred racing at Rockingham Park during the mid-1960s.

Rick Halloran of Salem, who tends bar in the

clubhouse and has been working at the track for 25 years, said business for him dropped off nearly 50 percent when the track switched from thoroughbreds to harness racing. He doesn't expect to feel much effect from yesterday's decision.

"The people involved with the trotters were betting on the trotters," Halloran said. "If there were 1,000 people in the building, maybe 75 were betting the trotters."

The track joins the state's two greyhound tracks, Seabrook Greyhound Park and The Lodge at Belmont, which have already decided not to have live racing this year.

Union Leader Senior Political Reporter John DiStaso contributed to this report.

#### YOUR COMMENTS

Hey Bob, Salem. I bet if you ask around Salem, not any other town, there is a lot more people who dont want expanded gaming in Salem. The negatives outweigh the positives. Dont believe the hype that a few snake oil salesmen on these boards keep spouting off/cutting & pasting.

Also, Bob, I have probably have lived in Salem a lot longer than you. Why dont you move!

- JeffD, Salem

3/8/10  
Tribune

# Property owner appeals ruling

## Salem man challenges 'change of use'

By JILLIAN JORGENSEN

jjorgensen@eagletribune.com

SALEM — An appeal filed by a local property owner in Rockingham County Superior Court alleges the Planning Board acted "illegally" in granting a change of use for a neighboring building.

The appeal, filed by a lawyer for Adam Abbas, who owns 291-297 S. Broadway, asks the court to overturn the decision. The board granted a change of use for the former Tweeter building at 301 S. Broadway during a meeting Jan. 26.

The change of use would allow the old electronics store to become a dance studio. The property is owned by Fuzzbuzz Realty, but the owners of the Krystal Ballroom, a dance studio, plan to purchase the site.

"Some action was taken by the Planning Board, and they didn't provide any notice," said Abbas' attorney, Bernard Campbell. "We think they should have gone to a site plan process so we could participate."

The appeal says that according to the town's site plan regulations, "all new uses of land" must receive site development plan approval.

By law, abutters must be notified before site plan approval can be given. But the change of use was granted during the public matters section of a Planning Board meeting, no site plan was required, and notice was not provided to abutters, including Abbas, the appeal said.

Local regulations call for "all new uses of land" to receive site

development plan approval from the board. The town ordinance says approval is required for a "use or change of use to a building or site" when the building or site does not have an approved site development plan.

Moldoff said there is an approved plan for the building.

"I didn't think the Planning Board did anything illegal," Town Planner Ross Moldoff said. "There was some question of whether (the issue) even had to come to the Planning Board."

He said based on the regulations and the minor impact the change of use to the building was likely to have, the board handled it under public matters.

"Ultimately, I guess it's up to a judge to decide whether that was the wrong thing to do," he said.

Abbas had previously asked to modify the access drive that runs between his property and 301 South Broadway, but was told it would require a site plan application and notice to abutters, according to the appeal.

The appeal also argues there is no legal basis for the board to approve a change of use that affects the same common drive without a formal application process.

"... the Plaintiff alleges that the decision of the Planning Board was 'illegal' in that the action was taken to approve a 'change of use' without the benefit of a formal application, or adherence to state law with respect to notice given to abutters," the appeal reads.

The appeal also asks the board to submit a certified record of the proceedings for review.

2/2/10 Tribune

# Vacant South Broadway store gets new tenant

## Sports Authority moves into Salem location

By JILLIAN JORGENSEN  
jjorgensen@englethrupe.com

SALEM — Sports Authority plans to open a new store on South Broadway by this summer.

Town Planner Ross Moldoff said the sporting goods store would move in to what was once Linens 'n Things at the plaza at 290 S. Broadway. The retail space was temporarily a used bookstore, Strictly By The Book, which closed last month.

"The permit is being issued for the initial fit-up of the building," Moldoff said. "They're actually going to tear down a wall and make the store a little bit larger."

Tracy Harrison, senior vice president at ING Clarion, which is advising the property owner, said the store should open in the spring or summer.

"We're going to go under construction right away," she said.

Harrison said everyone involved in the deal, from Sports

*"I've heard from a lot of people that they are very eager to have a sporting goods store in Salem."*

Project architect Ira Baline

Authority to the property owner to the town, seemed happy about the store coming to Salem.

"There's no other sporting goods retailer, big sporting goods retailer, in the area," she said.

Ira Baline, an architect with the Boston firm Bergmeyer Associates, said the firm was handling the construction administration for the initial phase of the project, which he called the "shell" of the store. He said construction began yesterday and that the store will be 42,000 square feet.

"I've heard from a lot of people that they are very eager to have a sporting goods store in Salem,"

Continued from Page 1

which is at 352 S. Broadway. The dance studio does not own the Tweeter building, Moldoff said. A phone message left

at the dance studio was not returned yesterday.

Moldoff called the interest in the buildings "good signs for the community."

"It doesn't mean that things are great, by any means," Moldoff said. "There's still a long way to go, but things are moving in the right direction."



PAUL BILODEAU/Staff photo

A construction worker heads into the former Linens 'n Things at 290 S. Broadway in Salem. After a brief stint as a discount bookstore, the location will soon be home to a Sports Authority.

Baline said.

The sporting goods chain has three other stores in the state and more than 450 stores across the nation.

Moldoff said it was one of several large vacancies in Salem that tenants have begun taking action to fill. But no other plans have been finalized so Moldoff

could not say what specific stores could move in.

On Jan. 26, the board approved a request for a change of use at the former Tweeter store at 301 S. Broadway. The request was filed by the owners of the Krystal Ballroom Dance Studio.

Please see **STORE**, Page 2

1/26/10 Tribune

# Proposed amendments to target affordable housing, wind systems

By JILLIAN JORGENSEN  
jjorgensen@engletribune.com

**SALEM** — Proposed amendments to the town's zoning ordinances aim to establish more affordable housing and allow for small wind energy systems.

Planning Director Ross Moldoff said one ordinance would help the town comply with the state's mandate to allow for work force housing. He said the town decided to amend an affordable housing ordinance from 1989, rather than start from scratch.

"In the end, kind of like renovating a building versus building a new building, sometimes it's kind of messy," he said.

Moldoff said the basic concept of the new ordinance is to give developers a "density bonus."

"We let him build more homes, more housing units than he would otherwise be able to build," he said.

In return, the developer "makes a portion of it or all of it affordable," Moldoff said.

The zoning ordinance defines a home as affordable if it costs 30 percent or less of the household income for a family of four, with an income not more than the area median income. For renting, it is a cost that does not exceed 30 percent of a three-person household income not exceeding 60 percent of the area median.

"The key with that is to manage (building) in such a way that you're not getting a big impact on the community," Moldoff said. "Because more housing units in the community might, generally, be seen by the public as a bad thing."

The ordinance has certain protections, he said, including a restriction on the number of units that can be built under the ordinance to 1 percent of the

existing housing supply.

"You couldn't build 1,000 units," Moldoff said. "You can only build 120 a year."

There also are protections against any development that has an unreasonable or disproportionate impact on the community, he said.

The work force housing ordinance is not the only potential zoning change motivated by state law. Another law said towns cannot unreasonably restrict the installation of small residential-scale wind energy systems, Moldoff said.

"There is not a large demand for these types of facilities in Salem, so far at least, but you never know what's going to happen," he said.

He said the Planning Board decided it would be better to have regulations for the wind energy systems in advance. The systems would not be allowed to

be taller than 30 feet above the tree canopy in the area, he said, and there also are restrictions about how close they can be to the property line.

"Most of what the Planning Board does is react to problems that come up," he said. "This is one case where they're saying, 'Let's be proactive and get ready in case requests for permits come through.'"

Other ordinances were mostly "housekeeping," Moldoff said. One would reorganize the town's zoning ordinance. Without making any substantial changes, the article would cut down the ordinance by about a third by removing duplicate language, Moldoff said.

Join the discussion. To comment on stories and see what others are saying, log on to [engletribune.com](http://engletribune.com).



# A new chapter for Salem retailing

One bookstore closes, another to open as commercial real estate inquiries appear to be perking up

By JILLIAN JORGENSEN  
jorgensen@eagletribune.com

**SALEM** — The closure of a discount bookstore will pave the way for a more permanent tenant in one of Salem's large retail buildings, and other empty spots may be filling up soon.

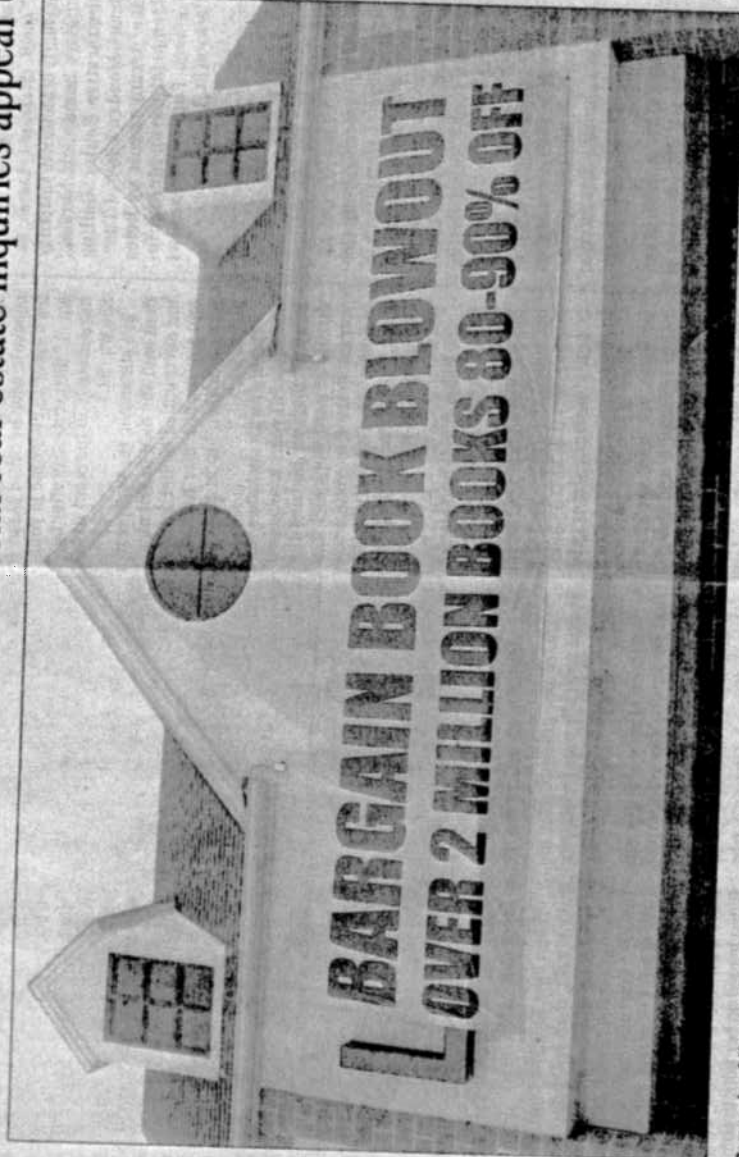
Strictly By The Book at 290 S. Broadway always was meant to be a temporary tenant. Town Planner Ross Moldoff said. The sign for Linens-N-Things, which occupied the space before the national chain went out of business in late 2008, still is partially visible beneath a plastic sign advertising books.

Moldoff said the owners of the property have found a more permanent tenant, but the deal had not been finalized so he could not say what store will be moving in.

"It's great news for the owner of the property," he said. "It's great news for the town of Salem."

The building, which includes a Petco store and the vacant CompUSA store, is owned by New York City-based CP/PIERS Salem LLC. A phone number for that company could not be located yesterday.

While one bookstore is closing, another one will open soon. The former Furniture World at 419 S. Broadway will



Remnants of the sign of defunct Linens-N-Things, the former tenant of the South Broadway building, peek out from beneath the banner of Strictly By The Book, which is closing.

soon be home to a Used Book Superstore, which is slated to open Feb. 5. That store had been vacant since 2007.

The store is owned by Got Books, a for-profit used book seller that sells donated books online and in stores in

Burlington and Danvers. They also will open a new store in Nashua, according to their Web site.

The property is owned by Boston-based Taurus Management. Moldoff said the new bookstore seemed to be

intended as a permanent use for the property.

Moldoff said he has been fielding more calls in recent weeks from people interested in becoming tenants in some of the town's vacant commercial real estate.

"That seems to be picking up from the end of last year," he said.

But, he added, most plans are tentative at this point. "Until they come in for a building permit, we just don't know for sure," he said.

Moldoff said the town has been trying to do whatever it can to fill empty spots.

"The Planning Board has been very positive about trying to help get new tenants in some of these buildings," he said.

Denis Buckley of Salem, who was shopping at the Petco next to Strictly By The Book yesterday, said seeing that store empty was not a surprise. He said he has always noticed some vacancies in the 33 years he lived in Salem, but the last two years he has seen many more.

"I just think that this has become the way of the world," he said. "You don't know what is going to be here."

Join the discussion. To comment on stories and see what others are saying, log on to eagletribune.com.

JILLIAN JORGENSEN/staff photo

► Salem

# Depot zone put off until 2011

BY DERRICK PERKINS

perkins.derrick@gmail.com

The Salem Planning Board will wait until at least 2011 to ask voters to rezone Salem Depot.

Chairman James Keller said the decision to hold off on the zoning amendment came after board members learned the traffic plan the proposed overlay district hinges on won't be ready until after the March vote. Once the plan is completed – sometime early this year – officials will be ready to move forward, he said.

Creating an overlay district at the bustling intersection Route 28 and Main Street has been touted by officials as a first step to foster growth in the downtown area. By giving developers more leeway, officials hope to encourage mixed residential and commercial projects and alleviate some of the notorious Depot traffic.

But Keller said it wouldn't make sense to move ahead with an incomplete traffic plan.

**"There are blueprints to follow ... To think that, after two years of discussion, more discussion is required is something that I think is not warranted."**

Chris Goodnow,  
Depot Revitalization Committee

"We just felt we were putting the cart before the horse," he said. "In a certain respect, we're not totally losing a year, we're doing it in a (step-by-step) fashion, but it gives us more ample time to explore things in detail."

Planning Director Ross Moldoff said the process has taken longer than

expected and officials faced asking voters to accept an unfinished plan. The Planning Board handled the zoning amendment side while members of Depot Revitalization Committee were working on traffic configuration. Both panels planned to finish their work around the same time, but that didn't work out as expected, he said.

Waiting a year to wrap up all the loose ends just made sense, Moldoff said.

"We've got to run the numbers and make sure the traffic network can handle additional development," he said. "Why go forward if we don't have the answers?"

Not everyone agrees. Chris Goodnow, a member of the Depot Revitalization Committee, believes enough work has been done to put the zoning amendment before voters this year. Creating an overlay district isn't like reinventing the wheel, he said.

"There are blueprints to follow," Goodnow said. "You're not truly breaking

ground from a planning perspective. We're trying to emulate what's worked in other areas. To think that, after two years of discussion, more discussion is required is something that I think is not warranted."

Planning officials also run the risk of overcomplicating the redevelopment scheme, he said. They would be better off to establish general guidelines and setting flexible goals and take each project in the area as it comes, rather than using the next year to prepare for every possible scenario, Goodnow said.

"You can't guess exactly what's going to occur. What you want to do is lay a template for property owners," Goodnow said. "The development of a downtown, pedestrian-orientated downtown, is a long time goal of many and it's something that would be an extreme benefit to the community. Anything that delays or complicates it takes us farther away from that goal."

## Police warn Pelham residents of break-in attempts

PELHAM – Pelham residents are being asked to be aware of suspicious people in their neighborhoods after police received several calls

On Jan. 2, officers took a report from a resident on Wyndridge Circle. The homeowner had found fresh footprints leading around their

and said that there were fresh footprints around their home. When the officer arrived, he observed foot prints in the snow leading up to every window and door outside the resi-

involved have appeared to be vacant for the night.

Police ask that you heighten your awareness in your neighborhood, paying attention to any suspicious vehicles