

Innovation Valley (www.ivalley.org)

Rooms with a View & Jobs with Pizzazz

Skilled Worker Condos and Modern Commercial Mix Are Keys to Haverhill's Downtown Renaissance

John Michitson with contribution from Seth Itzkan

I recently made several business trips to San José in Silicon Valley and marveled about how far it has come back from its low point following the dot com bubble burst of 2000.

My next thought was "Can such a transformation occur in downtown Haverhill, albeit tailored with its own set of economic drivers?" I suspect that the answer may be "Yes", however, our emphasis must focus on complementing residential development with a cutting-edge commercial sector.

Background

Downtown Haverhill has been transforming in stages since it had boarded up storefronts in the 1970s and early 1980s. City Councilor William Ryan, who was Haverhill's Mayor for six years in the 1980s oversaw the first stage of while serving as Mayor. Councilor Ryan recalled, "the key to the Washington Street comeback was the financial incentives for facade and awning improvements....even over empty storefronts....it primed the pump." The storefronts gradually re-appeared and it triggered a build-out of hundreds of condominiums and apartments, the second stage of which is occurring now.

Then in the 1990s another shot in the arm occurred. Clusters of art galleries, shops, restaurants and high technology start-ups began to pop up during the Internet boom. The jump in art galleries, shops and restaurants were the result of a buzz and organization created by the business owners and patron support. The high technology companies were the result of a grass roots Cyber-District task force sanctioned by then Mayor James Rurak to add another piece of the puzzle for the downtown.

Each of these stages has contributed to today's state of Haverhill's downtown, which is on the cusp of a renaissance. However, a few missing pieces remain to make it happen.

Today's Stage

"The future of Haverhill's downtown is at a critical juncture", says Jules Epstein, CEO of Primary Design, Inc., a branding and marketing management company, who has seen the incremental improvements in the downtown first hand. Retail continues to transition as stylish, new restaurants like the Essex Grille open their doors. The relatively affordable local housing market, enabled by Governor Romney's smart growth initiative with financial incentives for both developers and municipalities, is poised to take off. Mayor James Fiorentini and the Haverhill City Council have put in place plans and ordinances to make Haverhill a frontrunner in leveraging the Governor's transit-oriented housing initiative.

"Beacon Communities is making an impressive investment in the renovation of two former mill buildings into chic, urban apartments. I believe that the future of Haverhill's downtown growth may well hinge on the successful outcome of this ambitious project as I expect it could ignite a fire under other developers currently seeking or holding permits to build", states Mr. Epstein. Several hundred new condominiums and apartments are in various stages of development. In addition, residential success will increase demand for more entertainment and restaurants in the downtown. However, one caveat remains the decade-old problem of insufficient public parking. Mr. Epstein concurs, "the time has more than come for a viable solution that must include a multi-story public garage."

But is this enough for the downtown to hit critical mass?



Haverhill's Downtown Business District

Missing Piece in Downtown Strategy – New and Retained Local Jobs with Pizzazz

In order to encourage young professionals to reside downtown, local jobs with pizzazz are needed. This should be an added focus to the downtown plan.

William Nofsker of Kifor Development Co., who developed and manages the Burgess-Lang Professional Center on Essex Street, agrees that business development is a key ingredient for the downtown to realize its potential, "The Burgess-Lang Professional Center will be an oasis among the residential developments in the downtown because people need a place to work." He is embarking on a marketing campaign in the next few weeks to lease his

"The Burgess-Lang Professional Center will be an oasis among the residential developments in the downtown because people need a place to work."

– William Nofsker, Kifor Development Co.

"best value in region" space primarily for professional offices, as well as distribution and storage facilities.

One approach to create new jobs and retain existing ones is to transform traditional businesses by leveraging 2nd generation Internet and wireless technologies. This will help businesses create new channels to sell their products and will enable them to provide leading-edge services to customers. The resulting buzz will also help attract new businesses to the area.

Fortunately, this process is already underway. Many of the web application and networking companies that either opened their doors or moved to downtown Haverhill in the 1990s are today providing the knowledge, products and services to help technology-enable traditional businesses in the area. For example, SemaTree provides Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software and web applications, MVA.net and USAi.net provides wireless Internet access, while the Special Projects Group, Inc. provides engineering services.

Traditional companies in the downtown that are adopting new technology include: Margot's Gallery, Haverhill Beef and Primary Design. Joe Terrazzano, owner of Haverhill

Beef, has been using the web as a sales channel for several years. According to Mr. Terrazzano, "people find the web to be a convenient way to submit orders. In fact, last week alone we had 350 orders over the web and we average about 30,000 unique visitors to our web site per month." Gary Albanese, who runs home-based Galaca Web Solutions and was a Cyber-District advocate, designed and manages Haverhill Beef's web site.

"It's important to link your web content to your overall marketing campaign, which includes newspapers, radio and television advertising and to expertly achieve a high ranking on today's 2nd generation search engines. Haverhill Beef has achieved this level of technology adoption", according to Mr. Albanese.

Primary Design, a 26-year old firm with 20 years in the downtown, continues to experience growth as its customer base has expanded to a national arena through technology and communications. "We are experiencing our greatest growth in the area of cybermarketing – Internet marketing strategy, advertising and web development. We've recently expanded into a second office downtown to accommodate this demand", says Mr. Epstein, Primary Design's CEO. In doing so, Primary Design has hired six additional skilled employees in the past year, two of whom were recruited out of Boston firms.

Mr. Epstein said, "In all, we draw from a 50 minute radius including Manchester and Dover, NH, Westford and Marblehead, MA, bringing dollars into downtown for lunch, medical, and a host of other services." Mr. Epstein said that he suspects that his younger employees that don't already live in Haverhill may choose to do so if and when the reality of the renaissance appears imminent.

"I have long believed that Haverhill is an ideal geographic location for business and as a place to live. My firm has definitely benefited from the ability to recruit into NH where many talented younger people have migrated and also offer the option of not having to go into Boston to work", concludes Mr. Epstein.

Thus, the answer to my question is indeed "Yes". Although Silicon Valley's second stage renaissance is being driven by high-tech research and development, our own economic growth can be driven by a modern commercial sector that enhances traditional industries.

As Jules Epstein's experience with Primary Design has shown, traditional service industries, such as advertising, can realize substantial growth through technology adoption. The approach is providing the district with both residents and revenues. A plan for the downtown that incorporates new commercial growth as part of the mix with mill-space residential conversion, will ensure that the district is attractive to young skill workers, and economically vital for years to come.

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Seth Itzkan is president of Planet-TECH Associates, a consulting agency identifying innovations in economic development. Recently, Mr. Itzkan helped The Boston Foundation to conceptualize and implement its Hub of Innovations tool. You can email him at seth.itzkan@gmail.com



John Michitson was a Haverhill city councilor for 10 years; the last 2 as president. He is a manager and electrical engineer at the MITRE Corporation in Bedford, Mass. John and his wife, Heidi, are enjoying the childhood of their 4-year-old daughter and 6 year-old son. email: jmichitson@verizon.net

The Innovation Valley initiative seeks to help stimulate economic growth and quality-of-life enhancements in the Merrimack Valley. Every month we will report on innovative businesses, practices, and ideas that are helping to make Merrimack Valley the place to be. Look for our article in print media and online at www.ivalley.org.

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When most people were out Christmas shopping and preparing for the holiday season, Councilor Deborah Quinn and I attended the Climate Change: Local Solution to A Global Crisis town meeting held at UMASS Lowell on Saturday, December 16, 2006. Congressman Marty Meehan hosted this event and approximately 1000 people were in attendance including Governor-elect Deval Patrick and numerous experts in the field. A video message to the attendees from Vice President Al Gore was played along with some clips from his controversial movie An Inconvenient Truth.

It was ironic, (if that is the correct word to describe it), that it was a sunny 54 degrees outside when we all gathered at what was ultimately the third venue for this meeting. Initially the organizers thought the turnout would yield about 200. They changed locations when it felt closer to 500 would attend. Eventually, they moved the meeting to the Durgin Hall so that 1000 people could attend the town meeting to discuss this all important topic of global warming. I was in a good mood when I arrived, but by the end of the discussion, I have to be honest, I was a little depressed.

I remember reading Small is Beautiful by E. F. Schumacher when I was in college and at the time, I was amazed how simple it was. That was 25 years ago. Why haven't we done something to correct the way we treat our environment? "A civilization built on renewable resources, such as the products of forestry and agriculture, is by this fact alone superior to one built on non-renewable resources, such as oil, coal, metal, etc. This



Methuen News

Kathleen Corey Rahme
Methuen City Council, At-Large, Methuen
Youth Corps Founder

Global Warming?

is because the former can last, while the latter cannot last. The former cooperates with nature, while the latter robs nature. The former bears the sign of life, while the latter bears the sign of death (Schumacher, 1973)."

At the town meeting we heard frightening news about the impact of environs and our health. Never before have there been so many health issues especially among children such as increased in asthma cases. They are more vulnerable to toxins than adults (www.healthytomorrow.org). This website speaks of "toxic soup" which is a chemical buildup in our bodies that we accumulate due to our everyday interaction with the environment and products found in our water supply, air, food, our homes and workplaces.

Dr. Amy Cannon of UMASS, Lowell, was one of the panelists whom I found to be quite informative. She is a PhD in Green Chemistry. She is one of a kind. What was very interesting was her report that chemists are very good at creating chemicals but they have little knowledge about what these substances do to our health. She is someone

who knows the impact of chemicals on both the human body and the environment.

Each of us has the awesome responsibility to provide the next generation a safe environment. Global warming should be a real concern for all of us. The fact that we are responsible for the most carbon emissions in the world leading to this environmental catastrophe is disturbing. During my recent visit to Sweden, my husband and I were most impressed with the miles and miles of bicycle paths. The health benefits and environmental impact are too obvious to state.

Individually we can make our environment better. What can be done? We should support legislation and initiatives to protect our environment. Congressman Marty Meehan is sponsoring the Climate Change Investment Act (HR 6417). This Bill establishes a greenhouse gas intensity reduction investment tax credit. There is also S. 553 or H. 1286 which is An Act for a Healthy Massachusetts: Safer Alternatives to Toxic Chemicals. This bill seeks to eliminate toxic chemicals that have healthy

alternatives. If alternatives exist, they should be used.

In NYC, Mayor Michael Bloomberg (Bloomenergy.com) is concerned with local initiatives. Methuen has a committee called the Mayor's Commission on Energy Efficiency and Green Government to tackle some of these issues. It is chaired by Sal Albano and the committee members include Councilors Joseph Leone and Deborah Quinn, Jo Anna Marion, Richard DiGrazia, and me. We are looking at everything from better recycling to making the new or renovated Methuen High School "green."

Locally, new constructions should be energy efficient and have alternative solutions utilizing solar and wind. Older constructions can be modified using incentives to encourage alterations. Green solutions (cedar oil based products) can be utilized to spray for mosquitoes (EEE) as opposed to harsh chemicals that are currently used.

Other exciting measures include energy efficient vehicles and hybrids. During the town meeting, Deval Patrick challenged UMASS Lowell to retrofit the existing governor issued vehicle.

We can all participate in the betterment of our environment. By supporting local initiatives and doing our best to make our homes and lifestyles healthier, we can reap the benefits for future generations. I cannot wait to begin. What I plan to keep in mind is that even small changes can yield big results.

TIP TRAINING

The Trauma Intervention Program of Merrimack Valley (TIP) will be holding an April/May training academy to expand our trauma response team. TIP consists of an 18 member volunteer team that responds on scene at the request of police, fire and hospital personnel in our community and provides emotional and practical support to those in need. The first New England chapter is entering it's 13th year of service.

Anyone interested may call the office to request an application 978 975 8471.

An Open Letter to the President of Iran

Continued from Page 3

Hey bro, you must be kidding. Truth and honesty, justice, human rights, equity, protecting the innocent? Have you been banging your forehead on the ground too hard? Nobody is going to swallow that line ... except maybe Rosie O'Donnell, Barbra Streisand, Michael Moore, Howard Dean, John Kerry, Nancy Pelosi, the New York Times, ... OK, OK, so maybe the "hate America" crowd will buy it.

Here at the offices of The Valley Patriot we like to check the rhetoric against the record. So let's take these items one at a time.

Truth and Honesty. The holocaust never happened? Say what?! Here is a passage taken from IRNA – the Islamic Republic News Agency – your very own government's news agency:

Tehran, Dec 12, [IRNA] — Secretary General of Int'l Congress to Support Palestinian Intifada, Ali-Akbar Mohtashamipour, emphasizing need for survey and research on Holocaust, said here Monday, "Results of surveys so far show Holocaust is no more than a myth."

Talk about deceit, lies and distortion! I suppose you also think our moon landing was filmed in Nevada!

Justice. What did you think of the dose of Islamic justice served up to Daniel Pearl? How about the 3000 victims of the 9/11 attacks? What about the thousands more innocent victims of Islamic bombings in Israel, Indonesia, Iraq, London, and Madrid?

... just to name a few. What justice do you offer writers, bloggers and reporters who disagree with the actions of your repressive government? I'm sure you offer them a good dose of Islamic justice. Allahu Akbar!

Human Rights. Can Jews, Christians, Hindus or Buddhists practice their religion freely and openly in Iran? You criticize Israel, yet Muslims can live, work, and pray in Israel without fear. There are numerous mosques in the U.S., Europe and Israel. How many synagogues or Christian churches are there in Iran or any other Islamic state in the Middle East?

Speaking of human rights, how about freedom of speech or political action? Amnesty International recently reported on the fate of one of your citizens who tried to exercise his human rights:

"Human rights defender Reza Abbasi was sentenced to one year's imprisonment in mid-October: six months for "insulting the Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran" and another six months for "propaganda against the system." He has been held in Zenjan Central Prison since his arrest in June, and has spent at least two months in solitary confinement. Reza Abbasi is a founder member of an organization which has been active in promoting democracy and human rights."

So much for human rights.

Equity and Protecting the Innocent. Let's see... We've covered hostages being beheaded, innocents being bombed,

religious expression being crushed, activists being imprisoned. What have we missed? Oh yes, writers and cartoonists being condemned to death. And outlawing little girls going to school. Then there's women being condemned to death by stoning for infidelity or for being a victim of rape. Getting stoned to death after being raped ... that's my idea of a bad day! They won't do that again! Allahu Akbar!

The Iraq Study Commission seems to think we should negotiate with low-life thugs like you and your buddy Bashar Al-Assad of the Peoples Democratic Islamic Tyranny of Syria. I've got a better idea. Why don't we have you take a walk in your own capital city without your bodyguards? Or take a stroll in downtown Baghdad. I have no doubt that you will be rewarded with just the right amount of Islamic justice.

Speaking of Allah and Islamic justice, did you hear what happened to Mohamed Atta when he arrived at the gates of heaven? When he got there, Allah was nowhere to be seen but, instead, George Washington appeared and punched Atta square in the nose. After he fell to his knees, Thomas Jefferson walked up and kicked him in the groin. James Madison, James Monroe and

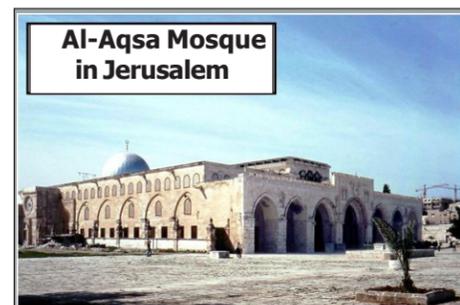
Patrick Henry then started to stomp on his head. When they were done, sixty-seven other of America's founding fathers took turns beating him to a pulp. Finally, Allah showed up and Atta asked him why he had lied about what he would get for killing all those innocent Americans. "What do you mean," Allah said. "I didn't lie!

I told you, if you carried out that terror attack, I would have you greeted in heaven by 72 Virginians."

Don't worry Mahmoud, the vast majority of Christians, Muslims, Jews, Hindus, and Buddhists who desire to live together peacefully in free and open societies know that God, the Compassionate, the Merciful, will take good care of you when your time comes. With a little luck, we'll have you for a few months in Guantanamo first.

Allahu Akbar!

Dr. Ormsby is a member of the North Andover School Committee. He is a graduate of Cornell and has a doctorate from MIT. If you have any questions or comments, you can contact Dr. Ormsby via email: ccormsby@comcast.net





From the Desk of **Methuen Mayor Bill Manzi**

New City Web Site Unveiled

You have probably already noticed the new city of Methuen Web site. The Web site has an easier navigation structure and some new interactivity, which we will continue to build on. We are already receiving interactive input from users.

Check out the new look at www.cityofmethuen.net. I would like to thank John Molori and King Lough from our I.T. Department. The new look was put together in-house at no additional cost to the city.



2007 City Census to be Sent Out this Month

The office of the city clerk will conduct its annual city census in January 2007. Conducting the census annually is mandated by state law, and its results are used for keeping the voting list current. The language on the census form regarding the removal of a voter from the active voting list as a consequence of failure to respond is not intended to be a threat; it merely states what the law says it must. It should also be noted that a voter's placement on the inactive list does not take away the voter's right to vote.

Census results are used to begin a statutory four (4) year process to remove voters who no longer reside in the city of Methuen from the city's voting list. The right to vote is so important that the only ways a person can be removed from a municipality's voting list are if he or she personally notifies the clerk's office that he or she has moved (or requests removal from the voting list), if the person is deceased, or if the person registers to vote in another community and notification is sent to the voter's old municipality.

Otherwise, state law mandates a process that requires that a voter be made inactive, be sent a confirmation mailing after being made inactive, and not vote in two consecutive state elections before the voter can be deleted from a voting list. A voter is rendered inactive if he or she does not respond to the annual census or to the subsequent confirmation mailing that is sent thereafter.

One important note is that a person cannot register to vote by responding to the census. If the person is not listed on the form, adding the person's name to the form will result in the person being listed as a resident, but not a voter. The only way to become a registered voter is to complete a voter registration affidavit, which can be obtained in person at the office of the city clerk, located in Room 112 at the Searles Building, 41 Pleasant Street, Methuen, or by calling (978) 983-8515 and requesting that a form be mailed to you for your completion and to be returned to the clerk's office. You can also register to vote at the Registry of Motor Vehicles when obtaining or renewing a driver's license.

Please feel free to contact the city clerk's office with any questions or concerns about the city census or voter registration.

Methuen Public Schools Receive Expanded School Day Grant

The Methuen school department has received a \$10,000 planning grant from the Massachusetts Department of Education to investigate increasing the amount of learning time provided to students at the elementary school level.

Methuen was one of a select group of districts across Massachusetts to receive a planning grant. Congratulations to Dr. Jeanne Whitten and the staff for the successful application.

Methuen Public Schools Receive Academic Support Competitive Grant

The Methuen public schools have received an Academic Support Competitive District Summer Transition and Enrichment Program Grant, totaling \$42,000.

The purpose of this grant is to provide students in the classes of 2010 and 2011 with a summer MCAS remediation program. The program is being funded by the Massachusetts Department of Education, which funded only eighteen of the sixty-three proposals it received. Once again, congratulations to Superintendent Jeanne Whitten and the staff for an outstanding job.

Book of the Month

Krista Macleod of the Nevins Library has submitted her book of the month, *Winterdance: The Fine Madness of Running the Iditarod*, by Gary Paulsen.

Though perhaps it doesn't feel like it this year, winter is here ... and a great story about survival and personal triumph in the winter landscape of Alaska is just the right book for curling up with in front of the fire! *Winterdance* is a wonderful rollercoaster ride of a book. It is the true story of author Paulsen, who trained for, and ran, the 1180-mile Alaskan dog sled race, the Iditarod. It is at times hilariously funny, and at times harrowingly exciting, as Paulsen and his dogsled team face a grueling season of training, the fear of the unknown as the race nears, and then the incredible challenge of the race itself, which is one of the last true physical and mental challenges of the American wilderness.

Gary Paulsen is a favorite writer, and his books about Alaska appeal to adults and young people alike. This is a great read for anyone!

This book is available at the Nevins Memorial Library. Click here for a link to the library website, www.nevinslibrary.org. Click on the catalog link to search for books. Or you may call the library at 978-686-4080 for help finding this and other titles.

This book may also be available through Borders Bookstore at the Loop in Methuen. Click here for a link to the Borders Web site, www.borders.com. All the best to you for a happy and safe New Year! Please contact me directly at wmanzi@ci.methuen.ma.us. Don't hesitate to drop me a line!

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Wilfredo Laboy: From Page 12

a few chosen administrators. Principals and teachers have learned how to access, analyze, and use student assessment data to set and execute improvement goals. In addition to assessment data, we examine staff and student attendance, new teacher retention rates, and discipline referrals, among many other things. Good data tells a story and allows for retrospection, reflection, and proper planning for school system transformation.

We have also worked to create a culture where teamwork is fundamental. Our professional learning environment provides ample opportunities for teachers to get together in a collegial manner to examine and construct new knowledge. It is expected that school teams engage in daily collaborative planning.

It is my role to continuously communicate and reinforce our school system's vision of transformation. I develop principal leadership and help principals expand teacher leadership. With hard work, we have built the leadership capacity throughout our schools to ensure that our transformation is successful and sustained.

BTB: You were elected president of the Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS) in 2005. Please describe the organization and its goals.

WL: ALAS is not just an acronym for the Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents—it was intentionally selected because it means wings in the Spanish language. It is our hope that the ALAS will generate wings to success for Latino educators.

ALAS is focused on identifying, training, and supporting Latino administrators and superintendents. By the year 2025, Latino children will comprise 25 percent of the nation's school-age population. In many states, Latinos have already reached that level, yet less than 1 percent of the nation's educational leaders are Latino.

We invite every system leader that serves the Latino school population, regardless of ethnicity, to join ALAS. There are currently about 2,500 Hispanic Serving School Districts (HSSDs), and we welcome them all. The truth of the matter is system leaders who have the largest population of Latino students under their care are not Latinos. ALAS is committed to framing our work to include all of those who serve our community, and to galvanizing all people to support public education for all children.

Public education is the bedrock of American democracy. One of our forefathers, Horace Mann, who steadfastly believed that all children had the right to a public education, wrote the charter for public schools in the city of Lawrence. I am grateful to him, the father of public education, and I proudly stand on his shoulders. I carry his vision forward through my work with ALAS and Lawrence Public Schools.

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Buying a New Home

Joe Zingales, Remax Prestige

Whether you've spent years saving and preparing to buy a home, or are unsure if you can afford it, the questions surrounding a home purchase can feel endless. Here are some tips to help you become your own landlord.

1. Hire a real estate professional.

The first step is to select a professional to help you find your dream home and fine-tune your financial expectations. Working with a buyer agent is worth consideration since he or she is legally responsible for representing the buyer's interest in a real estate transaction. Before making a decision, however, have a realtor explain the pros and cons of using a buyer agent versus a sales or dual agent.

2. Shop for mortgage rates and terms.

A difference of even half a percentage point can mean a huge savings over the life of a loan. For example, the difference in the monthly payment on a \$100,000 mortgage at 8 percent vs. 7.5 percent is about \$35 per month. Over 30 years, that's \$12,600.

3. Get pre-approved for a loan.

Your third step should be to get pre-approved, which determines how much you can afford. It allows you to move swiftly when you find the right home, especially when there are other interested buyers. It also indicates to the seller that you are serious and really can afford to buy the property.

4. Define what you want.

The next step is to create a realistic idea of the property you'd like to buy. What features are most important to you? Make two lists: one of the items you can't live without and one of the features you would enjoy. Refine the lists as you house hunt. It is also helpful to search online to see what is currently available on the market. Your real estate professional can then show you houses that meet your expectations.

5. Visit properties.

Now you're ready to visit houses. Ask your real estate professional to arrange showings, and keep track of the properties you've seen.

6. Know the features that help or hurt resale.

In some areas, a swimming pool actually detracts from a home's value and makes it harder to sell. In neighborhoods with two-car, attached garages, a single-car or

detached garage may impact the home sale and future value. Your real estate professional can point out features that hurt or help resale value.

7. Rate the houses you tour.

After touring each home, write down what you liked and didn't like. Develop a rating system that will help narrow the field down. For example, pick the house you like best on day one and compare all other houses to it. When you find a better one, use the new favorite as the standard.

8. Make an offer.

Once you've pinpointed your dream house, it's time to get serious about the financial and contractual side of the purchase. Your real estate professional will be a strong advantage since you and the seller have different goals.

9. Arrange for a home inspection.

After your offer is accepted, set up a home inspection. It's common to find problems, including leaky roofs, cracked walls, insect infestations and foundation problems. Your real estate professional can help find a reputable inspector, and will negotiate to get you the most for your money once the inspector's report is final. If you negotiate repairs as part of the purchase, ask for a "walk through" before finalizing the paperwork. Ask your real estate expert about home protection plans, which may save you money in the near future.

10. Close.

Before your closing date, make sure you've made all necessary deposits and completed the paperwork - including mortgage, title, homeowners insurance and any other paperwork required by local or state governments. Remember to bring your ID to the closing.

11. Prepare for life in your new home.

Before rolling out the welcome mat, consider some moving basics: arranging for an alarm company, turning on electricity, water and gas, cleaning or replacing the carpet, and notifying your local post office of your new address. The best time for renovations is often before you move in.

Congratulations! You've joined the ranks of home ownership. Next month we'll discuss certain steps more in depth, beginning with home inspections. Stay tuned!!



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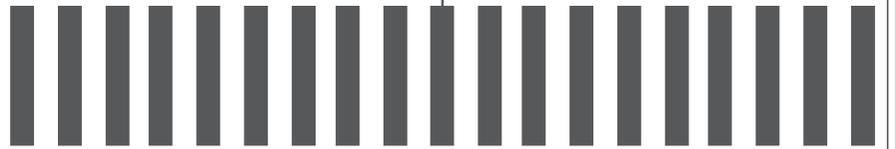
EVERY MONDAY:
BAKED STUFFED PEPPERS

EVERY TUESDAY & SUNDAY:
STUFFED GRAPE LEAVES

EVERY THURSDAY:
NEW ENGLAND BOILED DINNER

EVERY SUNDAY:
ROAST LEG OF LAMB

EVERY SATURDAY:
BAKED STUFFED CABBAGE



Methuen Senior Center Events Calender

**Jan 4 Lions Club Speech Contest.
6:00pm. All are invited!**

**Jan 6 Cabaret! The Entertainers.
7:30pm. \$7.00pp.**

**Jan 11 Better Days Ahead 6 week program.
9-11:30am.**

Jan 15 Martin Luther King Day. Center closed.

**Jan 16 Foot Care Clinic. \$25 .
1:00pm. By Appt. Only.**

Jan 16 AARP Meeting. 1:00pm.

**Jan 18 Better Days Ahead 6 week program.
9-11:30am.**

**Jan 20 Cabaret! Pete Saran.
7:30pm. \$7.00pp.**

**Jan 25 Better Days Ahead 6 week program.
9-11:30am.**

Jan 31 N.A.R.F.E. 2:00pm.

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My 2007 Wish List

Debbie Quinn, Methuen City Councilor

The city of Methuen, as all cities and towns, is responsible for delivering services to you twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. I am really excited about what is coming up in 2007 in the way we deliver those city services to the people of Methuen.

Whether it is police and fire services (in case of an emergency), or roadwork, bridge repairs, assessing your property values, educating the children of Methuen, or even something as simple as helping you get a permit to make needed home improvements, municipal services are something you rarely think about. Those of us charged with providing those services, however, have to think about them all the time. So, for 2007, here is my wish list for providing better city services to our residents.

Public Safety

Effective public safety services are crucial to any community for it to prosper and grow. In Methuen we are blessed with terrific police and fire departments. Methuen's police officers and firefighters are dedicated professionals who keep us safe 24-7, and willingly put themselves in harm's way to protect us on a moment's notice.

As our city grows, so does the need for upgrades to these two departments. On the lips of many residents lately is the increasing need for a new fire station on the east side of Methuen. My wish is that these residents are not still talking about it next January because a new fire station will have been built by then. The police department could use new cars to replace the outdated ones that they have now. We have to pay more attention to those individuals who provide our public safety services and listen to what they say they need to perform the dangerous and critical task of keeping us safe in times of crisis. I also wish that in 2007 our public officials will recognize the hard work these public servants do every day and stop using them as political pawns.

Methuen's Infrastructure

Our infrastructure has come a long way in the past few years and the work of our department of public works is tremendous. On any given day you will see Ray Difiore and Jay Bonnanno working on a multitude of different projects, keeping up with the ever growing demand of maintaining the city's roads, bridges and public properties. But, there is so much more to do in 2007 with the increase of new home construction (which will bring more traffic) and the increase of new businesses moving into the city.

What bothers me the most is the absence of sidewalks along each route heading to and from our grammar schools. This should definitely be on our 2007 priority list. From what I understand, sidewalks are very expensive so we need to get creative as a community to fund more sidewalks for the safety of our school children. My wish for 2007 is a public-private partnership with community organizations like the Rotary Club to help fund sidewalks for our kids to walk on while traveling to and from school every day.

The parcel of land along the Merrimack River where Bea's Sandwich shop used to stand has been and will be one of



my pet projects for the coming year. Governor Patrick has just restored the frozen monies that were to begin this transformation. With the help of my committee, the mayor, and interested citizens of Methuen, we can restore this pristine gem to a priceless place for all to enjoy.

Energy Efficiency

Mayor Manzi has put together a Commission on Energy Efficiency and Green Government, which I am proud to have been appointed to. Global Warming is real. It is here and now and we must take it seriously to ensure the health and future of our world. There are safe and efficient alternatives to reducing carbon emissions that will also improve public health and create jobs. But we can also conserve energy and save the taxpayers' money at the same time by conserving fuel consumption and taking advantage of energy-efficient ways to reduce our costs and help the environment at the same time.

The University of Massachusetts is one of the first universities to offer green science courses. As a community, we can receive a wealth of knowledge from them and take advantage of the benefits in the future. Solar power and wind power are paramount in the future of this community and this country, and my wish list for 2007 includes having many workshops and disseminating as much information about green science to the community as possible.

TAXES TAXES TAXES

What can be said that has not already been beaten out of our pockets or pocketbooks? The truth of the matter is taxes will probably not go down anytime soon. Commercial real estate and innovative new business ventures must be top priorities this coming year. Methuen would be a perfect place for higher education and medical research. Our possibilities are endless.

As far as the high school goes, its time has finally come. The dream of a new or refurbished school is about to take on a life of its own. This has been greatly needed for a very long time. With the mayor and the new superintendent, Jeanne Whitten, leading the charge, the children of Methuen will be the keepers of a great new educational experience that they so deserve.

A Master Plan

A city without an adequate master plan is like a pilot without a map or cockpit instruments to tell him where he is going. The master plan in Methuen has been a vision of the new Manzi administration. A plan will assess our new growth, the proposed new developments and the direction of that growth, so that we can make sure we are not growing too fast or too slow to sustain our tax base and/or city services. The downtown area is in great need of restoration and the renovation of this area could produce great wealth for the community and small businesses. Needed components in this area should be an increase in affordable housing to help with the state's 40B quota. Also, a new business parking garage, restaurants, a new post office — all these will help to modernize and energize the community.

Honoring Our Vets

John Lenotte, American Legion

With the holiday season now behind us, it is a time to reflect on individuals and organizations that "stepped up to the plate" and helped or recognized others. Roger Clark of the Merrimac Legion Post is one of those persons. Along with members of his post, Roger set up a veterans breakfast on Veterans Day. Fred Richard of the Salisbury Legion Post did the same in Salisbury. Lillian Eaton of Amesbury was recognized as Woman Veteran of the Year for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. She also is the chief organizer of the annual Pearl Harbor Memorial ceremony sponsored each year by the Haverhill AMVETS Post. Roger Gaumont, Lillian Eaton and Ron Koontz of Amesbury coordinated with other veterans groups in Amesbury to have a salute to the troops on December 17th. Approximately 175 people attended to pay tribute to those from Amesbury who have or are serving during the current conflict, be they active duty, Guard or Reserve. The mayor of Amesbury, Thatcher Kezer, is a Lt. Colonel in the AF Reserve. This was the 5th year this program was held, handing out citations to veterans and providing a meal for all who attended.



Thanks to the efforts of Veterans' Agent Ed Curran, the city of Methuen held an event on December 7th, also honoring those from Methuen who have or are serving in the current War on Terrorism. Mayor Manzi, along with other city officials, newly elected state Representative Linda Dean Campbell and Massachusetts Director of Veterans Services Tom Kelly (a Vietnam veteran who was awarded the Medal of Honor) were in attendance along with a large crowd. Citations were given out to the current group of veterans from Methuen.

Donna Blattenburger, a Lawrence resident who is a member of American Legion Auxiliary Unit #122 of Methuen coordinated a birthday party for veterans in residence at the Soldiers Home in Chelsea. This party was on December 28th, for those who had a birthday in December. Donations were given by the Legion posts in Andover, Gloucester, Methuen, Merrimac, Haverhill, Rockport and Boxford. The Peabody Legion post worked with other Peabody veterans groups to host a dinner, entertainment and gifts for veterans from the Soldiers Home in Chelsea.

I would like to note that it was a pleasure to see some of our local politicians stepping up to the plate to recognize local citizen soldiers who carry on the tradition of our early Minutemen. Elections were over, yet they were there with genuine sincerity and pride in our troops. We need more like those who are mentioned above. I am sure I missed a few names, but unfortunately, there are many who only talk the political talk, but don't "step up to the plate" when the time comes. And the names I did mention are always there to help and work with our veterans. We need more like them. What is your New Year's resolution? Can you work with and/or join a local veterans group? There are so many worthy projects that need help and so few to carry on the traditions and tasks. Speaking for the American Legion, we are veterans still serving America. And we need your help. Can you step up to the plate?



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