



Rep. Brian S. Dempsey cuts the boardwalk ribbon. To the left of him is Lisa B. Alberghini, president of the Planning Office for Urban Affairs, a Harbor Place partner; To his right are Jacquie Moloney, UMass Lowell chancellor; Mayor James J. Fiorentini; and Sally Cerasuolo O'Rorke, Greater Haverhill Foundation. Among those in rear are Rep. Linda Dean Campbell, City Councilors Colin F. LePage, Melinda E. Barrett and Andy Vargas.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony in downtown Haverhill Friday marked a connection between new and existing portions of the Merrimack River boardwalk off Merrimack Street.

The public and dignitaries, including Mayor James J. Fiorentini, Rep. Brian S. Dempsey and several city councilors, gathered for the ceremony behind Haverhill Bank, where an existing portion of boardwalk meets a newly constructed section extending to the rear of the ongoing Harbor Place development project. The ribbon cutting topped a so-called sneak peek public tour of the new boardwalk section between Haverhill Bank and the Basiliere Bridge. However, during ongoing construction at Harbor Place, public access to the

new section between Haverhill Bank and the Landmark building will, as within the construction area, remain closed for the time being, according to Chief of Staff David S. Van Dam.

"Friday's sneak peek was to give residents an opportunity to see and feel the project. Due to active construction, safety and liability concerns, that portion of the boardwalk will remain closed until it is safe for residents to freely walk on the boardwalk," Van Dam told WHAV.

A timetable was not immediately available but, as WHAV reported last week, Friday's tour was "the only time the public will have full access to the boardwalk before the official opening of Harbor Place at the end of the year," according to Harbor Place developer Merrimack Street Ventures.

"Hundreds of members of the public had an opportunity to tour the boardwalk for the first time and saw a 'sneak peek' of the new Harbor Place project," a statement from Fiorentini reads. "We thank Rep. Brian Dempsey. This project would not have happened without him."

As WHAV also reported last March, a \$19 million state MassWorks grant paid many of the costs associated with the \$68 million Harbor Place project. Of that amount, \$3,352,499 was designated toward the boardwalk extension, according to a June 30, 2014 agreement between Haverhill and the state.

Merrimack Street Ventures is a consortium including the Boston Archdiocese's Planning Office for Urban Affairs and Greater Haverhill Foundation.

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