

The Lamp Post

Nov 24, 2016



With **\$9 million** from the state announced by **Gov. Charlie Baker** for **downtown Merrimack Street** recently, wonder **what else** the **city and developers** have **in the works** for the street?

Property in that **eastern end of downtown** is **gaining value** — and it's clear **developers are eyeing it**.

Sal Lupoli, founder of the **Sal's Pizza empire**, plans to **build a restaurant** near the **river boardwalk**.

Well-known **local lawyer Scott Gleason**, whose **offices** have been **on Merrimack Street** for more than **two decades**, said he has been approached and **asked to sell his property**.

The **\$9 million from the state** is **on top of more than \$20 million** Massachusetts **spent on Harbor Place** at the **eastern end of Merrimack Street**. **Harbor Place** will contain a **UMass Lowell satellite campus**, a variety of **businesses and housing** — all **designed to boost the economy** in that end of **downtown**.

Speaking of the governor ...

During **Gov. Baker's downtown visit**, he **toured** the **new boardwalk** along the **Merrimack River**. The boardwalk is **part of Harbor Place**.

The **governor** was here to **tour Harbor Place**, which was made possible by a **multimillion-dollar partnership** of the **state and private developers**.

Baker's visit was a **chance for** proud state **Rep. Brian Dempsey** of Haverhill to **shoulder up the governor** and **show off the resurgent downtown**, **Dempsey** used his **political influence** to **bring the Harbor Place money to Haverhill**, and was **anxious to show Baker** what the money has accomplished.

'Trumping the signs'

If you were driving on **I-495** past **Ward Hill** early last week, you might have noticed **lots of Trump signs** near the big **"American Dog" metal statue** — a landmark in the area.

It was a **week after the election**, and the **signs were placed** there **after Donald Trump won** the presidency. The **signs appeared to be a celebratory gesture**.

The **largest sign** displayed the words **"Democrats for Trump."** The **other signs** were **smaller** and simply **displayed the Trump name**.

Within a day or two, the **signs were removed**.

Losing its look

Remember **a few years ago** when **local downtown supporters** came up with a **novel way to dress up the area?**

They decided to **paint forks, knives and spoons on crosswalks** which **lead to restaurants**.

The idea was to **give the area a unique look** — something that **would catch the eyes of downtown visitors**.

It did the trick, becoming a **topic of conversation** among **downtown types**.

But the **charm** of the decorative walkways **is gone**.

Next time you're near the **bottom of Locust Street**, take a look at the **crosswalk** leading to the **entrance to Maria's restaurant**. The **images of eating utensils** are **faded** and **all but gone**.

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MON 28
Methuen Festival of Trees: 23rd Annual...
Methuen Festival o... | Methuen, MA
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