

Top Items from Table Discussion at Possible Dreams 2017

City-Wide

- **Downtown Development** was a leading focus of discussion. Recent progress has sparked many hopes and dreams for “next” treasures, including: bookstore, theater, green spaces, dog park, boutiques and pop-up shops, improved passageways, amenities for families and elders, public makers space, more focus on employment opportunities.
- **Education** was another leading focus. Hopes included access to pre-school for all families, and a host of ways to improve K-12 education including: more city-wide dialogue about needs and priorities; attention to school infrastructure and beautification; internships for middle- and high-school students; teacher residencies as incentive; fuller use of social media to enhance education and engagement; and fuller community use of Haverhill High facilities.
- **Youth-Oriented Organizations** are highly valued in Haverhill. Often mentioned were the YMCA, YWCA, Girls Inc., and the Haverhill Boys and Girls Club, along with POSE, Inc., Haverhill Inner City Boxing (Lafayette Square), and Haverhill Downtown Boxing (Locust St.)
- **Local Food and Farms** were mentioned often, including the existing Haverhill Farmers’ Market, the possibility of more “mobile farmers’ markets,” increasing the number of community gardens all over the city, more “farm to table” opportunities, and full implementation of Merrimack Valley Food Co-op as a new food-shopping option for Haverhill residents.
- **Natural Resources/Recreation Areas** came up frequently among Haverhill’s treasures. Much excitement was expressed about the opening of Bradford Rail Trail and its Artwalk component. For the future, residents hope for more picnic and gathering areas, easier access to town forest, expanded acreage under conservation agreements more progress on “Complete Streets” initiatives, becoming a “green community,” more use of the Merrimack River for boating/kayaking/fishing, expanding boardwalk from Methuen to Groveland town lines, renewing boating program at Plug Pond, and summer recreation at Riverside park.
- **Tourism and Cultural Resources** were prominent themes. People hope to “put Haverhill back on the map” as a destination for visitors and potential residents; to build further upon historical assets (such as the six “Cultural Treasures” organizations) to express Haverhill’s distinctive identity; to feature Haverhill’s architecture and public art with more walking tours; and to feature historical figures who contributed to the nation’s development.
- **Haverhill Public Library** is a highly valued community asset, and residents hope for more “pop-up libraries” throughout the city. **Virtual Stories** projects (such as Haverhill Go) are desired, to connect more people to more of Haverhill’s special places. And finally, more **Communication** from City government about upcoming projects is desired.

Neighborhoods

- **Downtown:** Current and hoped-for treasures in the downtown residential area overlapped considerably with the citywide items labeled “Downtown Development.” Columbus Park and downtown restaurants are highly valued. Hopes include: café on the Riverwalk, improved parking, repaired sidewalks, bookstore, theater, green spaces, dog park, boutiques and pop-up shops, improved passageways, amenities for families and elders as well as young adults and empty nesters.
- **Acre, Lower Hilldale, Mt. Washington:** Churches in these communities were often mentioned at treasures (such as Rehoboth, Community Christian Fellowship, St. James), along with Fantini Bakery, neighborhood deli’s and markets, Tilton School, the water park at Swasey Field, 12th Avenue Playground, Portland Street Playground, Academy of Creative Arts (at Trinity Episcopal),

walkability of neighborhoods, and the people of the neighborhoods! Newer treasures include: playground at GAR Park, Anna Jacques Medical on Primrose St., new Fantini buildings, Marigold Montessori Pre-School, Citywide Youth Chorus, Mt. Washington Alliance, Swasey improvements, and community gardens. Hopes include: Pre-school for all; “all people succeed”; update Westgate Plaza; redevelop St. Georges’ site; more community gardens, Mt. Washington events (like street fair), tree-lined streets, public safety improvements, access to upper Hilldale.

- **Highlands, Riverside, Walnut Square:** Current treasures include Buttonwoods Museum and Trail, Elmwood Cemetery, First Landing Park, Lake Saltonstall (Plug Pond), Riverside Park, Riverside Yacht Club, historic homes/Victorian architecture, Walnut Square School, Trinity Stadium. Newer treasures include: Groveland Bridge, Highlands Neighborhood Association, Plug Pond improvements, Rocks Village Walking Tours, Little Libraries, Marianna’s Café, new CVS. Hopes include: animal shelter, revitalized Rivers Edge Plaza (Starbuck’s, movie theater), revitalize Riverside Park, add concert venue, Buttonwoods Shoe Museum, city historical photo archive, Highlands historic markers and historic district.
- **East Side:** Current treasures include Whittier Homestead, Millvale Reservoir, Whittier Tech, East Parish Meeting House, Rocks Village Hand Tub House (with recent renovations), Farm Maze, Renaissance Golf Club, East Meadow River watershed lands (protected), and relationships between East Parish and Cultural Treasures like Winnekenni Park/Castle, Lake Kenoza, Round Pond. Hopes include replacement of Whittier Middle School, investment in local farms, river access, kite festival (Winnekenni plans to pursue this one!), better roads and sidewalks, more renewable energy, and Overlook Park and abandoned house art installation. An innovative plan was proposed for marketing East Side amenities to visitors who come by boat to spend the day in Haverhill.
- **West Side (beyond 495):** The rural, agricultural, and residential feel of this section, and ample open spaces, featured prominently in discussion of treasures, including: Hilldale Cemetery/trails, Dudley’s flower and garden, Srybny Farm, Tattersall Farm, Crystal Golf Gourse, and local restaurants. Newer treasures include increased programming at Dustin-Duston Garrison House, Garrison Golf, and Willow Springs Vineyard. Many hopes focus on open space and recreation: expansion of walking, hiking, horseback and bike trails; parks and play-areas; bird sanctuary areas; enforcement of litter and conservation area rules; dog park; sidewalks (N. Broadway and Hilldale); underground utilities; community center/firehouse in Ayers Village; multi-cultural activities/outreach; further development of Hilldale Cemetery as historical gem; comprehensive open space plan.
- **Bradford/Ward Hill:** Bradford Common was mentioned frequently as a longstanding treasure, along with former Bradford College property (now Northpoint Bible College), Bradford Ski, Silsby Farm (Chris’ Farmstand), Cedardale, Skateland, Carter’s ice cream and Ari’s subs. New treasures include Cogswell Artspace (in development) and the Hunking School; SteamPunk Café, Albie D’s, new café in Bradford Square, the new “Gimme Chews” pet food store, and the NextDoor Bradford online community. Hopes include expansion of the Rail Trail, river access, and other recreational trails; planting more trees; more bus stops on Salem St.; repair of sidewalks and streets; retail, including food trucks and pop-up shops; and tours to explore the ruins of the old Grand Hotel.