

***Town of Weymouth
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Press Release

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Final Touches Made to Weymouth's Smelt Brook Walkway

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Weymouth, MA – In late October, final touches were made by the DPW, Planning, and Conservation Departments to the Smelt Brook Walkway in Weymouth Landing, a complicated project that has been ongoing for decades.

The plans to daylight the Smelt Brook go back to the permitting for the Greenbush branch of the Old Colony Rail Line. Originally, the MBTA was to take responsibility for the daylighting project as mitigation for the MBTA Greenbush Commuter Rail Project. At that time, the location of the daylighted portion of the Smelt Brook was the Braintree municipal parking lot in Weymouth Landing. In 2003, under Mayor David Madden, the Town agreed to uncover a portion of the stream on its own. However, the project languished for years due to insufficient funding. The MassDEP issued a Ch. 91 License requesting 150 linear feet of the Brook be replaced with an open channel.

In 2016, after Mayor Hedlund took office, the town moved forward with the stalled project. After realizing the original location for the daylighting was not feasible due to a private development on the original site, Mayor Hedlund accessed funding to study the

site of the abandoned Ye Old Brook Grill, owned by Nick Delegas, and determined it was the project's preferred location. In an agreement with the Town, Delegas granted an easement for the project in exchange for the necessary permits to demolish the Brick Grill.

In 2016, The Town received \$1.6 million in MassWorks infrastructure funding for the daylighting of the Smelt Brook. The project aimed to realign and unearth the Smelt Brook to create an open-air channel with plans for an adjoining pedestrian plaza and viewing areas to the water below. A second MassWorks of \$640,000 was received in October 2018 for Phase II of the project, funding to replace the deteriorated culvert beneath Commercial Street. Since its completion, the project has increased access to local businesses, creating a new foundation for pedestrian activity. Signage and landscaping elements were the final pieces of the project recently added to the walkway, creating an attractive, safe path from Washington Street to the municipal parking lot.

The ecological improvement to the Smelt Brook comes on the heels of improvements to other significant ecological resources in town, including: the replacement of failed flood control gates at the Herring Run, the repair of the Puritan Road culvert and restoration of the adjacent Salt Marsh, the demolition and removal of the incinerator and the creation of a fish ladder to help restore marine habitat at Pond Meadow.

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