

*Town of Weymouth
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Press Release

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Firm hired to advance Smelt Brook daylighting

Project will support economic development in Weymouth Landing.

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Weymouth, MA – Mayor Robert Hedlund and the Weymouth Redevelopment Authority have awarded a design contract to EBI Consulting of Quincy for uncovering and daylighting the Smelt Brook in Weymouth Landing. The project aims to revitalize public space in the village center and compliment private development plans.

“This project is a key step to supporting new development and fueling revitalization in the Landing,” **said Mayor Hedlund.** “I’m glad to have EBI on board and look forward to seeing their work.”

EBI Consulting will design plans to install a 150-foot-long open-air channel in Weymouth Landing. The channel will replace a six-foot-wide concrete pipe that carries the Smelt Brook beneath the village center. Known as “daylighting”, this process of physically uncovering and restoring buried streams is proven to help preserve and protect important waterways in highly urbanized areas. It has also been shown to mitigate flooding, improve habitat and nutrient retention, and enhance the livability of downtown centers.

The Smelt Brook is the historic border between the towns of Weymouth and Braintree. The headwaters of the small stream flow beneath the Landing under several buildings, Commercial Street, and the municipal parking lot before joining with the Weymouth Fore River. Buried for nearly a century, the stream is a conduit for the annual migration of smelt that travel upstream from the ocean to spawn.

Plans to daylight the Smelt Brook go back to 2005 when the project was made a requirement of the Ch. 91 permitting process for the approval of the Greenbush Commuter Rail line restoration. The original location of the daylighting was to be a traffic island situated inside the municipal parking lot. However, state funds were depleted before the project could begin.

In 2011, [a Town-sponsored report prepared by the Pare Corporation](#) proposed relocating the daylighting's location upstream, adjacent to the former Ye Old Brick Grill near the intersection on Commercial Street. The owners of the property, Nick and George Delegas, agreed to grant an easement to the Town to allow the daylighting.

"Daylighting the Smelt Brook fits very well with our vision for the Landing," **explained Mayor Hedlund**. "It allows us to protect and celebrate the Brook's historic path while also promoting a vibrant, pedestrian friendly environment. It's a win-win all around."

By creating a scenic waterfront passage between the buildings, street, and municipal lot, the daylighting project aims to build upon the \$2.4 million in state-funded road and streetscape improvements completed in 2010 by the Towns of Weymouth and Braintree. It will also create and beautify public space in the village center, making it more attractive for walking and shopping and further enhancing the marketability of private mixed-used developments planned in both communities.

In Braintree, Josh Katzen of Heller Property Management LLC of Cambridge is proceeding with a \$45 million development of more than 11,000 square feet of commercial space for retail and restaurants with 172 market rate apartments located on the floors above.

In Weymouth, Nick and George Delegas of Lexington recently demolished a string of dilapidated buildings on Commercial Street, and the brothers are currently revising plans to build market rate apartments with storefronts beneath.

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