

*Town of Weymouth
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Press Release

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Weymouth awarded \$1.6 million in MassWorks funding for Smelt Brook daylighting in Weymouth Landing

The daylighting will create a new pedestrian space to support mixed-use, transit-oriented development in the village center.

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Weymouth, MA – Housing and Economic Development Secretary Jay Ash announced today the award of \$1.6 million in MassWorks infrastructure funding to the Town of Weymouth for daylighting of the Smelt Brook in Weymouth Landing. The Brook, which currently runs beneath the Landing, will be uncovered to create an open-air channel and pedestrian plaza in the village center. The streamside walkway will help beautify the Landing and support a \$22 million mixed-used development currently planned by developer Nick Delegas of Lexington.

“This project has been a long-time coming and is a vital part of our plans to unlock outstanding economic opportunities in Weymouth Landing,” **said Mayor Robert Hedlund.** “This area has been dominated by a sense of disinvestment for too many years. With MassWorks funding, we’re going to create a high-quality public space that will help transform the Landing into a unique place to live and shop.”

Plans to daylight the Smelt Brook go back to 2003, when the Town agreed to uncover a portion of the stream as mitigation for the MBTA Greenbush Commuter Rail project. The MassDEP issued a Ch. 91 License requesting 150 linear feet of the Brook be replaced with an open channel. In 2011, the Town chose the site of the abandoned Ye Old Brick Grill, owned by Nick Delegas, as the project’s preferred location. In an agreement with the

Town, Delegas will grant an easement for the project in exchange for the necessary permits to demolish the Brick Grill.

Funding from the MassWorks Infrastructure Program is expected to cover the full cost of the daylighting, including rerouting the Brook away from existing buildings, constructing an open-air channel and viewing area, and installing a streamside walkway and pedestrian plaza with green space. The project will support a multi-million dollar development currently under design by Delegas, which will consist of approximately 13,000 square feet of ground-floor retail with residential units on the floors above. With an enhanced sense of place and aesthetics in the Landing, the Town hopes to attract new transit-oriented residents that will support a commercial space revival.

Study, design, and permitting for the project has been underway since April. The Town chose EBI Consulting of Quincy to lead the work due to their first-hand experience in daylighting streams in downtown areas. The firm helped prepare the specifications for the Town Brook Relocation Project in Quincy Center in 2012 – a project that received \$10.1 million in MassWorks funding to reroute approximately 1,200 feet of a subterranean stream and daylight over 200 feet of the waterway within a new public space.

“There’s no question that MassWorks funding will bring positive change to Weymouth Landing,” **said Director of Planning and Community Development Bob Luongo.** “With this grant, we have the capacity to leverage a unique local asset and aggressively pursue new, sustainable development which will help to improve the quality of life and business in the area.”

“We are fortunate to have received this grant. It’s a true economic development partnership between the Town, Delegas, the Department of Housing and Economic Development, and the Mayors of Braintree and Quincy. We all recognize the untapped opportunities in Weymouth Landing. We want them realized so we can see new jobs, more housing choices, and more growth in the regional economy,” **said Mayor Hedlund.**

“The Landing is fast becoming a destination for restaurants, retail, and residential,” said **Mayor Joseph C. Sullivan of Braintree.** “This shared area is being revitalized with the cooperation of two communities, and the investment of public and private dollars,” **said Sullivan.** “In 2020 the Landing will be the place to be.”

The MassWorks Infrastructure Program provides a one-stop shop for municipalities and other public entities seeking public works funding to support housing production, economic development, and job creation. The highly-competitive 2016 grant round generated 114 applications, requesting \$287 million in state support. Transit-oriented projects that encourage downtown revitalization and leverage private investment are considered strong candidates for funding. The infrastructure projects funded in the 2016 grant round are expected to generate \$1 billion in private investment.

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