



PRESERVATION ADVOCACY UPDATE

2025 PRESERVATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

In 2025, HSI played an active role in shaping the future of Salem through preservation advocacy. The Preservation Committee engaged with several major development projects while contributing to design improvements, policy discussions, and community-based initiatives across the city. At the same time, HSI strengthened its internal capacity through new tools, clearer communication strategies, and expanded public-facing advocacy content, supporting more coordinated and effective engagement.

PROJECT ADVOCACY

SHETLAND PARK (proposed 40R)

Focused significant advocacy efforts on this project. Issued an official position statement, met with the Mayor and other stakeholders, consulted with coastal expert Barbara Warren, and produced a regional coastal development comparison.

FOREST RIVER RESIDENCES (40R)

Successfully advocated for enhanced design standards within the 40R zoning and for preservation of the historic St. Chretienne buildings.

EL CENTRO, Goldberg Building

Despite concerns about demolition timing, funding assurances, and design setbacks, HSI worked with North Shore CDC to successfully advocate for inclusion of brick elements in the approved design.

AC MARRIOTT HOTEL, Canal Street

Advocated for inclusion of interpretive elements honoring the historic Eagle Iron Foundry, as well as improvements to the parking enclosure design.

MARGIN ST (40R), Harborlights/Lifebridge

Long-term advocacy efforts helped shape stronger design standards and preservation outcomes, including retention of 20 Endicott St and the historic church facade.

CRESCENT LOT, The Exchange

Influenced revisions to exterior materials, resulting in a more contextually appropriate color palette aligned with the surrounding cityscape.

SALEM COMMON BANDSTAND

Provided input advocating for an accessibility solution that better reflects the historic design of the structure.

ORGANIZATIONAL AND ADVOCACY CAPACITY BUILDING

CITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE

Reinforced HSI as a collaborative preservation partner to key city boards and commissions, including the Planning Board, Salem Redevelopment Authority, Design Review Board, Salem Historical Commission, and Zoning Board of Appeals.

WEBSITE RELAUNCH, Advocacy Section

Launched a new HSI website featuring a dedicated Advocacy section with project overviews for all active projects, designed to better inform and engage the community.

PROGRAMS & EVENTS

PRESERVATION AWARDS & HISTORIC HOME EXPO, September 2025

Delivered a successful Preservation Awards event, including the inaugural Historic Home Expo connecting homeowners with preservation-focused vendors and craftspeople. Collaborated with the Salem High School CTE culinary program.

COMMUNITY-BASED INITIATIVES

GREATER ENDICOTT STREET NEIGHBORHOOD (GESN) SURVEY

Secured a \$12,500 Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) grant, matched by private fundraising, to support a historic neighborhood survey documenting and preserving the neighborhood's history and significance.

2026 PRESERVATION PRIORITIES

In 2026, HSI will continue to focus on proactive and strategic advocacy as Salem navigates ongoing development pressures. Key priorities include sustained engagement on large-scale projects, advancing preservation-focused outcomes within approved zoning frameworks, and addressing challenges related to housing growth and neighborhood impact. The organization will also work to expand public engagement and improve access to information, ensuring that preservation remains a visible and relevant part of Salem's future.

SHETLAND PARK (proposed 40R)

Advance advocacy on density, infrastructure, and climate resilience, engaging City Council and key stakeholders.

FOREST RIVER RESIDENCES (40R)

Track ongoing design review and advocate for adherence to approved standards and commitments.

GESN HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY

Work with MHC and the consultant to complete a comprehensive historical survey of the neighborhood.

WEBSITE & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Expand Advocacy section to provide clear, accessible, and actionable information for the community.

CRESCENT LOT & HISTORIC COURTHOUSES

Monitor project sequencing and advocate for timely investment in the adaptive reuse of the courthouses.

5 BROAD STREET

Monitor conditions and work with the City to address structural decline and ensure appropriate outcomes.

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT STUDY

Continue development of a comprehensive analysis of recent and planned housing growth in Salem.

HARBORLIGHTS/LIFEBRIDGE (40R)

Continue monitoring as the project advances into subsequent phases.

PROJECTS CURRENTLY BEING MONITORED

HSI volunteers are actively monitoring a range of projects across Salem, from large-scale developments under 40R zoning to smaller municipal and community-focused initiatives such as brick sidewalk preservation. This ongoing work ensures that preservation considerations remain part of project review at all scales.

5 Broad Street • AC Hotel by Marriott (17 Canal St) • Crescent Lot (252 Bridge St) & Historic Courthouses (32-34 Federal St) • El Centro (73-75 Lafayette St) • Forest River Residences, 40R (Harrison Rd + Loring Ave) • GESN Historic Neighborhood Survey (Greater Endicott Street Neighborhood) • Harborlights/Lifebridge, 40R (Margin St + Endicott St) • Jerry's Department Store (301 Essex St) • Pioneer Village/Camp Naumkeag • Salem Common Bandstand • Shetland Park, proposed 40R (27 Congress St) • Tabernacle Church (50 Washington St)