

Seeing positive developments downtown

By Gayla Cawley / The Daily Item | Posted: Saturday, October 10, 2015 3:00 am

LYNN — Three longtime downtown residents remain happy about their decisions to live there, and have liked the positive changes that have taken place since they moved into the area a decade ago.

Mike Crouse, 40, said he moved downtown in 2005 and lives in Central Square, above Cafe Moka in the Keith building. He said he moved in right around the time that the old mill buildings were being converted into condominiums.

Crouse, a civil engineer who works in Marlborough, said he and his wife were living in a small apartment in Cambridge prior to moving to Lynn. He had originally wanted to move to Boston, but prices were better in Lynn.

At the time, his wife was working in downtown Boston and when Crouse started looking at Lynn, it helped that it was still near the city. He is also originally from the North Shore, as he grew up in Newburyport and his parents both grew up in Danvers.

“We felt it was worth the risk,” Crouse said. “We thought that it was an area on the rise. It provided a lot of the things we were looking for. For the price, we could have gotten a place the third of the size in Cambridge. We felt really good with the decision.”

Crouse said he enjoys being close to the water as he runs on the boardwalk on Lynn Shore Drive three to four times a week. He likes how close he is to downtown Boston and to New Hampshire. He said he can drive a mile and a half and be in Lynn Woods. When things are going on in the neighborhood, he’s within walking distance to those events and can walk to a bar or restaurant afterwards.

Crouse also enjoys being in an area that’s changing. He said progress has been slower than expected because the economy took a downturn right around the time he and his wife bought their property. However, he does see change. He said R.F. O’Sullivan’s took a chance with opening up a location in the area and he was excited to see Cafe Moka open up.

“I see progress being made within the last year after a number of years being kind of a bust,” Crouse



Downtown Lynn

George Herrell stands in front of his home, the Sloan Machinery Lofts on Essex Street in Lynn.

said.

For changes, Crouse said the parking situation needs to improve. He said signs need to be more clear with when and where people are allowed to park in certain areas and that having parking spots specifically for residents only would be an attraction for people to move downtown. He also thinks that the town should be a little more cognizant of the businesses that are brought in.

“All in all, I definitely think that it’s a hidden gem that people are starting to hear about more,” Crouse said.

George Herrell, 45, who works in advertising and is the owner of Money Mailer, said he has been living downtown for 10 years now. He lives in Sloan Machinery Lofts on Essex Street.

Herrell said he had been living in South Boston prior to his move to Lynn and was looking for a nice loft. He said the lofts in Lynn were affordable and the city was near Boston, where he was working at the time.

Herrell said he enjoys the type of people who live downtown. He likes the convenience of getting to nice businesses, restaurants and entertainment.

“I like to run and having the beach and Lynn Woods so accessible is a huge plus,” Herrell said.

Herrell said he’s seen the most growth in the area within the past couple of years, such as new restaurants opening up and the Lynn Auditorium doing more shows.

“It really feels like downtown Lynn is on the rise,” Herrell said. “It’s a good feeling.”

When Herrell first moved downtown, he said there was basically just what a person needed to get by. He said there was a place to go to for everything a person needed, but there was not much variety.

For future changes, Herrell said he would like to see a rooftop patio restaurant and bar and a pedestrian-only street somewhere downtown, even if it’s just for weekends.

Teri Faulisi, 42, who works as an application software delivery advisor for a nationally managed healthcare company, said she has been living downtown for 11 years. She lives in the Boston Machine Lofts on Willow Street.

Faulisi said she was enticed by the affordable pricing of the lofts and by the urban location. She said she liked the access to recreation and entertainment and to transportation. She also likes her neighbors, the ability to walk to the ocean, the restaurants and the art scene.

“My friends tease me all the time about my cheerleading for Lynn, but honestly I do love it here,” Faulisi said.

Faulisi also said she has seen changes since first moving downtown.

“Eleven years ago it was architecturally beautiful, but very run down,” Faulisi said. “I like to say the downtown has good bones. Now, some of the blighted buildings have been developed and are occupied. Some new, upscale restaurants have moved in and are successful. Public art is on prominent display.”

As for changes, Faulisi would like to see an anti-litter campaign. She would also like more useful parking signage and the return of the Christmas/holiday decorations for the downtown.

“I am truly looking forward to what the future brings for downtown,” Faulisi said.