

# MARINA BAY VISION



Break Rock Brewing owner Jay Southwood, right, and Quincy Chamber of Commerce President Tim Cahill discuss the forming of the new Marina Bay Business Association. PHOTOS BY TOM GORMAN/FOR THE PATRIOT LEDGER

## 'Sky is the limit' for group looking to raise area's profile

Mary Whitfill The Patriot Ledger | USA TODAY NETWORK

QUINCY – Festive lights along the boardwalk, a floating Christmas tree among the boats, pop-up shopping markets, nonprofit fundraisers, open houses, three new bus stops and a reliable ferry are just the start of a long list of ideas from the leaders of a new business association hoping to make Marina Bay the city's next thriving commercial district.

"This is a beautiful, underutilized piece of land and neighborhood that Quincy hasn't really paid attention to for the last decade," Jay Southwood, owner of the recently opened Break Rock Brewing Co., said.

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People sample beer in the Break Rock Brewing Co. taproom at Quincy's Marina Bay.

**"We want to extend the business season down here, amp up the profile of Marina Bay and help break this stigma that Marina Bay is not a real Quincy neighborhood. We have 4,500 residents, multiple buildings, hundreds of employees and more than 50 businesses. It could be huge."**

**Tim Cahill**  
Quincy Chamber of  
Commerce president

# Marina Bay

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“People remember The Tent or Waterclub as it was back in the day, and they don’t know it has evolved. That just tells me we, collectively, have not done a good job tapping into this really unique resource.”

Southwood has worked with the Quincy Chamber of Commerce for the last several weeks to form the Marina Bay Business Association, a division of the chamber that will work to promote the area’s restaurants, shops and other small businesses. The association will not collect dues, but it will raise money for events and the chamber will use its existing structure to collect and manage the money.

Tim Cahill, chamber president, said the chamber’s status as a nonprofit will help the new association run its accounts, get grants and manage paperwork. He said the chamber has heard criticism from businesses across the city that both it and the mayor’s office focus too much downtown and not enough on smaller neighborhoods.

“We have the farmers market, the

beer garden, the holiday market, and there is no reason all of that couldn’t be replicable here,” he said. “This allows us to spend more time here. We want to drive it from a local perspective.”

The association is working to put together a board of directors and create bylaws, and Southwood is serving as the de facto leader in the meantime. He said there are roughly 60 businesses in the Marina Bay area, and 35 people showed up to the initial meeting.

“The sky is the limit,” Cahill said. “Whatever the business association wants to do, we will support them. ... They could have what we have downtown: a self-contained, solid business district.”

The wheels are already turning on a few ideas to draw people to Marina Bay this holiday season. “Light It Up: Marina Bay” will have lights along the boardwalk from Nov. 26 to Jan. 5 and there will be a Christmas tree lighting with the mayor, carolers and a potential visit from Santa the Saturday after Thanksgiving. Southwood said he has plans for quarterly events ranging from car shows to festivals and dock-jumping contests for dogs.

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Marina Bay and help break this stigma that Marina Bay is not a real Quincy neighborhood,” he said. “We have 4,500 residents, multiple buildings, hundreds of employees and more than 50 businesses. It could be huge.”

Beyond fun events, Southwood said he hopes to play a role in overhauling the accessibility of Marina Bay. As it stands, public buses only go as far as East Squantum Street – a mile on foot from the boardwalk – and the only ferry access is managed by a private company and runs only during weekday commuter hours in a loop from Boston to Marina Bay to Winthrop, and back to Boston.

In a recent letter to Mayor Thomas Koch, who chairs the MBTA board of directors, Southwood requested either a dedicated Marina Bay bus route that would connect the area to Red Line stations or three additional stops on the 211 bus route. The new stops would be between the FedEx and Boston Scientific campuses on Commander Shea Boulevard, at 550 Victory Road and at 305 Victory Road.

Southwood and Cahill said that not only would the public transportation make Marina Bay an easier place for visitors to access, but it would also make a

big difference for the employees and businesses in the area. The Quincy FedEx location could be the largest in New England if it weren’t struggling to hire employees, a representative told Cahill, adding that a lack of public transit is a common reason employees seek jobs elsewhere.

Southwood said he knows service workers in the area who load their bikes onto the 211 bus, ride to East Squantum Street and bike the rest of the way to work.

Association members want the MBTA to implement a permanent, state-run ferry service similar to those that connect Boston, Hingham and Hull. He said the state’s ownership of Squantum Point Park, a former Navy airfield, limits what can be done on a local level.

“One of the longtime challenges has been, ‘well, you don’t have enough volume down here,’ but now we do,” Southwood said. “We have the numbers to support it.”

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