

Search for:

[Advanced Search](#)Showing postings 1 - 22 of 22 in the thread: [The Truth About Lower Jackson Street.](#)

Posting:	The Truth About Lower Jackson Street	Posting 1
Poster:	Consumer Advocate (Multi-Alias Facility)	
Date:	12 May 2006 8:40 AM	
<p>Let's not wax nostalgic over lower Jackson street. The bulk of the street between Main and Valley Street was occupied by dirty little rat hole taverns. On Friday and Saturday nights the Willimantic Police were kepy very busy arresting drunks that poured out of these bar rooms at closing time. The entire district was a festering monument to depravity and deserved to be torn down. You can always judge a town by the number of bar-rooms and liquor stores. Willimantic has always had an over abundance of both</p>		
Posting:	Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street	Posting 2
Poster:	Francis "Whitey" Sellars	
Date:	12 May 2006 9:56 AM	
<p>Are you also talking about,Paul pappas's,durand's barber shop,donut shop,american legion,knights of columbus, shoe store,college shoppe,abbes meat market,joe osso's ice cream shop,kincyzk tailors,kowalski's cleaners,labbe's candy store. I am sure I missed a few, but they were all good places to do business with. These were all between union valley sts.</p>		
Posting:	Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street	Posting 3
Poster:	JayJay	
Date:	12 May 2006 9:28 PM	
<p>Whitey... To "wax nostalgic" on lower Jackson Street, you have to be able to look over your shoulder and peer close to seventy years back, like when you attended St. Joseph's, St. Mary's, or Natchaug School. If you don't have that cherished vision, you can't appreciate some wonderful experiences and people. Obviously, you can. To those who can't their loss!!!</p>		
Posting:	Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street	Posting 4
Poster:	Nostalgic Nickodemus	
Date:	13 May 2006 8:43 AM	
<p>JJ, My comments referred to the Jackson St. area back in the late 1950s-early 60s. I believe there were 7 barrooms between Main and Valley St. All watering holes for some of the towns most notorious bums and drunkards. There was also the Campus shop, a high school kid hang out and Sunshine Donut shop. The Kof C hall was a tiny dumpy place that reeked of the odor of vomit and stale beer..Nostalgia is a wonderful thing, but tends to cloud ones mind and divorce it from reality</p>		
Posting:	Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street	Posting 5
Poster:	Dagmar Noll	
Date:	13 May 2006 8:54 AM	
<p>Whitey and JayJay -</p> <p>I have nowhere near 70 years under my belt, and have no personal living memory of the major parcel being anything but a recreational field.</p> <p>A couple days ago I was shown a photograph where the photographer was standing at the corner of Jackson and Valley looking down Jackson toward Main. The man showing me this photograph rattled off the names of the businesses and owners along the street easily from his own living memory. It still amazes me how much was packed into that small area!</p> <p>When I moved to Willimantic a few years ago I frequently enjoyed playing frisbee, flying kites, or just walking on the major parcel, appreciating its value as open, recreational space. I remember when I first learned with surprise (on this forum!) after living here for a couple years about the redevelopment movement and specifically the story of the major parcel. I had no idea whatsoever that the parcel had once been the site of lively residential and commercial activity!</p> <p>I continue to enjoy regular recreation on the major parcel, but now, due to the vivid and personal descriptions shared here, I am ever aware of the life and history buried just under my pounding feet.</p> <p>I've really enjoyed reading your posts!</p> <p>Best, Dagmar</p>		
Posting:	Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street	Posting 6
Poster:	Dagmar Noll	
Date:	13 May 2006 9:11 AM	
<p>Yeah, that's what I've come to understand about the whole redevelopment, though I hadn't heard specifically about fraud, just mismanagement. In any case, what a mess!</p>		

Dagmar

Posting: Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street Posting 7
 Poster: John Boudreau
 Date: 13 May 2006 7:57 PM

" Are you also talking about,Paul pappas's,durand's barber shop,donut shop,american legion,knights of columbus, shoe store,college shoppe,abbes meat market,joe osso's ice cream shop,kincyzk tailors,kowalski's cleaners,labbe's candy store. I am sure I missed a few, but they were all good places to do business with. These were all between union valley sts."

You've got a great memory Francis ! What was the name of the shoe repair shop next to the American Legion anyway ? I remember taking my shoes there as a kid in the early 60's .

Posting: Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street Posting 8
 Poster: John Boudreau
 Date: 13 May 2006 8:03 PM

" Let's not wax nostalgic over lower Jackson street. The bulk of the street between Main and Valley Street was occupied by dirty little rat hole taverns. On Friday and Saturday nights the Willimantic Police were kepy very busy arresting drunks that poured out of these bar rooms at closing time. The entire district was a festering monument to depravity and deserved to be torn down. You can always judge a town by the number of bar-rooms and liquor stores. Willimantic has always had an over abundance of both "

I lived on Jackson Street as a kid (from 1957 , when I was 5 , until 1965) , and walked many a mile over that lower end of Jackson Street , at various times of the day , and not once did I ever encounter a problem with any drunks or anyone else for that matter that hung around down there . In fact , the inhabitants of the KofC (where my Dad hung out) were always kind to me wherever I met them , buying me sodas or giving me a nickel for some penny candy or whatever . I have very fond memories of the KofC Christmas parties . I had four sisters and we ALL got beautiful , expensive gifts which were paid for with Kof C dues by your drunks .

The old place wasn't perfect , and there was room for improvement for sure , but it wasn't as bad as you made out . It was safer to walk the streets of lower Jackson than it is to walk anywhere in Willi now I daresay .

Posting: Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street Posting 9
 Poster: Tina
 Date: 13 May 2006 9:01 PM

"It was safer to walk the streets of lower Jackson than it is to walk anywhere in Willi now I daresay."

I have to say I agree with you John, in 1967 I used to walk to kindergarten (St. Mary's) by myself. It was only a few blocks, but in those days it was safe.

Posting: Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street Posting 10
 Poster: John B
 Date: 13 May 2006 9:08 PM

Tina my love ! How've you been ?

We must meet up if I ever make it back to Willi again !

I'm still in Japan .

All my best ...

Posting: Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street Posting 11
 Poster: Tina
 Date: 14 May 2006 6:55 AM

John,
 I couldn't be better thanks!
 Good to see you lurking about on the board.
 The next time you visit, we'll go out for cocktails!

Posting: Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street Posting 12
 Poster: Francis "Whitey" Sellars
 Date: 14 May 2006 8:41 AM

To John B,
 I believe the shoe store next to the american legion was run by a polish man. He was short and chubby. I may have the spelling wrong, but I think his name was Baronski. Does that ring a bell with you. I had to dig real deep for this one.

Posting: Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street Posting 13
 Poster: MJS

Date: 14 May 2006 8:59 AM

Hi John:

I believe the name was Sylvesters, and I recall Jake Agustine and his family lived upstairs in the same building. It was right next to the Legion home..(don't quote me on that..) heh..

Posting: Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street
 Poster: John B
 Date: 15 May 2006 6:33 AM

Posting 14

Francis ,

Thanks for posting ...I remember some Baronosky(s) (sp. ?) in Willi , but no BaroNSki(s) ...Anyway , I never knew the owners name ... I know he didn't say much , at least not to me .

Was Gaudreau's shoe repair shop near the corner of Jackson and Union called Gaudreau's , or did it have another name ? I forget !

Posting: Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street
 Poster: John B
 Date: 15 May 2006 6:34 AM

Posting 15

Tina ...CocktailS it is ! On me !

Posting: Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street
 Poster: Ed T.
 Date: 15 May 2006 9:30 AM

Posting 16

"It was safer to walk the streets of lower Jackson than it is to walk anywhere in Willi now I daresay."

Please tell me Tina, Where is it not safe to walk in Willimantic? I have lived in Willi my entire life and have never had any problem in any neighborhood.

I'm so tired of people putting this city down. How much violent crime do we have? You hear about shootings in Hartford just about every night on the news. What do the Willi police logs show. Mostly traffic violations or auto registration violations.

Whats going to happen if you walk from one end of Spring Street to the other at 2:00 am? I'll tell ya, You'll have walked from one end to the other. Thats it

Posting: Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street
 Poster: Roger D.
 Date: 15 May 2006 11:45 AM

Posting 17

I'd have to agree with Ed T. I've lived in Willimantic, Rockville, and Norwich. I have no worries about walking anywhere in Willimantic. Norwich and Rockville have some dangerous parts in them that should be avoided. The Willimantic perception is based on the "Willireco" branding from people in the other area towns. In their minds, if you speak Spanish you must be a dangerous criminal or a gang member. This thinking makes me sick. Didn't Woodstock and Coventry have some issues with people getting killed last year? Willimantic seems to be a lot safer!!

Posting: Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street
 Poster: Tina
 Date: 15 May 2006 11:44 PM

Posting 18

Ed T.,

Actually Spring Street was actually one of the streets I was thinking about when I wrote that post. I used to walk down Spring Street all of the time as a young kid to play with my cousins. You're right, Willimantic doesn't have a lot of violent crime, but the kind of crime it does have is unusual for most small towns of its size.

I'm not putting the city down. Believe me, I am pro-Willimantic. It breaks my heart to walk down Main Street and see all the businesses that used to be there are relocated or gone. I love the victorian houses, the footbridge, Lauter Park, etc. I love the fact that the Third Thursday Festivals are such a success, there are new diners, and other changes taking place that hopefully will put Willimantic back on its feet again. It's truly a hidden gem.

Posting: Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street
 Poster: Ed T.
 Date: 16 May 2006 11:15 AM

Posting 19

Okay Tina I think I see where your coming from. The town has changed quit a bit, but so has the rest of the world. I used to walk across the railroad tracks to get to St. Marys myself. That was during the late 70s and early 80s. My son will be going there in a couple of years too, but will not be walking. Not because of our city, but because of our world.

Willi is a great little gem of a city, we have a victorian and it will be on the tour this year. Hope to see you there.

Posting: Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street
 Poster: Ada
 Date: 16 May 2006 11:57 AM

Posting 20

"Let's not wax nostalgic over lower Jackson street. The bulk of the street between Main and Valley Street was occupied by dirty little

rat hole taverns. On Friday and Saturday nights the Willimantic Police were kepy very busy arresting drunks that poured out of these bar rooms at closing time. The entire district was a festering monument to depravity and deserved to be torn down. You can always judge a town by the number of bar-rooms and liquor stores. Willimantic has always had an over abundance of both"

Yes, that row of taverns was a problem. I used to walk to school along that block when I was in Kindergarten and first grade, after having lunch at my grandmother's store. It made me a bit uneasy. One day I had a disagreement with my grandmother at lunch and was softly sobbing to myself as I walked to school. One old drunk who was holding up the building asked me what was wrong. I think I broke all records running up Jackson St. to school. In retrospect, I realize that he meant no harm, but to this day I associate tattoos and the smell of stale beer with Jackson St.

That was in the late 1940's. You have to realize that those taverns were there because they were close to the mill. With shift work, some of those men might actually have worked night shifts and may not have had families, or spouses who worked a different shift. Of course if they were habitual alcoholics, they could not have held a job. The bottom line re "redevelopment" is that the whole area did not have to be destroyed for a few undesirable properties.

Posting: Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street
Poster: rd
Date: 16 May 2006 2:48 PM

Posting 21

I just cannot believe how lethargic the town government has been for the past 30 years. Maybe Dr Phil should interview them to find out if they still have blood in their veins. Fortunately, the little town I live and work is breathing new life into its Main Street. All new brick sidewalks; new antique street lights; new trees and flower beds configued with the sidewalks. All utilities are being placed underground. New businesses are sprouting up in old buildings that are also being renovated. It was not an easy process. But the local merchants and town leaders decided it was time to break into the 21st century or be left behind forever. There are no major industries and no public transportation available. Yet, this little town is forging ahead. The down side is that the area is rapidly becoming a very desirable place to relocate for a second home or permanent move with some people willing to commute up to 3hrs to work.

Posting: Re: The Truth About Lower Jackson Street
Poster: John B
Date: 16 May 2006 5:36 PM

Posting 22

RD ,

Where do you reside ?