

**City of Salem Massachusetts
Public Meeting Minutes**

Board or Committee: Design Review Board, Regular Meeting
Date and Time: Wednesday, August 24, 2016 at 6:00 pm
Meeting Location: 120 Washington Street, Third Floor Conference Room
Members Present: Ernest DeMaio, Paul Durand, Christopher Dynia, David Jaquith, J. Michael Sullivan, Helen Sides, Glenn Kennedy
Members Absent:
Others Present: Andrew Shapiro, Economic Development Planner
Recorder: Andrew Shapiro

Paul Durand calls the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Urban Renewal Area Projects Under Review

1. 6 Central Street (Emporium 32): Discussion and vote on proposed installation of signage

The submission under review included a sign permit application, designs for the proposed signs, and a photo of the existing building showing where signage will be installed. Store owners Jillian and Nick Perry were present.

N. Perry explained that he and his wife have been vending their wares in Salem for two years and are now opening up a bricks-and-mortar location on Central Street. He noted that he has a background in graphic design and designed the signage himself.

Kennedy inquired whether the text shown on the door has a shadow effect. J. Perry responded noting that it does. She also noted that the text on the door would be 19 inches wide by four and a half inches high.

Shapiro noted that the signage being proposed complies with both the City's sign ordinance and commercial design guidelines.

Sides inquired about the type of products the applicants were selling. N. Perry explained that they sell primarily jewelry and leatherwork.

Kennedy asked for the applicants to confirm that the gold being used for the text would contrast more sharply from the background than what was being presented. N. Perry confirmed that the contrast would indeed be sharp; a metallic gold against a deep/forest green background.

Kennedy: Motion to recommend approval as submitted.
Seconded by: Sides. Passes 7-0.

2. 125 Washington Street: Small project review: Continued discussion and vote on proposed modifications to main entry to allow wheelchair access

The submission under review includes an architectural drawing showing and rendering of the proposed new entryway. Building owner Bob Dunham was present to discuss the proposal.

Dunham pointed out that the proposal has been revised to show that a railing would close off one end of the entryway where there would be a stepdown.

Durand noted that he feels the new design is a good solution.

Shapiro remarked that he showed the plans to the Building Department and that they had no issue with what was being proposed.

Jaquith: Motion to recommend approval of the small project as presented.

Seconded by: Sides. Passes 7-0.

3. 55-57 & 59 Federal Street: Small project review: Discussion and vote on proposed exterior renovations

The submission under review included a set of plans with a site plan, elevations, drawings, photos, and renderings. Architect John Seger was present to discuss the proposal.

Seger explained that the two buildings that make up the extent of the proposal are going to be converted from offices with some residential uses, to nine residential units. The project is seeking historic tax credits that would be in effect for five years.

Seger remarked that the two buildings are connected by a breezeway. The existing site has paved parking. There are a series of bulkheads; two of these will be removed and one new one will be added. A brick path on the site will be extended to a back entrance. A one story bay window will be added in the back of 55 Federal Street. The footprint of the buildings will not change. He noted that a couple of sets of stairs would end up being replaced.

Seger continued by noting that the main scope of work is to restore the exterior of the properties; the front windows facing Federal Street will be restored in kind, whereas the windows on the sides and back will be replaced (both frames and sashes). All of the shutters will be repaired. The roof was recently replaced and will remain.

Seger then explained that they are proposing to add two dormers in the attic space on one of the buildings, as well as to provide a second story addition in the rear of the property with a balcony on top of it.

DeMaio questioned whether the set of plans that he had, when looking at the proposed rear addition, corresponded with the set that the applicant was showing the Board.

Seger acknowledged that the plans had been revised since his submission.

DeMaio commented that there should be more pitch for the gable ends of the dormers shown; that it would be more in keeping with the rest of the building.

Jaquith noted that he agrees with DeMaio's comment, that the pitch of the dormers should match the roof pitch. In regards to the addition, he noted that the rendering shows two over two windows, and the elevation shows six over six windows. It would be more appropriate to be two over two throughout the whole building.

Seger acknowledged Jaquith point and noted that they would carry the two over two windows throughout as shown on the rendering.

DeMaio inquired about what the space in the addition would be used for.

Seger responded that it would be a kitchen.

Kennedy commented that the connector piece between the two buildings feels like it could use something added, like a window.

Seger commented that a design change like that would need to be approved by the park service in order to obtain the tax credits they are seeking.

Jaquith said that he agrees with Kennedy and that the space needs a small window.

Sides asked for confirmation about whether the shutters would be on both the front and side portions of the house.

Seger noted that the shutters would indeed be in front and wrapped around the corner of the building.

Sullivan observed that the shutters may have been added on well after the building was built because of the substantial nature of the trim around the windows.

Sides asked about the composition of the windows proposed to be replaced.

Seger responded by noting that they would be all wood with simulated divided light. The idea would be to only replace the sashes with new sash packs, instead of also replacing the trim.

DeMaio remarked that the arrangement of windows shown on the west elevation of the proposed addition seemed unresolved, given that there are different sized windows on the second floor and that there are three windows above only one.

Other members of the Board voiced their agreement with DeMaio's comment and Sides then suggested that one additional window could be added underneath the proposed addition.

Durand: Motion to recommend approval of the proposed small project subject to review of further revisions by Board Member David Jaquith.

Seconded by: Sides. Passes 7-0.

4. 161 Essex Street / East India Square (Peabody Essex Museum): Continued discussion and vote on proposed museum expansion (schematic design review)

The submission under review included a full set of plans including a site plan, elevations, floor plans, sections, renderings, and a landscape plan. A slide presentation was shown. Robert Monk of the PEM, Molly McGowan of Ennead Architects, and Thomas Woltz and Mark Streeter of Nelson, Byrd, Woltz (Landscape Architect) were present on behalf of the applicant.

Monk started out by noting that the Museum is at the end of its design development phase. He noted that they were seeking approval of this submission and that they would return when construction documents are developed.

McGowan started by covering some issues that had been raised in past meetings. She noted that the new building is presented as “another house,” which is why there is a reveal on either side of the façade; the focus is meant to be on East India Marine Hall. Street trees have been added in front of the building. In terms of streetscape enhancements, efforts were made to lighten the ground level portion of the façade, as well as to brighten the base. The façade now presents a kink to run with the curvature of the street.

McGowan then noted that Gingko trees would be introduced in front of the new building, as well as down along the Dodge wing of the existing building. These trees have more of an architectural presence and will not overly mask the Museum. Signage and wayfinding is currently being explored in an effort to devise ways to better activate the streetscape. Those details will come at a later date.

On the upper portion of the façade, split-faced Chelmsford Granite will be used. Granite is being considered for the mullions on the windows, but that approach may change to steel. Steel mullions are used elsewhere in the project, which gives a much slimmer profile. If steel proves too costly, the project would revert to an aluminum mullion, which has a thicker profile. The glass being used on the façade was chosen for its low reflectivity given that the building faces north, which will allow for better visibility into the building from the street level.

McGowan then introduced Thomas Woltz, Landscape Architect with Nelson, Byrd, Woltz to discuss details regarding landscape treatments. Woltz began by noting that the proposed interior garden would be 3,700 square feet. He showed examples of other outdoor spaces that provided more context for how big/small this space would really be. The garden is meant to be a place of discovery, where one can walk through and discover different aspects of it, much like they would inside the various galleries of the Museum.

Woltz walked through plans, images, and renderings of the proposed garden area, first pointing out transparent screens that would be installed within the space to provide some form of separation between areas of the garden, which will separate into three distinct areas. A recess within a limestone wall would have a cascade of water falling down it. He pointed out certain species of plants and trees that would be planted in areas of the garden, including Serviceberry and Gingkos.

On another perspective, Woltz pointed out a proposed meandering path that would be made of stone, cut into the pavement, which would move all around the garden. This feature has been consistently maintained through different iterations of the landscape plan. Inside the central garden area would be a raised bed, with colorful perennials. A “poetry fountain” would also be a feature within the raised bed, with water running from one side to the other; benches would be on either side.

Woltz moved on to the loading dock area. Street trees would be introduced along Charter Street. A perennial bed would be planted within a planter in between the Museum and the private property next to it in order to provide screening and separation. A low lying hedge would run along the property in front of the loading dock area.

McGowan then concluded and pointed out that at this time, there would be no access to the garden from the Charter Street side for the public.

DeMaio expressed that he appreciates the level of thought put into the project. He then pointed out that the project was described as infill for a “missing tooth,” where a beautiful garden will have stood. Now the new garden will be semi-privatized. There is a good effort being made for transparency at the ground plane. With that said, he wondered aloud whether some type of gesture for a garden-like or green area could be made on the Essex Street side, to both bookend with the new garden and provide a reminder of what had stood approximately there in the past. He referenced a potential green or living wall.

Monk expressed an understanding of needing to mitigate the effect of a “big blank wall.” He explained that signage options are being investigated, which could incorporate the cantilevered second level of the Dodge wing. These details would come at a later date and much still needs to be worked out, especially in terms of coordinating interior and exterior signage. Public art and lighting are also being considered for the outdoor space along Essex Street.

Sides noted that the project has come a long way and was well presented. She remarked that the garden seems to contrast sharply from the interior gallery spaces, in that it’s very confined. Can it handle the number of people that will be coming out of the galleries?

Monk responded that the largest gallery they have is 2,000 square feet. The new garden would be close to 4,000 square feet. Visitor traffic ebbs and flows, and there may be times when the area is congested.

Woltz explained that the central planting bed with fountain was considered for removal, but they discovered that it really enlivened the space and did not want to remove it.

Jaquith inquired about the visibility of the garden from inside the museum and from upper levels.

McGowan pointed out that there are a series of bridges running through the upper floors of the building. There is a platform that provides an overhead view of the garden.

Sullivan questioned whether actual art pieces or displays, such as sculptures, would be installed in the garden.

Monk said that there would not be art displays in the garden. Woltz remarked that the differing species of plants and trees is meant to provide an artistic experience in and of itself.

Sides remarked that there is a lot going on in the garden space and that it could be simplified.

Jaquith praised the architects and Mr. Monk for listening to comments from the Board. In referencing the review process, he said, “this is how it’s supposed to work.” The project has come a long way, and there has been a lot of improvement at every step of the process.

Kennedy asked whether the planned Gingko trees in front of the building would be maintained by the Museum.

Monk responded that the Museum would indeed maintain them.

Kennedy then remarked that sometimes Gingkos can get a bit “gangly.” He said that they need to be well maintained.

Durand then opened the meeting to public comment.

Jennifer Firth of Historic Salem Inc. remarked that “the evolution has been amazing.” She remarked that Gingkos are present in a lot of areas close to where new trees are being proposed. There may be an overuse of that type of tree.

Woltz commented that perhaps Charter Street is an opportunity to mix in other species found in Salem, such as Oaks.

Durand remarked that perhaps the Gingkos on Essex Street don’t need to be there. It may obscure the building to some extent. The trees seem a bit forced.

Monk acknowledged that trees had been removed as part of the enabling phase from a couple of years back, and that new trees had not yet been planted. The Museum is committed to replacing the presence of trees along its Essex Street façade. Other boards overseeing the review process, such as the Planning Board, will most likely also address the issue of trees.

Shapiro then suggested some language to be included in an ultimate recommendation to be considered by the Board, noting also that a final design with construction drawings would still need to be approved by the DRB and SRA. The language suggested included the following:

- 1.) A detailed plan for site and building lighting, to include both specifications and locations of lighting fixtures, shall be provided for review and approval by the DRB and SRA prior to issuance of a building permit or as part of final design review.
- 2.) All final plans, materials and color samples shall be in accordance with those submitted to and approved by the DRB on August 24, 2016 in plans dated August 24, 2016.
- 3.) Any changes thought to be substantial to the approved schematic design plans shall be first reviewed by the City Planner, and if deemed to be substantial in nature, shall then be subject to review and approval by the DRB and SRA.
- 4.) A signage plan shall be submitted for review and approval by the DRB and SRA as part of final design review, or prior to issuance of any sign permits

Shapiro acknowledged that there could be some deviations in the materials presented, given cost constraints or logistics. Flexibility should be afforded for minor changes to be made.

Jaquith: Motion to recommend approval of schematic design, incorporating the conditions referenced.

Seconded by: Sides. Passes 7-0.

- 5. 50 St. Peter Street (Old Salem Jail):** Discussion and vote on final design review (proposed design revisions to previously approved plans for Phase II of “Old Salem Jail” redevelopment project – new multifamily housing development.)

The submission under review included; a full set of construction documents in plan set, including site plan, floor plans, exterior elevations, renderings, and a landscape plan. Architect Dan Ricciarelli and Steven Feinstein of Symes Associates were present to discuss the project.

Ricciarelli oriented the Board with a site plan. He noted that a five foot buffer of grasses and Honey Locust trees would be planted along St. Peter Street. Two trees are being

removed as part of the project. Private patios would extend out from garden level apartment units. Generally speaking, the landscape plans has been updated, but does not deviate dramatically from the original plan that was approved in 2006.

Sides remarked that Boxwoods should be reconsidered if they are planned for this site because they have been dying when planted elsewhere.

The primary materials seen on the building are lead coated copper, light grey nichiha panels, metal panels, fiber cement clapboard, faux stone, and faux slate for the roof. All balconies are set into recesses. There is a cedar screen for the parking area under the building. Material samples were handed out for the Board to examine. The corner boards are three and half inches.

Feinstein indicated that they had shown the plans to current residents of the Old Salem Jail property.

Jaquith inquired about the manufacturer of the window.

Ricciarelli noted that they would be Jeld wen.

Shapiro confirmed suggested that the following conditions be considered with the recommendation.

1. **Construction/Building Materials** – The construction and building materials shall conform to the materials presented to and approved by DRB on August 24, 2016 in plans dated March 4, 2016.
2. **Exterior Elevations** – The exterior elevations shall conform to the plans submitted to and approved by the DRB, dated March 4, 2016.
3. **Site Plans** – The site shall conform to the plans submitted to and approved by the DRB, dated March 4, 2016.
4. **Lighting** – A final detailed lighting plan indicating specifications and locations of proposed lighting fixtures for the building and site shall be reviewed by the DRB prior to installation.
5. **Signage Plan** – The signage plan shall be submitted to the DRB and SRA for review and approval prior to installation. All signs shall conform to the City of Salem's sign ordinance, Commercial Design Guidelines, and Design Guidelines with the Downtown Renewal Plan (2011).

Jaquith: Motion to approve final design revisions with conditions noted.
Seconded by: Kennedy. Passes 7-0.

Old/New Business

Approval of minutes from the July 27, 2016 regular meeting.

Jaquith: Motion to approve.
Seconded by: Sullivan, Passes 6-0 (Sides abstained).

Adjournment

Jaquith: Motion to adjourn the meeting.
Seconded by: Dynia. Passes 7-0.

Meeting is adjourned at 8:10 PM

Know your rights under the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 30A §18-25 and City
Ordinance Sections 2-028 through 2-2033.