

**City of Salem Massachusetts
Public Meeting Minutes**

Board or Committee:	Redevelopment Authority, Regular Meeting
Date and Time:	Wednesday, May 13, 2020 at 6:00 PM
Meeting Location:	Zoom Virtual Meeting
SRA Members Present:	David Guarino, Dean Rubin, Russ Vickers
SRA Members Absent:	Chair Grace Napolitano
Others Present:	Tom Daniel – Director of Planning and Community Development
	Kathryn Newhall-Smith – Principal Planner
Recorder:	Colleen Brewster

Vice Chair Vickers calls the meeting to order. Roll call was taken.

Annual Meeting

Executive Director's Report:

Mr. Daniel stated:

Economic Development Recovery and Revitalization: The Mayor established a task force that he and Ms. Newhall-Smith are providing staff support. Members of the business community are participating and their partners on the task force are; Salem Partnership, Salem Chamber, Salem Main Streets, Creative Collective, Destination Salem, and The Enterprise Center. The task force meets twice a week and are actively working to support the Salem business community and the downtown. They began with providing business owners with information before the PPP program was available and the city issued a small grant assistance program that closed on Friday. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from HUD are focused on businesses with five or fewer employees and the Federal Cares Act has provided additional CDGB funding. A task force is working on gathering communications and conducting one on one interviews with business owners, that will continue once the restrictions have relaxed. Dave Kucharsky, Director of Traffic and Parking is working to provide short term parking in various location within the downtown for customers to pick up their take-out orders from restaurants. Mr. Kucharsky and Ms. Newhall-Smith are also working on expanding the outdoor space for commerce; dining and queuing. The Enterprise Center is collaborating on developing a technical assistance panel and some businesses are receiving guidance from other business associations, etc. that already had plans in place. Some businesses are struggling with cash flow, marketing, growing their on-line presence, and they are trying to get ideas and input on state and local levels, including a hold on evictions and delivery fees taking a chunk of revenue from restaurants. It has been challenging, but they are grateful for their partners and they are sending out a weekly newsletter communication and webinars too. Not everyone will make it through this pandemic, but some are optimistic about the future of downtown Salem and the Governor's guidelines for reopening will be published on Monday. This will be a phased reopening, so not all businesses will open on May 19th, and there will be distancing guidelines in place. Finz for example, is larger and can use function rooms for dining, has space to space the tables 6-feet apart, can create a separate entrance and exit door, with one-time use menus. Retailers will need to determine how to be open, such as by appointment only. Offices that share bathrooms will also need to determine how to do that. Massachusetts can learn from other states.

Mr. Rubin asked how this will work at City Hall. Mr. Daniel replied that the City must determine their protocols and the required adjustments. They anticipate some continued remote working since many have kids and need to stay home to care for their children. The law may be modified in the future and meetings will continue through Zoom.

Mr. Guarino requested an SRA approved project update. Mr. Daniel replied that construction is wrapping up on Hampton Inn, but they haven't spoken to them yet. The District Court is continuing as well as several projects outside SRA's jurisdiction, that are reviewed by the DRB. There will be some vacancies, but also new projects with new retail space to fill, like at the future District Court project.

Mr. Daniel noted that Councillor Madore is also on the task force.

Urban Renewal Area Projects Under Review

1. Church Street West Parking Lot: Restriping Project Information Update

Dave Kucharsky, Director of Traffic and Parking, was present to discuss the project.

Mr. Kucharsky stated that they are adding additional long-term parking spaces to the West lot. They were addressing the ongoing draining issues at the Museum Place Garage and in anticipation of that wanted to create long-term parking in other areas while sections of the garage are under construction. A consultant completed a lot survey and reviewed several layouts to determine the best way to maximize usage and circulation within the lot. Many drivers park along the walkway near the buildings on the West end, so they decided to add striping and create 16 spaces and 2 additional HC spaces. Allowing parking perpendicular to Federal Street and allowed them to add two new rows. Vehicles will enter through Federal Street and leave through Church Street. They will also work with DPW to engage a striping contractor that will also restripe the smaller Church Street lot overnight.

Mr. Rubin asked if spacing will be lost during to snow storage. Mr. Kucharsky replied no, the South-West corner will be used for snow and they will make efforts to remove the snow.

Vice Chair Vickers opens public comment.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

Vice Chair Vickers closes public comment.

Rubin: Motion to support the restriping of the West Church Street projects.

Seconded by: Guarino.

Roll Call Vote: Guarino, Rubin, Vickers Passes: 3-0

2. 49 Federal Street: Final review of façade restoration and construction of rear 10'x22', two-story addition

John Seger of Seger Architects and Mike Becker – Owner were present to discuss the project.

Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that the applicant previously presented to the SRA and the DRB recommended approval with some conditions for the SRA to consider. Mr. Becker added that there

are no major changes; a change in railing type, the numbers of muntins per window sash, and the gable indicating two windows but the DRB would prefer one, although the windows are in two different rooms. In terms of parking restrictions, the four existing parking spaces on site will remain and a fifth will be at the parking garage within 1,000 feet of the structure.

Mr. Seger noted that they met with DRB twice. The DRB also wants to eliminate the existing aluminum siding and restore the building with the existing clapboards underneath. The rear addition will be restored with minimal impact on the structure that can't be seen from the street. This will be a positive project for the neighborhood.

Vice Chair Vickers opens public comment.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

Vice Chair Vickers closes public comment.

Guarino: Motion to approve with DRB conditions

Seconded by: Rubin. Guarino, Rubin, Vickers approve. Passes: 3-0

3. 32 Church Street: Small Project Review – addition of skylights and a dormer

Peter Pitman, Pitman & Wardley Architects was present to discuss the project.

Mr. Pitman represented East India Group (his wife) the owner of 32 Church Street. They need a dormer over the Conference Room and rear offices now that the new Brix building will block out the light from their only two windows on the 3rd floor. The developer will construct a dormer on the East elevation as compensation for covering their windows, view, and airflow. The dormers would be along the East alley side of the building, just beyond the existing chimney, and placed in the middle of the 3rd floor to avoid the existing timber framing and truss configuration. The shed dormer between two gable dormers was influenced by Salem Handbook and the new gable would be minimally visible from Federal Street, painted grey to blend in with roof, and have asphalt shingles.

Mr. Rubin understood the reason for this request and noted that the new dormer will be noticeable. Mr. Vickers noted that this is a habitability situation. Mr. Pitman added that their building will be engulfed on two sides by brick and their building will be in the shadow in the new. The South (Federal Street) and East (alley) are the only areas to locate this dormer. Changes to the South façade along Church Street would change the historic character of the building, but their proposal makes the new dormer as minimal as possible. Vice Chair Vickers stated that this proposal is well thought out and recommended that it be sent to the DRB for review.

Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that concerns are expected from the Historic Commission about the prevalence of the Nantucket style dormers being added around the city.

Vice Chair Vickers opens public comment.

Councillor Madore asked if the timing and coordination will align with the construction at 65 Washington Street. Pitman replied that Groom will construct both 65 Washington Street and the new work on their building. They will meet with them next week, so an approval is needed before it can be priced, but the construction time is flexible.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

Vice Chair Vickers closes public comment.

Mr. Guarino stated that the proposed design was well thought out and minimized. The Preservation Planner had concerns about placement and dormer style, but they don't want to cross the threshold of too many of these particular style dormers downtown. He was supportive of the proposed and the need for it.

Guarino: Motion to send to DRB for review.

Seconded by: Vickers. Guarino, Rubin, Vickers approve. Passes: 3-0

New / Old Business

1. Superior Court and Crescent Lot: Update

Mr. Daniel stated that they've extended the proposal submission deadline for the development teams to June 30, 2020. They will continue to have bi-weekly meetings with DCAMM, the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was drafted 1-year ago then DCAMM began pushing for the SRA to take ownership of the properties prior to having a developer on board. They are now back to have a simultaneous closing and DCAMM will cover the property management and maintenance responsibilities since the City doesn't have a facilities department to manage it. The legislation needs to be consistent and they need to determine if it can accommodate the Registry's request.

Mr. Daniel stated that they are still working with the MBTA on the 6,000 SF crescent lot property and have a draft MOA with them too. The MBTA wants \$150,000 in exchange for the property and that needs to be worked through prior to June 30th.

Mr. Daniel stated that Ms. Newhall-Smith has been working with MHC and the preservation restrictions were revised. MHC is past their 30-day timeline so Ms. Newhall-Smith will reach out to them.

Mr. Daniel noted that the timing of the review is hard to know since it depends on their workload, but it could occur between August and September. A schedule mapped by Ms. Newhall-Smith will need to be reviewed by the SRA. He will also discuss the internal review with Matt Zahler, The SRA will be given time to review them.

Mr. Guarino encouraged the Mayor filling the SRA vacancy is any current Board members are unable to attend the future review schedule. Mr. Daniel replied that the Mayor appointed Cynthia Nina-Soto from Affordable Housing and Trust Fund Board, who is also a real estate professional. Her name has been submitted for the next City Council Meeting for approval.

Mr. Daniel stated that they are interested in joining the Downtown Association that has resourced for downtowns like Salem in terms of strategies, initiatives, networks, etc. and a colleague of the Mayor suggested they join. There is a \$940 annual membership fee and he and Ms. Newhall-Smith to participate; however, the SRA needs to approve spending those funds. The City has paid for conference attendees in the past.

Rubin: Motion to approve the funding for the association.

Seconded by: Vickers. Guarino, Rubin, Vickers approve. Passes: 3-0.

Minutes

Guarino: Motion to approve the December 18, 2020 regular (open session) meeting minutes.

Roll call vote: Guarino, Rubin, Vickers. Passes: 3-0.

Rubin: Motion to approve the April 7, 2020 regular (open session) meeting minutes.

Roll call vote: Guarino, Rubin, Vickers. Passes: 3-0.

Executive Session

To discuss the requirements of the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Opportunity for Redevelopment and Reuse of 32 Federal Street (County Commissioners Building), 34 Federal Street (Superior Court Building), and 252 Bridge Street (public parking lot) Salem, MA. because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body.

Rubin: Motion to being Executive Session. Roll call vote to begin to Executive Session.

Guarino, Rubin, Vickers. Passes 3-0.

Vice-Chair Vickers states that Open Session will not reconvene.

Rubin: Motion to end executive session.

Roll call vote to adjourn to Executive Session. Guarino, Rubin, Vickers. Passes 3-0.

Other Business

Adjournment

Rubin: Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Roll Call Vote: Guarino, Rubin, Vickers. Passes 3-0.

Meeting is adjourned at 7:30PM.

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