

**City of Salem Massachusetts
Public Meeting Minutes**

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| Board or Committee: | Redevelopment Authority, Regular Meeting |
| Date and Time: | Wednesday, June 10, 2020 at 6:00 PM |
| Meeting Location: | Zoom Virtual Meeting |
| SRA Members Present: | Chair Grace Napolitano, David Guarino, Dean Rubin, Russ Vickers |
| SRA Members Absent: | None |
| Others Present: | Tom Daniel – Director of Planning and Community Development Kathryn Newhall-Smith – Principal Planner |
| Recorder: | Colleen Brewster |

Chair Napolitano calls the meeting to order. Roll call was taken.

Annual Meeting

Executive Director's Report:

Mr. Daniel stated:

The City's work in response to the epidemic is ongoing and the task force meets twice a week with a focus on providing information to the business community on a range of topics from financial programs to reopening guidelines. They also act as a convener to get questions answered by the City staff and lead focus group meetings to find out what specific sectors might need. They've conducted a city-wide survey and in-depth interviews to determine company needs and what they prioritize in terms of the City's role; 1-month of PPE, sanitization supplies, marketing, etc. as well as outdoor dining areas for restaurants now serving people. Kate Fox from Destination Salem is also on the task force and the Salem Together Pledge begins on Friday to publicize business expectations. Councillor Christine Madore is also on the task force and has promoted 'clarity through consistency' on what the City will provide. They have distributed 50 grants to small businesses around the City, with funding that came largely through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. Some businesses aren't opening and won't survive to next year which means more vacancies, but they are grateful for strong partnerships and community as a whole. The City Hall and Annex now have regular business hours with more staff returning to the City offices, which will be open to people next week. There is not enough spacing for everyone so some will remain working remotely while continuing on-line communication. Regarding the restaurant expansion of premises, 37 applications were received so far; the approvals will be valid until November 30, 2020 unless the state extends the date.

Mr. Rubin asked if the City is considering the temporary Covid-19 outdoor seating as a test for permanent downtown seating and if there is a renewed energy around setting up downtown seating. Mr. Daniel replied there has been some broader conversation but some of those areas are within parking spaces. The pilot parklets at the 3 locations that were tested last year are being pursued this year. Some of the temporary outdoor areas will remain and outdoor retail will be considered.

When we return to in-person meetings, it is very likely that the Zoom component will remain to provide access to City meetings.

Urban Renewal Area Projects Under Review

1. **14 New Derby Street:** Final review of façade modifications

Marc Moschella, Goldberg Properties was present to discuss the project.

Mr. Moschella stated that they will be replacing 2nd floor windows, the first-floor storefronts, adding one new commercial tenant on first floor, new windows on the second floor left and rear elevations for new residential apartments. The new windows and storefronts will be black.

Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that the DRB was in favor of black trims on the windows.

Chair Napolitano opens public comment.

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Napolitano closes public comment.

Guarino: Motion to approve DRB recommendation with black window trim color and any changes to the plan will require a return to the SRA for review and approval.

Roll call vote: Guarino, Rubin, Vickers, Napolitano. Passes: 4-0.

2. **32 Church Street:** Small Project Review – Final review of additional skylights and dormer

Peter Pitman of Pitman & Wardley was present to discuss the project.

Mr. Pitman stated that the Salem Historic Commission (SHC) provided comments, and the Design Review Board (DRB) largely validated those comments. They are proposing a dormer to offset their lost windows due to the 65 Washington Street, 'Brix', development. This new dormer will provide light and ventilation and is consistent with the existing skylights on the building. The Historic Commission requested a simpler shed roof rather than the proposed Nantucket dormer that will face the alley. There will be a simpler mullion pattern on the windows which will have black mullions not burgundy to match the buildings remaining windows. From the rear the side of the shed dormer will be seen, as well as a skylight to match the others and a roof hatch next to the mechanical dormer because the next structure will block their existing roof hatch.

Mr. Vickers praised their design efforts. Mr. Rubin agreed that the design is a nice reflection of the Historic Commissions comments.

Chair Napolitano opens public comment.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Napolitano closes public comment.

Rubin: Motion to approve as recommended by the DRB.

Roll call vote: Napolitano, Guarino, Rubin, Vickers approve. Passes: 4-0

3. 30 Federal Street: Development Project Review – Final review of construction of a mixed-use addition with retail space, four residential units, and four parking spaces

Attorney Scott Grover of Tinti & Navins, Dan Ricciarelli – Architect at Seger Architects, and Mike Becker – Owner, were present to discuss the project.

Mr. Daniel stated that two fundamental questions remain open; (1) parking, because six spaces are required, the applicant removed two spaces and four spaces remain on site; and (2) a formal opinion from the Building Inspector as to the project's compliance to the Zoning Ordinance. The DRB recommended the SRA take no action until the ZBA reviews the project and the applicant obtains the formal zoning compliance determination.

Atty. Grover stated that they were last before the SRA in February, their plan showed six spaces and two were proposed on Federal Street. The public, Board, & neighboring owners were not in favor of spaces on Federal Street, so they've agreed to remove the spaces and are seeking a variance from the ZBA to allow one space per unit, since it was allowed at 65 Washington Street. The SRA agreed to let them present to the DRB which they've done and made significant changes to the design. In May, the DRB approved the project subject to the ZBA conditions. An alternative is in place if the ZBA doesn't approve of the proposed project. They will reduce the number of new residential units from four to two and will place commercial units on the second floor to satisfy the original 1.5 parking requirements. Lastly, the Building Inspector Tom St. Pierre's opinion was requested in May prior to the DRB meeting and he will have a written determination for them shortly.

Mr. Ricciarelli stated that there will be 876 sq. ft. of retail at the base and an open courtyard along Federal Street. The side entry is in a recessed between the addition and existing building. Three parking spaces are proposed under the addition and one outside the building footprint but on their property. The neighboring condominium board has decided to abandon the existing walkway to Washington Street. The addition will match the ridge height, there will be wood panel cladding at upper penthouse to match the neighboring buildings, and cementitious cladding at ground floor. Four residential units and a townhouse at upper floor are proposed. They will move all living space in the addition to Washington Street to make it more private for neighbors. The East elevation matches some of the details of the neighboring building and the upper deck will be screened with siding not railing. The North elevation will have the transition from commercial to residential with storefront glass at Washington Street to open it up to pedestrians. They will paint the entire building to blend in the new addition and will introduce a cornice along Washington street addition, blend in the existing eave line, give relief to streetscape, and add new lights at the egresses only.

Mr. Rubin referenced abutters comments, concerns, and the SRA receiving another 50 letters with concerns about the look of building, fitting into downtown, and with the courthouses, etc. and questioned whether any of those concerns had been addressed. He suggested the new color match the neighboring buildings rather than create a new color scheme. Mr. Ricciarelli replied that two members of the public made comments at the recent DRB and he supported their thoughts. Mr. Becker added that they have made multiple changes given the feedback they've received over the course of the project. Bill Yuhas gave detailed criticism, but others just don't want a structure in front of their building.

Mr. Guarino echoed Mr. Rubin's comments, noting that there has been a disconnect with this project from the start that seems to have continued, since the look and feel of a project and whether it fits into the downtown is within the purview of the SRA. He suggested holding off on voting until the ZBA review and the Building Inspector has sent a letter. Mr. Ricciarelli noted that they are picking up

queues from 65 Washington Street and neighboring buildings, and the DRB felt their project has been successful. They are trying to respect the island of residential at this end of downtown, respect the neighboring buildings, and felt this was an appropriate response. Atty. Grover added that the DRB reviewed 65 Washington street at the same night at their review of this. That would have been their opportunity to address any issues. Atty. Grover believed their concerns will be addressed once Mr. St. Pierre provides the letter, but the parking concerns will take time for the ZBA to address. This is an urban renewal project that is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Downtown Urban Renewal Plan and he suggested conditioning an approval.

Chair Napolitano stated that a denial requiring changes would require the applicant to return to the SRA and the parking determines whether the relief would be granted. Modifications to the use means a change in the building because the revenue generated would change. Mr. Daniel noted that the SRA interested the change of use from residential to commercial, the look of the building, the Code Enforcement Officer's response, and the open question about parking. Mr. Rubin was not in favor of voting without the ZBA review and approval and knowing they are reviewing the final design. Mr. Guarino agreed and added that all letters should go to ZBA for their review. Mr. Vickers agreed to hold until they have clarity.

Mr. Becker requested a continuance to review the abutters letters.

Guarino – applicant should read all current letter prior to the next meeting.

Chair Napolitano opens public comment.

Pam Broderick, 28 Federal Street. The applicant, including Dan Botwinik, need to review the letters. Disagreed with the DRB's determination that the design of the North Elevation was physically compatible with the neighboring building, that has no painted wood nearby. In the North rendering the property line ends at drainpipe and the dimensions are not accurately represented in rendering. Concerned with the turning radius for all vehicles near the addition and doesn't believes it complies with regulations. Mr. Ricciarelli replied that the inaccurate rendering was corrected, resubmitted to the DRB, and that's what the DRB approved. Ms. Broderick requested that all drawing be submitted so all condominium owners have them to review and that the property line be marked on the ground.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Napolitano closes public comment.

Rubin: Motion to continue until a final design is presented, the ZBA has made a decision, and the letter from the Code Enforcement Officer has been received.

Roll call vote: Napolitano, Guarino, Rubin, Vickers approve. Passes: 4-0

4. 144 Washington Street: Small Project Review – Installation of Dutch door

Erica Feldman, owner, Hauswitch, was present to discuss the project.

Ms. Feldman stated that they won't open in the immediate future, but she would like to install a Dutch door for curbside pick-ups. They would lock the bottom lock for the time being. She has a carpenter looking into where they get the door from or a design. Either would need approval by Goldberg Properties.

Mr. Vickers thinks it is a great idea. Mr. Guarino agreed and requested regulations on there types of doors. Ms. Newhall-Smith replied that the new door must be the same dimensions so that the entrance is not changed.

Mr. Rubin stated that he liked the idea of the door due and it's a cleaner look due to Covid-19, but a Dutch door takes away from desired look of the door and questioned whether it fits into the Downtown. Mr. Daniel noted that the existing door has a knob.

Mr. Daniel suggested an approval contingent upon DRB's review of the details of the doors. Mr. Rubin noted that this could be the future door of downtown Salem, that others may want to install.

Motion: Rubin to approve pending evaluation by the DRB without a return for the SRA

Roll call vote: Napolitano, Guarino, Rubin, Vickers approve. Passes: 4-0

5. Public Art at the Lobster Shanty: Review proposed location for public art mural

Dianne Wolf, Owner of the Lobster Shanty was present to discuss the project.

Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that the applicant wanted to paint a mural on their fence and the Public Art Commission is reviewing the proposed art, a lobster. Mr. Rubin questioned who owns fence, if the fence is abutting on a neighboring unit, if the art will be permanent, and if artwork should support a private business. Mr. Daniel noted that the space is rented space and it's not meant to be permanent, but the fence is there because of their use. Mr. Vickers added that this is the first art on pedestrian side of buildings

Ms. Wolf stated that they paid for the fence, the Public Arts Commission is doing the new artwork for the Arts Fest, this will provide art and allow them to advertise for the Lobster Shanty.

Motion: Rubin motion to approve proposed sketch and send to Public Art Commission.

Roll call vote: Napolitano, Guarino, Rubin, Vickers approve. Passes: 4-0

New / Old Business

1. Superior Court and Crescent Lot: Update

Mr. Daniel stated that the deadline for proposals is June 30th. There is the MOU with DCAMM that parallels the District Court MOU about DCAMM retaining ownership until they are ready to close on the property with the developer. Some additional work is needed on the language regarding the rights and management of the driveway to the left-hand side of the building because the end user will be able to use the driveway, but the maintenance will be managed by the Trial Court. At the July SRA meeting they will have the core language for review. Modification to the Letter of Intent was also sent out to all development teams. Ms. Newhall-Smith added that the staff report included an updated review schedule for the Board to review.

2. Outdoor Dining: Update

Mr. Daniel stated that maintaining access for people of all abilities is important and with Covid-19 the City has suspended their rules about umbrellas. He thanked Ms. Newhall-Smith for her

efforts in supporting the businesses during these challenges and noted that they've received a letter on Monday thanking Salem's efforts unlike other Northshore cities and towns.

Minutes

There were no minutes to review.

Executive Session

To discuss the Memorandum of Understanding between the SRA and the MBTA for the parcel adjacent to the 'Crescent Lot' at 252 Bridge Street because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body.

Roll call vote to begin to Executive Session.

Guarino, Rubin, Vickers, Napolitano. Passes: 4-0.

Executive Session began at 8:00PM

Chair states that Open Session will not reconvene

Rubin: Motion to adjourn Executive Session.

Roll call vote: Napolitano, Guarino, Vickers, Rubin. Passes 4-0.

Other Business

Mr. Daniel stated that a Racial Equity Task Force was started by Mayor Driscoll, to see how the City can work differently on the racial inequities in our systems. There was also inappropriate tweet sent out by a police captain that needs to be addressed. Real change is needed, and she wants to start those conversations to make some changes.

Mr. Daniel stated that Ms. Cynthia Nina-Soto was approved to fill the vacant SRA seat, but needs to be sworn in. She is excited to join the SRA all current information will be sent to her.

Adjournment

Guarino: Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Roll Call Vote: Napolitano, Guarino, Rubin. Vickers. Passes 4-0.

Meeting is adjourned at 8:15PM

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