

**City of Salem Massachusetts
Public Meeting Minutes**

Board or Committee:	Redevelopment Authority, Regular Meeting
Date and Time:	Wednesday, August 14, 2019 at 6:00 PM
Meeting Location:	98 Washington Street, First Floor Conference Room
SRA Members Present:	Chair Grace Napolitano, Gary Barrett, David Guarino, Dean Rubin, Russ Vickers
SRA Members Absent:	None
Others Present:	Tom Daniel – Director of Planning and Community Development (on phone) Kathryn Newhall-Smith – Senior Planner
Recorder:	Colleen Brewster

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

Urban Renewal Area Projects Under Review

1. 173 Essex Street (Kakawa Chocolate House): Café Permit Application

Rene Loughe of Kakawa Chocolate House, was present to discuss the project.

Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that the applicant went to DRB for a café permit and the DRB had no major concerns but requested matching tables and chairs, solid dark green umbrellas and black trash receptacles. One DRB condition was to secure the tables and chairs or bring them into the building at night. There also must be 4-feet of clearance between furniture and the a-frame for pedestrians.

Mr. Rubin reiterated that the trash be taken in at night. Mr. Loughe replied that they will take in the a-frame sign.

Mr. Guarino suggested the umbrella signage wording say, “no corporate logos.”

Chair Napolitano opens public comment.

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Napolitano closes public comment.

Guarino: Motion to approve subject to DRB conditions, and umbrellas shall have no writing.
Seconded by: Rubin. Passes: 5-0

2. 9-11 Dodge Street, 217-219 and 231-251 Washington Street (Hampton Inn/Mixed Use Development): Final Review of Modifications to Façade Materials and Site Plan

Ken McClure, Owner’s Rep, was present to discuss the project.

Mr. McClure stated that the changes approved improve the architecture and materials, and some changes were required due to regulations. The DRB reviewed / approved of the following changes;

1. January 2019: The window frames in residential area were changed from bronze to black to compliment the building colors.
2. January 2019: The brick masonry on Washington Street residential wing changed to a red color rather than brown, with no brown flashing.
3. May 2019: The transformer was relocated due to regulation that it can’t be within 10-feet of a window. Its new location is across from the residential area where there are no windows. It and a bus cabinet will be housed behind a metal screen.

4. July 2019: Two transformer screen options were rejected. The first because of its two-tone coloration that match the building too much and the second because the proposed green color wouldn't have blended with the plantings. They preferred a black fence with some opacity partially hidden by tall grasses. The DRB also approved the screen layout.
5. July 2019: The material changed from a cembrit panel that required visible fasteners every 16-inches to an aluminum composite that eliminates the connectors and creates a cleaner look.
6. July 2019: The use of black grout at the mixture of panels where the DRB felt debris and water would get stuck and be highly visible.
7. July 2019: The "231 Washington" signage needs additional revisions. The stainless-steel letters will be lit from the front, and the address lit from behind. This sign will also require ZBA approval.
8. July 2019: Upper material change above the retail portion of the building from Nichiha cementitious panel with vertical lines to the same panels with horizontal lines, in two color tones. The use of these panels means that very little fasteners will be visible on the upper facade.
9. July 2019: The Juliet balconies at the corner units had two balconies, one facing Washington Street and another facing the restaurant patio. Two balconies weren't necessary so the balconies facing the restaurant patio were changed to windows.

Mr. Rubin asked if the landscaping that will be green in the summer will die off in the winter. Mr. McClure replied yes, there is not enough space for a lush planting bed, but the bed will be as big as possible with screening for National Grid to access the transformer. He noted that Ms. Miller from DRB suggested evergreens but the fence will look good enough on its own.

Mr. McClure replied that retail tenants will be required to obtain individual signage approval. Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that the DRB recommended changes to the Hampton Inn signage which is vertical and is not allowed. Mr. McClure added that this large sign puts them over their allowable signage square footage. The vertical signage along the Washington Street is less valuable to them than the signage on Dodge Street. The DRB agreed and recommended approval of the one vertical sign. Mr. Daniel stated that the vertical blade sign raised several issues that need to be addressed. Hampton Inn wants to be visible, the DRB felt it was too large for the cityscape, and the vertical blade sign at their Portsmouth, NH hotel has a much better scale that they would suggest. Mr. McClure noted that the DRB wanted a Hampton Inn "Salem" but Hampton Inn doesn't allow it. The applicant included a separate smaller sign below it the vertical blade sign that says Salem or has some imagery of Destination Salem that the hotel doesn't have jurisdiction over. It's still up in the air, however; the DRB appreciated the addition of the smaller separate Salem related sign.

Mr. Rubin questioned the DRB wanting to move forward with approving vertical signage that hasn't been thought of favorably in terms of proposed signage. Mr. Daniel replied that no changes to the language is being proposed and he's not in favor of it on this property. The SRA allowed it at the Salem Jail given the window pattern and the lack of areas to place it. That property needed signage, so a vertical blade sign was approved. When deviation from the standard is requested, there needs to be facts to accompany it. The ZBA also plays a role in the approval process and the SRA needs to be on board with the sign package, to which the DRB has provided their recommendation. Mr. Rubin requested the DRB's rationale for approving vertical signage, given that the Salem Jail was an existing building, and this is new construction. Horizontal signage in compliance with the signage ordinance could have been developed. He requested to see the vertical signage. Mr. Guarino requested to review the applicant's entire sign package.

Chair Napolitano opens public comment.

Gary Gill, Ward 3. The vertical blade sign was discussed at the last DRB meeting, one was horizontal and there was separate signage for the retail areas. A condominium property being reviewed by the ZBA with proposed vertical signage has been approved and the applicant was asked to scale it down. Ms. Newhall-Smith replied that that project is outside the SRA jurisdiction and

only the manual says vertical signage isn't allowed. Mr. Rubin stated that the SRA needs to plan for future applicants.

Chair Napolitano closes public comment.

Rubin: Motion to approve with the DRB's recommended changes, except signage, and that the applicant return with their full signage package.

Seconded by: Barrett. Passes: 5-0

3. 87 Washington Street (Opus): Review of Café Permit Application for Rear Patio Seating and Proposed Partial Demolition of Rear Façade

Roberto Leon, Architect from Peterman Architects and Jeff Cala of Opus were present to discuss the project. Jeff Cala, restaurant owner, was present.

Mr. Leon stated that they want to construct a wood terrace wall at the rear courtyard space of Opus, where they currently have a rear entry and an existing patio with tables and chairs and plants. The new terrace would be enclosed with a wood wall fence. The exterior wall and door would be enlarged, and a folding glass partition installed. There would be three, 8-foot-high walls to the terrace, with the end next to an existing trash enclosure. Vertical posts and horizontal wood slats with a gap on both sides of the wall create the terrace walls, with string lights attached between the building to top of wall and fabric. A letter of support has been provided a letter from the landlord.

Mr. Rubin asked where the current property line is in relation to the patio. Mr. Cala replied that the terrace will extend over the city property line by 3-feet. Ms. Newhall-Smith noted that 4-feet of clearance is needed on the opposite side of wall to allow for pedestrian access.

Mr. Rubin asked if the egress door within the accordion door must have panic hardware. Mr. Cala replied yes, one panel will be an operable door with panic hardware in case of emergencies. Mr. Leon noted that Nano walls have an egress door incorporated into the operable wall.

Mr. Guarino asked for the requirements when extending a space over city property. Ms. Newhall-Smith replied that a café permit looks at this use of the public way. Mr. Daniel questioned having some of what's proposed on city land. Mr. Cala replied that they are going out into the area that Goldberg owns and there will be 4-feet of clearance on the other side of the wall. This is a structure, but it can be taken down. Mr. Daniel noted that café permits are temporary seasonal seating that can be removed during the winter months and questioned the intent of this proposal. Mr. Cala replied that they want to add life to the courtyard that all tenants take care of. Chair Napolitano asked if could be used seasonally or year-round. Mr. Leon replied that the poles will be sitting on metal base stanchions and they will create removable wall panels. Mr. Daniel stated that this requires seasonal permits and the Building Commissioner should review.

Chair Napolitano asked if an easement would be required. Mr. Daniel replied yes. Mr. Rubin stated that the City may not allow seasonal seating between October 31st to April 1st and asked how an 8-foot-high wall will bring life to the courtyard. Mr. Cala replied that patrons don't want to sit back there now, in the summer people want to go to the waterfront, and the added life will help the business. Mr. Guarino asked if a half wall could be considered. Mr. Vickers noted that the wall height is the biggest issue and the wall does the opposite and creates a barrier. Mr. Rubin suggested 4-foot-high wall. Mr. Guarino agreed and noted that he preferred what East Regiment did with their awning and perimeter seating. Mr. Leon stated that this would be an extension of the cozy interior feel but to also bring some liveliness to the patio. Mr. Rubin noted the proposed being more of an addition and a creative way for a proprietor to extend their space. Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that the SRA can pass on their concerns to the DRB or ask the applicant to return.

Mr. Cala noted that they will use high top tables and didn't want the wall to be level with the table tops.

Mr. Guarino suggested the applicant check with Building Commissioner before they go to the DRB. Mr. Cala replied that they've spoken to Mr. St. Pierre on this project. Mr. Daniel stated that the proposed sounds like a fence and there are height restrictions on fence height. The improvement and safety in this area but this is also a public space.

Chair Napolitano opens public comment.

Gary Gill, Ward 3. The applicant wants a seasonal area, the property owner, Goldberg, should take care of that property which hasn't changed since the 1980's. Vagrants sit in this area and this is a good idea although he doesn't like the walls. It could work along with Turners to make the entire area vibrant since the courtyard gets no attention. He suggested a 5-foot-high walls and the use of a tables at a lower height. He is in favor of the other items and wishes the applicant well.

Chair Napolitano closes public comment.

Guarino: Motion to refer to DRB with considerations of wall height, removability of the walls, Building Inspector to weigh-in on the design, and it must conform to their standards.
Seconded by: Rubin. Passes: 5-0

Mr. Leon stated that they are considering a front Nano wall along Washington Street with front seating. Mr. Rubin questions the existing tree and current front seating. He added that they should keep their A-frame sign out of the middle of the sidewalk. Mr. Cala replied that they have approval for front seating already and a front Nano wall will bring in more people from Essex Street.

Executive Session

1. To review the submittals to the Request for Qualifications for the redevelopment of real property located at 32-34 Federal Street and 252 Bridge Street, Salem, MA because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body.

Rubin: Motion to request an Executive Session.
Barrett, Guarino, Chair Napolitano, Rubin, Vickers. Passes: 5-0.

The SRA entered executive session at 6:35PM.

Roll call vote to adjourn to Executive Session and reconvene open session at 8:50PM.
Barrett, Guarino, Chair Napolitano, Rubin, Vickers. Passes: 5-0.

Chair Napolitano: The SRA has agreed to select four (4) teams to submit to the RFP; Barnat, JHR, North River, and Winn Development.

Minutes

Guarino: Motion to approve the June 12, 2019 regular meeting minutes with Rubin's edits.
Seconded by: Rubin. Passes: 5-0

Guarino: Motion to approve the July 10, 2019 regular meeting minutes with Rubin's edits.
Seconded by: Barrett. Passes: 5-0

Adjournment

Barrett: Motion to adjourn the meeting.
Seconded by: Guarino. Passes 5-0.

Meeting is adjourned at 9:00PM.

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