

**City of Salem Massachusetts  
Public Meeting Minutes**

**Board or Committee:** Redevelopment Authority, Regular Meeting  
**Date and Time:** Wednesday, January 11, 2017 at 6:00 pm  
**Meeting Location:** 120 Washington Street, Third Floor Conference Room  
**Members Present:** Chairperson Grace Harrington, Conrad Baldini, Robert Curran  
**Members Absent:** Russell Vickers  
**Others Present:** Tom Daniel – Director of Planning and Community Development, Andrew Shapiro  
**Recorder:** Colleen Anderson

Chairperson Grace Harrington calls the meeting to order. Roll call was taken.

**New / Old Business**

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**Executive Directors Report:**

- a. Daniel stated that regarding 289 Derby Street (reoccurring Carnival property), the City Council voted once to approve funding and that the final vote to acquire the property is Thursday, January 12, 2017. \$100,000 in CPA funding will be used for the design and an RFP will be issued to solicit design services. The SRA will remain informed on the progress of that project.
- b. A City-wide visioning initiative called “Imagine Salem” is in planning stages. A working group will conduct a series of small group meetings/conversations outside of City Hall to speak to residents. A city-wide meeting is scheduled for March 8, 2017. The goal is to identify shared values among the residents focusing on housing, transportation, and employment in the context of inclusivity and equity.

Daniel introduced Christine Madore who was nominated by Mayor Driscoll to fill a seat on the SRA.

**Urban Renewal Area Projects Under Review**

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1. **41 Lafayette Street (Kokeshi):** Discussion and vote on proposed installation of signage and new garage doors.

Shapiro presented the proposed project on behalf of the applicant.

Shapiro stated that a new restaurant and proposes a sign for its Lafayette Street façade directly above a new black aluminum garage door. It is aluminum backed 21 ¼ square foot sign with raised white aluminum type face. An additional proposed sign will be painted directly on the thin span of brick that faces Derby Street, with a 14 square foot doll logo and the “Kokeshi” name painted in white at 12 ¾ square feet. The maximum allowable signage is being used up and their signage request has been reduced with help from DRB member Glenn Kennedy. Two (2) LED lights will illuminate the building sign from between its underside and the top of the garage door. A small sign will be placed on the new rear door next to A& J King to indicate the delivery entrance. The DRB recommended

approval provided that Glenn Kennedy was able work with the applicant to refine the proposal, which he did.

Baldini: Motion to approve as recommended by the DRB.  
Seconded by: Curran. Passes 3-0.

**2. 9-11 Dodge Street, 217-219 Washington Street and 231-251 Washington Street (Dodge Area LLC c/o RCG LLC):** Discussion and vote on 100% construction documents (final design review), including plan for signage.

The submission under review includes; site plans showing possible locations for public art, revised perspectives, building section vignettes, and signage. Andrew Zimmermann of RCG, LLC were present to discuss the 100% construction drawings and a signage concept.

Shapiro noted that this will be the last presentation of this project to the SRA. Zimmermann stated that part one of the presentation will focus on the 100% final construction documents with which they are already out to bid, and part two will focus on the different types of proposed signage for the development. The DRB has already reviewed the presentation. The previously discussed items were; 1) the flared stair between the hotel and mixed-use building, 2) alternative materials at the underside of the decks, 3) alternate location for the building directory, 4) revised lintel color on the Mill Hill Building, 5) possible public art locations, and 6) Washington Street sidewalk materials.

Zimmermann stated that three locations for public art have been narrowed down to two, A) at the Washington & Dodge Street corner and B) the stairway between the hotel and mixed-use portion of the buildings. Location B is on their land and location A is not, however; they are open either, although location A would most likely have a bigger impact. The content of the art is unknown at this point and a call to artists will be issued in the future. Commemorating the history of the site is also a possibility along the Washington Street near the intersection of Canal Street, through perhaps engraving on the pavement or a plaque mounted in the landscape; only conceptual at this point.

Zimmermann displayed the building section elevations/vignettes with additional detailing that had not been determined at the 50% review. Section 1) West Building: showed the retail facades and nichih panels. Section 2) Building Connector at the residential Lobby: showed a two story curtain wall, apartments at the upper level with cembrit panels and nichih panels, proposed sunshades at the top level deck, and brushed metal window frames protruding from the façade. Section 3) the Mill Hill building: showed the granite base, storefront at the retail spaces, cembrit and nichih paneling, a traditional brick façade, cembrit panels at the recessed top level, and a revised lintel color. There will be black framed single hung Anderson windows and black railings at the balconies. The underside and walking surface of all the decks will be Azek – Arbor Collection. The building transformer will be concealed with a permanent corten metal screen, in lieu of yellow bollards, that will double as a place for signage.

Zimmermann noted that the building address will be on the face of the metal screen and in cut-out form on top of the entry canopy. A blade sign building directory listing the retail tenants and direction to the parking entrance has been relocated to above the storefront window rather than in the storefront window at the garage entrance on Washington Street to make it visible to vehicle and pedestrians. The Dodge Street streetscape paving will have perpendicular banding, concrete on the city property for easy maintenance, and pavers on the private property for a rainwater infiltration system.

Zimmermann noted that in terms of signage, sign type 1 is a corten steel screen main building identification with a name and address that also shields the transformer; the cut-out lettering will be

placed on the canopy above that building entrance. A directional sign will be placed at the upper level parking entrance. A directional sign will be placed at the Washington Street corner of the building to indicate parking and retail spaces. A wayfinding sign will be placed at the bottom of the flared stair between the two buildings. The template for the retail and live/work spaces are an exterior lit blade sign, and a raised lettering retail ID sign on top of the canopy for easy fire department location. Off Dodge Street Court there are two lower level parking entries, the public entrance is indicated with a blade sign and residential parking is indicated with a wall mounted sign. All interior signage complies with ADA standards.

Baldini asked if the residential would be condominiums or apartments. Zimmermann replied apartments only.

Daniel asked if public art locations A & B would both be options. Zimmermann replied yes, there will be some flexibility. The ultimate type of art that is proposed will help determine where a piece should be located, even though one location is on public property and the other on private property.

*Chair Harrington opens public comment.*

Councilor Tom Furey, Salem Councilor-At-Large. Councilor Furey stated that this area has been somewhat ignored over the years, that he is in favor of this new project and believes this will be an great asset for Salem.

*Chair Harrington closes public comment.*

Shapiro stated the DRB recommends approval, conditioning that the project be constructed as it was presented and that any substantial changes will need to be presented to the Boards for approval again. Individual tenant signage will need DRB and SRA approval. A formal signage application will be submitted for the building signage, including the large directional sign at the Washington Street corner that will require a Variance from the ZBA because it is over the maximum height for signage allowed per the City's sign ordinance. Daniel noted that the ZBA will take the DRB and SRA decision into account when they are presented with that Variance request.

Baldini: Motion to approve as recommended by the DRB.  
Seconded by: Curran. Passes 3-0.

**3. 65 Washington Street (65 Washington Street, LLC c/o Diamond Sinacori, LLC):** Discussion and vote on initiation of Schematic Design Review process for proposed Development Project.

Daniel noted that a request has been submitted to the City Council for a housing development incentive program zone and plan. It is a tool enabled by the Commonwealth for Gateway Cities to support the development of market rate housing. Councilor Dibble, the new Chair of the Subcommittee on Community and Economic Development, will schedule a meeting and then a public hearing on this matter; SRA member participation is encouraged. In addition to the District Court property, the zone and plan include other properties in Salem; the Superior Court and County Commissioners Building, the City owned crescent shaped parcel adjacent to the train station, and the two properties that comprise the Church Street parking lot. Regular meetings occur with the Redevelopment team regarding the HDIP and project, and regular calls are made to DCAMM to finalize documents and the environmental work that Diamond Sinacori has conducted. The committee meeting need to be scheduled and the public meeting still needs to be advertised with two weeks' notice; this should occur in February.

Merrill Diamond, Jeff Hersh, and Greg Winter (Project Manager) of Diamond Sinacori, and Steve Tice and Julia Sauer of Tice Design Associates, were present to discuss the proposed project.

Diamond stated that the plans have been refined to ensure that the building looks as if it belongs in Salem by drawing on neighboring elements and they are seeking endorsement for the general direction of the design.

Tice stated that their firm has replaced the original architects. The original proposal required excavating the entire site and locating 82 cars completely below grade, which is an extreme economic challenge due to hazardous materials and soil conditions, etc. That resulted in a parking ratio of 1.34 cars per unit, which is below the ZBA requirement of 1.5. The current proposal consists of on-site parking of 1:1 and leasing spaces from the City in its municipal garage to get the ratio up to 1.5. The current design reuses the Courthouse Basement after demolition and encloses the remaining spaces at grade level. The previous design showed a shared roof deck, which created a 7<sup>th</sup> floor, bringing the building into high-rise code, and making the project financially infeasible. The current plan has the shared open terrace at an interior courtyard at the rear of the building, since no balconies will be provided. The building has approximately 89,000 square feet of enclosed space. The number of unit types is still unknown, however; the final number of units is expected to be between 62 and 64; the original total was 61. The proposed plan has concealed parking at grade, which displaced some of what was proposed retail space, however; there is still retail space halfway along Washington Street and continuing down Church Street, which extends the existing retail space at the neighboring buildings.

Tice stated that they are building out to the lot line, which has not changed from the original plan. The plan has six floors, so no height limit relief is needed. The base of the building will have a stone veneer, with 4 stories of brick and projecting bays, so approval will be needed in order to project over the public ways at both the bays and the cornice treatment. The proposal is to up-light the large cornice with LED lighting. The top floor along Washington Street consists of 3 three-bedroom penthouse units with a continuous window wall. The walls that enclosing the parking on Washington Street will be back-lit laser cut aluminum panels recessed into the masonry done by a local artist. The main entrance will be at the center of the Washington Street façade and the first floor will remain at 24 inches above grade so interior ramps will need to be utilized at the main entrance and separate ramped entrances at the two retail spaces which combined are approximately 3,000 square feet. The first floor has a grand staircase leading to level two which houses an exercise room, and the library/meeting room for residents that leads to the U-shaped terrace/courtyard. The residence levels have approximately 6 feet more of frontage that previously proposed.

Tice noted that the small City owned strip of landscaping along Federal Street will remain and have new landscaping or artwork. Diamond noted that the retail is being handled the same way as the retail spaces across Washington Street and the brick will match as closely as possible to the neighboring brick along Church Street. Diamond noted that the estimated length of construction is 14-16 months.

Shapiro asked if the 3,000 square feet of retail space could be one unit or two. Diamond added that several restaurants have inquired about the retail space but the space could be used by 2 tenants. Tice noted that a showcase window is planned for the corner of the building closest to the neighboring Church Street building that could be used by the new corner tenant. Daniel asked if the ramps would be enclosed. Tice replied that that aspect of the design has yet to be determined.

*Chair Harrington opens public comment.*

Christine Madore asked if there will be parking access off of Federal Street. Tice replied that they felt a Federal Street entrance would not generate as much traffic. The garage door would be wood for security purposes. Chair Harrington asked if less parking to open up the Washington and Federal Street corner was considered. Diamond replied no, and that it would cost them five parking spaces where they are already at less than what's required. Also residents prefer to have more available

parking. Diamond noted that special treatment at that corner will make it welcoming and inviting from that direction.

Councilor Tom Furey, Salem Councilor-At-Large. Councilor Furey stated that this was a handsome design and believes that this will be a good match for Salem.

*Chair Harrington closes public comment.*

Shapiro noted that the SRA would need a motion to approve having the DRB begin the process of schematic design review.

Baldini: Motion to approve allowing the proposed project to advance to the DRB for schematic design review.

Seconded by: Curran. Passes 3-0.

## **New / Old Business**

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1. **32-50 Federal Street (Superior Court and County Commissioners Building):** Discussion on conveyance of property to the Salem Redevelopment Authority.

Daniel noted legislation was passed on January 3, 2017 to transfer those buildings to the SRA. The Governor still needs to sign the legislation. The transfer of the property wouldn't be complete until a development plan was in place and DCAMM will be contacted to begin that process and so the SRA can tour the property. The organization of the RFP is being discussed. 18 – 20,000 square feet will be utilized from the Superior Court Building for the Registry of Deeds.

2. Discussion on SRA/DRB sign review and approval process.

In an effort to streamline the signage process, Daniel suggested that the SRA consider having small signage projects and signage for a single tenants that are recommended for approval by the DRB, be reviewed and administratively approved by him, as opposed to having the proposal come before the SRA. This new process of approval will eliminate applicants having to wait two weeks for review and approval or longer if meetings are postponed, especially if they've already received initial approval from the DRB. Applicants will still retain the right to come before the SRA if they disagree with a condition set forth in a DRB recommendation. A draft of the streamlined process can be reviewed at the next regular SRA meeting.

## **Minutes**

The minutes from the November 9, 2016 regular meeting were reviewed.

Daniel requested to amend the minutes with various minor edits.

Chair Harrington: Motion to approve as amended.

Seconded by: Baldini. Passes 3-0

## **Adjournment**

Baldini: Motion to adjourn the meeting.  
Seconded by: Curran.

Meeting is adjourned at 7:20PM.

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