

**City of Salem Massachusetts
Public Meeting Minutes**

Board or Committee: Redevelopment Authority, Regular Meeting
Date and Time: Wednesday, August 9, 2017 at 6:00 pm
Meeting Location: 120 Washington Street, Third Floor Conference Room
SRA Members Present: Chairperson Grace Harrington, Christine Madore,
David Guarino, Dean Rubin
SRA Members Absent: Russell Vickers
Others Present: Tom Daniel - Director of Planning and Community
Development, Andrew Shapiro
Recorder: Colleen Brewster

Chair Grace Harrington calls the meeting to order. Roll call was taken.
(The agenda items were taken out of order.)

Projects Under Review

New / Old Business

- A. 32-50 Federal Street (Superior Court and County Commissioners Building): General update

Daniel commended the work of Gail Rosenberg, DCAMM Project Manager, and her response to the SRA, DRB, and public comments from the July 26, 2017 joint meeting. DCAMM found no policy requiring a perimeter fence; therefore, no perimeter fence will be included in the moth-balling. Exterior lighting will be included and lighting will be added to some recessed areas for safety, and the Trial Court will maintain the property (trash pick-up and landscaping) in exchange for their continued use of the front parking lot. Redirecting the alarm to the Salem Police Department is not possible, however; the alarm system will be monitored at DCAMM 24/7 and someone will notify the Salem Police Department if the alarm were to be triggered. The security cameras are inactive but will remain in place as a deterrent, and would require additional staff to monitor them if they were to become active; however, there will be security on site from 7PM until 7AM, motion sensors, and alarms on the doors. The mortar color will be matched at masonry repairs and Jessica Herbert (Chair of the Historical Commission) provided notes from a Traditional Building Conference regarding appropriate mortar types that were forwarded to DCAMM and the architect for the project.

Chair Harrington opens public comment.

Jennifer Firth, Historic Salem. Commends the SRA for their scrutiny regarding this important building in Salem, is in support of no fence being installed, stated that an official correspondence will be submitted to DCAMM from Historic Salem for this

project, would prefer the windows be covered in plexiglass not plywood, and requests SRA support on that matter.

Madore noted that the SRA cannot approve/reject anything in the DCAMM proposal; however, issues can be raised for DCAMM to consider.

No one else in the assembly wishes to speak.

Chair Harrington closes public comment.

- B.** Daniel noted that Madore proposed a joint meeting of the SRA and DRB to discuss projects in general. The SRA annual meeting will be in November with a 'year in review' report and a joint meeting could be scheduled after it but that will need to be determined.

Urban Renewal Area Projects Under Review

- 1. 125 Washington Street (Ledger):** Discussion and vote on proposed enclosure for dumpsters.

Brett Danahy of Ledger was present to discuss the proposed dumpster enclosure.

Danahy stated that the 90 day grace period to evaluate options for a dumpster enclosure has ended. Two sides of an existing planter have been preserved for added structural support of a fence with a double door swinging gate that will be installed, and to keep the dumpsters in place. The waste provider, JRM, has recommended a black chain link fence with black slats. The DRB had recommended a 6 foot high solid cedar fence, which will require regular maintenance and upkeep on their part.

Daniel noted that the DRB recommended approval of the cedar fence and residential neighbors present at that DRB meeting were also in favor of cedar fence.

Madore commended the applicant for including their recommendations in the proposed design.

Chair Harrington opens public comment.

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Harrington closes public comment.

Rubin: Motion to approve the enclosure as recommended by the DRB.
Seconded by: Madore. Passes 3-0.

David Guarino arrived after the conclusion of first agenda item.

2. 65 Washington Street “Salem District Court” (Diamond Sinacori, LLC and Urban Spaces, LLC): Discussion and vote on schematic design for proposed development project.

Merrill Diamond of Diamond Sinacori, LLC and Jeff Hirsch of Urban Spaces were present to discuss the schematic design for the proposed development project.

Hirsch noted that three previous versions of the design were presented to the DRB where; massing, building shape, function, exterior façade, number of floors, base, roofing, windows, unit count, and parking spaces were shown. Details and additional materials will start to be worked out and public art will be integrated at the Federal Street corner.

Daniel noted that the DRB focused on the ground floor treatment and increased retail space transparency, but still had questions and items for the applicant to address. Comments from the community were submitted to both the DRB and SRA. Glenn Kennedy (DRB member) noted the lack of transparency at the corner of Federal and Washington, but understood that parking spaces occupy the area behind the façade. The DRB approved the Schematic Design and recommended SRA approval.

Rubin noted that the community had concerns regarding the more modern design vs. an historic one of a gateway building. He wanted to be sensitive to that concern and to know the DRB's reaction. Hirsch replied that most community concerns associated with integrating this building with historic Salem and several DRB members noted that this building's design should represent Salem in 2017. Diamond added that the concept is transitional not contemporary, the brick matches other brick on Washington Street, and it will become an appropriate gateway building into Salem.

Rubin asked who sets the tone for the structure. Daniel replied the DRB, although they do not design it. The DRB felt that traditional vs. contemporary tension with the building needs to be clarified. Shapiro noted that the Urban Renewal Plan design guidelines have details that need to be followed and the DRB will critique and respond to designs that are presented. Feedback is critical and at each meeting progress is made and the DRB recognizes that.

Rubin asked for a review of the finishes. Hirsch noted that the original stone base was thought to be old fashioned and didn't fit the transitional building, so a cast stone lintel, 24" brick columns, columns wrapped in brick, and glass and steel at retail and main entrance have been integrated into the design. The use of stone, tile, metal panel, etc. is being explored at the corner treatment at Federal and Washington Streets. Diamond added that several meetings with citizens, the design team, and the SRA regarding appropriate artwork is in process and will be presented at a later date.

Guarino noted that the current Federal Street facade is not a worthy Gateway view and asked why no retail or windows could be placed there. Hirsch replied that the trash room

and 61 parking spaces are being provided to create a 1 to 1 ratio for parking. Diamond noted that the forthcoming art will make the façade more welcoming and the lighted night view will highlight the building.

Madore noted that something additional to the artwork could be added to make the corner more transparent. Hirsch added that the green strip along Federal Street will create a buffer and the neighbors on Federal Street want that area to be green and quiet.

Madore stated that Salem is a walkable city so the day and night street level experience is important, encouraged them to continue to push the envelope and noted that there is some tension between the traditional and modern differences. The building doesn't have an identity and could be placed anywhere, it should speak to Salem's character, history, and future. The scale and size of the building is a concern for many and it looks very large. As a gateway building the finishes & material should not be compromised. Parking spaces could be subsidized for T passes; Madore suggested that alternatives be presented at the next meeting. Diamond replied that the design will be refined at the next meeting with a more expressive and appropriate ground level.

Chair Harrington noted that she is in support of their progress and excuses herself from the meeting.

Hirsch noted that the applicant will have an additional Design Development review with DRB but would be willing to return to the SRA for a review. Shapiro noted that another review isn't required but it would be appreciated and the applicant will also go through a Plan Unit Development (PUD) process with the Planning Board that will have less of a focus on design.

Rubin noted that the community is asking that this new gateway building be respectful of Salem's history.

Madore asked if the City Council will review this project because the same questions will be asked. Daniel & Hirsch replied that they intend to go before the City Council in September for review of a proposed Tax Increment Exemption (TIE) agreement, at which time the Council will most likely ask about detailed elements of the project.

Rubin opens public comment.

Anya Wilczynski, Historic Salem. HS Members would like to see the building experience at the street level and from all angles, public art will be key to the Federal Street corner, and noted that "Salem" is spelled out in tile in front of City Hall so adding a piece of art that can't be removed will help give the building an identity. Hirsch replied that they have a movie showing those views. Madore suggested that a link to the movie be shared on the City website, Historic Salem, and other websites.

Polly Wilbert. With the vehicle entrance on Federal Street people may double park on Washington Street to make drop-offs. Salem Laundry building has a drive through port

cochere. Diamond replied that empty nesters are the target market for this building that should create less traffic and with parking spaces in the building owners have no need to stop along Washington Street.

Morris Schopf, 1 Cambridge Street. Is in favor of the developer efforts to please all interested parties. Suggested that the SRA review the original proposal to make sure the project is moving forward not backward. Not all members are in favor of the character, general massing, treatment, materials, fenestration, and there is a reason for that. The earlier ideas could be re-examined. Diamond replied that DRB has opined that this design is more appropriate than the original RFP image, the exterior design has changed but the intention has not.

Brendan Murphy. A concern of the community is with old Salem buildings in the vicinity and incorporating art into the building that will help make the community more receptive to it. Diamond replied that the details don't show in the renderings but they will be revised. Guarino noted that the revised rendering should be as accurate as possible.

Madore closes public comment.

Daniel stated that the project will return to the SRA for approval after the Design Review Board approves the next design phase, which is final design. There may be informational updates provided by the applicant to the DRB and SRA before the final design phase. The Schematic Design has been determined but the SRA comments will help move the design forward. Madore noted that the DRB will provide the necessary design pushback.

Madore: Motion to approve the motion to approve Schematic Design.
Seconded by: Rubin. Passes 3-0.

Minutes

The minutes from the July 12, 2017 regular meeting were reviewed.

Daniel noted that a minor word change was needed on Page 4 and the agenda title on Page 6 should be The District Court not Federal Street.

Madore: Motion to approve the minutes as amended.
Seconded by: Rubin. Passes 3-0.

Adjournment

Madore: Motion to adjourn the meeting.
Seconded by: Guarino. Passes 3-0.

Meeting is adjourned at 7:30PM.

Know your rights under the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 39 §23B and
City Ordinance Sections 2-028 through 2-2033.