

**City of Salem Massachusetts  
Public Meeting Minutes**

**Board or Committee:** Redevelopment Authority, Regular Meeting  
**Date and Time:** Wednesday, June 9, 2021 at 6:00 pm  
**Meeting Location:** Virtual Zoom Meeting  
**SRA Members Present:** Chair Grace Napolitano, Cynthia Nina-Soto, Dean Rubin  
**SRA Members Absent:** David Guarino, Russ Vickers  
**Others Present:** Tom Daniel – Director of Planning and Community Development  
Kate Newhall-Smith – Principal Planner  
**Recorder:** Kate Newhall-Smith

**Regular Meeting**

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**Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Daniel stated

Economic Development: The EDRR continues to meet weekly. The biggest concern right now is lack of employees. The EDRR is working to understand the problem and find ways to address it.  
Arts Fest: Events were dispersed in three locations versus only one this year. downtown was alive with visitors and community members. It felt like downtown was reopening again to the community.  
Vaccines: Public health briefing looked at vaccination rate models and there is a difference between 70% and 80% of the population being vaccinated. Concerns for the fall and mortality rates. Want to make sure vaccination continues to happen. Vaccines are readily available, walk-in appointments. This is a big change from only a few months ago.

**Projects in the Urban Renewal Area**

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1. **38 Norman Street:** Schematic Design Review – Construction of a new mixed-use building with commercial uses on the ground floor and residential uses above, continued from 4/14/21, request to continue to July 14, 2021.

Rubin asked whether the project should be pulled from the agenda until the applicant is prepared to come back rather than continuing to postpone it meeting-to-meeting. Newhall-Smith states that Attorney Grover said that his clients have a reworked design for a smaller building, which they want to share with the community before coming back to the SRA. Newhall-Smith believes they will be back before the Board next month.

Rubin: Motion to continue the application to the July 14, 2021, regular meeting as requested by the applicant.

Seconded by: Nina-Soto

Roll Call: Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano in favor. 3-0

2. **118 Washington Street:** Small Project Review – Review of DRB Recommendation for façade renovations including painting, lighting, and material replacement.

Eugene Nigrelli, co-owner, was present to discuss the project.

Ms. Newhall-Smith reviews the DRB deliberations and shares with the members that DRB member Glenn Kennedy was able to manipulate the sign design during the meeting, on Zoom, to show the Board's suggested revisions. Mr. Nigrelli was supportive and grateful for the technology and expressed his thanks for the assistance throughout the review process.

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Vote: Rubin made a motion to approve the project subject to the DRB Recommendation.

Seconded by: Nina-Soto.

Roll Call: Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano 3-0 in favor.

3. **285 Derby Street:** Small Project Review – Façade modifications to rear tenant space, including creating new entry doors, murals, exterior lighting, and the construction of a paved walkway along the side of the building in the easement area of Charlotte Forten Park.

Attorney Scott Grover, Bill Golden, Whydah Pirate Museum, Ken McTague, Concept Signs, and Stephen Livermore, Architect, were present to discuss the project.

Attorney Grover introduces the project team that will be presenting. Mr. Golden shares a synopsis of the story of the Whydah and his search for the perfect location to bring Real Pirates. Mr. Livermore reviews the proposed modifications to the façade elevations, which include:

- Creating two entry/exit doors on the park façade,
- Installing a plain black awning over the main entry,
- Installing gooseneck and historic-appearing lighting along length of façade,
- Closing in overhead doors and windows and creating service doors along the alley façade,
- Installing stucco panels in gray or terracotta in the alley's recessed panels, and
- Constructing a walkway and accessible ramp along the side of the building in the easement area in the park.

Mr. McTague reviews the sign plan, which includes:

- Blade signs at the Derby Street and at the river end of the building,
- A wall panel sign over the main entry door, and
- A large painted wall sign facing the river (similar to the painted sign on Notch Brewing).

Mr. McTague states that the blade signs and the wall panel sign will be black with gold leaf text and white vinyl jolly roger graphics.

Rubin shares his concern with having a single tenant in the space and if there is not a variety of tenants to draw pedestrians into the park and to 285 Derby. Mr. Golden describes his vision of

activating the park through outdoor events, using the North River for programming, installing popcorn/soda carts on the easement. He also reviews the museum programming, which includes excavation of recovered treasure in addition to the exhibits associated with the Whydah itself. Mr. Rubin emphasizes the participation of school children and their enthusiasm to bring activity to the park.

Mr. Daniel asks if the applicant has considered removing all of the brick within the recessed panels at the proposed entry/exit doors. Mr. Golden reviews the security concerns, the interior lighting needed for the exhibits, and the impact of COVID on materials and supplies. Mr. Livermore states that they are proposing double doors with a 32" wide sidelite. The doors with sidelite are approximately 8' tall and 9' wide, which will bring in a lot of natural light. He confirms that the proposed doors are the same anodized aluminum used on the primary façade of the building. All of the customer/visitor doors on the building will match.

Mr. Daniel asks for more details on the proposed accessibility ramp. He states that a ramp was considered during the planning and designing of the park and was rejected for a variety of reasons. He asks for details on the ramp, noting the existing granite wall. Mr. Livermore replies that they will sawcut the portion of the wall they need for the ramp and will install the same railing system as used throughout the rest of the park.

Mr. Daniel expresses concern about the ramp and requests a meeting with the applicant team to discuss the concept before the Design Review Board meeting. Ms. Newhall-Smith will coordinate the meeting.

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Vote: Nina-Soto made a motion to refer the project subject to the DRB.

Seconded by: Rubin.

Roll Call: Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano 3-0 in favor.

### **New/Old Business**

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1. Heritage Trail Update: Ms. Newhall-Smith reviews the proposal to change the Heritage Trail from red to gold.

Rubin states that he educated himself on how the current descriptor 'red line' (2-words) might be confused with the contentious word 'redline' (1-word) and that he believes it is very important for the community to understand why the red is being removed in favor of the gold.

Ms. Newhall-Smith states that the group will come back to the SRA when they determine the design of the stencils that will be added to the trail.

2. Redevelopment of the Historic Courthouse and the Crescent Lot: Update on Project Status.

Mr. Daniel and Ms. Newhall-Smith share the following:

- a) Weekly Project Meetings – Tom and Kate continue to meet weekly with the Winn team to review project status and work through outstanding issues.
  - b) Preservation Restriction – The latest version is at the MHC for a final review based on DCAMM’s desired edits. Kate sent it to MHC on May 14<sup>th</sup> and should receive comments within the next few days.
  - c) Registry of Deeds – There is no update regarding the Registry of Deeds. A discussion with representation from the Secretary of State is the next logical step in the process to determine if the Registry of Deeds is a feasible/viable tenant in the courthouses. Winn Development is leading on the coordination of this meeting; Tom and/or Kate will attend it as well.
  - d) Project Timelines – The Winn team has moved its anticipated filing date for Schematic review to the July meeting.
3. Discussion: Consideration of including an expiration date on SRA approvals.

Chair Napolitano asks her fellow members if they are amenable to continuing this discussion to the next meeting so that the other members are able to participate. Ms. Nina-Soto and Mr. Rubin agreed to moving the agenda item to July.

#### 4. SRA Financials

Ms. Newhall-Smith states that the SRA’s general account and Charlotte Forten account are excerpted in the staff report. She asks the members to contact her if they would like to see the financials presented in a different way.

Mr. Rubin notes and appreciates the first expenditure from the Charlotte Forten account to support Salem Main Streets and Arts Fest.

### Meeting Minutes

Ms. Nina-Soto and Mr. Rubin confirm they sent their edits to Ms. Newhall-Smith. Chair Napolitano asks if the absent members submitted any edits. Ms. Newhall-Smith replies that she hasn’t heard from them. Chair Napolitano suggests continuing the minutes to the July meeting so the other members can review and submit edits before voting.

Ms. Newhall-Smith will carry the three sets of draft minutes to the July meeting.

### Adjournment

Vote: Rubin motion to adjourn

Seconded by: Nina-Soto

Roll call: Nina-Soto, Rubin, Chair Napolitano in favor. 3-0 in favor.

Regular Meeting ended at 7:15PM