

**City of Salem Massachusetts
Public Meeting Minutes**

Board or Committee:	Redevelopment Authority, Regular Meeting
Date and Time:	Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 6:00 pm
Meeting Location:	Virtual Zoom Meeting
SRA Members Present:	Chair Grace Napolitano, David Guarino, Dean Rubin, Cynthia Nina-Soto
SRA Members Absent:	Russ Vickers
Others Present:	Tom Daniel – Director of Planning and Community Development Kate Newhall-Smith – Principal Planner
Recorder:	Colleen Brewster

Projects in the Urban Renewal Area

1. **234 Bridge Street:** Small Project Review – Revised proposal for installation of cellular infrastructure on pole.

Mr. Daniel thanked Atty. Klasnick and Verizon for their hard work with relocating the infrastructure design.

Attorney Daniel Klasnick of Duval & Klasnick, and Sean Conway were present to discuss the project.

Atty. Klasnick stated that the City Council referred them to the DRB back in the winter of 2021 to review the potential location and design of the small cell equipment. The original proposal was to locate the infrastructure on a new, replica, decorative light pole, then it switched to the opposite side of the street at 1 Washington Street to be mounted on an existing street signal pole. Residents were not in favor of the revised location behind their homes; the City Council stated that the location cannot be changed, and the SRA can review it for design aesthetics only. Atty. Klasnick is back before the SRA with the original proposal to be integrated into a replicated light pole. The proposal is to replace and replicate the design and appearance of the decorative light pole. The device shown in gray on the plans is a 12-inch-diameter x 28.7-inch-high canister and lower on the pole is a 22-inch-wide x 12-inch-deep x 48-inch-high enclosure. The lower box will be 8-feet above grade and both enclosures can be painted black. No ground equipment is proposed, and they are trying to maintain consistency while meeting the demand needs of the city.

Mr. Rubin expressed his disappointment that it took eight months to grant the applicant approval despite the applicant's willingness to meet the ever-changing demands in location by the City.

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: Rubin made a motion to approve the revised proposed location pending DRB review and approval. Seconded by: Guarino.

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

2. **65 Washington Street:** Request for Certificate of Completion

Jeff Hirsh of Urban Spaces and Stephen Tise of Tise Design Associates were present to discuss the project.

Mr. Hirsh noted that the project is 99.95% complete. Mr. Daniel stated that as part of the LDA, at the conclusion of the project the SRA must approve a certificate of completion, and this is also an opportunity to request project updates or to ask any final questions. Substantial Completion is defined in the LDA as the improvements that comprise the project, are substantially complete in accordance with the permits and approvals of the design documents, and sufficiently complete for any unit or other portion of the project to be offered for sale or lease, subject only to minor painting, patching, adjustment, or repair.

Mr. Rubin stated that the interior of the building is stunning and well done and he's also seen an interior unit. He congratulated them on their accomplishment and requested the status of the commercial lease of the retail spaces. Mr. Daniel noted that tenant leases are independent of the certificate and the construction of the building. Mr. Hirsh added that there is 3,000 sq. ft. of retail space with prospective tenants although he cannot divulge any potential deals and hopes to have it rented soon. Mr. Daniel asked if there were plans to utilize the vacant space with window displays for the time being. Mr. Hirsh replied that they haven't considered it but are open to ideas. He noted that he visited the building with Sec. Kennealy who commented that the common spaces were wonderful and praised the design of Steve Tise. Mr. Tise noted that Sec. Kennealy reached out to him regarding the very successful design.

Mr. Daniel asked when the proposed sculpture at the corner of Federal and Washington Street would be installed. Mr. Tise replied that it has been fabricated and they need to determine if the base has been poured. Mr. Daniel noted that the Public Art Commission had reviewed and approved the final design.

Mr. Tise believed that the design along North Federal Street to conceal the parking along that end of the street was very successful and does not read at a blank wall. Mr. Daniel noted that 10% of the units are affordable, totaling 6 units, and they are priced in the upper \$200,000's to lower-mid \$300,000's. These units are part of what DHCD calls Local Action Unit and several local development projects have these styles of units and were toured with Secretary Kennealy visited Salem. Salem is a leader in this area and other towns and cities should do it. He thanked the team for their commitment to the project and meeting the affordable housing aspect of it.

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: Rubin made a motion to approve the Certificate of Completion. Seconded by: Guarino.
Roll Call: Guarino, Rubin, Napolitano. 3-0 in favor.

VOTE: Rubin made a motion to allow Tom Daniel, Executive Director of the SRA to sign the Certificate of Completion. Seconded by: Guarino.
Roll Call: Guarino, Rubin, Napolitano. 3-0 in favor.

3. **133 Washington Street:** Small Project Review – Review of DRB recommendation for the installation of replacement windows and repointing the brick façade.

Dennis Droggitis of JMJ Construction was present to discuss the project.

Mr. Droggitis stated they are looking to replace the second and third floor windows at the front of the building with a double-hung Marvin simulated divided lite fiberglass windows. He will also repoint second floor masonry and in-fill any cracks. Scaffolding will be installed at the front of the building for two-week but it will allow people to walk along at the street below. Ms. Newhall-Smith noted that the DRB reviewed this application at a couple of meetings, and they approved it with conditions to match mortar and to paint the window and shutters a muted white.

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: Rubin made a motion to approve as presented, subject to the DRB approval. Seconded by: Guarino.
Roll Call: Guarino, Rubin, Napolitano. 3-0 in favor.

4. **91 Lafayette Street:** Small Project Review – Review of DRB recommendation for façade modifications to Wendy's, including new materials and architectural features.

Ms. Nina-Soto arrived.

Heidi Hogan and Kelsi Hall were present to discuss the project.

Ms. Hogan stated they've been to the DRB and PB meetings. They've changed the colors to a more muted color palette, the front crimson red blade will be new, there will be new accent tile piers at the front façade, existing windows to remain, a small sign over the driveway, and some brick repair and tuck-pointing. Both the right- and left-side elevations will have new upper fascia and signage above the existing façade.

Mr. Guarino asked why signage was being reviewed separately. Newhall-smith replied that the signage was reviewed by the DRB the previous week, the work was separated so the applicant could proceed with their construction work prior to winter, the signage will be halo lit and the sizes were reduced for compliance purposes.

Mr. Guarino asked how much higher the red blade sign would be. Ms. Hogan replied that they are typically 18" higher and the tree in the front may need to be trimmed for added visibility. Mr. Guarino agreed with the DRB recommendations.

Chair Napolitano asked if the DRB discussion included landscape improvements. Ms. Newhall-Smith replied no, the application was for façade work only. Ms. Hogan added that they will

replace the landscaping as part of the building refresh with plantings based on the climate zone, as well as replacing the ADA ramp and directional signage, and minimal landscaping is proposed. She noted that they will add canopies over the drive thru ordering and payment areas with recessed lighting.

Mr. Rubin asked if the interior HC parking spaces will be used. He noted the awkward and unsafe plan to have people cross the driveway to enter the building. Ms. Hogan replied that neither the interior HC parking spaces nor crosswalk through the driveway are ideal; the requirement is to have the HC spaces as close to the entrance as possible.

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: Rubin made a motion to approve per the DRB recommendation. Seconded by: Guarino. Roll Call: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano. 4-0 in favor.

5. **10 Derby Square:** Small Project Review – Review of DRB recommendation for the replacement of windows on the third floor.

Samuel Clement of Jones Architecture was present to discuss the project.

Mr. Clement stated that they want to replace windows in their office, a third-floor unit. 17 windows will be replaced in total, 5 on east elevation facing Old Town Hall, 3 on the south elevation, and 9 on the east elevation facing Higginson Square. The existing windows are true divided lites but the double-hung replacement windows will be simulated divided lites with the same quantity of divided lites. The outer sash will be aluminum, with an aluminum frame and aluminum cladding over the exterior wood painted to match the existing windows. Mr. Rubin requested the reason for modification the windows. Mr. Clements replied acoustics, comfort, ease of operation, and that they are old failing windows.

Mr. Guarino asked if all the windows on their floor will be replaced. Mr. Clements replied that the one window in the stair will not because it is part of the shared common space of the building and is outside of their unit.

Mr. Daniel asked if the wood windows were original. Mr. Clements replied that he did not know. Mr. Daniel noted that replacement windows mean a reduction in glazing area which will have an impact and asked if that was discussed by the DRB as well as the switch from wood. Ms. Newhall-Smith replied that she did not recall a glazing conversation but noted that the DRB said the selection was a good window which could set a precedent for the building. The DRB was in favor of the replacement and made no special recommendations. Mr. Daniel noted that wood windows have a different look and keeping them should be a goal despite noise considerations, etc. like the restored windows at Essex Apartments. He noted that the SRA may have worked to restore what could have been existing windows at 10 Derby Square in the 1970's and the age of the windows should be an important element to determine in the future.

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: Rubin made a motion to approve the application for the replacement windows that the SRA sees at a suitable replacement window for the future of the building. Seconded by: Nina-Soto.

Roll Call: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano. 4-0 in favor.

6. **1 Salem Green:** Small Project Review – Review of DRB recommendations for façade modifications including removal of existing entrances, creation of new entrances, and modification to window glazing.

Samuel Clement of Jones Architecture was present to discuss the project.

Mr. Clement stated that while most of the interior renovation were interior renovation with a few exterior modifications and some minor site work. They will replace existing clear story windows in kind, replace some second-floor louvers with new clerestory windows, replace some louvers, replace two storefront entrances along the west façade, replace several storefront glass panels and install some spandrel glass. Modifications to the elevator stair core will result in the replacement of the entrance storefront glass along Church Street; however, the new aluminum finishes will match the dark bronze color. They will apply a frosted semi-opaque film at the newly enclosed east facing alcove to conceal interior mechanical upgrades and will enclose an existing brick alcove at the north façade with new brick and a new steel door painted dark bronze with metal coping at the new roof. The sliding glass door entrance at the vestibule on the opposite side of the alleyway will be replaced with a single aluminum swinging door. Mullins will be added at some of the new aluminum frame windows rather than continuing with the butt glazing.

Mr. Rubin noted that the rendering has changed the color of the brick and asked if brick modification were proposed. Mr. Clements replied no, it was result of the rendering only.

Mr. Rubin stated that he is grateful for the improvements to the building and entryways. He asked if the louvers incorporation could be made symmetrical along the east façade. Mr. Clements replied that the interior configuration differs from the exterior view, the interior spaces are for a restroom and kitchen and the kitchen would like to maintain their natural light.

Ms. Nina-Soto stated that she is looking forward to the improvements.

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: Rubin made a motion to approve as presented with the recommendations of the DRB. Seconded by: Nina-Soto.

Roll Call: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano. 4-0 in favor.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Daniel stated:

1. **Downtown Activity:** It's been an active summer and Halloween season and some businesses met their goals after the first two weeks in October. Many were new visitors to Salem which

made for a lot of work for Destination Salem and Haunted Happenings, who will look into changes for the tourism sector for next year.

2. Off-Shore Wind Announcement: The site is outside the urban renewal project and would take a couple of years to construct. Some jobs on site and others on the water. This is a new industry and there will be some connection to the downtown and businesses, but there is more to come with this new endeavor. By Dec 17th the state will make its award decision with the current procurement, and many are optimistic that the Commonwealth Wind Proposed will be part of it.
3. Covid Recovery Grant: Salem has received a grant from the EDA that will include an Economic Diversification Study, which will commence in 2022. This offshore wind opportunity will help determine how the office/work environment will work in the future when it comes to neighboring cities with remote workers or satellite offices and will inform this grant-funded work.
4. Downtown Parking Study: A study is pending in collaboration with the parking department. The study will examine feasibilities and economics of alternate parking areas and facilities around the downtown to relieve pressures on the Museum Place Garage.
5. City Council Appointments: Five new City Councillors were appointed in the recent election and there will be a briefing session soon that Chair Napolitano will participate in.
6. City Reopening Policy: The policy has been updated again, public meeting will stay fully remote through December, and there will be a hybrid meeting option from January through April, if Board members wish to continue to stay remote. In April, meetings will return to in-person with the public having the option to be remote.

Mr. Rubin asked if remote access would continue to count as a quorum. Mr. Daniel replied only until April 2022.

7. Northshore CDC project at Lafayette and Peabody Streets: The project went on hold for several months, was scaled down and the proposed plan has changed. The Peabody Street building is no longer part of senior housing, and the design team is not intending to demolish the building at the corner of Lafayette and Derby Street. The project is also being reviewed by the PB and a continuance has been requested to allow the applicant to consult with the Historic Commission. The project is currently in the Schematic Design approval process and will return to the SRA and DRB for continued review.

Chair Napolitano asked if the demolition of the building would change the proposal. Mr. Daniel replied yes since the previous plan called to preserve the façade. The DRB discussion regarding recreating the original building resulted in the DRB not feeling as if the design team should be constrained by the demolition of the existing building. The SRA can also request that the applicant return to for review and comment.

Chair Napolitano asked if this change triggers a refile. Mr. Daniel replied that the Planning Department will need to have a conversation to determine that. He noted that he's been informed by Planning Department employees that the applicant was requesting to demolishing the existing historic building to raise it up 2-feet and repair the damaged culvert.

Chair Napolitano requested a legal opinion from the City Solicitor on what triggers a refile. Mr. Daniel stated that he would also speak with the applicant's attorney, Scott Grover. Mr. Guarino agreed and noted that the SRA needs to agree with the DRB that this is worth pursuing.

Mr. Rubin stated that the applicant's argument relates to resiliency, but resiliency was not mentioned with the redevelopment of 285 Derby Street. Mr. Daniel replied that they need to hear directly from the applicant. Mr. Rubin added that he also had concerns around parking and unless they deal with that it won't be well received by some of the SRA numbers.

8. Mass Works Grant: The Engineering and Traffic Departments received a grant that would largely be for infrastructure improvements in the Point Neighborhood. We also received a grant of \$45,000 for design/study work for connections to North Salem for the Crescent Lot. This could lead to infrastructure fundings to make additional improvements that connect to the crescent lot and downtown Salem.

New / Old Business

1. Redevelopment of the Historic Courthouses and the Crescent Lot: Update on Project Status

Mr. Daniel stated that it was one year ago today the SRA made their developer selection decision. The biggest recent milestone was Schematic Design approval by the SRA. They continue to meet weekly with the Winn team who will need to advance their design for the PB filing, so they may not return to the SRA until April or May but will utilize all Board and public comments they received as they continue to refine their design. They have also been corresponding with the Registry of Deeds and are hoping to hear back from them next month. When the City Council conveyed the crescent lot to the SRA, there was a cooperation agreement between the SRA and the City of Salem. They will be going to the City Council to request an amendment to update the 18-month developer selection timeline that went six-weeks and two-days beyond that limit due to the pandemic. The dates in all related documentation need match and the language in the cooperation agreement spoke to the execution of multiple land disposition agreements and the execution of a Purchase and Sale Agreement to be issued before the end of the calendar year. He already has authorization from the SRA to authorize the document and asked that Chair Napolitano co-sign the letter. They are working with DCAMM. They are refining the trial court easements which will require a surveyor to date plans. DCAMM is working on the draft deed. Winn requested the MOA with DCAMM that the city has allows them to pursue permitting and other applications, and they are working to make that process more efficient. They also continue to with the MBTA on the remnant parcel and P&S agreement. Development consultant Matt Zahler and development attorney Shirin Everette continue to help the city work through these multiple agreements. They are also now engaging with Mass DOT which is associated with a small piece of the project, as well as the city engineer.

2. SRA Financials: Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that no money has been spent with the account earning a small amount of interest each month.

Other Business

Witch City Mall: Mr. Rubin stated that there was a severe lack of maintenance at the mall during the Halloween season. The building was dirty, unkept, and seemingly abandoned in some respects. It was sad given the sheer number of people that visited the city and walked through the building. It should be a better representation of what we want to see from the city, and he asked if there is any recourse or if there has been any further discussion about the condition of the mall owners. Mr. Daniel replied that the EDRR also spoke about the condition of the mall which remains quite dirty, and the owner has a new cleaning company that wasn't prepared for the Halloween season. There have been conversations with the building owner, but he has not been apart of the code enforcement issues regarding the bathrooms being closed and not being maintained; however, the city hasn't been involved in the management of the internal common areas. He agreed that the conditions are concerning and not up to basic standards. Mr. Rubin added that they should have a say in what can be done although it is a private business.

Chair Napolitano left the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

1. October 13, 2021

VOTE: Guarino made a motion to approve the minutes of October 13, 2021.

Seconded by: Rubin.

Roll Call: Guarino, Nina-Soto, and Rubin.

Adjournment

VOTE: Nina-Soto made a motion to adjourn.

Seconded by: Guarino

Roll Call: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Rubin.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45PM.

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