

City of Salem Massachusetts  
Public Meeting Minutes

**Board or Committee:** Redevelopment Authority, Regular Meeting  
**Date and Time:** Wednesday, September 14, 2022, at 6:00 pm  
**Meeting Location:** Virtual Zoom Meeting  
**SRA Members Present:** Chair Grace Napolitano, David Guarino, Christine Madore, Cynthia Nina-Soto, Dean Rubin  
**SRA Members Absent:** None  
**Others Present:** Tom Daniel – Director of Planning and Community Development; Kate Newhall-Smith, Principal Planner  
**Recorder:** Colleen Brewster

**Regular Meeting**

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**Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Daniel stated that

1. Old Town Hall and Culture House study is nearly complete and there will be a public meeting in the fall of 2022 to discuss their findings.
2. Status of previously approved projects where no site work has commenced: Projects at 30 Federal and 23 Summer Streets were applied for by Michael Becker, who has architects and engineers advancing the designs. At 30 Federal Street a building permit was issued for interior demolition. At 38 Norman Street, the design team is looking into financing.

**Projects in the Urban Renewal Area**

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1. **41 Lafayette Street:** Small Project Review – Review of Proposal and DRB Recommendation for the painting of a mural on Central Street façade of Barrio, request to continue to October 12, 2022.

Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that the applicant needed to go before the Public Art Commission to discuss the mural, which hasn't occurred yet and they didn't make the Commission's September agenda. She requested a continuance.

Chair Napolitano arrived.

Ms. Madore arrived.

**VOTE:** Rubin made a motion to continue until the October 12, 2022, regular meeting. Seconded by: Guarino.

Roll Call: Guarino, Madore, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano. 5-0 in favor

2. **30 Church Street:** East Regiment Beer Company Request for License Renewal, continued from 8/10/22.

Scott Perry (Co-Owner) of East Regiment Beer Company was present to discuss the project.

Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that at the August meeting the Board was considering an amendment to the existing license for the patio space at the establishment, since the owner requested a 3-year renewal rather than annual. There are few examples to model this amendment after and the

Board is also considering adding fees with an escalation fee. Mr. Rubin thanked Ms. Newhall-Smith for the analysis she provided, encouraged that the owner to be notified of the renewal in advance, and suggested an escalation clause of a certain percentage in lieu of taxes. Ms. Nina-Soto and Mr. Guarino agreed and noted the helpfulness of seeing the current rates and fees elsewhere in the city. Mr. Rubin suggested the fee be increased to \$1.00 with a 3% annual escalation. Ms. Madore requested language regarding stewardship and maintenance of the property be included as public space owned by the SRA. Ms. Newhall-Smith suggested referencing specific sections of the ordinance that relate to the removal of snow & ice, trash & debris from the adjacent walkways.

Mr. Perry stated that originally the only legal writing Salem had was a café permit to allow the use of a public sidewalk with a \$25 fee. The area was a mulch bed not a public sidewalk and they only own the land the building sits on, and the fee was raised to \$500 a year license fee. They want to flatten the earth and place tables and chairs only, but the DRB requested a much more substantial structure which they constructed. In fairness, he wanted to point out that there was no other use for the area since directly below it are utilities, and the side doors are fire exits that need to be kept clear, so there was no other use. The \$50 fee for Artists' Row was for the City to erect and maintain the space but the city doesn't have to maintain this space. He asked them to consider the difference between their site and Artists' Row or current outdoor seating since no usable space for the City has been occupied. Regarding snow removal, they remove snow and treat the sidewalks but not Salem Green, which is maintained by the City and it would take them a significant amount of time to clear that path on their own. Mr. Rubin noted that the SRA wanted to add the language as a precedent and not that it was for the owner to maintain on their own. Ms. Madore noted that based on Section 38 of the city ordinance, the property owner is responsible for clearing snow that abuts their property. The property belongs to the SRA's, but the volume of snow doesn't justify the use of large equipment and they hope the business will continue to make a reasonable effort to clear the public ways. Mr. Perry replied that they will continue to clear snow, ice, and trash within reason as they do at the start of each workday and requested additional language be provided for clarification. Ms. Madore suggested that specific language not be applied to this property and for the owner to contact [snow@salem.com](mailto:snow@salem.com) to alert them to of heavy snow accumulation.

**VOTE:** Rubin made a motion to amend the language to include a \$1 per square foot renewal fee with a 3% escalation each year, and to include language that the licensure is responsible to keep the property clean and neat per City Ordinances sections 38-13 and 38-14. Seconded by: Nina-Soto.

Roll Call: Guarino, Madore, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano. 5-0 in favor

- 3. 43 Church Street:** Small Project Review – Review of DRB Recommendation for the construction of a one-story addition on the rear of the building to extend the restaurant's dining area. A portion of the proposed addition is located on land owned by the Salem Redevelopment Authority.

Jim and Kathi Turner (Owners) and Tyler Youngblood (Architect) were present to discuss the project.

Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that the applicant went before the DRB in August and received a positive recommendation. Mr. Youngblood noted the DRB's recommendation for the new parapet railing to be one even height even though the roof undulates and to reconsider the color of the awning.

Mr. Rubin suggested using the same language as proposed for East Regiment Beer Company. Mr. Guarino noted that Salem Five Bank provided a comment letter and raised issues that should possibly be included. Mr. Turner replied that their working with the bank on those issues. Ms. Turner noted that they've made the necessary adjustments to address the banks concerns. Mr. Daniel suggested the concern include those conditions in the motion.

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

**VOTE:** Rubin made a motion to issue a license to Turner's Seafood with the DRB's recommended conditions and to honor the Salem Five recommendations including: that the primary customer entrance remains on Church Street, the rear entry shall not be a primary entrance, the 4-foot sidewalk next to the rear seating be kept unobstructed, no trash bins or dumpster shall be placed in Salem Green, the stormwater and drainage requirements shall be maintained, the run-off from the roof of the proposed addition be satisfactory to Salem Five Bank, the south-eastern corner of the proposed addition be far enough west to allow space for a vehicle to access as necessary, the terms of the license be \$1 per square-foot for a 3-year renewable license with a 3% escalation clause. Seconded by: Guarino.

Roll Call: Guarino, Madore, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano. 5-0 in favor

**4. 120 Washington Street: Small Project Review – Review of DRB Recommendation for the painting of exterior façade for the Gyro Spot.**

Myles Cox and Ryan Cox (two of the Co-Owners) were present to discuss the project.

Mr. Myles Cox stated that their location is at 128 Washington Street, they plan to open within a week, and they worked with the DRB in August to adjust their suggested paint scheme. The scheme will be primarily white with blue accents and Greek keys above the door and one window.

Ms. Madore asked if the sign will go above the window. Mr. Myles Cox replied that the sign is flat not a blade sign and has been reviewed by the DRB.

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

**VOTE:** Rubin made a motion to approve subject to the DRB recommendations. Seconded by: Nina-Soto.

Roll Call: Guarino, Madore, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano. 5-0 in favor

**5. 140 Washington Street: Small Project Review – Roof replacement**

Andrew Brockway (Architect) and Debbie Tucker (President of Salem Housing Authority) were present to discuss the project.

Mr. Brockway stated that the parapet at the roofline has a 5-inch metal coping cap, they want to replace the existing roof system but would retain the metal coping. The parapet is only along Washington Street façade and the remainder of the roof is a gravel stop with a metal fascia at the perimeter. They need to add 5.5-inches of rigid insulation at the perimeter to meet current code. The existing parapet steps up and down at the front façade and some areas have a minimal difference between the roof line and parapet and the additional insulation would place it higher than the parapet at some locations. For consistency they want to extend the height of the parapet 5-inches and create a 2-piece parapet condition with a 2-piece metal fascia that would not cover any additional brick. The parapet height would increase from 5.5-inches to 12.5-inches high and would be scaled more appropriately. Mr. Rubin noted that the change would be minimally visible.

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

**VOTE:** Rubin made a motion to approve pending approval from the DRB. Seconded by: Madore.

Roll Call: Guarino, Madore, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano. 5-0 in favor

- 6. 252 Bridge Street and 32-34 Federal Street:** Review of DRB's Design Consultation of the Exchange Salem – Part 1: Redevelopment of 252 Bridge Street, the 'Crescent Lot' into a six-story mixed use building with approximately 7,325 square feet of commercial space, up to 120 residential units that will be offered at varying levels of affordability, creation of public spaces, and site improvements, continued from 8/10/22.

Ramie Schneider (WinnDevelopment), Steve Prestejohn (Cube 3), and Michael Blier and Chris Macfarlane (Landworks Studio) were present to discuss the project.

Ms. Schneider stated that when they last met with the SRA, they were asked to have a design consultation with the DRB before returning to the SRA before beginning a final design review. The design has progressed with the DRB's input, and the same presentation will be presented tonight. Mr. Prestejohn stated that the earlier SRA and DRB comments were that the architecture has less of a bold and unique look, the North River elevation has become flat and less dynamic, an effort needs to be made to reintroduce color and playfulness into the fenestration and materials, the site planning and public realm have improved, and lastly that they need to find a happy medium between the approved Schematic Design and the Final Design submission.

#### Public Realm

Mr. Prestejohn stated that they've reintroduced the monumental stairway to connect the two levels and the lower plaza activates the lower river level with a connection along the two paths to Bridge Street through the building. The previously received feedback included the building looking flat so they used curves to reintroduce laying and flow aligning with its identity as a waterfront building which introduced flamboyance and playfulness. There is a pull-off space on Bridge Street for short-term deliveries such as mail and drop-offs but no loading. They wanted to create a strong frontage that felt urban and introduced warmth, with regulated bays. He presented the renderings and the view from Washington Street where they kept the break in the building to manage the massing and brought down the wood-like skinned columns to the pedestrian level. The connection to the sidewalk invites people to walk through the building and adds some residential legibility. Along the water, they added a curvilinear façade to create a bold dynamic look and playfulness, reintroduced the language of the columns, and maintained the

narrow proportions that vertically touched the ground. The building is stepped back towards the MBTA garage and creates a desirable experience for people that may not use the building. Along the Bridge Street façade, they added some color and from North Street they stepped the façade and broke the roofline, so it identifies as residential. The view from the lower pathway adjacent to the North Street pathway, interplay of volumes, layering and geometry to create a more dynamic and inviting façade. At the façade facing the North Street bridge, the two elevations have standalone window alignment that feels bold and inviting.

Ms. Madore stated that the revisions are a huge improvement that's going in the right direction in her opinion. She asked why the waterfront façade treatment was applied to the overall design, because the Bridge Street façade could benefit from that softness and warmth, particularly a change in the color palate to make the street façade even warmer. She noted that the drop-off area could be used by commuters as it has in the past, even with proper signage. Ms. Schneider replied that the location was selected by VHB and City staff based on the width of Bridge Street and slip ramp clearances. A third-party peer review is being conducted and this item will be discussed in detail with the Planning Board (PB). They believe it's inevitable that some will use it as a drop-off, but they will have staff to monitor the area, but they needed to create a safe area for deliveries since Bridge Street is the front door to the building. Ms. Madore suggested incorporating a second loading area. Ms. Schneider replied that the residential loading zone is on the lower level and the upper loading area is for 15-minute increments only. Mr. Presetejohn added that one design question related to why the Bridge Street façade wasn't also rounded and they wanted to be contextually responsive to the court buildings across Bridge Street that are all rectilinear. They wanted to be suggestive to the other side of the new building along with the pass-through. The DRB desired to see more of that warmth which they are looking into.

Mr. Rubin questioned the term "the language of Salem" into the design and noted HSI's letter seeking respect for Salem's architectural heritage. Mr. Prestejohn replied that some believe that means using the Federal style, however the institutional buildings across the street have similar stone panels, regular window patterns, volumes, and bays, which is the language of an urban building along. Mr. Rubin stated that if old Salem is in brick, there is modern architecture, but the use of brick would tie back to that and he's unsure of where this building is falling short. Mr. Prestejohn replied that their design doesn't need to be tied to brick and traditional ornaments, bay windows bring in that contemporary language and they want to use elements that feel familiar in an inventive and fresh way.

Mr. Guarino agreed with Ms. Madore on the improvement made and echoed the need for softness to continue to the front. The heavy use of grey is his concern, which the DRB called imposing and HSI called monochromatic, and that needs to be addressed. He noted that along the riverside, the DRB mentioned the curves may be difficult to construct and not wanting to see so many joints. Mr. Presetejohn noted they are speaking to product representatives on execution. The panels will be 8–10-foot lengths with staggered joints and fewer joints will be used on the curves without compromising the constructability concerns on the exterior wall. The drip edge and reveals will also be curved. Ms. Schneider added that they are working to ensure that their design is buildable and will obtain material samples for more meaningful DRB conversations. Mr. Guarino appreciated their continuation of the review to allow other board members to attend and requested an update on the courthouses since this site was added for their redevelopment. Mr. Rubin suggested the courthouses be reviewed at the end.

Ms. Madore noted her concern with the monolithic grey on the Bridge Street elevation which reminds her of jail cells, which should not be the case. The language of the corridor can provide

material inspiration but there is room for improvement, warmth, and possible curved elements as a direction to consider. Along the pedestrian walkway there is a view walking along that railing but no real walkway. Ms. Schneider agreed and noted that the pull-off zoning will become a pedestrian friendly walkway and slow down traffic. Ms. Madore suggested the DRB focus on that area. Mr. Prestejohn noted the grade change, services being outside of the flood plain, the activation of the building along that sidewalk, and that the sidewalk will be widened. Ms. Madore asked how they will manage the change in elevation. Mr. Prestejohn replied that the sidewalk is off the face of the wall and slope independent of the building. The façade treatment will need to be storefront with film or artwork on the wall to provide character and there could be color changes or material changes. Ms. Madore requested a visual for this façade as a pedestrian level along Bridge Street façade. She asked whether the LED Street lamps would be obstructions on this stretch of road that impact the design. Mr. Prestejohn replied no. Ms. Schneider added that the light poles are outside of the right-of-way except for the drop-off zone.

Ms. Nina-Soto stated that her questions have been answered, commented on previous meetings where this building did not have a backside, however, the Bridge Street elevation looks like the backside. She stated that the design has improved but it's not there yet, and it does feel like a jail due to the void of color and life. This is one of Salem's entrance corridors and this facade is upsetting, but the rest of the building has the flamboyance Winn once presented. This elevation looks like a different building that doesn't flow with the remaining façade Salem will have to live with it for a long time and it will be highly visible, the design needs to be cohesive and fit, and to not just be brick because there are plenty of inspiring materials. Ms. Schneider clarified that no brick proposed. Ms. Madore agreed with Ms. Nina-Soto and added that the Bridge Street façade looks like an afterthought. She asked if due to the wavy waterfront treatment other compromises were made. Ms. Schneider replied that the unit mix and square footage have changed due to the incorporation of the curves. They must maintain a certain square-footage of commercial space due to Chapter 91 accommodations, building program, and to maximize the river level to maximize parking, with the flood zone and proximity to MBTA garage. Ms. Madore suggested a summarization of changes in future presentations since the design changes have a cost that will impact who lives in the building.

Mr. Rubin noted that there have been some flipflops and the Bridge Street facade which now looks like the backside when at the previous meeting it was switched. How far along historic vs. modern vs. futuristic Salem can be addressed through materials. The introduction of two separate halves of the building could be adding to its starkness compared to the previous renderings, where there was a blending of color and material.

Ms. Guarino asked if new public comment letters were received. Ms. Newhall-Smith replied no, only a resubmission of HSI's previous letter.

#### Public Comment:

Emily Udy, HSI & 8 Buffum Street. Their letter has specific comments about the Bridge Street façade where the bays are picking up the design cues from the urban streetscape but contrasting color bays would resemble Brix and that may start to define Salem architecture in 2022 which may not be what they want. The materials should be detailed, the bays front a distance break up façade but don't touch the grade, they hover, and the pedestrian experience should be engaging. In terms of connectivity, the site will have 3 key connections, where the walkways hits Bridge Street, where the MBTA walkway hits Bridge Street, and courthouse plaza. They need to understand how those connections will work along with the intersection because this project will be separate from the downtown as it relates to the urban realm, which is concerning.

Geoff Miller, 28 Boardman Street. Echoed thoughts of others, loved the river facing façade and connecting the wood-look to the concrete, the giant gray wall is foreboding, color should be added to break up the façade which feels like two different building because the river side is whimsical, and the Bridge Street façade is across from courthouses fits with the downtown area. The edges may not need to be rounded off to match the north façade.

Mr. Rubin agreed with public realm concerns and the courthouses.

Ms. Schneider appreciated the feedback and noted that they will continue to make progress on the design.

#### Courthouses

Ms. Schneider stated that the courthouses are critical and a key component of the new development. There is a longer lead time process to get to a closing and Massachusetts has resources that need to be deployed by 2024 for affordable housing projects, and they need a permit in hand for a January submission to the Department of Housing. At the same time, 2 weeks ago they submitted federal and state tax credits for the courthouse. The Salem Historical Commission supported their application, and they are having ongoing conversations with optional operators for artists' lofts and resident's preliminary in the County Commissioners building and venue space with some residential in the Superior Court building. They believe the use aligns with the City's and RFP goals by activating the buildings. It's not a public space but the work is ongoing and the process for being in the track is dictated by the low-income tax credit awards and application process. Mr. Daniel stated that they collaborated on a grant submission to Mass Development this summer to provide resources for redevelopment expenses and they are exploring some public financing tools. The RFQ disclosed that public resources would be needed, and the crescent lot was "the carrot" and these are expensive buildings to rehabilitate. The permitting is initiated on the crescent lot and the courthouses and crescent lot will begin construction at the same time.

Ms. Madore asked if HDIP was part of the process given the scale of the courthouses. Mr. Daniel noted that the Housing Development Incentive Program (HDIP) could be a tool for the courthouses. Ms. Schneider replied that they will investigate it since residential use is a newer idea.

Mr. Guarino noted his appreciation for the update and their commitment to those two court buildings.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

**VOTE:** Rubin made a motion to refer to DRB for final design review with SRA comments.

Seconded by: Madore.

Roll Call: Guarino, Madore, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano. 5-0 in favor

- 7. 73 Lafayette Street and 9 Peabody Street:** Schematic Design Review – Review of DRB Recommendation for the demolition of existing building at 73 Lafayette Street and construction of new, mixed-use structure with 35,000 square feet for the North Shore Health Center, pharmacy, and urgent care facility and for income-restricted senior housing residential units. Construction of a new mixed-use structure on 9 Peabody Street with income-restricted senior housing residential units, commercial and gallery space, continued from 8/10/22.

Attorney Scott Grover of Tinti & Navins representing South River Partnership, LLC (joint venture between the Northshore CDC and North Shore Community Health), Jonathan Evans and Megan Altendorf of Mass Design Group, and Mickey Northcutt of Northshore CDC were present to discuss the project.

Mr. Evans stated that they met in April 2022, and they received approval from the DRB in May 2022. The health center and housing structure will be at corner of Derby and Lafayette Street, the building will be 6 stories, which they see becoming a community asset for downtown Salem with public improvements along the harbor walk. At the Peabody Street building there will be 29 units of aged restricted affordable housing with modest commercial space and a gallery facing the river. There is no backside to the sites and connections will be made to Derby and Dodge Streets, the Peabody Street Park, and to the downtown. Landscapes will protect the building for resiliency as will raising the first-floor line.

The 73 Lafayette building was peer reviewed by Woodward and Curran and they wanted to create something new not recreate the existing. It will have a 2-story red brick portion with contemporary brick bonding patterns, raised floor elevations, they will setback the curtain wall at the entry away from the street, and place housing on right (Lafayette Street) side and healthcare on the left (Derby Street) side. They are considering lighting options to create a public realm and want to enhance the health center and create galleries since the first-floor elevation is 4-5 feet above grade. They moved the bank to the opposite side of the building, hiding the drive-thru from the public way.

The Peabody Street building will have curtain walls at grade and connections to the success of the Punto Art Museum by looking for opportunities to display art in the building and to have community space.

Regarding traffic and mobility, the peer review confirmed their approach to staff parking, resident and visitor parking at the health center and a health center survey was done to determine the number of visitors and staff parking concerns.

Mr. Rubin stated that he loves the project, the design team has been respectful and deliberate when answering questions and concerns, and the project will add vibrance. He asked if the patient drop-off location will put patients at risk of being hit. He noted that the dedication of parking for a staff of 65 people is a lot of spaces for a public garage all year long, not just in October. Mr. Evans replied that the initial 3 travel lanes off Lafayette Street are for the bank teller and one for the ATM. The patient drop-off zone is against the building next to the rear entrance, right after the three lanes combine into one. Mr. Rubin noted that the lane merging is forced through the use of landscaping. Mr. Daniel asked circulation in the opposite direction was considered, so vehicles enter the site from Derby Street. Mr. Evans replied yes, but it would have been too hard for vehicles to make the left off Derby Street so close to the intersection and continuing to make a right turn off Lafayette Street was cleaner. Mr. Rubin suggested they reversed the problem rather than addressing it. Mr. Evans reiterated that it will be less of an issue since the drivers would not be approaching a traffic light.

Ms. Nina-Soto raised concern with the number of cars that cause a back-up onto Lafayette Street where the bank line may only hold up to 5 cars. The bank doesn't have a lot of traffic, but the traffic report suggested 2-3 patients dropped off each hour and 2-3 visitors to the bank could cause a backup. She suggested keeping the bank in its current location because she knows of a local business owner who rushes deliveries to keep traffic moving. Vehicles existing Wendy's could contribute to the back-up as well. Mr. Evans replied that the curb cut is 2 lanes wide, the

bypass lane will direct traffic around the bank line, and very few vehicles access the bank. Ms. Nina-Soto suggested the bank lanes be clearly marked so all drivers know how to move through the site. Mr. Evans agreed. Mr. Northcutt stated that they want the site to be functional, the feedback they requested from the bank staff was that it was rare for more than 1 vehicle to be waiting in line. Mr. Guarino suggested removing the bank drive-through. Mr. Northcutt replied that the bank requested it. Mr. Evans noted that the ATM location is highly visible, and they want to integrate it into the building and make it less visible. Mr. Northcutt noted the speed of bank transactions and that some customers park and walk into the bank.

Ms. Madore stated that many tend to think of the worst-case scenarios and use that to drive the conversation outside of what is happening rather than listening to what the operator, the bank, is telling them. She noted her belief that parking minimums should be up to the property owner and based on the need of their usage, and she is not hearing any reasonable concern to doubt the feedback from the bank. Ms. Nina-Soto replied that her concerns are with the reactivation of the site and the new use adding to the bank traffic increasing the number of people on site. She believes the bank will see even more traffic because of the new use on site and she wants to avoid the scenario of what could come. She wants a well thought out decision where all the questions have been asked. This is a fantastic project, but her concern is the crossing of vehicles and idle vehicles causing back-ups on Lafayette Street. Mr. Evans agreed that they want to do this right and they've tried to understand that using their traffic analysis, and he has confidence that they are handling this accordingly. The parking and mobility study looked at capacities in garages in October too. Northcutt – looked before, during and after Halloween. Says there is enough parking in municipal garages on a typical day and he asked the board to consider the peer review results rather than their personal experiences. The Northshore Community Health center factored in their potential growth for in-person and virtual visits, and they tried to be conservative. The hourly pace of visitors and patients is believed to be manageable with the substantial increase in on-site parking. The health center is needed in downtown Salem and that should be considered a high priority. Mr. Rubin stated that he is not concerned about patient parking, he is reacting to 65 staff parking cars when the city says there is a parking problem. The Planning Board will conduct a parking study and if 65 staff can be easily accommodated he questioned where the parking problem is in the city. Mr. Northcutt replied that the Church Street garage is an option and didn't have the same feeling as the South Harbor Garage. Ms. Madore questioned whether the staff was not considered the public and noted that with no dedicated reliable parking for staff the staff will also be circling for parking and taking away spaces from other businesses with the same concerns. This could be a good solution to eliminate employees taking up street parking. Most of the year that garage is not at full capacity, but staff should have dedicated parking. Mr. Evans noted that in 2021 that parking garage was approximately 40-50% full outside of October and the pre-pandemic study showed approximately 70% utilized throughout the downtown.

Ms. Nina-Soto questioned whether parking studies consider new projects requesting to use spaces in municipal parking lots. Mr. Daniel replied that it depends upon the timing of the report, but it is not always considered with new projects. The parking concerns can be the capacity not being where people want parking to be. The garages get full throughout the year and there was recent construction at the Church Street lots, but the MBTA garage is available too. Parking is a concern and generates frustration for people who may not want to walk the distance, they want convenience. They need space turnover and part of this project would be parking passes for the staff not dedicated parking spaces.

Mr. Rubin noted that this will make the waterfront and riverwalk more attractive and inviting. The new treatment will blend the neighborhood and invite people. Mr. Daniel noted the creation of a new connection to Lafayette Street.

Chair Napolitano questioned whether two separate votes would be required. Mr. Daniel replied yes, one for demolition and one for schematic design.

Mr. Rubin questioned HSI's denial of the demo delay request. Mr. Daniel replied that the Demo Delay Ordinance by the Historical Commission requires a review by the Commission for a building more than 50-years-old, to determine if the building is preferably preserved and if the building warrants preservation. If not, the building could be demolished. If yes, the clock starts there the building cannot be demolished until the clock has run out or if an alternate plan is approved by the Commission. Atty. Grover noted that their filing under the Demo Delay was their only vehicle to begin that dialog with the Commission to allow the demolition. Mr. Rubin asked if they want the denial prior to receiving peer review information. Atty. Grover replied yes. Mr. Guarino noted that he was skeptical of the Demo Delay request, but the design team has provided information that the original decision was the right one due to safety and the new structure will become a bridge to the downtown. Ms. Madore noted that the DRB recommendation regarding Demo Delay will pave the way to create new history and the new design is thoughtful and respectful of the existing, and she looks forward to seeing the new design.

**Public Comment:**

Christopher Barlow, 289 Essex Street. Appreciate Mr. Daniel and Mr. Rubin's comments, because the parking concerns are a messaging issue. The reality is Salem is an urban environment, visitors come for pedestrian zone not traffic flow and parking. It's being discussed due to parking concerns outside peoples preferred locations. He looks forward to the day when this much discussion goes towards the pedestrian experience rather than the vehicular experience.

Emily Udy, HSI. As preservation advocates, they take Demolition approval by a city board seriously. They acknowledge that all options have been considered but are still digesting the peer review. They are concerned with allowing demolition downtown, because it is uncommon, and it should continue to be a rare occurrence.

Goeff Millar, 29 Boardman Street. It's a great improvement for this site. It may be the third largest downtown intersection but it's underutilized, and he would hate to see it not approved over parking. Mr. Barlow captured many of his thoughts since being downtown and in a city, people don't necessarily get to park outside their door. Someone he knows on staff at the health center walks and will continue to do so, but free parking is available. He's impressed with the building and the idea of urgent care for at-risk people in the city, and he would hate to see it denied over parking when the residential building across the street has no parking and those owners buy garage parking spaces.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

**VOTE:** Rubin made a motion to allow for the demolition of the building with the pending approval of the project that respects the historic look of the historic building. Seconded by: Nina-Soto.

Rubin amended the motion to include that the demolition cannot move forward until the final design has been approved and permitted. Seconded by: Nina-Soto.

Roll Call: Guarino, Madore, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano. 5-0 in favor

Public Comment (relating to the design of the building):

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

**VOTE:** Rubin made a motion to approve the schematic design with the recommendations of the DRB. Seconded by: Guarino.

Roll Call: Guarino, Madore, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano. 5-0 in favor

8. **301 Essex Street:** Schematic Design Review – Erect a 3-½ story addition above the existing building (known as Jerry’s Army & Navy Store) with ten (10) residential units and twelve (12) onsite parking spaces located inside the building at the first-floor rear with retail space fronting on Essex Street, continued from August 10, 2022.

Attorney Scott Grover of Tinti & Navins, P.C., Daniel Ricciarelli and Sanir Lutfija of Seger Architects, Michael Becker and Carissa Vitas (Owners), were present to discuss the project.

Atty. Grover stated everyone agreed that the design needs to be thoughtfully approached given the historic nature of the building and its location at an entrance corridor and the edge of the McIntire District. They met with abutters and when they last presented to the SRA at the July 2022 meeting there were concerns with parking and design that they felt needed further refinement before referring the project to the DRB. There would be a mixture of uses, 6,000 square feet of commercial space in the basement and on the first floor facing Essex Street. Ten residential units, two units on a new second-floor within the existing building, and a 3 ½ story addition. Twelve parking spaces are proposed behind the retail accessed by garage door on Summer Street with 2 parking spaces at the Wesley United Methodist Church 1 block away. Parking is less than allowed to minimize the impact on residential neighborhood.

Mr. Ricciarelli noted that the building was constructed in 1897, it sits at a prominent corner, and has rich material uses. They are maintaining a residential feel on Summer Street with the introduction of new materials at the addition above. The 6,000 square foot site is taken up mostly by the building, except for an alley on Summer Street. Some of that space will be used as a garage for 12 vehicles with a widened entrance and exit lane that has been reviewed by their engineer and the Traffic and Planning Department. Adequate maneuverability is provided in the garage as well as storage for 14 bicycles. The inset will be maintained as a historic characteristic of the building and provide an entrance to the 900 square-foot of first-floor retail and the residential lobby. Over 5,000 square-foot basement is available to house trash, elevator machine room, and possible retail space or another commercial use. The mezzanine level and addition will be set behind the parapet 8-feet to create deck space, where there is 16-feet of interior headroom on the first floor, to allow for the incorporation of an inter-floor within the existing building. The second and third floors will have 3 units, with the upper floor having 2 units as townhouses, for a total of 10 units. The upper level will be screened from Essex and Summer Street and the recessed units will be fully glazed and cleverly landscaped to make them comfortable urban living. The mezzanine could be added to the second floor if desired.

Along the façade, they will maintain the bottom base and set back the new upper façade. All the brick will be reinterpreted for the addition using the same proportions of the existing window bays below. The Summer Street facade is less transparent, so they added punched openings and brick for a residential feel. The site is next to Bonchon which is one story structure where they could add floors above, which their design will be respectful of. The windows between Crombie

and Essex Street will have a more contemporary feel. The upper floors are coplanar, but the first floor of the addition will be set back to provide a deck and provide relief to the existing building below which brings the streetscape forward. The façade facing Bonchon will be wrapped in brick before transitioning to Summer Street. It will face a blank brick façade along the Salem Inn, and they will wrap the brick with banding at the cornice to match the Salem Inn floor lines. The façade will have details like what was used below but in a more contemporary vein with expressed pilasters and large glazed openings. Jerrys once had an addition, and this is a good opportunity to widen the garage and give some relief to the intersection. There were concerns with pedestrians, so the garage will have A/V signalization and motion censored gate. The smaller punched openings on Summer Street will be opened too.

Ms. Nina-Soto stated that she was having a hard time picturing the mezzanines and asked if a view from the deck could be provided. Mr. Ricciarelli replied that the decks are inset into the building with an open area for sun and light to get their area. It's a long areaway with full height glass. Mr. Daniel noted that the view out of those windows would be the backside of the parapet wall. Mr. Ricciarelli noted that it would be a good buffer for the noise generated at that intersection, could be a private amenity within an urban environment. The recommendation was made to provide openings in the parapet wall and that can be explored. Ms. Nina-Soto asked when sunlight would come into the windows. Mr. Ricciarelli replied when the summer sun is high and winter light would be diffused throughout the day. It would be a garden style apartment that provides privacy with landscaped decks to make them decorative. Ms. Nina-Soto reiterated that it is hard to envision without imagery. Mr. Ricciarelli replied that rendering can be provided in the future.

Ms. Madore asked if there was a reduction in density. Atty. Grover replied that they always proposed 10 units, it is less dense than what zoning allows but the applicant scaled it back due to proximity to the residential neighborhood. Ms. Madore noted that the staff report mentions that the design standards are not being met. Ms. Newhall-Smith replied that the memo was sent to the board only and not the applicant after the last meeting. They were items that the board requested be addressed. The design team didn't provide interior signaling in the garage, materials, and images to better presented the interior units were needed, and deviations of the design standards would need to be approved by the SRA prior to the project being sent to the DRB. Mr. Ricciarelli replied that they are addressing the 5-foot setbacks, but as a narrow 1 story building a 10-foot setback would create a hardship on their footprint. They set back the corner of Summer and Essex Street instead and they anticipate having multiple design session with the DRB for refinement. Garage signalization would require hiring a consultant, but the building isn't going forward yet, and signalization would be addressed under life safety concern.

Mr. Daniel noted that the design deviation of a cantilever is out of character in Salem. The left side bay goes all the way down but not the rest, which is awkward and doesn't make sense to him. He asked what it is accomplishing and why it is advantageous to the downtown. Mr. Ricciarelli replied that the building against the back of a parapet isn't appropriate, but they can study making the addition flush. Ms. Madore asked why a flush addition would be inappropriate. Mr. Ricciarelli replied that the addition would compete with the historic building below. Mr. Rubin stated that he is not a fan of the cantilever, everything above looks like it has been added on top, and if the addition were to continue straight down, it would leave 3-feet which he would understand. It concerns could also be the stark difference in material and color, but he is glad to see cars in garages. Mr. Guarino added that the addition doesn't fit and doesn't feel necessary to him. He noted his concerns with the parking even with the small volume of vehicles despite the parking study determining that it would have minimal impact but the traffic which can

occasionally be at a standstill; however, the intersection could need better signal control. It is a tough addition to see even if people say it will work. Mr. Ricciarelli replied that traffic and parking agreed that 2-ways traffic in the garage and the additional vehicles aren't seen as an issue, but it will be peer reviewed. Atty. Grover noted that the traffic and parking study was meant to give the SRA some comfort so that it would work and won't be a significant issue. Mr. Guarino suggested the backup could have a ripple effect.

Mr. Guarino noted that retail is planned in the basement but raised concerns about its viability. Mr. Ricciarelli replied that the space could be a back of the house for retail and noted that Opus has successful basement activity. Mr. Becker noted that the basement ceiling height could be 8-9-feet depending upon the thickness of the slab. The retail space would have a 16-foot ceiling and if connected it could provide more indirect light to the basement.

Mr. Daniel stated that the retail entrance from the lobby seems awkward and asked if the bump was part of the original building or a change in the façade. Mr. Ricciarelli replied original. Mr. Daniel noted that businesses typically have their own entry directly into the main retail. Mr. Ricciarelli replied that the angled wall entry could be studied.

Ms. Madore stated that the current floor plan and entry are compromised by two parking spaces, which is disappointing. There should be a prominent entry point near the intersection for more exposure for the future occupant and to continue the vitality of the downtown rather than taking it away, which she is not okay with. She noted that despite this being a schematic review, the parking minimums are as important as the building program. Prioritizing meeting the parking minimums is not a good compromise for a building at this location rather than accommodating units at the expense of the parking and she suggested they seek a variance. Parking is muddling what could be and this project could evolve after an SRA review. Atty. Grover replied that if approved at this level, with this program, the floor plan would stay the same. Parking is not entirely driving the density of the project, its massing, scale of the building, and what would fit on the site. It is what will fit on site and compliment the neighboring buildings. They opted not to go any higher and provide more density.

Ms. Madore asked why there are 12 parking spaces. Atty. Grover replied that they have 1.5 parking spaces per unit, other than the mezzanine which is satisfied with the two off-site parking spaces. Mr. Ricciarelli replied that the point is well taken and noted that compact spaces would restore some of that retail square footage.

Ms. Madore stated that she is not comfortable moving the project forward and suggested providing concrete requests for the project team to respond to, such as the cantilever treatment and wrap around the facade. They would want to see additional scenarios with the less of a step back to determine alternatives. Mr. Rubin agreed, particularly regarding retail downtown. They could make the small retail space more viable, so it doesn't sit empty and be considered impractical. The mezzanine is also a concern for some, which is a design concern that the DRB could review. Mr. Ricciarelli replied that they can address the issues, but does it meet the spirit of what the SRA wants, which is to provide housing. He asked if they considered this viable for downtown Salem and a real project. Atty. Grover stated that the DRB would address the cantilever and they should provide input as designers and architects. Mr. Guarino agreed to the DRB's input but felt that this wasn't well thought through before it came to the SRA. Some of their questions are being repeated and projects aren't sent to the DRB for workshopping a project design, they are sent to work out specifics and details. He was not comfortable saying that this project is mostly there.

Mr. Rubin noted that this is a historic retail establish and they are giving up retail for residential and he does not want housing at the expensive of more downtown retail, so it does not seem a viable project. Ms. Madore believed the request for DRB review was to circumvent the SRA. She noted that the crescent lot went through the same review because they weren't comfortable with it. Retail is being compromised for parking and removing parking means adjusting the housing units. More work is needed to move the project forward to the DRB. Atty. Grover replied that retail is not a design issue, it is the proposed mixture of uses that the SRA is not satisfied with. Ms. Madore asked if they would consider a parking variance to make way for housing and more retail. Mr. Becker replied yes, as they did with 30 Federal Street.

Ms. Madore suggested considering other ways to expand the project. Mr. Becker replied that they tried to propose it, the Planning Department required them to meet parking, and they are now paying for parking for parking spaces at the church just so they could meet with the SRA. Ms. Madore suggested that developers attend neighborhood meetings to indicate the filing needs they would go after to make the project viable. The variances are equally risky but it's more valuable if it makes the project better. More can be done with the project if they were to compromise on parking. Mr. Ricciarelli replied that they have had these discussions and variances are a hardship issues but it's better to have nicer retail rather than parking. Mr. Becker noted that projects with less than 1 parking space per unit are PUD and the PB can decide the amount of parking they want, and they don't have discretion to reduce parking with ZBA approval.

Chair Napolitano suggested a continuance. Atty. Grover questioned whether that would be productive. They understand that SRA wouldn't entertain a proposal with less parking and the initial application was delayed until they found outside parking spaces. Mr. Daniel noted that their concern was there was no plan on how to meet those requirements. The Board could entertain that if they knew the applicant would be willing to go through that process. Mr. Rubin noted that there would be no guarantee that it would be approved by the SRA when the project returned. Mr. Becker stated that it would take months to hash out those details. Ms. Madore suggested that an SRA and DRB blessed project may be easier to get through ZBA, but they wouldn't need to file that now. Even a reduced parking design could lead to a positive SRA review. Mr. Becker agreed that it would be a stronger case but wanted to know what the projects would look like or what parking relief they would receive. He proposed that the SRA have the jurisdiction to grant parking guidelines on projects they approved downtown like the PB. Mr. Lutfija asked if other Board members also wanted a reduction in parking. Ms. Nina-Soto replied that the project overall needs adjustment to become something they see viable downtown. The two parking spaces in exchange for the retail would improve it and she would support that. The project feels hard, those two spaces are the hardest to access, and she can't give her blessing until she can better see the project. Mr. Rubin added that he would not be in favor of the project if only the two parking spaces were removed, and the retail were increased. Mr. Guarino agreed with Mr. Rubin.

Mr. Daniel suggested the applicant request a withdrawal or a continuance. Atty. Grover replied that they would request a continuance to determine if they could return with a viable project.

Mr. Becker requested clarification on the mezzanine concerns. Mr. Rubin replied that the materials don't marry well with the addition on top, or the color, and it doesn't feel right in that location or complimentary. Bonchon makes it difficult to comment on the scale, but it is consistent with the balance of the street. Parking in what could be a retail space is also an issue. Mr. Nina-Soto noted her concern with the mezzanine, parking at retail area, and cantilever. Chair Napolitano agreed with Ms. Nina-Soto. Mr. Becker replied that cantilever originated from his

meeting with HSI, which was their historic resource, and he noted that the Witch House which is diagonal from this site also has an overhang. Ms. Vitas asked if the Board would like to review the previous iterations. The Board replied no, they want to move forward not backward.

Mr. Lutfija asked if it was more important to capture the space below the overhang than to provide outdoor space. Mr. Ricciarelli added that they found the old photo of people on the roof watching a parade intriguing because they could provide new and exciting outdoor space. By bringing that upper façade straight down would lose that deck space but it can be studied. Mr. Becker noted that HSI thought the view down Essex and from across the street some structures were setback and others were against the sidewalk and they were trying to mimic that. Mr. Ricciarelli presented an image of the deck behind the parapet wall that would be similar to that on Summer Street next to Bonchon. Mr. Becker noted that privacy would be a plus rather than open glass and a view of the street. Ms. Madore replied that commentary on providing public outdoor space for potential residents is great and she values private outdoor space, but the vibrant downtown serves a purpose of community building in shared outdoor spaces. Mr. Lutfija suggested opening the mezzanine up to more units. Mr. Becker noted that he hoped to provide a common area deck so upper-level units on floor 4 would have some outdoor space or small private decks on floor 5.

Public Comment:

Christopher Barlow, 289 Essex Street. Likes the proposed design which looks better than his own building, agreed with the front face on Essex Street not fitting in but it's the asymmetry rather than the cantilever. Salem has a lot of symmetry, and he would like to see that version that leans into the vernacular of the Witch House with a shallower overhang. The greenery is his favorite part and would love to see people enjoying the space which would provide vibrancy. He raised concerns with the two inset areaways that look at a very busy Summer Street and the Bonchon roof, as well as the removal of the diaphragm and the top of the parapet wall being unsupported given its length. He suggested a structural engineer would need to provide kickers to support the parapet, but he likes the overall concept.

Emily Udy, HSI. Did some preliminary review with the design team and provided letters. Good comments were made, and she appreciated the SRA's discussion and concern. This project has varying opinions within HSI, and she agrees with Mr. Barlow on the concerns with the lack of symmetry, the configuration should be mirrored on the right-side and retaining the overhang elsewhere. The Summer Street façade is successful and HSI is unified on that. She echoed the importance of this building as a retail space and the board discussing ways to maintain its historic use despite its controversial aspects.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

Mr. Becker presented a symmetrical cantilever design. Mr. Daniel replied that the newly proposed concept hasn't been reviewed by the SRA.

**VOTE:** Rubin made a motion to continue to the October 12, 2022, regular meeting. Seconded by: Nina-Soto.

Roll Call: Guarino, Madore, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano. 5-0 in favor

- 9. 231 Essex Street:** Small Project Review – Remove six windows, replace three with new windows and restore and reinstall three at Rockafellas.

Kevin Marshino (Owner) and Juliana Silva (Project Manager of MS Masonry and Construction) were present to discuss the project.

Mr. Marshino stated that Ms. Silva is overseeing the exterior renovation and window installation. The windows are the concern because she didn't realize each window and their details needed to be reviewed by the SRA. The new windows were ordered and, on the property, but have not been installed. The second floor is the kitchen and with moisture and grease built-up they ordered vinyl windows. The windows aren't visible from the street, and he believes the difference won't be noticeable. He noted that Seger Architects and Structures North designed the renovation.

Ms. Madore stated that while she is a fan of the restaurant, procedurally the SRA are the stewards of the downtown and have guidelines and permitting process to follow. Even with so much investment in the building, given the significance of the building and location they cannot turn a blind eye. She believes the windows are visible because they were flagged, and they want to keep the historical integrity intact and carry it forward. Mr. Marshino replied that the removed windows were wood and would not hold up to kitchen use, since the sills were rotted and they repaired them approximately every 4 years, and the second-floor windows were not salvageable. The third-floor windows were saved and are being restored and some of them broke during the explosion in Danvers.

Mr. Guarino noted that an applicant wanting to move things forward can mean them not wanting to discuss the issues or whether they knew the process or not. Mr. Marshino replied that he put this project in the hands of the contractor who didn't know windows weren't included in the permit. Ms. Silva reiterated that this mistake was her fault because she thought the windows were included in the permit. Mr. Daniel stated that he spoke with Ms. Silva earlier about building permits in the urban renewal district, and that some aspects of the project were in-kind repairs that didn't need SRA review but told her new items would need to be reviewed. Mr. Guarino agreed with Ms. Madore that the SRA are stewards of the downtown that need to follow the standards.

Ms. Nina-Soto noted that steward is the perfect description of the SRA, and this will set a precedent for others that did things without approval. If the window came before the SRA as-is it would not be approved. She suggested looking into alternatives to accommodate the look and feel of the historic windows.

Chair Napolitano suggested a referral to the DRB for their review of what is appropriate. Mr. Daniel replied that Patti Kelleher's comments on the design guidelines will be submitted for DRB review.

**Public Comment:**

Geoff Millar, 29 Boardman Street. Doesn't care about the upper-level windows, he has bigger concerns with the first-floor window at the corner of Washington and Essex Streets where the window was removed, and the opening covered with plywood. He believed the board should be more concerned with it as well. Mr. Marshino replied that the window has been leaking and deteriorating over time from ice and snow getting trapped behind the bay window and allowing birds to nest where the bay separated from building. He is pursuing people to fix it and the Window Woman is currently repairing the third-floor window. He removed the bay because he feared it would fall off the building. The window will be restored off site and a temporary window will be installed the following week. He added that wood is difficult to obtain and that is also why he went with vinyl.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

Mr. Rubin suggested the applicant review the design guidelines for the window requirements and to mitigate future damage to the interior to eliminate heat and moisture accelerating some of the deterioration concerns.

**VOTE:** Rubin made a motion to refer the applicant to the DRB and to suggest the applicant review the Historical Commission Design Guidelines as they relate to window. Seconded by: Guarino.

Roll Call: Guarino, Madore, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano. 5-0 in favor

#### **New / Old Business**

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1. Redevelopment of the Historic Courthouses and the Crescent Lot: Update on Project Status
2. SRA Financials
  
3. Annual meeting – Moved to October 12, 2022.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

1. Review of July 13, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes  
To be reviewed at the October 12, 2022, regular meeting.
2. Review of August 10, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes  
To be reviewed at the October 12, 2022, regular meeting.

#### **Other**

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##### **Adjournment**

**VOTE:** Guarino made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by: Rubin.

Roll Call: Guarino, Madore, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano. 5-0 in favor

The meeting adjourned at 11:30PM.

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