

Salem State University Neighborhood Advisory Committee

October 21, 2015 – Minutes

Attendees: Dominick Pangallo, Adria Leach, Richard Riggs, Marcia Lambert, Dana Lothrop, Ben Szalewicz, Jack Hoar

Absent: Councilor Josh Turiel, Maureen Call

Guests: Al Brideau, Dimeo Construction; Elizabeth Brosnan; David Pabich, Salem Renewal

Welcome and Introductions

- Dominick starts meeting

Approval of the Minutes

- Approved

Construction Updates

- **Garage** – Update on construction progress (Al Brideau, Dimeo Construction)
 - Just on finishing touches, putting metal roof on the tower. Landscaping is underway, tree trimming now and loam is spread next week. The lights will be turned on tomorrow and fire alarm testing next week. Some painting remains. Replacing fence around perimeter on Lafayette and Raymond; Rainbow Terrace fence remaining.
 - Marcia: When will it open?
 - Adria: Early to mid-November, the date will be sent out to the committee once it's firm. Will be heavily promoted to students.
 - Dominick: The City Council has approved no parking 40' to the east of College Drive and 100' to the west, on Loring Avenue, for better sight-lines when College Drive becomes two-way.
 - Adria: SSU is providing 5 off-street parking spaces in the Pacific Street lot for HMLS, to make up for the loss of on-street parking.
 - Jack: Is there a turning lane on Loring Avenue? And can they turn right onto Loring Avenue only out of College Drive?
 - Adria: No turning lane, and traffic can go right or left out of College Drive. It's no left into College Drive when southbound on Loring.
 - Richard: There's a traffic island in College Drive that prevents that left.
 - Public (Anne Balentine): Will there be a crossing guard for HMLS students crossing College Drive?
 - Adria: We'll assess that after it opens.
 - Dominick: This is the last update on garage construction status, but we expect additional updates from SSU on the traffic impacts and operations.
- **Sophia Gordon Center** – Update on construction progress (Elizabeth Brosnan)
 - Last bit of demo underway so structural steel erection can take place. Traffic details on Lafayette during steel delivery. Goal is to unload as quickly and safely as they can. Concrete deliveries now for basement and masonry work on interior, some blocks being delivered. Details are present 7am-3:30pm. Starting to work later shifts, not later than 5pm. 8am-4:30pm Saturday work will begin in a couple of weeks.
 - Jack: How far behind schedule are you at this point? Is there an expected completion date?
 - Elizabeth: Fluid situation, some changes have been made that will effect completion date.
 - Ben: End of May was the original goal, not sure where we're out to at this point.
 - Jack: Any changes to the exterior from what we've seen?
 - Elizabeth: No.

- Jack: Signage?
- Adria: It's locked down at this point and not expected to change from what was presented before.
- Dana: Last meeting we asked about the completion date. Is this going to go on from month to month? Will it be open before school starts next year?
- Ben: We're still working to figure it out.
- Jack: I'd assume next summer. You can use Microsoft Project to give us a date.
- Elizabeth: We're using a different project management software.
- Ben: I'd hope to have the schedule for next month's meeting. I don't want to put out a date that we'd have to then change.
- **287 Lafayette Street** – Update on noise mitigation and parking (David Pabich, Salem Renewal)
 - The project is effectively complete except for the acoustic screening going in around the rooftop HVAC unit. Now have a design and budget for it, waiting on fabrication and installation to take place. Trying to balance the aesthetic concerns from the neighbors. Otherwise, project is on schedule and on budget.
 - Jack: Heard some parking concerns related to the classes there.
 - Adria: Councillor Turiel and the Salem Police are working on additional enforcement.
 - Dominick: The City Council has a measure before it from Councillor Turiel to extend the resident parking zone in the vicinity.
 - Adria: Once the garage opens in November, we hope to be better able to encourage social work students to park more in the O'Keefe lot, as that lot is now filled with student parking displaced from the Peabody Hall lot due to the garage construction.
- **75 Loring Avenue** – Update on demolition (Ben Szalewicz, SSU)
 - Demolition is ready to commence mid-November. All gas and electrical have been removed and permits are in place. After demo will regrade site and put in landscaping in the spring.
 - Dana: Can you move the fence in? It's taking up 2/3 of the sidewalk on Loring Avenue.
 - Ben: We'll check it out.
 - Dominick: What will the landscaping consist of? Will the committee be able to see the plan?
 - Ben: We'll bring in a presentation when it's developed internally.
 - Jack: What's the long-term plan for the parcel?
 - Ben: We'll leave it open, just landscaping.

Neighborhood disturbances

- Marcia: Councillor O'Keefe had asked about the number of students who had moved into Viking Hall who had come from off-campus rentals. Now that Viking is open, do we have that number?
- Adria: Student Life has received that request and will look into it. Viking is a sophomore dorm, so they were freshmen last year. We've not forgotten the request and will get the information.
- Shawn: We heard from Lt. Dennis King about alleged activity in two neighborhoods in September. SPD provided the names to us and we've taken necessary action internally per SSU discipline policy. Matters seem to be resolved in both location and no complaints on them since then.
- Marcia: Any news about the issues reported at 1 Raymond Road at the last meeting?
- Shawn: That was mentioned as one of the two disturbances. There's been no repeat there since then.

New Business

- Dana: Looks like a truck backed into one of the bollards on the ballpark access road.
- Adria: We'll take a look at it.

- Adria: November 9th residents can start picking up snow emergency parking permits from the parking office. Only 100 will be issued, first come first served basis. Parking Office is open Mondays & Fridays 9am-5pm, Tuesdays 11am-2pm, Wednesdays 10am-5pm, and closed Thursdays.
- Dominick: When is SSU parking at Shetland over?
- Ben: When the garage opens in November.

Loring Avenue sidewalks:

- Jack: What is the purpose of the sidewalk project?
- Dominick: To make the intersection safer for pedestrians and for drivers.
- Jack: Have there been many accidents?
- Dominick: I don't have the data on that, but will check with the police.
- Jack: I read it will make it easier for cars exiting Raymond. That's not helping a whole lot of traffic because not many drivers come that way. It will negatively impact drivers going onto Raymond. Will there be a turning lane for left onto Raymond?
- Dominick: The City will measure to check the width of Loring there, and if it can accommodate a turning lane, we could stripe one there.
- Jack: If it becomes two lanes only, when it's four now - though not legally four - it will be bad for traffic.
- Marcia: But it's only two now.
- Jack: It's not used that way, though.
- Marcia: I've used Raymond since 1986 and it's never been a problem. If you make eye contact with the pedestrians it's fine. There's no speeding. We have more speeding on Charles Street than Raymond Road. What's the problem?
- Dana: The flashing lights and speed sign helped a lot, but the issue is the bump out will increase congestion.
- Riggs: The bump out is to restrict traffic to one lane, the legal lane, in each direction. When a car makes an illegal pass to turn onto Raymond, they risk hitting pedestrian because neither car nor pedestrian can see each other now. Traffic is like water. If they can pass illegally to get through more quickly, they will, even if it's dangerous.
- Jack: So the purpose is to make it easier for pedestrians? Won't wider sidewalks invite bigger crowds? I can see a bump out at the bike trail, but the one at Raymond does a number on traffic.
- Dana: Are there bump outs on Raymond themselves?
- Dominick: They're adding ADA ramps.
- Jack: What's the purpose of this again?
- Dominick: Pedestrian safety and driver safety. Per the police and the traffic engineers, an illegal maneuver is not a safe maneuver.
- Marcia: The hedge needs to be kept trimmed and the crosswalks restriped. I don't see how this work will help. There was supposed to be a trial.
- Jack: I agree. We were told there would be a trial.
- Dominick: The proposed limits of construction were striped out, but I will ask about the feasibility of a physical trial.
- Jack: I still believe we don't get anything out of this project.
- Dana: I didn't know the proposed bump-outs went past the bike trail until tonight. There was going to be a trial. I'd also like to see accident data for the intersection.
- Dominick: I'll ask the police for the data.
- Public (Anne Balentine): The new fence and basketball net at HMLS look great. Thanks to SSU.

- Public (Sandy Power): Viking Hall turned out looking very good [Jack and Dana agreed.] SSNA will be presenting the Mayor with a “wish list” of items in November when she speaks to the group. Here are some that SSUNAC might be interested in:
 - Smoking area for students on campus.
 - Noticeable influx of trash & litter on streets when school is in session. How about student brigades for twice weekly litter clean up. [Adria: SAE fraternity does weekly bike trail.] MLK Day clean-up was good, but can't be just once a year.
 - SSU Police to enforce traffic violations and jay-walking.
 - Lighting on Loring Avenue is insufficient near campus.
 - Have all SSU students pay parking fee.
 - Shuttles are too big, SSU should get a smaller one. Does SSU track ridership and usage? Is schedule working? [Capt. Riggs outlined shuttle program.] If schedule is not dependable, discourages riding and increases car use. [Riggs: strive for 1/2 hour schedule, but driver breaks can impact now and then.] [Adria: SSU looking to get new shuttles. Don't know size. Riggs: SGA vans are small, but have stops with more than 10 waiting; 28 passenger bus is most balanced.] Do you ID riders? [Riggs: No.]
 - Need a train station on Canal Street. [Jack, Riggs, Dana, express support.]
 - Loud students walking downtown at night.
 - Sign on Loring Avenue for baseball field, to reduce traffic going through neighborhood. [Adria: There had been. Will check if it needs to be replaced.]
 - Parking on Lafayette Street due to classes at 287 Lafayette Street. [Adria: Should help when garage opens; students on street will go to O'Keefe as O'Keefe cars go to garage.]
- Dana: Are they going to move bus stop from Jefferson to behind the Diner?
- Adria: I haven't heard more on it, but am aware of the issue.
- Dana: Would make bump out situation worse. Behind Diner would be better than in the traffic island.
- Next Meeting is November 18th at 7pm.

Adjourned 8:15 p.m.