

**City of Salem Massachusetts
Public Meeting Minutes**

Board or Committee:	Design Review Board, Regular Meeting
Date and Time:	Wednesday, January 25, 2017 at 6:00 pm
Meeting Location:	120 Washington Street, Third Floor Conference Room
Members Present:	David Jaquith, Helen Sides, J. Michael Sullivan Christopher Dynia, Glenn Kennedy, Ernest DeMaio
Members Absent:	Paul Durand
Others Present:	Andrew Shapiro
Recorder:	Colleen Anderson

Helen Sides calls the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Urban Renewal Area Projects Under Review

1. **99 Washington Street (Honey Dew Donuts):** Discussion and vote on installation of signage

The submission under review includes; a signed application, a sign package including; dimensions, existing and proposed elevation photos, and proposed lighting. Bart Steel of Viewport Sign & Awning was present to discuss the proposed signage.

Bart Steele stated that one proposed sign is a 5 square feet (2 feet high x 3 feet wide) blade sign, hung from a 42 inch long x 13 inch high black scroll bracket. The second sign will be a flat wall sign, 21 inches high and will be centered within the 68 inch long fascia board. The lettering will be ½ inch thick PVC lettering. Both signs will not have illumination. A 10" high x 20 inch wide vinyl decal logo will be applied to the entrance door. 2 vinyl window graphics; one 6 inches high x 74 ½ inches long and one 6 inch high x 78 ½ inches long applied to the top of the glass at the two large windows.

Steele noted that there was ¾ inches of space between the top and bottom of the fascia board mounted sign. Sullivan noted that there should be more space to make the sign feel less crowded. Kennedy suggests that a horizontal sign to make better use of the space if the lettering were smaller. Steele noted that the corporate office would prefer to maintain their logo shape.

Sullivan suggested that the blade sign height be raised so that the sign is centered on the raised panel instead of the bracket being centered, which causes the blade sign to hang below the bottom of the cornice. Kennedy suggests a bracket be used in lieu of a blade bracket and that it be centered within the space within the panel trim. Steele noted that a heavier bracket will be needed to support the back-to-back sign.

DeMaio noted that the image of the brand should remain. Kennedy added that 1 inch of space should be both above and below the wall mounted sign.

Jaquith: Motion to approve with sign reduction to allow 1" of space above and below the wall mounted sign and a centered side mounted support bracket for the blade sign.
Seconded by: Kennedy. Passes 6-0.

2. **21 Church Street Salem (National Grid):** Discussion and vote on installation “switchgear” equipment.

The submission under review includes; existing and proposed plans and existing and proposed elevation photos. Daniel Cameron of National Grid was present to discuss the proposed new switchgear project.

Cameron stated that Salem’s electrical wiring is in need of an upgrade that National Grid is doing statewide. The breaker is currently located in a confining underground manhole using old technology. The latest technology uses above ground switching covered by a green box: 5 feet 7 inches wide x 3 feet 8 inches high x 5 feet 1 inch deep, that sits on top of a collar that is open to a below grade 14 feet long x 7 feet wide manhole. The green box makes no noise, has double doors on two sides, to make it safer for the techs to operate. A situation affected this area 18 months ago which has made this a target area to upgrade, which will also provide a back-up service for the condominium building at 10 Church Street. A meeting with Mayor Driscoll has led them to the proposed landscape area at the entrance to the property that is owned by the SRA, between the existing curb and low brick wall.

Cameron noted that the original proposed condition would require removing one handicapped parking space, which would require a submission and meeting with the Parking Board and City Council because they would be removing a revenue generating property. The secondary proposed condition would leave the curbing in place. A small circular manhole would be required to allow workers to access the large open manhole below the green box and that smaller manhole can be located in the existing parking space, although closing off a parking space or having a car removed so their workers can access a manhole is not their typical practice. 5 feet of clearance on the two door sides of the green switchgear box is preferred. Cameron noted that a couple bollards to protect the switchgear on the driveway side are also proposed.

Sides asked if the box can be a candidate for the painted boxes around the city. Shapiro replied that usually City owned boxes can be candidates. Kennedy asked if the City owned the fence. Shapiro noted that an easement needs to be executed with the SRA, as well as the Parking Board. DeMaio added that the Parking Board should determine if this is the right spot for a handicapped spot.

Dynia asked if the switchgear could be rotated. Cameron replied no, due to the swing of the doors.

DeMaio noted that this area is also used for snow storage is located.

Shapiro stated that he has to determine the timeline and roll of City Council on this matter while understanding that it is a service quality issue for National Grid that will benefit the customers in Salem, and the DRB will not be reviewing this project. Jaquith stated that he is concerned with issues that may arise while matters relating to this location are investigated and suggests they hold off on a vote. Sullivan asked if the fence could be altered or moved to help conceal the switchgear possibly with different screen. Cameron suggested that the wall be moved to help with screening with a new side wall and the only thing lost is some shrubbery on the street side of the wall. Sides is in favor of additional concealing methods. Shapiro noted that the shrub line is a continuation of the condominium walls and shrubbery and that should be factored into the proposed design.

Kennedy stated that the issues needs to be further discussed by the Board and their recommendations sent to National Grid at a later date. Shapiro will schedule a DRB on-site meeting with Daniel from National Grid, representation from the Mayor's office, and the Director of Parking and Transportation.

Sides: Motion to continue the discussion until the next regularly scheduled meeting on February 22, 2017 until the DRB members have had an on-site meeting.

Seconded by: Sullivan. Passes 6-0.

3. **65 Washington Street / Salem District Court Property (65 Washington Street, LLC c/o Diamond Sinacori, LLC):** Discussion and vote on schematic design review for proposed development project

Merrill Diamond, Jeff Hersch, and Greg Winter (Project Manager) of Diamond Sinacori, and Steve Tise and Julia Sauer of Tise Design Associates, were present to discuss the proposed project.

Diamond stated that the plans have been refined to ensure that the building looks as if it belongs in Salem by drawing on neighboring elements and are seeking endorsement for the general direction of the design.

Tise stated that their firm has replaced the original architects. The plans have been further refined since its review by the SRA. The original proposal required excavating the entire site and locating 82 cars completely below grade which is an extreme economic challenge due to hazardous materials and soil conditions, etc. The current design reuses the Courthouse Basement after demolition and enclosing the remaining spaces at grade level so soil does not have to be removed. That resulted in a parking ratio of 1 car per condominium unit and the developer is making a commitment to lease spaces up to 1.5, required by zoning, from the city garage. Backlit laser cut plans are being considered to conceal the parking.

Tise stated that the building will go directly to the lot line The property boundary will go directly to the lot line goes up to the landscaped strip along Federal Street is owned by the City. Easements currently exist at the rear service area accessible through a Church Street curb cut.

Tise stated that the base of the building will have a stone veneer, with 4 stories of brick and projecting bays and cornice treatment. The structure is currently six stories, with steel construction on the ground floor and wood frame construction on the upper floors. The top floor is now 3 three-bedroom penthouses with a continuous window wall. The reused garage level means that the first floor, residential and retail entrances, will be two feet above grade. The bays material hasn't been determined but the siding will be a simulated wood rain screen.

Tise stated that the final number of units is 62 reduced from 63 which has eliminated the one parking space and allowed them to relocate the handicapped access closer to Federal Street and to open up more of the Washington Street façade. Handicapped ramps are concealed on the exterior with planters on Washington and Church Streets. The main entrance has stairs and the retail space can be bifurcated into two spaces. The previously designed shared roof deck made the building a high-rise which is not allowed. The current plan has a shared open landscaped terrace at an interior U-shaped courtyard at the rear of

the building next to the shared library and exercise room. Shallow balconies have been included but are limited to the three penthouses.

Tise stated that a shallow simulated storefront window has been placed at the far corner of Church Street and next to it is a second accessible ramp to the retail space. The elevator will provide access to the Basement and secondary egress door will exit from the Basement near the display window. A bicycle storage area and new general storage in the Basement is being discussed. Eliminating 1 parking space has added 300 square footage making it 3,300 square feet. The parking garage entrance will be from Federal Street with a roll up garage door. The garage will be screened along the Federal Street side which is behind the City's landscaped area.

Sides asked about the height of the building. Tise replied 68 feet high, zoning limits the building height to 70 feet or less. From the first floor level the floor to floor height is 13 ½ feet.

Sullivan asked what the treatment would be at the building and the recessed ramps. Tise replied that the base of the building would be a cast stone base and lintel, brick that matches the stone color but coursed like quoins although the pattern hasn't been determined. The inset portions at the ramps would be a granite tile. Sullivan asked how the corners would be treated. The developer is proposing awnings and other projecting elements to pronounce the retail space and add character to the ground floor. The façade at the upper levels will be brick to match the character of the City, floor to ceiling glass at the penthouses, and the treatment at the bays will be a metal rain screen clad in a simulated teak wood.

Jaquith asked where the building will stop along Church Street. Tise replied that it would stop right next to the neighboring Church Street building and the neighboring buildings owner, Peter Pitman has encouraged them to build up to it.

Sides noted that the Federal & Washington Street corner is the most visible, is the most closed off, and needs further study and/or a corner treatment. Diamond replied that the SRA agreed and it will be studied. Sullivan added that the full height of the corners and entries need to be improved to de-emphasize the mass of the building. Sides added that the recessed ramps are not pedestrian friendly and separate the building from the streetscape. DeMaio noted that the retail space of the previous scheme wrapped the corner and gave life to the streetscape while keeping the stairway access point within the building. Kennedy added that the entire first floor is not as open as the previous scheme and the Washington & Church Street entrances and retail areas are far from the actual retail space. Tise replied that continuing the retail space eliminates the parking spaces that are in demand. Winter noted that corner glazing to open the corner has also been considered. DeMaio added that retail on the ground level should extend as far as possible for urban design purposes. Tise replied that the ramps are the minimum distances required and planter boxes between the free standing columns at the ramps have been considered to liven up the space, as are overhangs and awnings but they haven't been designed yet. DeMaio noted that the proportion of the building makes the base feel compressed, the treatment and height of the base should be explored; perhaps bring the base up to the underside of the second floor bays, and signage will also help the facade. Sullivan noted that the window bay widths vary. Tise replied that the second floor sill height has been raised to heighten the base. The first floor column lines do line up with the floors above but the details haven't been finalized.

DeMaio asked where the HVAC units will be placed. Tise replied that the systems haven't been determined but it will be screened and it will be placed on the roof. Tise added that

fireplaces and skylights are expected for the penthouse units and will add another element to the roof. The projecting parapet will have LED up lighting for night illumination. Sullivan asked why the need for such a large projecting parapet. Tise replied to cap the building, provide daytime shading, and an illuminated nighttime feature.

Tise noted that a sculpture could also be placed at the landscaped area corner along Federal Street rather than. Sullivan replied that the livening up of that corner of the building shouldn't rely on a piece of art. Kennedy and Sullivan agree that that corner of the building still needs further study.

Jaquith opens public comment.

Councilor Tom Furey, Salem Councilor-At-Large. Councilor Furey stated that being along an entrance corridor, this building will be a window on Washington Street, and he believes this will be a nice fit for Salem with the input of the DRB.

Tim Jenkins, agrees with Councilor Furey's statement to make the building a showcase, and the details and the DRB's input will be important. Elements of Salem that will be remembered should be implemented into this design like with the last PEM project.

Jaquith closes public comment.

Tise noted that the budget does put constraints on the design and they plan to keep the building simple so money can be spent on the details. Diamond noted that they will meet with the PEM board to generate ideas and possible display ideas for this building.

DeMaio noted that he would prefer great retail over display windows and asked how the one way direction of parking will affect traffic in the area. Shapiro replied that the number of spaces has been reduced and a traffic study will be conducted. Diamond added that the condominium units will be geared towards empty nesters that will create less traffic than anticipated. Sullivan noted that providing fewer spaces in such a densely populated area is the best option.

Shapiro noted that a Variance would not be required for having less than the required parking because the PUD (Planned Unit Development) permit process allow the applicant to work with the Planning Board to set the parking ratio and zoning requirements don't need to be strictly adhered to.

Kennedy: Motion to continue the discussion of the project to a future meeting date.
Seconded by: Sides. Passes 6-0.

Old/New Business

Approval of the minutes from the December 20, 2016 regular meeting.

Sides: Motion to approve the minutes.
Seconded by: Kennedy, Passes 6-0.

Discussion by Board members on the project review process.

Adjournment

Kennedy: Motion to adjourn the meeting.
Seconded by: Jaquith. Passes 6-0.

Meeting is adjourned at 8:20 PM

Know your rights under the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 30A §18-25 and City
Ordinance Sections 2-028 through 2-2033.