

**City of Salem Massachusetts
Public Meeting Minutes**

Board or Committee:	Design Review Board – Regular Meeting
Date and Time:	Wednesday, August 25, 2021 at 6:00 pm
Meeting Location:	Remote Participation via Zoom
DRB Members Present:	Chair Paul Durand, David Jaquith, Glenn Kennedy Catherine Miller, Marc Perras, Helen Sides
DRB Members Absent:	J. Michael Sullivan
Others Present:	Kate Newhall-Smith
Recorder:	Colleen Brewster

Chair Paul Durand calls the meeting to order at 6:00PM. Roll call was taken.

Signs in the Urban Renewal Area

1. 37 Central Street: Eastern Bank

Ed Batten, of Batten Brothers Signs, was present to discuss the project.

Batten stated that Eastern Bank acquired Century Bank and they must now replace three signs. The internally lit aluminum sign at the entry will be replaced with raceway mounted letter sign at 50-square-feet, to the right of the entrance. Replaced the raceway mounted letters with a new smaller raceway mounted sign at 36-square-feet at eastern elevation. Replace the face plate at the existing sign cabinet.

Perras stated that the wood screen to the right of the main entry is a prominent feature that is not meant to hold the weight of the sign and suggested a stacked raceway sign be placed in the existing location over the entry door. Batten replied that he will ask Eastern Bank for their thoughts on stacking the words. Kennedy noted the multiple versions of stacked logo at their other location that won't crowd the façade. Miller stated that internally lit signs aren't allowed even though one exists on the building. She noted that the signs on the Pickering Wharf branch are significantly smaller, placed lower, and the Washington Street branch sign is not internally lit.

Perras asked if the parking entry and exit signs would also be replaced. Batten replied that while they are not within the scope of work, the bank would most likely change them to match the Eastern Bank colors.

Kennedy agreed that smaller signs would be more appropriate and suggested halo lighting. Sides agreed with moving the sign back over the entry and stated that the backer board should be black.

Batten requested the Board's thoughts on the face replacement sign. Sides and Jaquith were not in favor of it. Miller stated that if its internally lit it cannot be reused. Kennedy recommending eliminating the orange band and using stacked signage for consistency

Chair Paul Durand opened public comment

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

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Chair Paul Durand closed public comment.

Jaquith: Motion to continue to the next regular meeting. Seconded by: Sides.
Roll Call: Jaquith, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sides, Durand in favor. Passes 6-0.

2. **193 Washington Street:** Rockland Trust

Jason Fredette, of Poyant Signs, was present to discuss the project.

Fredette stated that East Boston Savings Bank has been acquired by Rockland Trust. The lighting will be changed to halo illumination given the sign ordinance. Sign 1: Halo sign facing Washington Street matching in size at location, Sign 2: Halo sign above the corner entrance door, Sign 3: Halo sign facing New Derby Street matching in size and location. He noted that the bank has legal obligations to change the signage to the new name but must also install banner sign over them with the existing bank name until the deal is complete. The temporary signs will cover the new signs for approximately 2-3 weeks. The new vinyl signage on the entrance door will also be replaced and indicate their hours of operation and services offered.

Kennedy stated that the use of the word "Banking" seems new and it's overpowering the word "Trust". Fredette replied that older branches may have "Bank" but use of the word "Banking" is their banking standard although the stroke weight is different. Kennedy believed the overall font size is different too and others have used a better visual or all caps. Fredette replied that the use of all caps is also on older branches. Miller stated that there is not enough white space around the text and suggested the text be scaled down. She noted that the serifs on the lettering also make them hard to read unless you see them straight on. Fredette agreed and noted East Boston Savings Bank also uses tight and condensed font while Rockland has a thinner Trajan font and more open space around the letters which helps with readability from the sides. He suggested reducing the logo by 10% and agreed to discuss it with his client. Kennedy suggested 10% or more. Sides agreed with all comments, "Rockland Trust" is good on its own and suggested that "Banking" be even more spaced out when scaled down. Fredette replied that his client would like to use the word "Banking", but it could be an option and would lower the text to center it.

Fredette requested an approval with those two caveats. Newhall-Smith agreed to circulate any revised plans among the Board and an administrative approval.

Chair Paul Durand opened public comment

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Paul Durand closed public comment.

Jaquith: Motion to approve with the condition that revised drawing be presented to the Board for review and approval. Seconded by: Sides.

Roll Call: Jaquith, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sides, Durand in favor. Passes 6-0.

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3. **285 Derby Street:** Lulu's Bakery

Ken McTague, of Concept Signs, Jim and Nikki Economides – Owners, and Russel Tanzer, representative for property, were present to discuss the project.

McTague stated that four long belt signs are proposed, three across the front to be placed at the existing built-in sign band with a 2-inch border around the signs to match the spacing at the upper window mullions, and a 1-inch aluminum frame with vinyl graphics. A fourth sign will be on the storefront sign band facing the park. Sides suggested reducing the font size of "Lulu's". Miller asked if there will there be two or four daisies. McTague replied two, one at each end. Kennedy suggested reducing the size of the daisies and matching the color of the dots at the center of the daisies to the font color. He suggested making the "Lulu's" white and using either all caps or all lower-case lettering for consistency between the vinyl window sign, stacking the window sign for even more consistency, and matching the word spacing between the business name so it takes up less space.

Chair Paul Durand opened public comment

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Paul Durand closed public comment.

Sides: Motion to continue to the next regular meeting. Seconded by: Jaquith.
Roll Call: Jaquith, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sides, Durand in favor. Passes 6-0.

McTague requested an approval with conditions rather than a continuance. The Board discussed whether they would like to see the revised plans.

Amendment: Sides: Motion to approve with a review of the revisions by Kennedy.
Seconded by: Jaquith.
Roll Call: Jaquith, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sides, Durand in favor. Passes 6-0.

Projects in the Urban Renewal Area

1. **234 Bridge Street: Small Project Review** – Installation of cellular infrastructure on existing decorative light pole, continued from 2/24/21, requested a continuance to September 22, 2021

Jaquith: Motion to continue. Seconded by: Sides.
Roll Call: Jaquith, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sides, Durand in favor. Passes 6-0.

2. **32-50 Federal Street and 252 Bridge Street:** Schematic Design Review – Restoration of historic courthouses and development of mixed-use structure, continued from 7/28/21

Adam Giordano and Adam Stein of Winn Development, Brian O'Connor and Steve Prestejohn of Cube 3, were present to discuss the project.

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O'Connor stated that the presentation will be mostly on the crescent lot, plaza across the street, and the connections between the two sides of the intersection. Their broad design goals were to enhance the waterfront experience, define the accessible spaces, reinforce pedestrian connection, and create bold architecture that recognizes frontages from all directions, welcomes the public, and creates meaningful street edges. They used the feedback from last meeting to make the following revisions.

Building Design Approach

Prestejohn stated that there are connections to the MBTA station and lower-level entrance, they determined how to deal with the grade change and make the connections between the levels. The building edge was closest to the water, but they wanted to create an urban edge, so the building is now against the sidewalk edge to make a street wall that is not on the slip ramp. Breaks in the building support the public realm, address the key view corridors, and create areas of public space. They didn't want a continuous street wall, so the façade is meaningful and measured by how they carved/sculpted the form to create these connections through layering, terracing, and tiering and the building is responding to the waters edge by creating a carved form. In terms of the gateway view, the massing strategies work with the surrounding buildings and the carved forms can be seen from the top of the North Street bridge. From a city perspective, there is an intersection between the public plaza space, strong vertical corner to anchor the building, and floating corners to reinforce the sense of public access. The mass of the MBTA garage also relates to the new building.

The proposed façade will consist of painted aluminum storefronts, maroon and red accent panels at the openings, dark door and window frames, angled accent walls at the angled balconies, metal picket railings with wooden handrails, slat screening at the garage to allow for open air ventilation, and a natural wood-like panel boards at the first floor to contrast the stone-like panel base. The wood-like panel banding will be horizontal at the façade and vertical at the columns.

Outdoor Public Space

O'Connor stated that the monumental stair along the North will be wide with integrated seating at landings, planters, and bollard lighting to make it feel welcoming. The open rail to the outside will extend the views from the planters against the building. ADA entrances will be accessed from this level, and they want to bring activity away from the slip lane retaining wall and towards the stair edge. There will be a shared use ramp at far northern edge, river view seating areas, walkways, public lawn, and separate commercial and residential entry points into the building. The outdoor terraced spaces will connect to the lower level with a gentle overhang and the potential for public art space towards the upper level with bench seating next to the entrance to the shared use ramp. These points converge at Bridge Street Plaza and the open space under the buildings edge. These public areas could accommodate a wide variety of use at the courthouse plaza across the street.

Parking Strategy / Current Design

Prestejohn stated that an emergency access and flood management plan is required. The new lower-level plan proposes perimeter parking to extend further to the east for

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additional covered parking and 62 parking spaces below. Emergency and building system spaces and domestic water will be elevated above the floor plain at the lower level but will be accessible from above in the instance of flooding. They will continue the design of their emergency plan to discuss with the Salem Fire Department.

Chair Durand requested the number of housing units proposed. O'Connor replied 129 in total over both properties.

Miller stated that the articulation of each floor line is too much, the elevation reads as a diagram and not each line needs to be highlighted. O'Connor agreed. Miller asked about the ramp design and the placement of the landings. Prestejohn replied that they wanted to separate the ramp traffic so that bikers were at the outer ramp and pedestrians were at the interior. O'Connor replied that the ramp meets ADA guidelines. Prestejohn added that each ramp section has a 30-inch rise then a landing and they are going beyond what's required and creating a gentler slope for the 8-foot-wide ramp. Miller requested additional information on the bicycle ramp requirements be provided when they return for their next review. She suggested the bottom of the ramp be treated differently, possibly wider, so it is more creative and inviting. She noted that the angular pieces the curved landscapes don't fit or that reinforce the building and the planters under the overhang seem forced.

She noted that the one-way in and out of the lower-level parking entrance could create a back-up leading out to the streetlight at Bridge Street. Perras agreed with Miller and noted that a 5% slope should be labeled a walk not a ramp. He liked the reveals, stacked design, and uniqueness of the site, but the floor line expression is critical to lessen the walled aesthetic. Regarding the material expression, the forms don't need to respond to the neighboring building, but there should be more of a civic look since they are similar in scale, but the wood look panels don't feel appropriate. Sides agreed and noted that the horizontality of the panels is good, but they are too blond and could be a darker mahogany, so they relate to the colors within the slots. Perras stated that the rendering without expressed floor lines is problematic. Chair Durand agreed. Prestejohn suggested expressing the horizontal where it counts most. Kennedy suggested adjusting the color palette first. O'Connor replied that they will provide options, the horizontal lines could be protrusions or reveals, which will also create shadows, and suggested thin protrusions if the building will be richer and darker. Jaquith noted that he is in favor of horizontal lines, the floors seem to look cut-off and that visually there is no top. He also agreed with Miller's landscaping concerns but there should be a lot of landscaping into the staircase. Chair Durand suggested a frosted glass at the balcony to conceal stored items. O'Connor replied that they are still researching options.

Chair Durand requested the applicant's timeline for schematic design approval. Giordano replied that permitting and community engagements should end at the end of 2022. Stein added that this will occur around the same time as the planning board approval. Newhall-Smith suggested they not rush the Schematic Design since it plays an important role. The basics have been defined and comments have been made on the details. If the Board is comfortable, the project could be sent to the SRA for a Schematic Design approval or there could be another review to see the refined design. The Board agreed to a continuance.

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Perras asked if any riverfront work was proposed. Stein replied no.

Chair Paul Durand opened public comment

Emily Udy, HSI and 8 Buffum Street. HSI will provide more detailed comments before the next meeting, and they will meet separately with the design team. They want the design team to describe how the design relates to the material selection. At the previous meeting she asked if the roofline closest to the garage could continue to be pulled back. She asked if mechanical equipment is placed on the roof, will it be visible or screened and requested the height in relationship to the existing buildings and roadways. The pedestrian connection to this site was discussed with the North Salem Neighborhood Association, and she asked what that pedestrian experience to the grand staircase would be like, how it is approached, and suggested a possible reorientation at the bottom of the stair to make it more welcoming. Stein agreed to schedule a meeting with HSI the week after Labor Day.

Polly Wilbert, 7 Cedar Street. Concerned with burden on ramp to Rt. 114, asked how they would discourage use of the slip ramp for taxi and ride share drop-off's which could cause accidents. Asked if the sidewalk ownership for snow and trash removal has been determined and if that ownership would be with the building. Asked where delivery trucks and moving vehicles would park. Asked if any of these items will be considered in the September meeting.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Paul Durand closed public comment.

Miller requested zoomed out views to understand the surrounding ramps and access points to determine what happens where and why. Chair Durand noted that the bottom of the stair leads to the sidewalk and pedestrian path and the stair at the bridge puts a pedestrian on the path to North Salem.

Sides recognized the progress this project has made and appreciated their responses.

Sides: Motion to continue to the next regular meeting. Seconded by: Miller.

Roll Call: Jaquith, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sides, Durand in favor. Passes 6-0.

3. 141 Washington Street: Small Project Review – Window Replacement

Jaime Morin, of Renewal by Andersen Windows, was present to discuss the project.

Morin stated that 6 replacement windows are proposed. Two attic windows facing Washington Street, two attic windows on Front Street, and two second-floor windows on Washington Street. The new windows will be simulated divided lights and will have exterior muntins to match the existing.

Sides asked if the window size will be different. Morin replied that the replacement window frames are narrow, there will be minimal difference, and the windows will be inserted into the existing frame. Jaquith and Miller asked if HSI preferred a particular

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window style. Newhall-Smith noted that this building is not within a historic district; if it was, the Historic Commission would require wood windows with divided lights. Sides stated that while this building is not in a historic district these resemble more of what they would want to see in a window. Miller noted her concern with a triple track being visible. Sides asked why only these few being are done. Morin replied that they were the only condominium owner interested in replacing their windows and the new windows will have half screens.

Chair Paul Durand opened public comment

No one in the assembly wished to speak

Chair Paul Durand closed public comment.

Sides: Motion to approve simulated divided lite windows. Seconded by: Jaquith.
Roll Call: Jaquith, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sides, Durand in favor. Passes 6-0.

4. 217-221 Essex Street: Installation of rooftop cellular infrastructure for T-Mobile

Tim Greene, of T-Mobile, was present to discuss the project.

Greene stated that the existing equipment has been on the roof for the past 20 years and the revised plan will reduce the number of antennas on the roof and equipment within the building. They will remove nine antennas, three remote dishes, five hybrid cables, and other equipment and install a reduced number of new pieces of equipment. Equipment on the existing chimney will require new bracing for structural reason. The SRA reviewed the application and recommended painting the bracing to match the chimney. The existing rooftop is at 68-feet above grade and the maximum height of the new equipment will be at just over 84-feet above grade.

Sides stated that all new equipment on the roof should be matte black or dark slate grey, so it disappears.

Chair Paul Durand opened public comment

No one in the assembly wished to speak

Chair Paul Durand closed public comment.

Jaquith: Motion to approve with all brackets and antennas to be painted dark grey.
Seconded by: Miller.
Roll Call: Jaquith, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sides, Durand in favor. Passes 6-0.

5. 15 Front Street: Small Project Review – Installation of AC unit on rear of building

Carol Perry, owner of 15 Front Street, was present to discuss the project.

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Perry stated that the existing AC unit was installed 11 years ago, the unit no longer works and can't be repaired. They want to add a Mitsubishi unit above the rear window next to the existing vent.

Perras suggested that the new unit be black or grey to match the window. Kennedy asked how it will be mounted to the wall. Perry replied that it would be mounted with brackets. Kennedy requested the brackets be painted the same black or dark grey color. Sides asked if the conduits will be visible. Jaquith replied that they would be behind the unit and enter the building. Perry noted that the hole in the wall will be 3-inches in diameter and behind the unit. Miller asked if the unit could be placed to the left of the first-floor windows. Jaquith noted his concern with vehicles hitting it when they park.

Chair Paul Durand opened public comment

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Paul Durand closed public comment.

Miller: Motion to approve with the unit and mounting to be painted dark grey or black.

Seconded by: Jaquith.

Roll Call: Jaquith, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sides, Durand in favor. Passes 6-0.

6. 14 New Derby Street: Small Project Review – Installation of rooftop mechanicals for Flip the Bird.

Ryan McShera, of Red Barn Architecture, was present to discuss the project.

McShera stated that new mechanical equipment is proposed on the roof, in a location approved by landlord and commercial tenant. The roof is three different heights, and the mechanical units will be located next to the rear existing chimney with 4-foot-high painted PVC L-shaped screen. There will be no view to the new mechanical units from New Derby Street, it is only visible from the rear and the equipment will be 8-feet away from the rear wall.

Chair Durand suggested the screening be moved as close to the units as possible and away from the edge of the wall. Newhall-Smith stated that plans submitted by another architect for modifications to facilitate the residential uses in the building indicate that the chimney will be removed, and their plans should be revised to include that. Sides agreed with moving the screening away from the roof edge and suggested a dark matte finish that doesn't resemble a fence. Perras suggested black matte metal finish to match the windows, not vinyl.

Chair Durand asked if the RTU can be moved further away from the edge. Kennedy agreed with the suggestion and suggested that both units be screened. Chair Durand suggested Hardi slats with spaces between them to allow for air flow and asked if the condenser could be flipped to the other side of the roof, closer to the first station. McShera agreed to pull back the screening and noted that the units must be placed in

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these locations. Miller suggested adding even more screening to the west. Jaquith agreed with all comments.

Chair Paul Durand opened public comment

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Paul Durand closed public comment.

Jaquith: Motion to continue to the next regular meeting. Seconded by: Sides.

Roll Call: Jaquith, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sides, Durand in favor. Passes 6-0.

New/Old Business

1. Approval of Minutes:
 - a. July 28, 2021: The minutes were continued to the next regular meeting.
2. Staff Updates, if any:

Newhall-Smith confirmed that the October meeting will be on the 27th.

Adjournment

Miller: Motion to adjourn. Seconded by: Jaquith.

Roll Call: Jaquith, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sides, Durand in favor. Passes 6-0.

Meeting is adjourned at 8:45PM.

Know your rights under the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 30A §18-25 and City Ordinance Sections 2-028 through 2-203