Salem Marketplace Design Peer Review

REPORT and RECOMMENDATIONS

September 2006

PREPARED FOR

The City of Salem
Marketplace Redevelopment Committee

PEER REVIEW TEAM

Landworks Studio, Inc. - Office dA, Inc.

Aerial View of Salem Marketplace

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Annie Harris, Chair	Essex National Heritage Commission
Josh Basseches	Salem Partnership/PEM
Michael Brennan	Salem Redevelopment Authority (SRA)
Barbara Cleary	Historic Salem, Inc.
Glenn Kennedy	Design Review Board
Bill Luster	Charing Cross Realty
Joanne McCrea	Alliance of Salem Neighborhood Assoc.
Rinus Oosthoek	Salem Chamber of Commerce
Diane & Dick Pabich	Salem Renewal
Councillor Jean Pelletier	City Council President
Dan Pierce	Pierce Architects
Walter Power	Salem Planning Board
Chris Silva	Owner, Front Street Coffeehouse
Larry Spang	Salem Historical Commission
Christine Sullivan	SRA/Planning Board

Consultants

LANDWORKS Studios
Office dA

Funders

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Cover Letter

Mayor Kimberley Driscoll

Dear Members of the Community:

When we first started talking about the redevelopment of the Salem Marketplace Block, we knew it would be a challenge that needed to be looked at carefully and with a great deal of input from the community. The redevelopment of this block will have a considerable impact on the downtown and it is important that we "get it right."

The *Salem Marketplace Peer Review: Report and Recommendations* represents a tremendous public effort to review the preliminary plans proposed by the developer, RCG, LLC, and provide thoughtful comments on how the project can be improved. Overall, the report will serve as a useful tool as we look ahead to redeveloping this key downtown block

The Marketplace Redevelopment Committee (MRC), an appointed committee made up of several community stakeholders with various backgrounds and levels of expertise, met over the course of five months to review proposed project plans, retain land-use consultants LANDWORKS Studios and Office dA, and develop a conceptual plan for redevelopment of the Marketplace Block that blended the desires of many different constituencies. Committee members took their tasks seriously and this report is the product of their labor. They gave a great deal of their time and effort for that I thank them.

In addition, the MRC held two well-attended public meetings to gain feedback on the development and enlist recommendations for improving the original plan. I believe that the level of community input and interest in this project is unprecedented and bodes well for the future successful redevelopment of this block.

Finally, I should note that this process is not complete. We will continue to work with the developer to identify a proposed project and will insure that the spirit of openness and candor experienced to date continues as plans progress.

I hope you find this report informative and useful Thank you for your interest in making Salem a better place to live, work and visit!

Sincerely,

Kimberley Driscoll
Mayor

Salem Marketplace Block Development

"Getting it Right"

The **Salem Marketplace Design Peer Review Report** contains the findings and recommendations developed during the spring and summer of 2006 for the **Salem Marketplace Block**. Every effort has been made in this report to present the materials in a clear and complete - but also concise - manner. It is our desire to inform the community about what was accomplished, what still needs to be done, and to establish a public record that can serve as a guide for the future development of this block. The report includes: a series of drawings and models based on the original developer's plan; an analysis of the site performed by the peer review team; and a chart of alternate development scenarios. The report also summarizes the opportunities, issues and concerns voiced by the public and the review committee.

Background: In the winter of 2006, Mayor Kimberley Driscoll along with the real estate development company RCG announced plans to examine the proposed redevelop of a key city block in downtown Salem – the land and buildings situated between Washington, Front, New Derby and Lafayette Streets. The size of RCG's proposed development and the community's reaction to the announcement of this new project had made it clear that many Salem residents, businesses and organizations considered this to be a project with the power to transform the area – to the benefit or detriment of the community - depending on one's point of view.

RCG's original concept was to construct three, 6 story, mixed-use buildings with residential and retail uses, along with underground parking for approximately 500 cars. The proposed project encompassed privately-owned property, city-owned land, and a parcel owned by the Salem Redevelopment Authority.

Process: Recently elected as the 50th Mayor of Salem, Driscoll understood the importance of this project and quickly set in motion a remarkable new process for the city.

"The redevelopment of this city block is going to make a considerable impact on the downtown. We want to make sure that we get it right by soliciting input from the community to determine the opportunities for the redevelopment and identify any concerns."[1] Mayor Kim Driscoll

In April, the Mayor established the *ad hoc* Marketplace Redevelopment Committee (MRC) to review the proposed development. Shortly thereafter, the Mayor worked with the developer RCG to set aside funding to pay for a peer review of the project. The city worked with the MRC to release a Request for Proposals (RFP) to hire a peer review team and then, after interviewing three candidates, the team of LANDWORKS Studio of Salem and Office dA of Boston was selected. The team worked with the MRC, the Salem Department of Planning and Community Development and RCG's architects to review the developer's proposed project design, the committee's vision for this type of project in the downtown, and community's concerns for a public-private development that would "fit" with Salem. The three month review was rigorous and transparent to the community. The results are presented in this report.

1. Dalton, Tom, "Public meeting planned for Salem News block", Salem News, 19 May 2006

The Original Plan: Big Ideas - Room for Improvement
The original plan proposed by the developer RCG showed that they had big ideas for transforming the block including significant new retail space, a large increase in public and private parking, and a re-imagined role for the city owned Salem Marketplace stalls and public walkway. The analysis of the plan revealed several areas that seemed less than optimal regarding the scale and height of the proposed structures, the street edge, pedestrian circulation through the site, the views of Old Town Hall, and the overall urban character of the development. Because the Marketplace Block is located in Salem's Heritage Plaza East Urban Renewal District, development at this site is required to undergo a two-step review process and the design must be approved by the Salem Redevelopment Authority (SRA). The SRA relies on the Heritage Plaza East Urban Renewal Plan to guide its design review. The recommendations in this report are intended to supplemental the Urban Renewal Plan and to provide additional direction for development at this site. We believe that this report outlines the best combination of attributes for the development of the block – now or in the future.

Public and MRC Comments
A crucial component of this review process was two, well attended public meetings. Following these meetings, the peer review team and MRC sought to incorporate many of the public's suggestions into this study's recommendations. A summary of the comments and issues raised at the meetings is contained at the end of this report. In general, the comments show that the residents of Salem are open to development, but are justifiably concerned with the balance between the costs and benefits to the city.

Recommendations
The highlight of this report is the 15 recommendations of the critical elements that should be included in the future development of this site. These recommendations are derived from both the consultant's professional analysis of the site and program, and the ambitions and concerns of the public as articulated in the public meetings. We hope that our recommendations are clear enough for a general audience and specific enough to guide the development of the Salem Marketplace Block by any developer that takes on the challenge and opportunities of Salem's next emergent downtown block. With a continued level of open communication between the city and the residents of Salem, we have no doubt that a development with multiple benefits to all concerned parties can be achieved.

Common Ground and Tradeoffs: Three Development Scenarios
There are numerous development scenarios possible for the Salem Marketplace Block. We have included three broadly defined scenarios for consideration here.
1. "No Build"
2. Parcel by Parcel Development
3. Comprehensive Block Development

The intent in identifying these options is not to undertake a thorough analysis of the ramifications of each, but rather to identify the key options and trade offs facing the citizens and officials of Salem as they seek to grapple with the complex set of issues facing any development at this central business block.

Additional Considerations
Towards the end of this report, we have listed a number of questions and issues that were not adequately covered as part of the scope of this report, but are critical to the long term success of the Marketplace development. Any future development at this site will need to address these issues early on in the process.

Additional Resources
The final pages of this report refer to additional documents and reports that should also be used to guide this development and others in downtown Salem. This small city's remarkable downtown architecture and history make it essential that every effort be made to adhere to the best practices of urban design and development. The documents in *Appendix A* are drawn from the city's own legal and regulatory development guidelines, documents from the American Institute of Architects, and various newspaper articles that covered the peer review process. *Appendix B* is a summary of public comments from the April 13, 2006 and June 26, 2006 public meetings.

Conclusion
The MRC and peer review consultant team are proud to have been part of this project. We are optimistic that this report will greatly assist the City of Salem's boards and commissions who will be charged with reviewing the project at the proper time. It was our intent to make this study a practical tool that will be used to supplement Salem's existing zoning laws, the Urban Renewal Plan, and the Design Review Guidelines.

We hope that our recommendations will lead to a future for this block that embodies the best of elements of urban development, with the results being a project (or series of projects) that is financially sustainable, architecturally appropriate, and complements the ideal vision of Salem to its residents and visitors.

Respectfully submitted,

Annie C. Harris, Chair
Marketplace Redevelopment Committee

Executive Summary- cont.

Salem Marketplace Block Development

Project Description

Introduction

The Office of Mayor Kimberley Driscoll, Salem Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD), and the Salem Redevelopment Authority (SRA) worked with the Marketplace Redevelopment Committee (MRC), a group of interested citizens, to plan for the future use of the Salem Marketplace, the adjoining Klop Alley and an SRA owned parking lot. The goal was to review a pending concept plan for the area and determine goals and objectives in moving ahead with the project.

The proposed redevelopment includes privately owned property, City-owned land and an SRA-owned parcel. This review will inform the City, City Council and SRA and be used to make a judgment about support for proceeding with the redevelopment project. To move forward, the project will require disposition/acquisition of the City-owned and SRA-owned parcels.

The redevelopment of this city block will be another keystone in the continuing revitalization of downtown Salem. This initiative is being undertaken within the context of City policies and a long-term and highly successful public/private investment process that has helped transform large areas of the downtown and the surrounding community.

Salem is growing as a community; over the past three years, downtown Salem has seen a rise in development with a number of vacant or underutilized buildings and parcels being redeveloped, creating over 100 high-end condominiums and representing over $35 million of private Investment. In addition, the Peabody Essex Museum recently completed a significant and successful $125 million expansion and renovation."

Community Participation

The MRC was formed by Mayor Driscoll in an effort to publicly discuss the redevelopment of the Salem Marketplace with community stakeholders. The Committee met on a regular basis over the course of the project to vet the project in coordination with the design consultants, Landworks Studio, Inc. and Office dA. These meetings were used to get input and discuss strategies as part of the peer review of the project.

MRC Members

Annie Harris, Chair	**Essex National Heritage Commission**
Josh Basseches	**Salem Partnership/PEM**
Michael Brennan	**Salem Redevelopment Authority (SRA)**
Barbara Cleary	**Historic Salem, Inc.**
Glenn Kennedy	**Design Review Board**
Bill Luster	**Charing Cross Realty**
Joanne McCrea	**Alliance of Salem Neighborhood Assoc.**
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Jean Pelletier	**Salem City Council President**
Dan Pierce	**Pierce Architects**
Walter Power	**Salem Planning Board**
Chris Silva	**Owner, Front Street Coffee House**
Larry Spang	**Salem Historical Commission**
Christine Sullivan	**SRA/Planning Board**

The Salem Marketplace Block

The project area includes the downtown block bounded by Washington Street, Front Street, Lafayette Street and New Derby Street, including two regionally important highways (1A and 114). The proposed project includes the redevelopment of six existing parcels and Klop Alley, an existing throughway between New Derby and Lafayette Streets. It is a six minute walk to the Salem station of the MBTA commuter line that provides service to Boston in thirty minutes.

The block holds a unique place in the fabric of downtown Salem as a link between the civic, cultural, and retail core that occurs between Washington and Essex Street and the important tourist destinations on the waterfront including the planned Salem Harbor Walk currently in the process of implementation. Additionally the Marketplace block is part of the historic Derby Deed, an 19th Century gift from the Derby and Pickman families to the city for the preservation of marketplace functions and civic space. The City Solicitor has provided an opinion to the City Council that the reversion rights of the Derby Family under the terms of the Derby Deed have been relinquished .

Aerial Photo of Proposed Development Site

Site Context

Privately Owned
8,900 sf

Parcel Owned by
Salem Redevelopment Authority
9,600 sf

Salem Marketplace, City Owned
15,300 sf

Privately Owned, Developer has Option to Buy
31,000 sf

Fire Station and Electric Department Offices, City Owned
18,900 sf

Privately Owned, Developer has Option to Buy
16,300 sf

Klop Alley
City Owned
21,300 sf

Legend

- Parcel Lines
- City Owned Lot
- Privately Owned Lot

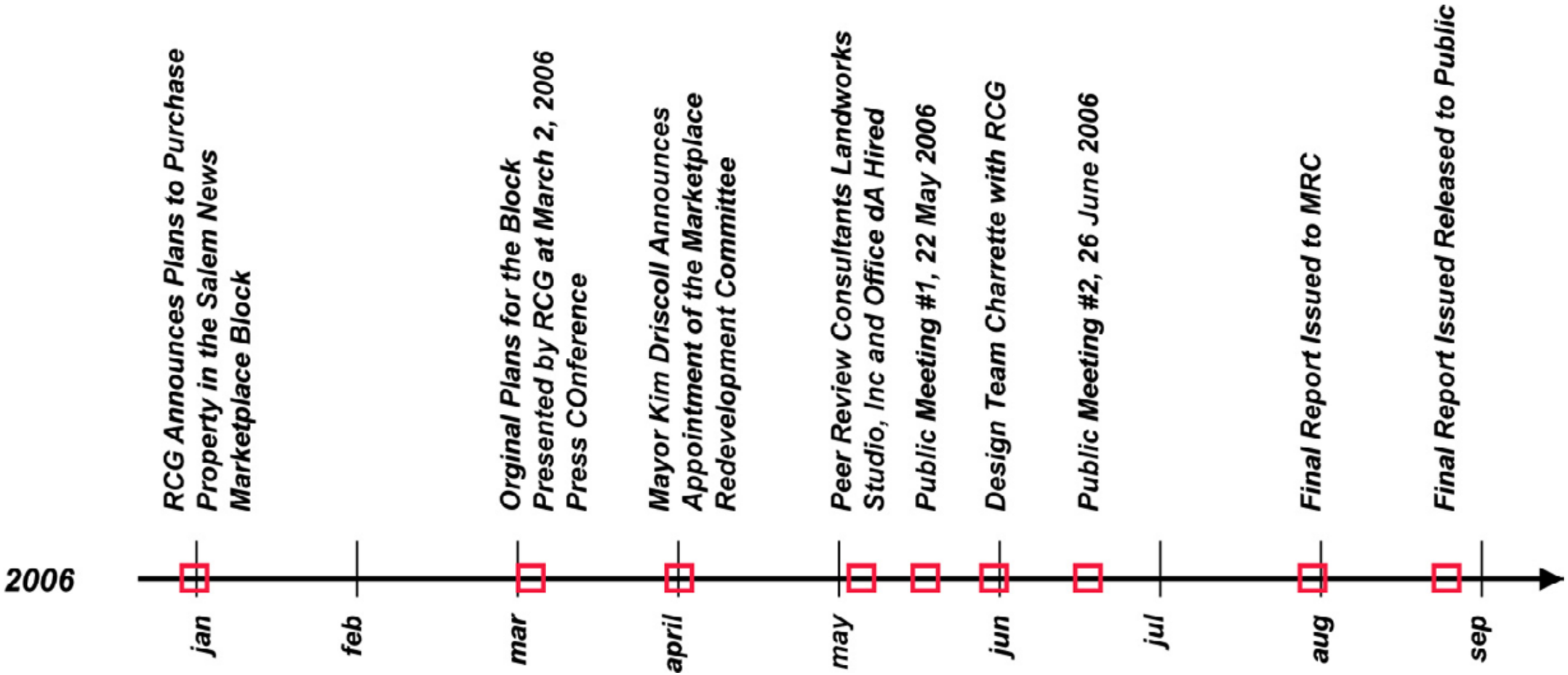
Site Context

The Process

The consultant team started the peer review process by undertaking a spatial and environmental analysis of the site, the existing conditions and the original scheme as proposed by RCG. After making some initial conclusions about the site and some critiques of the scheme as presented by RCG, we re-imagined how the development could be configured to better serve the interests of downtown Salem, while simultaneously meeting the approximate density of the developer's original scheme. Following is a summary of our analysis, the public's most pressing concerns and four alternative development scenarios.

Peer Review Process

Project Timeline



Public Comments

At the first public meeting, 22 May 2006, the consultant team presented their initial analysis of the site and developer's initial scheme. Following is a summary of the most pressing concerns voiced by members of the community regarding the development and the block.

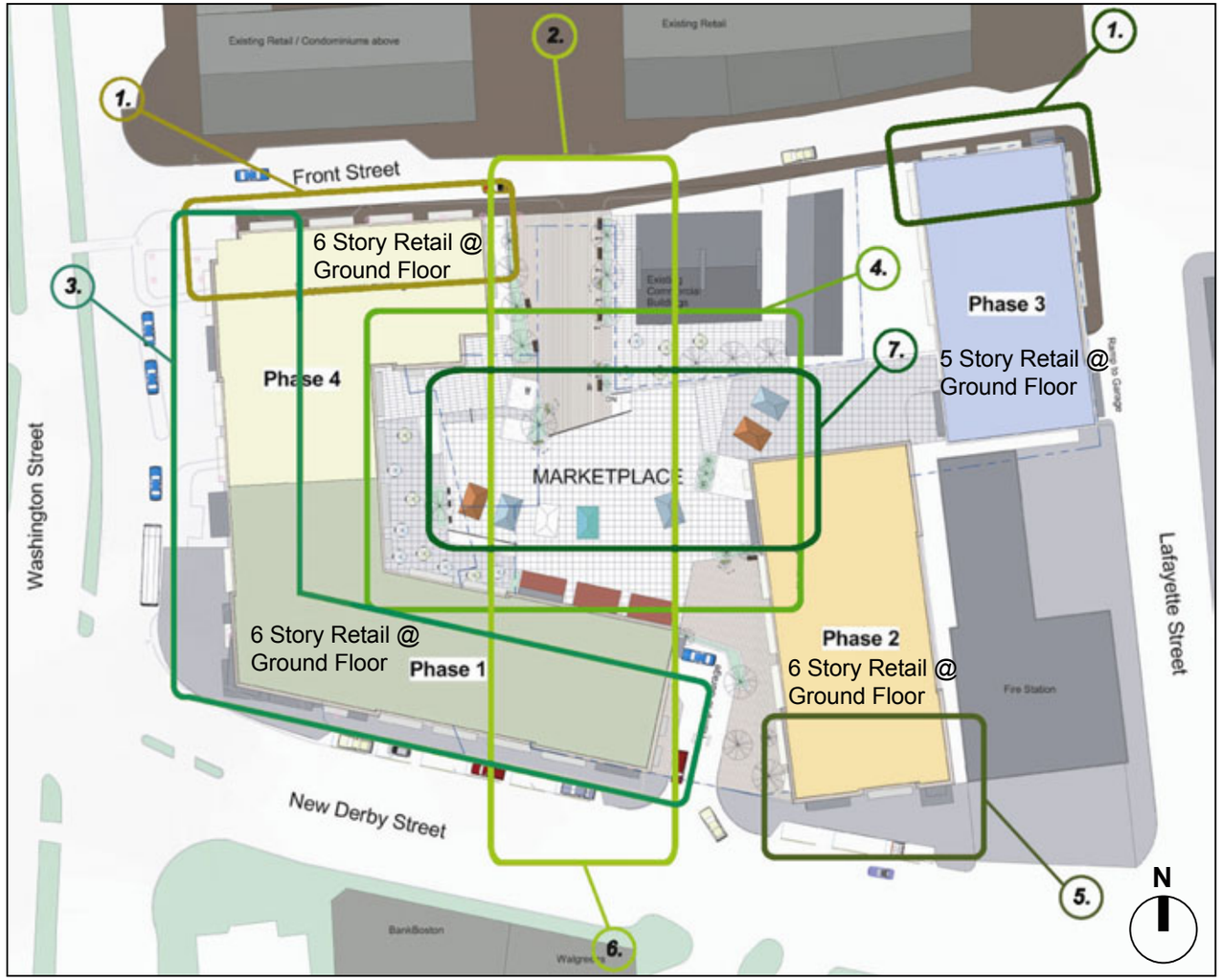
- **Will the proposed density and scale of the development fit in downtown Salem?**
- **What are the Benefits to the City of Salem?**
- **Will the development fit into the historic image of downtown Salem?**
- **Will there still be a view of Old Town Hall from New Derby Street?**
- **Can any of the historic buildings be incorporated in the project?**
- **What happens with the current Marketplace? Will there still be a public area of residents and visitors to enjoy? What about the Derby Deed?**
- **How much public parking will be provided? What percentage of the parking will be for residents and what percentage will be for short-term shoppers? Is the underground parking lot even feasible?**

Public Comments

- Can the existing water/sewer system sustain this type of development?
- What is the mix of uses going to be? How much will be retail/commercial? How much will be residential?
- What are the environmental impacts of the project?
- Will there be a traffic study?
- What is the relocation plan for the affected businesses?
- Can the market absorb this many condominiums and this much retail?
- Will there be a construction management plan?

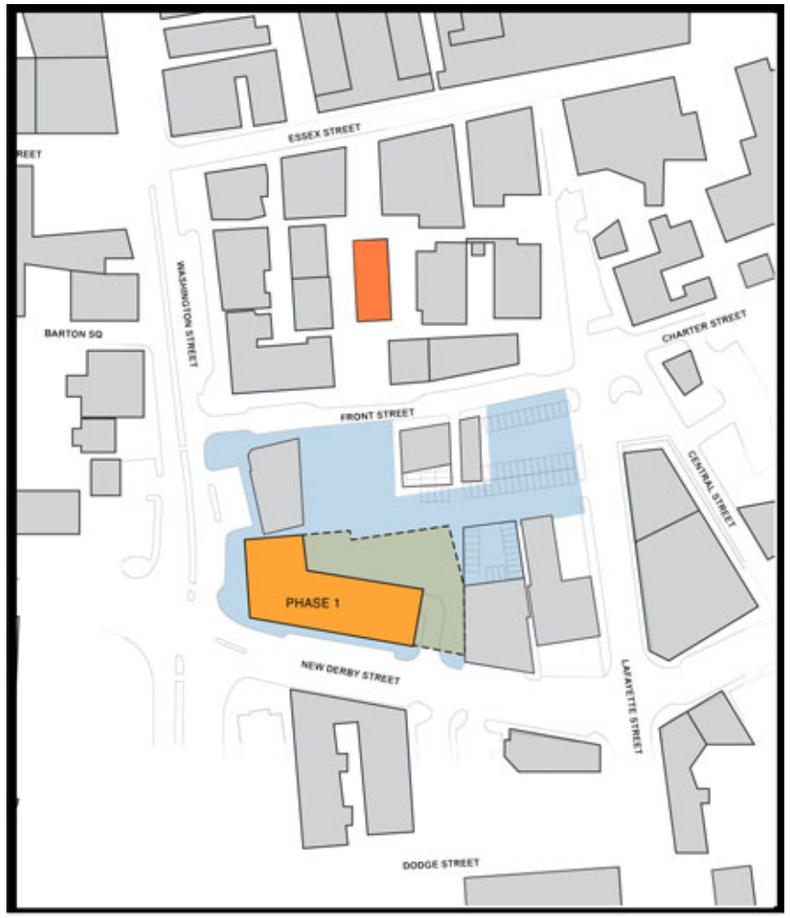
Initial RCG Plan- Areas for Improvement

1. **Buildings too tall at Front Street-** Five and six story buildings overwhelm the surrounding buildings.
2. **Through-Block Connection Lost-** A Crucial pedestrian connection at mid-block is lost to building.
3. **Building Height too Uniform-** A six-story building height around the whole block is too uniform, lacks visual interest and variation crucial to appropriate scale.
4. **Central Plaza too Large, Internally Focused-** An over-sized central plaza will be difficult to utilize, the inward orientation will give the perception of private space.
5. **Façade Street Edge not Maintained-** By matching the face of the fire station, s discontinuity of the street edge is created and places pedestrians needlessly close to the doors of the fire station.
6. **Visual Connection to Old Town Hall Obstructed-** A clear view of Old Town Hall is very important for the image of the project and downtown as a whole.
7. **Centralized Marketplace is not Sustainable-** The current placement of the Marketplace clustered in the block interior is already proven to be an unsuccessful model.



Initial RCG Plan

Phasing- as Proposed



Phase One

Phase Two

Phasing

Phasing is very complex aspect of this project, and the scope of this report does not address a full range of options or scenarios. These diagrams show the phasing as proposed by RCG.

Proposed New Building

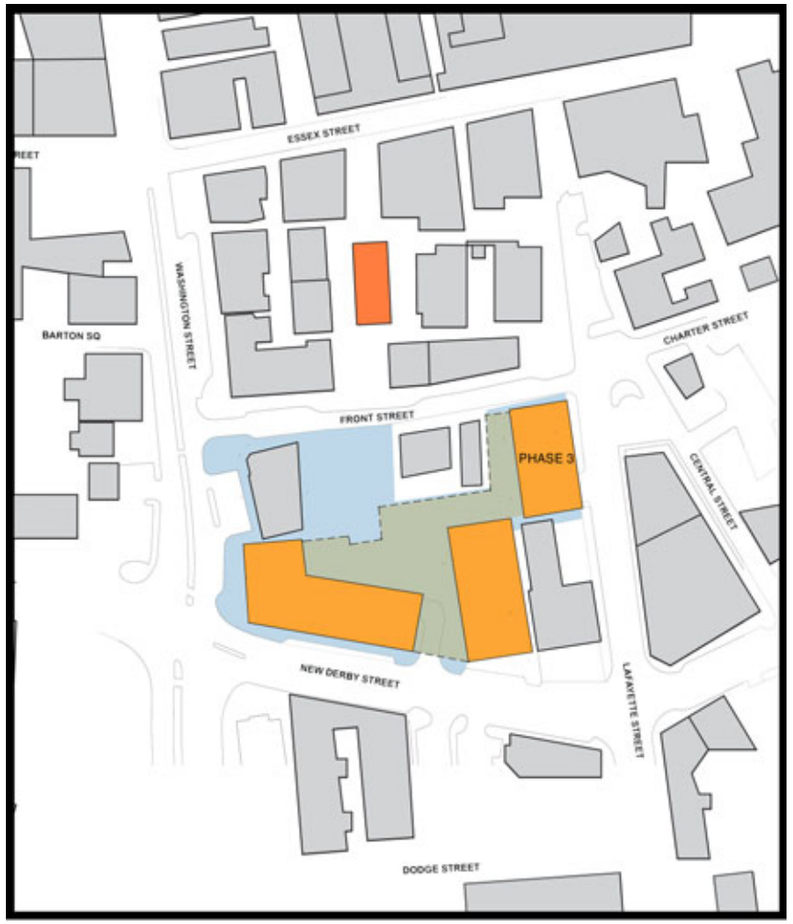
Open Space

Project Boundaries

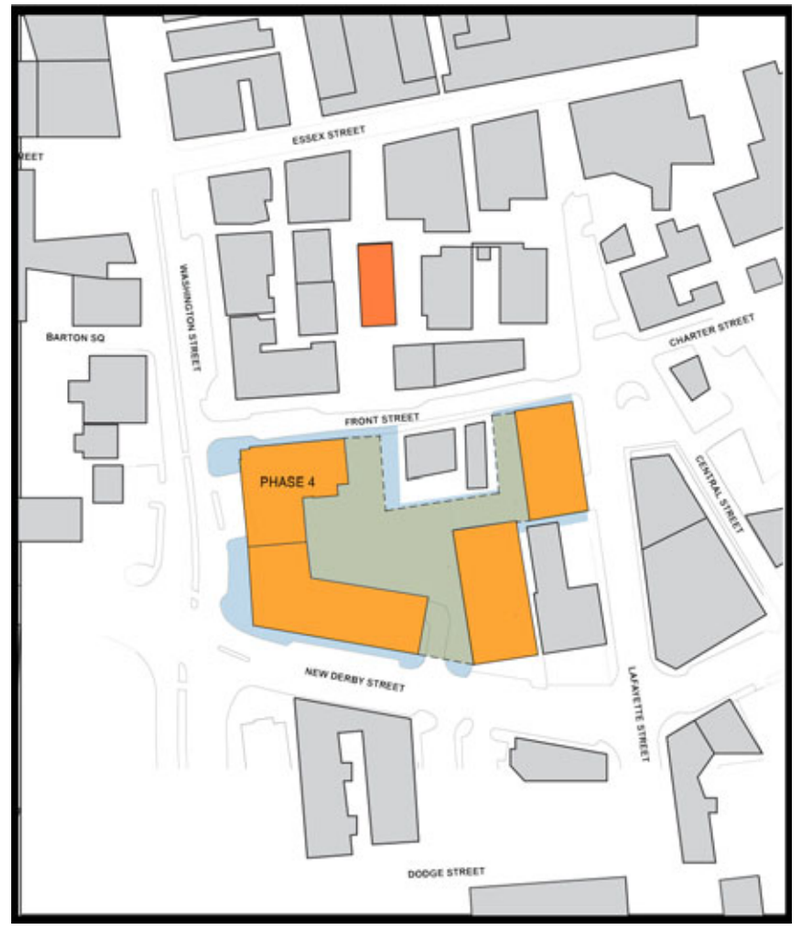
Extent of Underground Parking

0 100 200 400'

N



Phase Three



Phase Four

Proposed New Building

Open Space

Project Boundaries

Extent of Underground Parking

0 100 200 400'

N

Phase Three- Leftover Undeveloped Space

Testing the Options for the Block

This diagram illustrated the importance of phasing and the ramifications of such a relatively large project. If, as shown, the developer is unable to complete phase four, the green shows the leftover space that would result. This space is present throughout the phasing until phase four is built. The final plan should take into consideration a temporary landscape for this space, and plan for the possibility that the whole block may not be developed as planned.

Proposed New Building

Open Space

Project Boundaries

Extent of Underground Parking

0 100 200 400'

N

Conceptual Design Development and Analysis

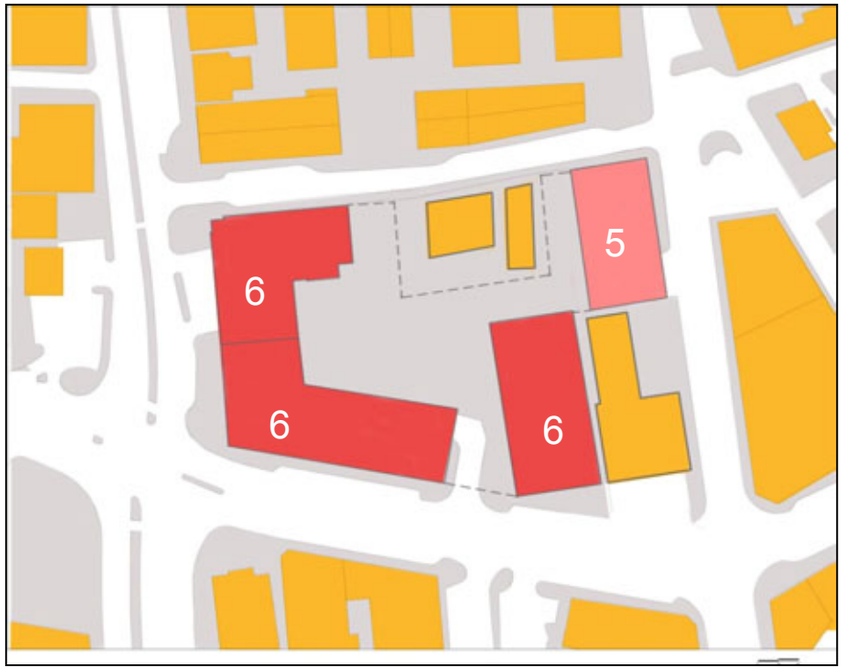
A large part of our study involved testing various scenarios of development that matched the developers pro-forma in terms of density and square footage. We used a number of spatial and environmental analysis techniques to visualize a series of options. Through models, plans, and 3D computer models, we looked at the developer's initial plan, the "as-of-right" (meaning the developer builds the maximum allowable density by current zoning regulations with the parcels they currently control) scheme and four new schemes. These various schemes were reviewed by the MRC and the developer to develop a preferred scheme.

CURRENT ZONING STATUS

The City of Salem Zoning Ordinance has designated this area as **B5 Zoning.** Under this designation, the maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is 3.0 for new construction, and the maximum height is six stories.

RCG Scheme as Proposed

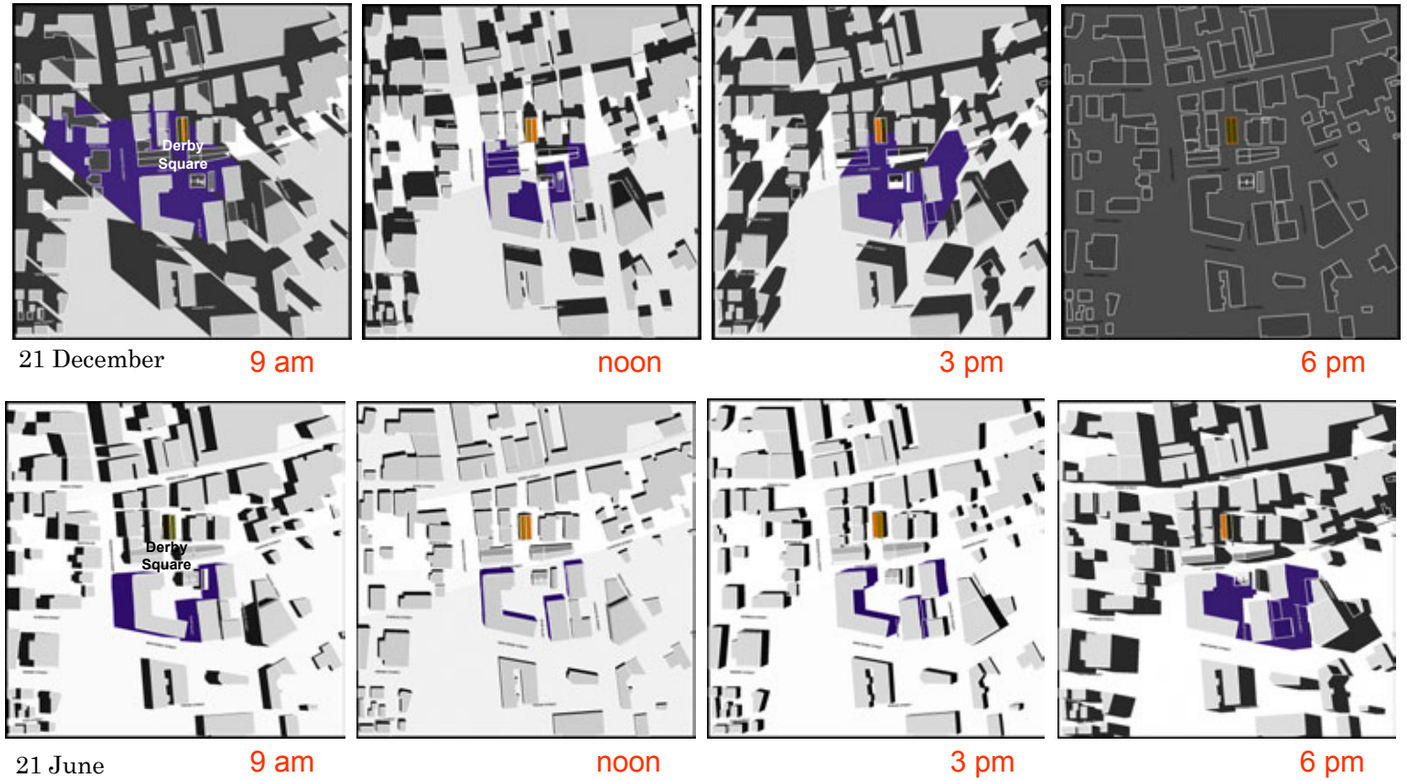
TOTAL AREA:	***RCG***	***PARKING (100% Underground)***
Retail:	44,000SF	240 spaces dedicated for condos
Housing:	200,000SF	260 spaces dedicated for public use



Plan

5 Proposed Building Footprint (White Number Indicates Height by Stories)

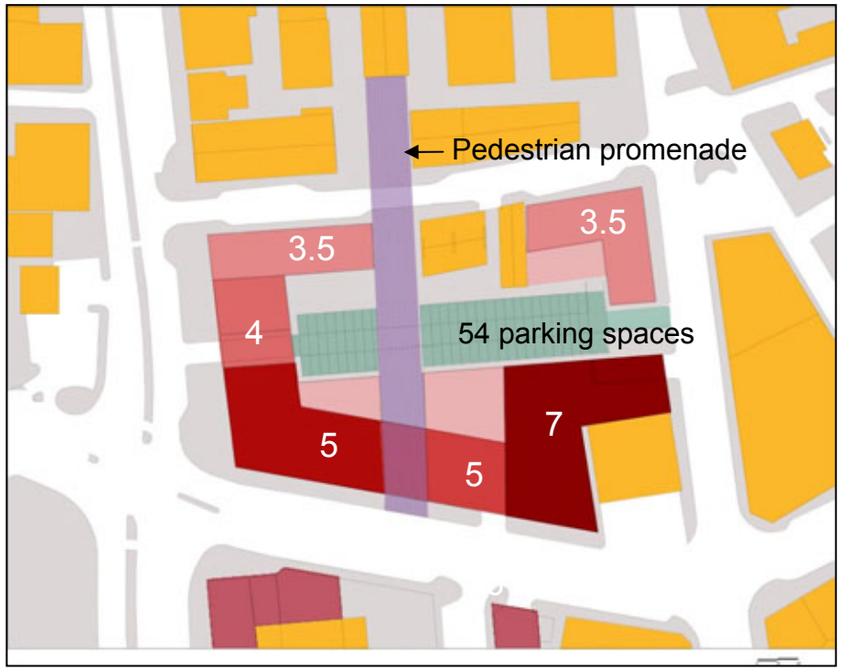
Existing Building



Shadow Studies, Plan View

Study ONE

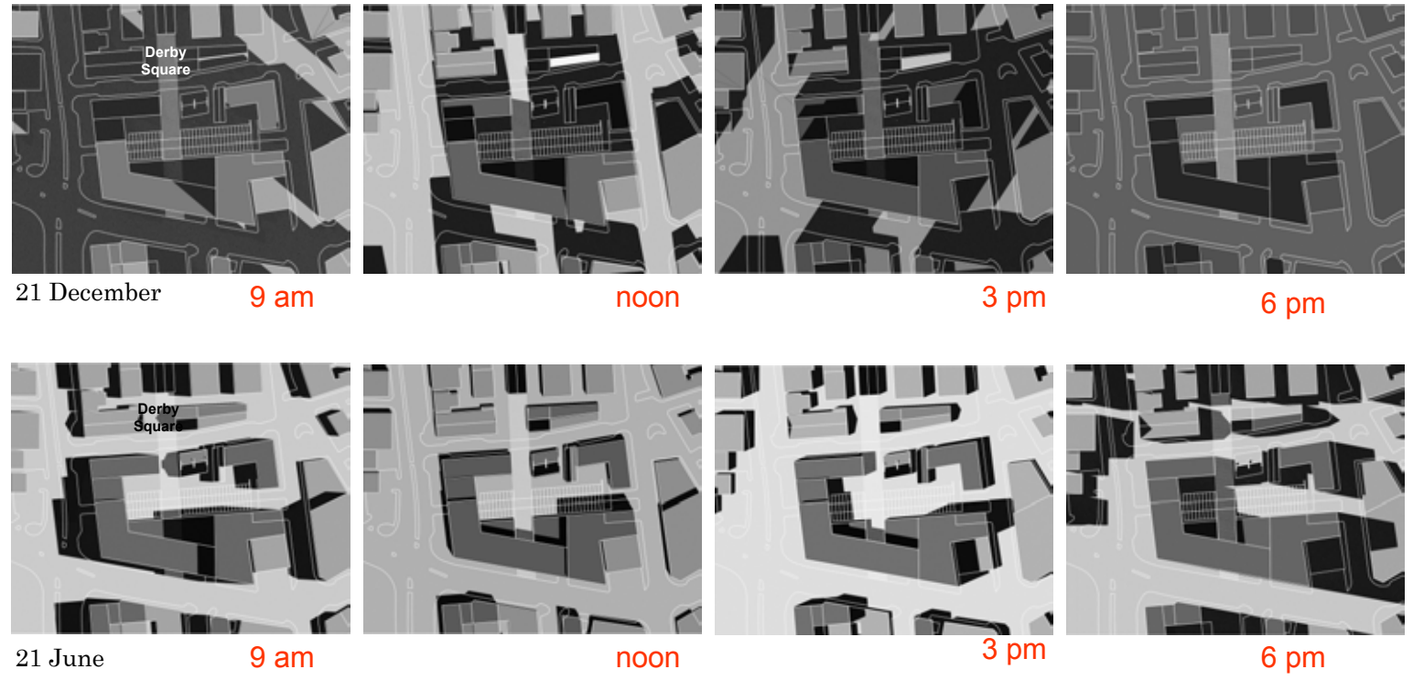
TOTAL AREA:	*RCG*	*Study ONE*
Retail:	44,000SF	43,000SF
Housing:	200,000SF	210,000SF



Plan

5 Proposed Building Footprint (White Number Indicates Height by Stories)

Existing Building



Shadow Studies, Plan View

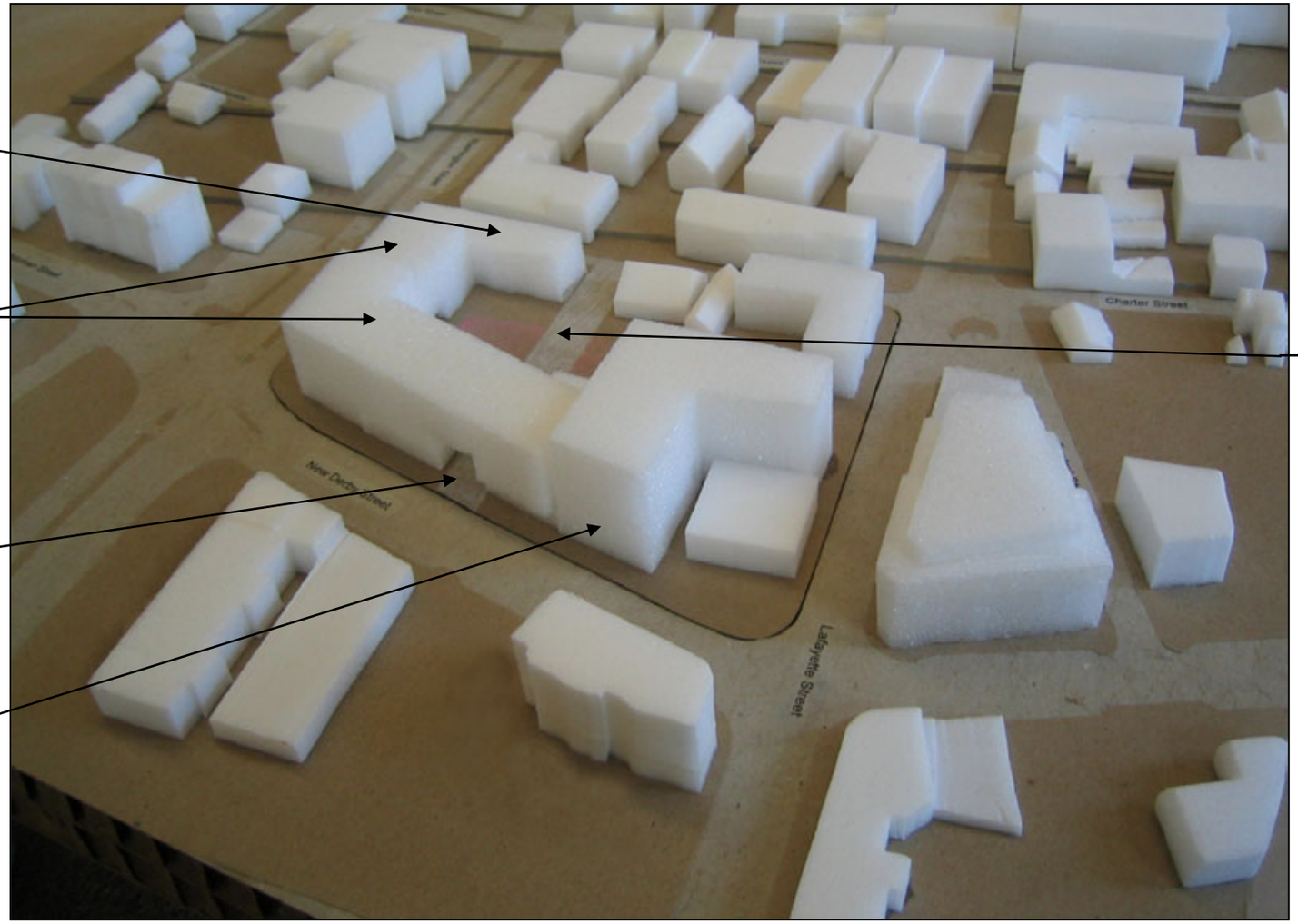
Study ONE

3.5 Stories on Front Street

Plan Steps Up in Height

Maintain through-block connection

Preserve street edge

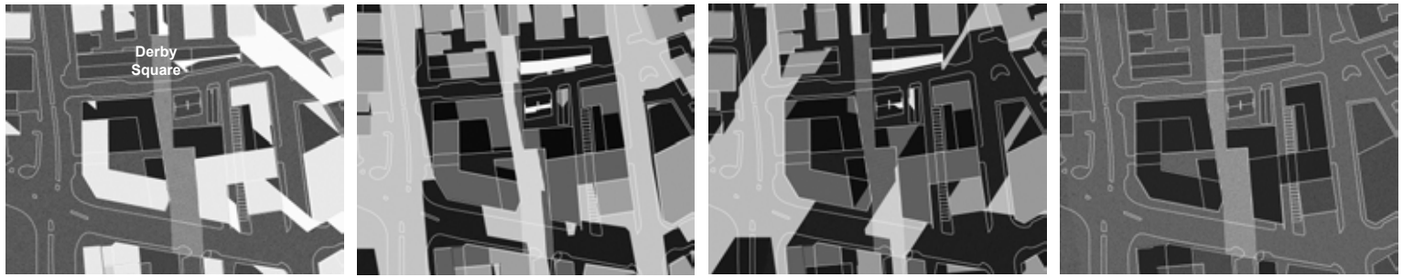


Surface Parking and Large Central Plaza Co-exist. The Parking Lot can be closed for Large Civic Gatherings

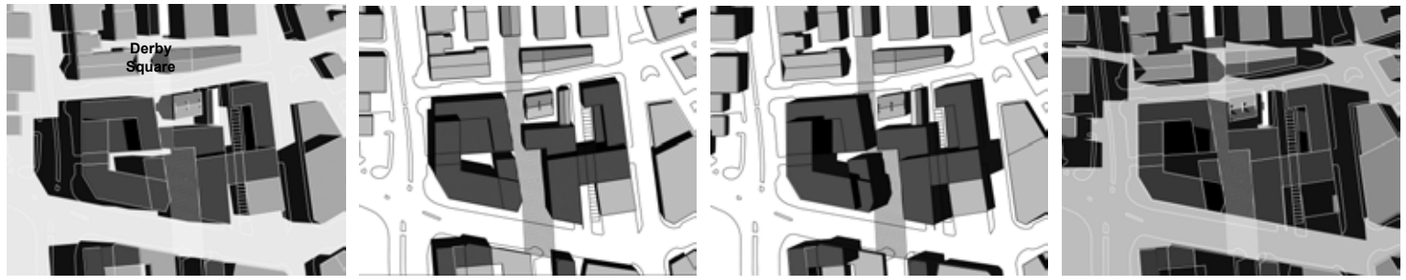
Model View

Study TWO

TOTAL AREA:	*RCG*	*Study TWO*
Retail:	44,000SF	52,000SF
Housing:	200,000SF	217,000SF

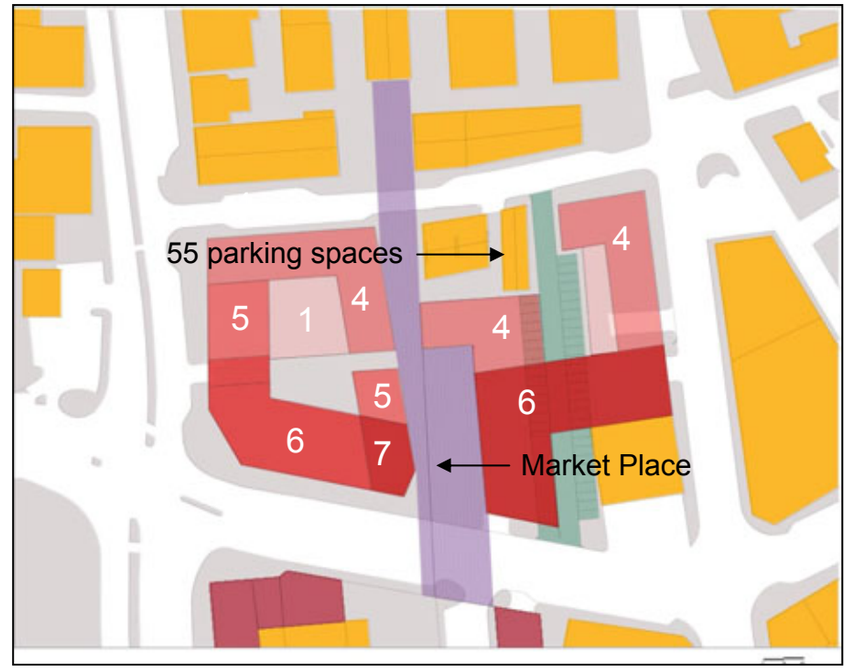


21 December 9 am noon 3 pm 6 pm



21 June 9 am noon 3 pm 6 pm

Shadow Studies, Plan View



Plan

5 Proposed Building Footprint (White Number Indicates Height by Stories)

Existing Building

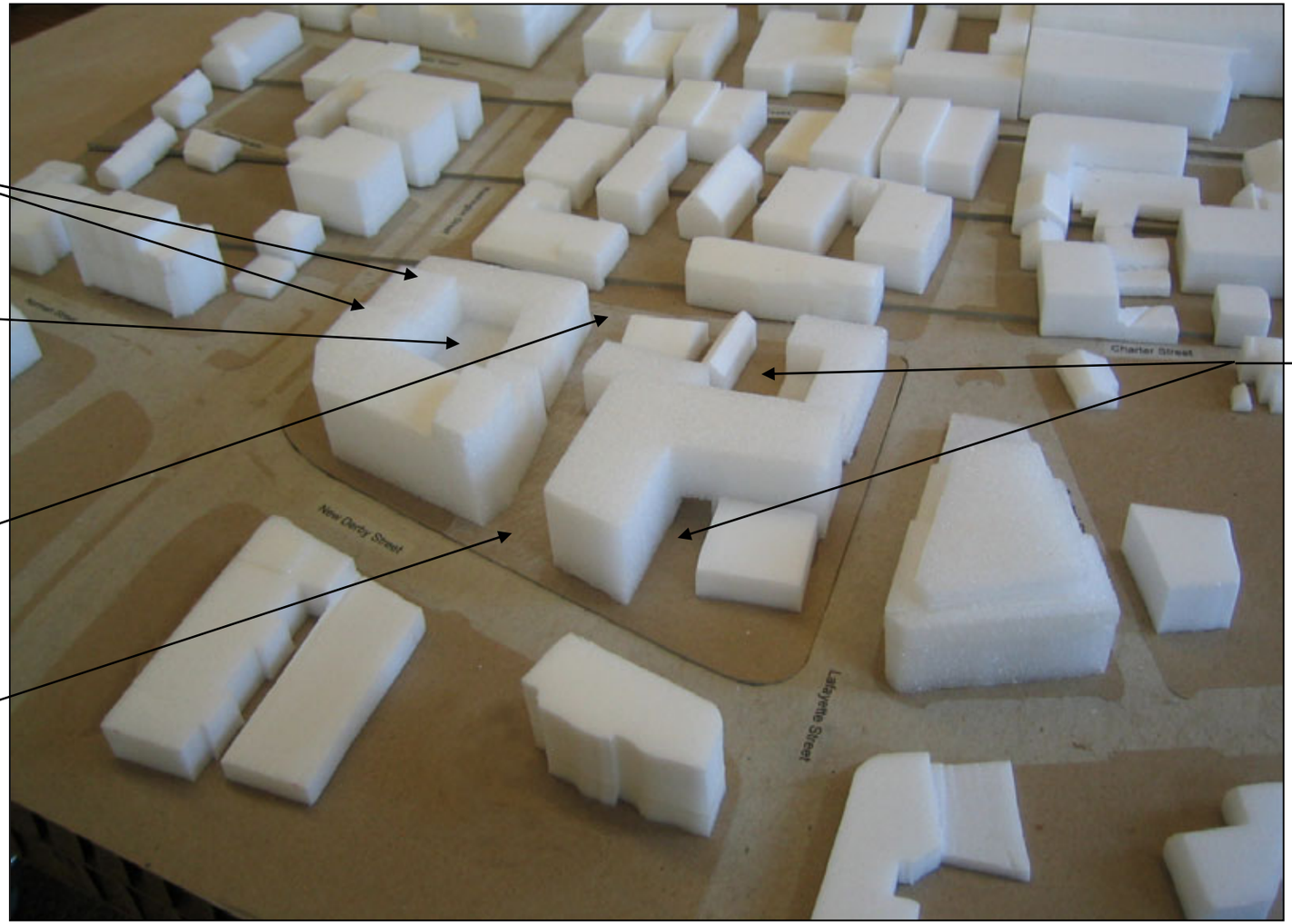
Study TWO

Plan Steps Up in Height

One Story Retail Space Occupies Large Interior Footprint. Could Feature Roof Garden Space

Retain views of Old Town Hall

Large , South-Facing Open Plaza as Part of Through-Block Connection



Large Parking Lot

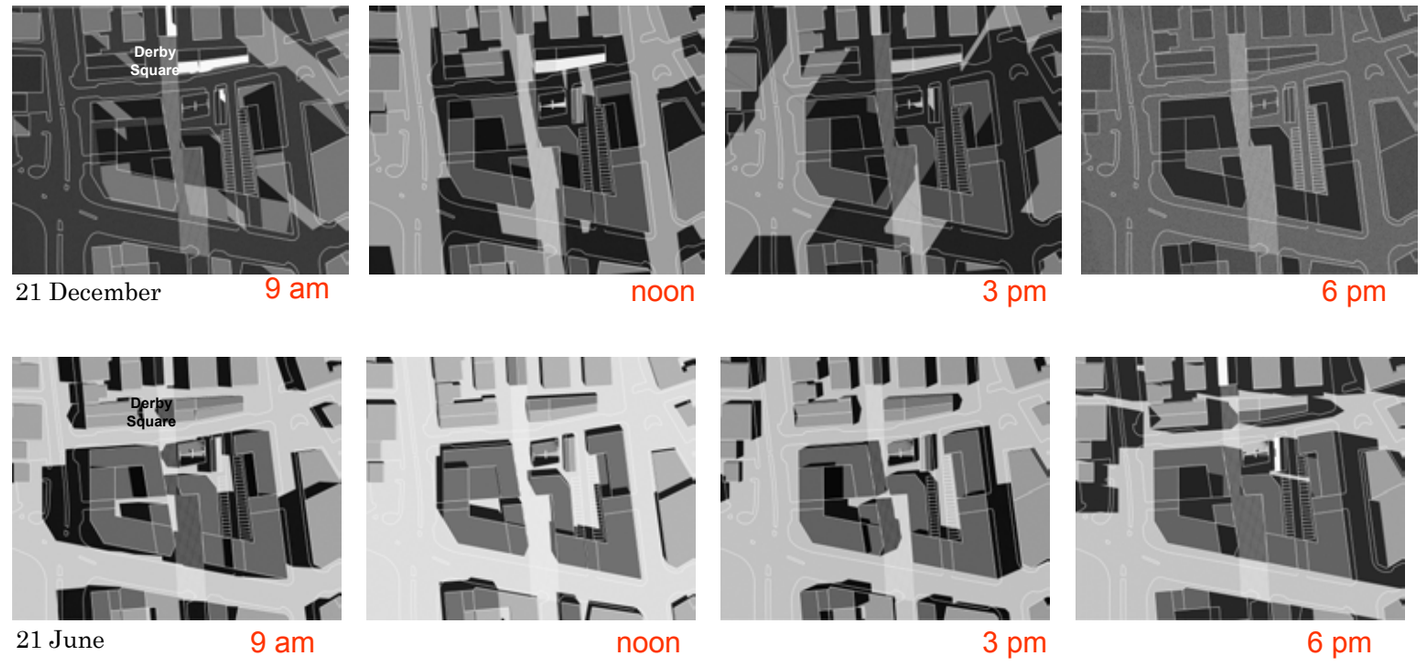
Study TWO A

TOTAL AREA:	*RCG*	*Study TWO A*
Retail:	44,000SF	56,000SF
Housing:	200,000SF	205,000SF

Plan

5 Proposed Building Footprint (White Number Indicates Height by Stories)

Existing Building



Shadow Studies, Plan View

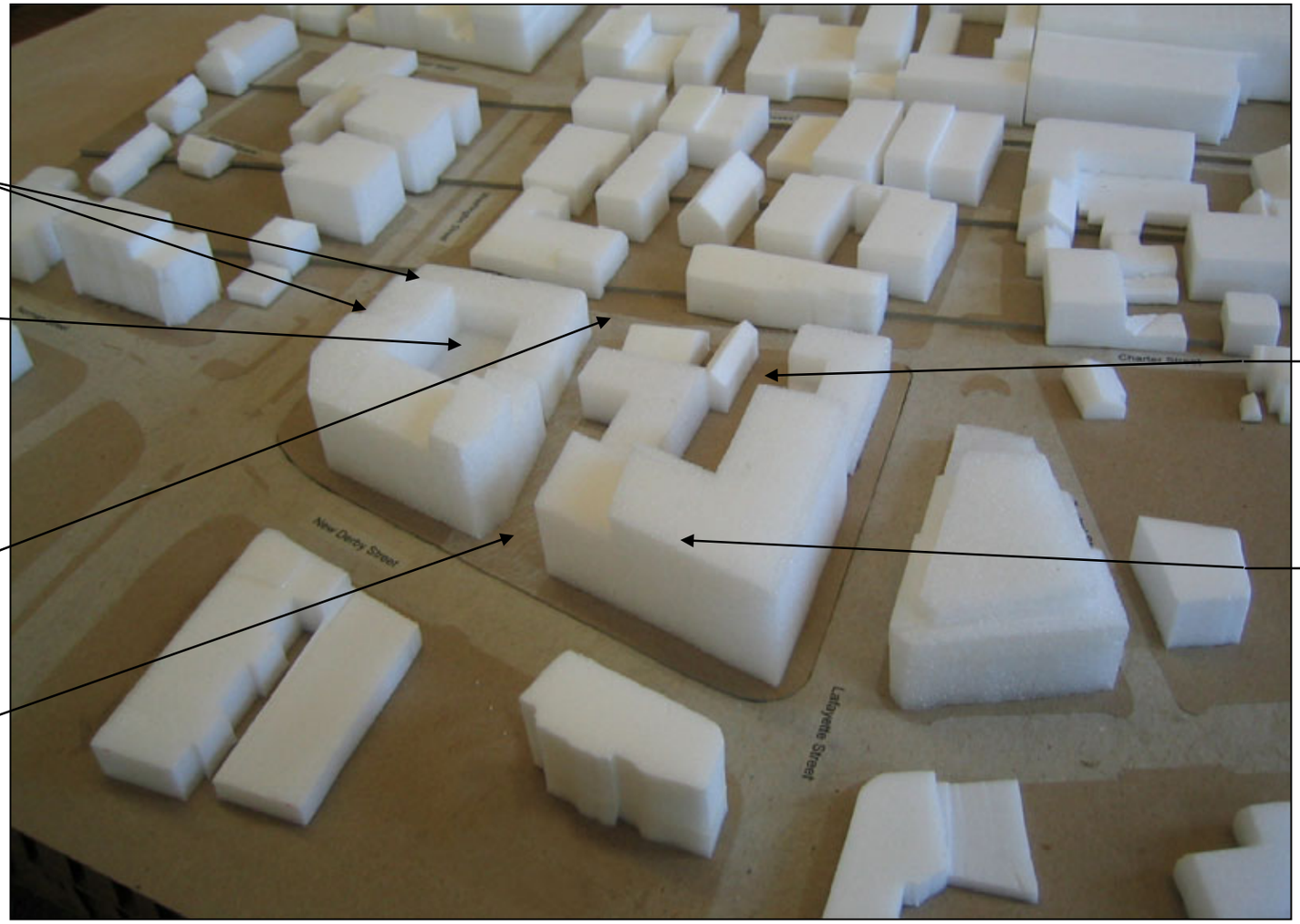
Study TWO A

Plan Steps Up in Height

One Story Retail Space Occupies Large Interior Footprint. Could Feature Roof Garden Space

Retain views of Old Town Hall

Large , South-Facing Open Plaza as Part of Through-Block Connection

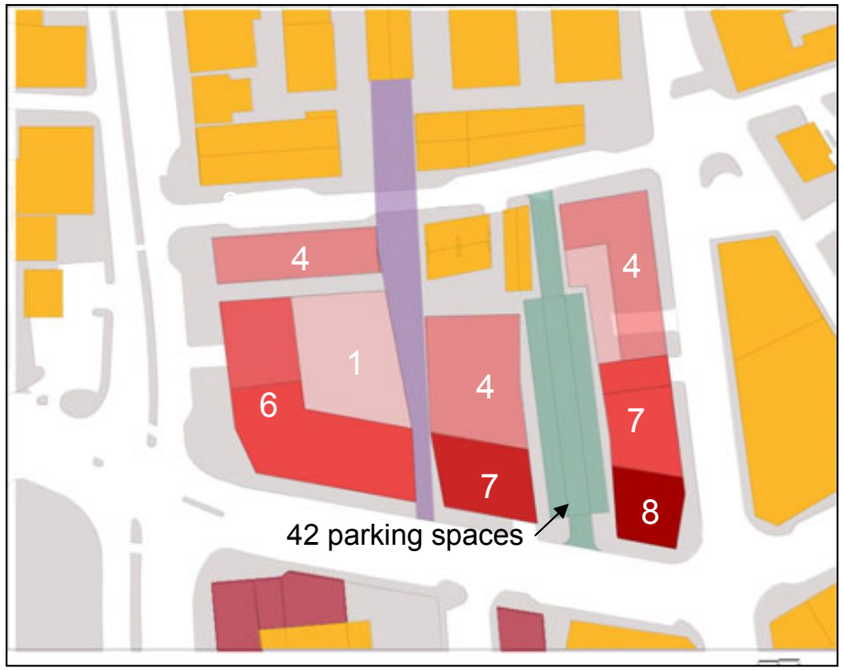


Surface Parking

Firehouse Relocated

Study THREE

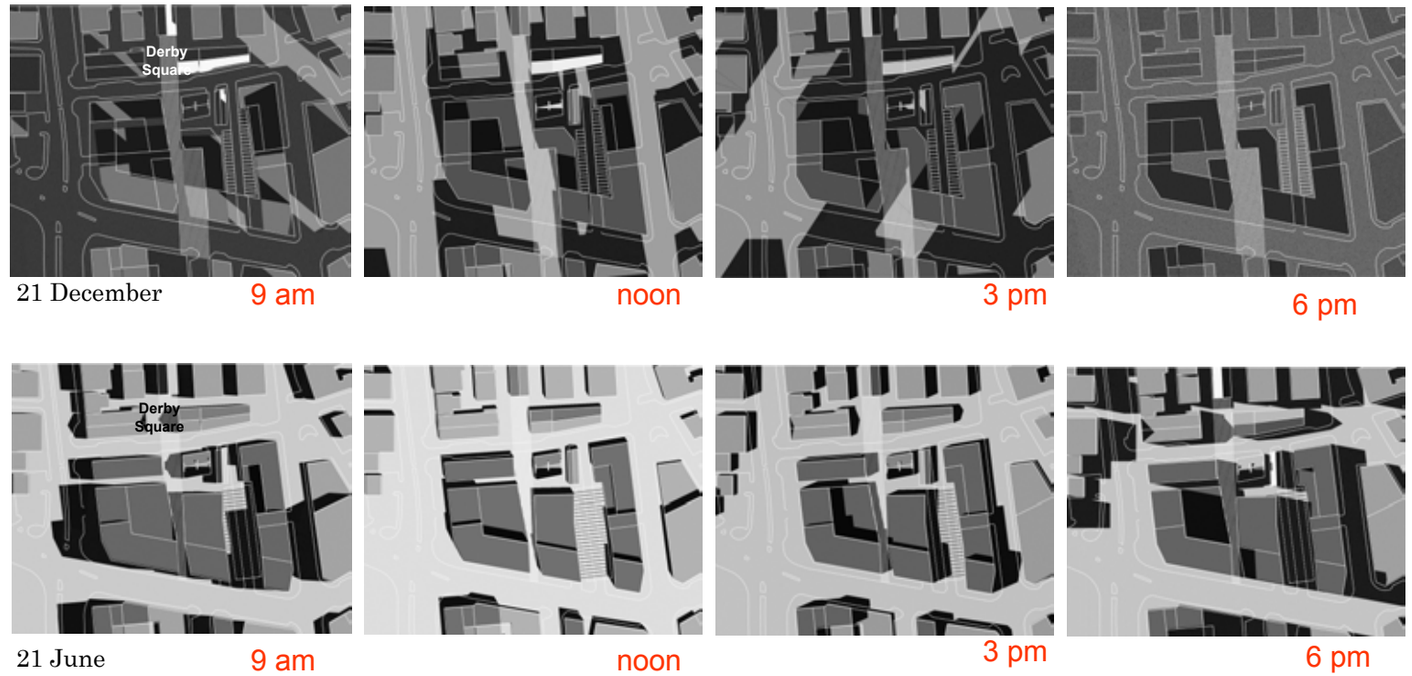
TOTAL AREA:	***RCG***	***Study THREE***
Retail:	44,000SF	59,000SF
Housing:	200,000SF	206,000SF



Plan

5 Proposed Building Footprint (White Number Indicates Height by Stories)

Existing Building



Shadow Studies, Plan View

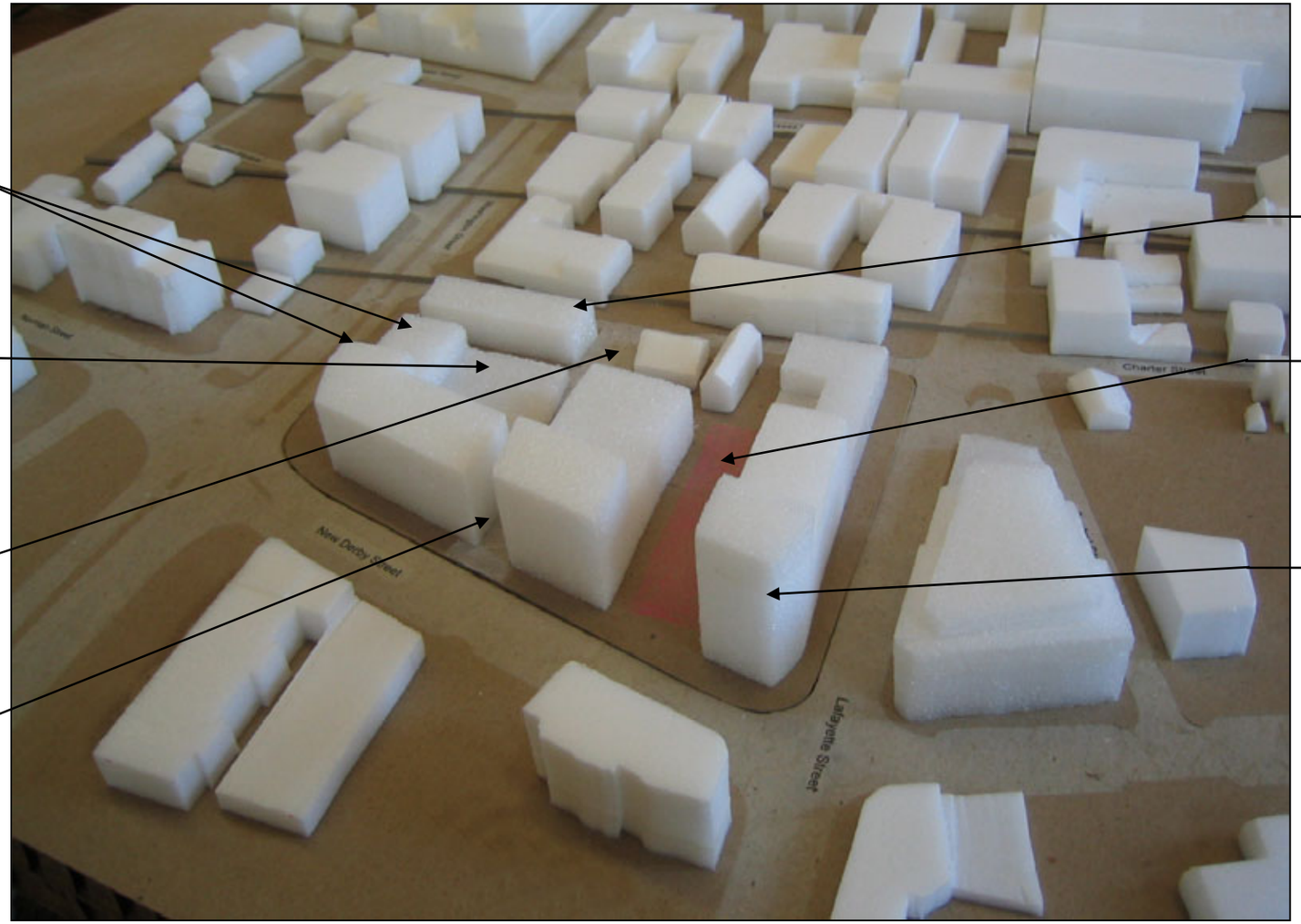
Study THREE

Plan Steps Up in Height

One Story Retail Space Occupies Large Interior Footprint. Could Feature Roof Garden Space

Retain views of Old Town Hall

Narrow Aperture to Through-Block Connection



4 Stories at Front Street

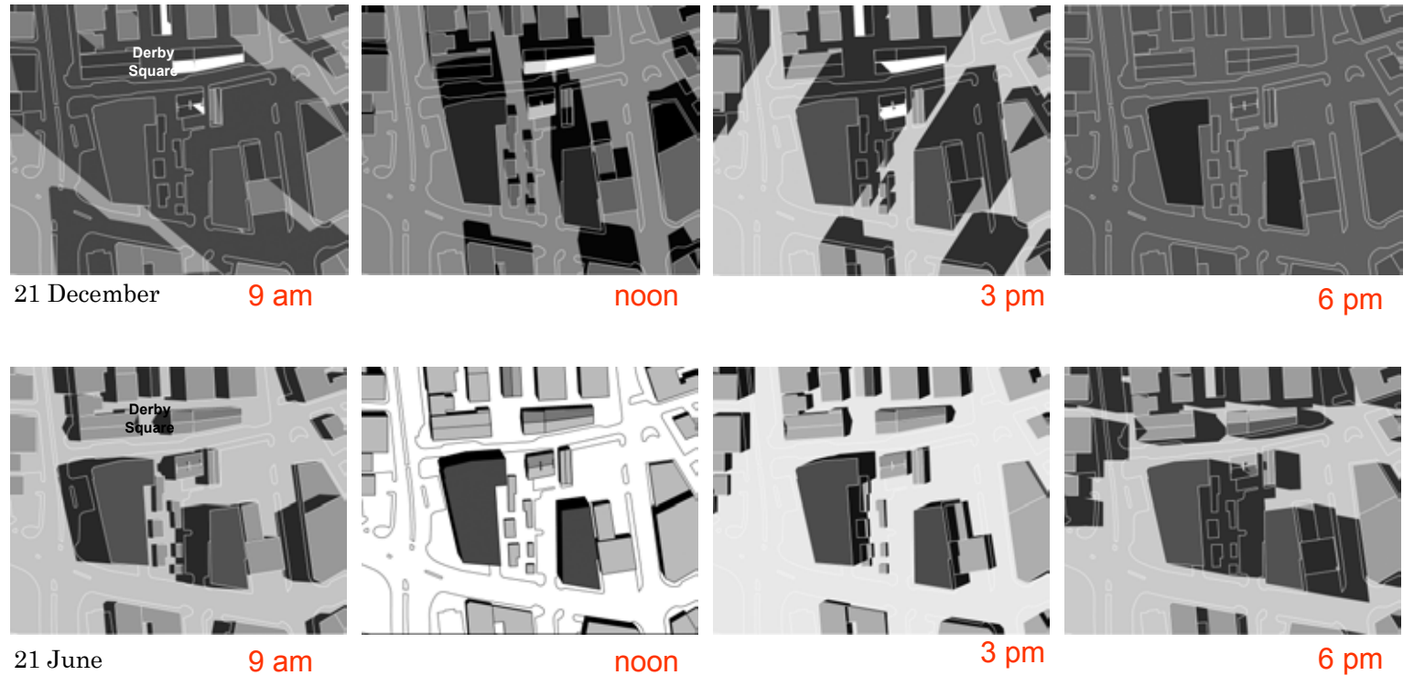
Surface Parking

Firehouse Relocated, Replaced with 8 Story Tower

“As of Right Scheme”

The “As-of-Right” Scheme projects what the current owners of these parcels could build within the dictates of current zoning regulations. It should be noted that the SRA still must approve anything to be built on the block in accordance with Salem’s Urban Renewal Plan.

Plan

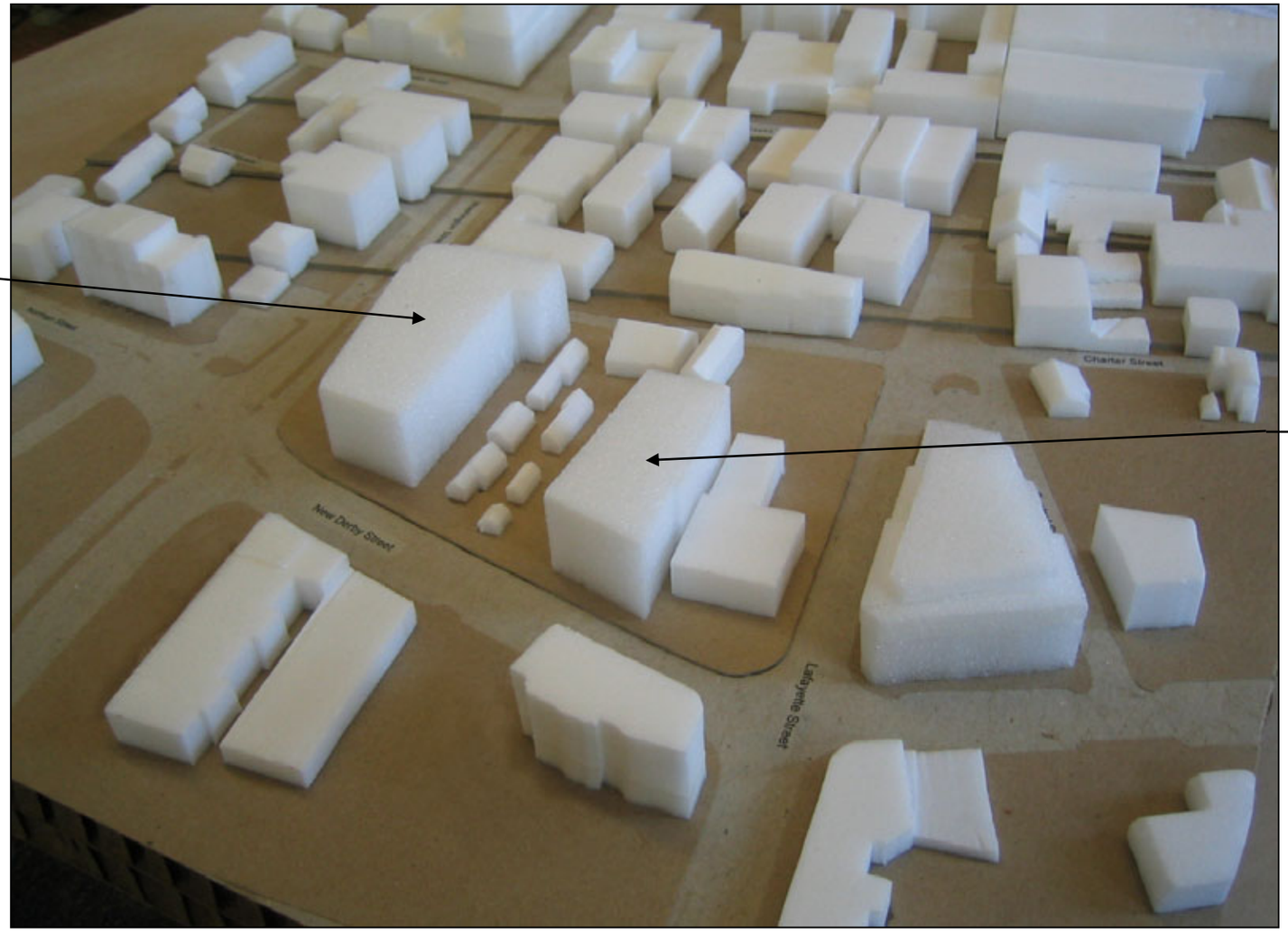


Shadow Studies, Plan View

TOTAL AREA:	***RCG***
Retail:	30,000SF
Housing:	155,000SF

“As of Right Scheme”

Entire Parcel of Salem News Buildings Re-developed at Six Stories



Delande Lighting Building Parcel Redeveloped at Six Stories

Producing a Conceptual Plan

Following the presentation of alternative design scenarios to the committee, a single preferred option was chosen to develop further with members of the developer's design team. A full-day collaborative design session yielded a plan that was largely driven by ground floor configuration with a focus on how the space is eventually programmed. The resulting plan was used as the basis for a series of recommendations that allowed us to develop a clear set of guidelines.

Recommendations

The highlight of the Final Report is a list of 15 recommendations to the city about the future development of this site. These are derived from a professional analysis of the site and program, and the ambitions and concerns of the public as articulated in the public meetings. We hope that our recommendations are clear enough for a general audience and specific enough to guide the development of the Salem Marketplace Block by any developer that takes on the challenge and opportunities of Salem's next emergent downtown block. With a continued level of open communication between the city and the residents of Salem, we have no doubt that a development with multiple benefits to all involved parties can be achieved.

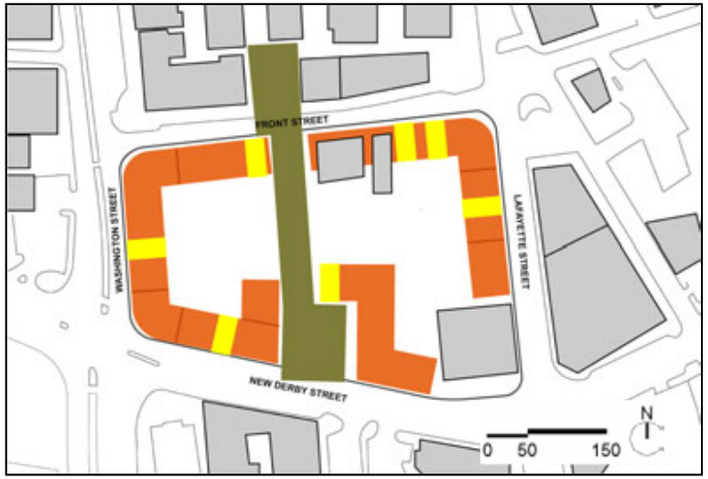
Peer Review Team Presenting to Public, 26 June 2006

Recommendations

Recommendations Summary

1. *Connect Derby Square with New Plaza*
2. *Preserve Views of Old Town Hall*
3. *Establish Retail Edge Around the Site*
4. *Disperse Marketplace Functions to the Edge*
5. *Create South-facing Plaza*
6. *Deflect Plan Towards Waterfront Circulation*
7. *Introduce Townhouse Typology to Center Passage*
8. *Locate Key Programmatic Amenities, Surface Parking and Anchor Tenant*
9. *Match Building Street Edge Along Washington Street*
10. *Retain Edgewater Café Building and Incorporate Delande's Façade*
11. *Buildings at Front Street must not Exceed 3.5 Stories, or 47' Height*
12. *Consider Building Heights Greater than 6 Stories in Other Places on the Block*
13. *Vary Building Heights*
14. *Utilize Preferred Building Materials and Methods as Identified in Current City of Salem Guidelines*
15. *Implement a Version of Design Team's Conceptual Ground Floor Plan*

Visual and Physical Connection Through Block



1. Connect Derby Square to New Derby Street with a Through-Block Connection

This will add to the existing network of interconnected public spaces in downtown Salem. It will also facilitate pedestrian movement between the city's retail zone and its cultural/tourist attractions.

2. Preserve Views of Old Town Hall

In addition to the physical connection between Derby Square, a visual connection to Old Town Hall is an important piece of the image of the block and the development. Keeping the vista open and treating it with a complementary visual frame elevates this view to its proper status as defining the historic character of the block.

Existing Ground Floor Program

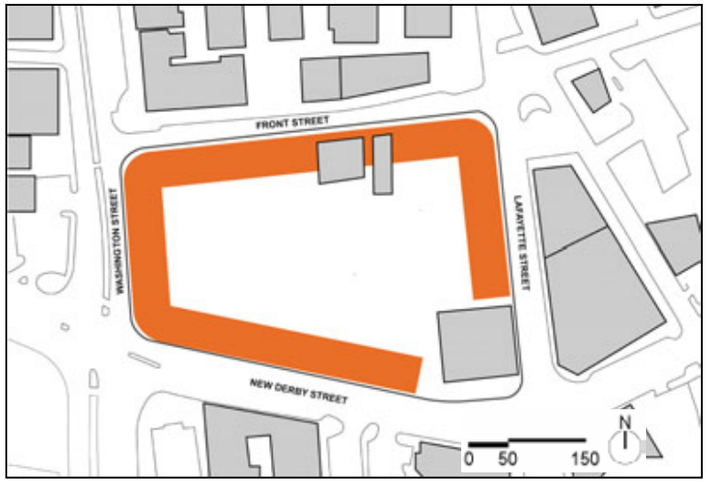
Downtown Salem- Active Street Edge

Mapping the existing ground floor program for downtown Salem reveals a well-established pattern of street-edge retail with a varied distribution of retail types and sizes. This arrangement works to the advantage of the retail establishments and has a positive effect on the street life of the city.

Street Edge and Marketplace

3. Establish Retail Edge Around the Site

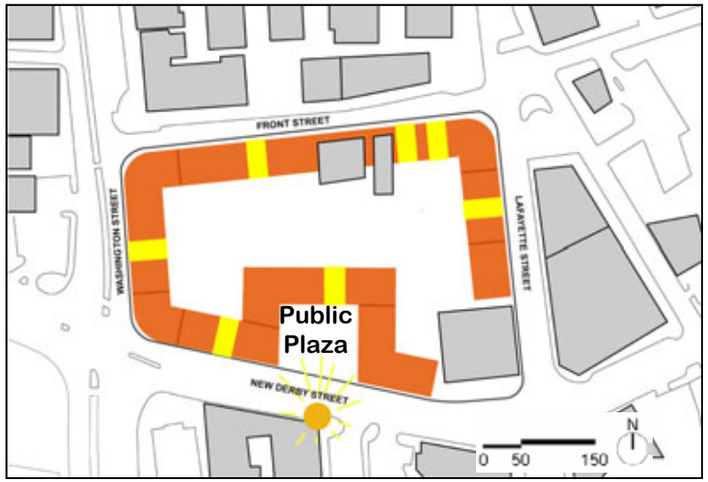
The success and vigor of street life is dependant on a thriving retail edge. Internal block retail does not thrive in Salem and should be avoided.



4. Relocate Marketplace Businesses to the Edge of the Block and Retain the Open Space for Civic Functions

Relocating the Marketplace businesses to the edge of the block allows them to become part of the street life. The smaller scale of these businesses adds to the mix of storefronts and business types while giving these incubator businesses the chance to thrive in the mix of established businesses.

Open Space



5. Create South-Facing Plaza

Pushing a section of the retail edge north from New Derby Street creates the opportunity for a public open space that is south-facing and connected to the street. This area will replace the open space once occupied by the Marketplace and provides an area for civic program. The edge of this space should be occupied by businesses that have outdoor program (such as outdoor café seating) to enliven this space. Larger sidewalks, particularly along Derby and Washington Streets, will extend the plaza activity and draw attention to the space. We would also like to see one of the existing Marketplace businesses in a prominent space in the plaza.

Sun-filled space invites activity

Countless urban studies have shown that north-facing spaces shrouded in shade function poorly as public spaces and are doomed to non-use regardless of how well they may be detailed. In order to develop a thriving public life for the marketplace block, the opportunity to capture a south-facing open space is critical.

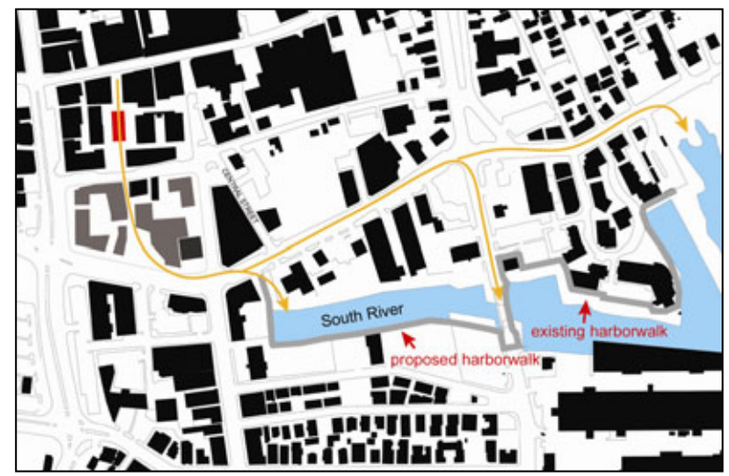
Connection to Salem Waterfront

6. Deflect Plan Towards Waterfront Circulation

By configuring the footprint of the development at the plaza on New Derby Street towards the waterfront, a desirable pedestrian route is established by a simple gesture with the massing of the buildings.

Marketplace Block as a Link in the Pedestrian Path Between Downtown and the Waterfront

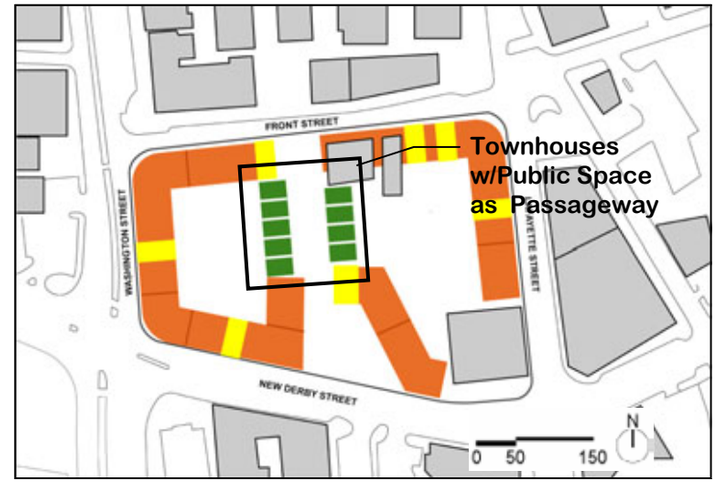
The Marketplace should be an important pedestrian link between the Essex Street/Washington Street corridor and the new Harbor Walk that connects to the Salem Waterfront; one of Salem's most important tourist destinations.



Interior Block Program

7. Introduce Townhouse Typology to Center Passage

A double row of townhouses at a maximum of 3.5 stories with individual street entrances have an appropriate scale for the central block and act as an ideal frame for the view to Old Town Hall. Their presence improves interior block security by providing 24-hour occupancy and additional "eyes on the street." The passageway through the middle of the block here should never become privately owned/controlled land– always to remain as a public way through the block.



Townhouse Typology

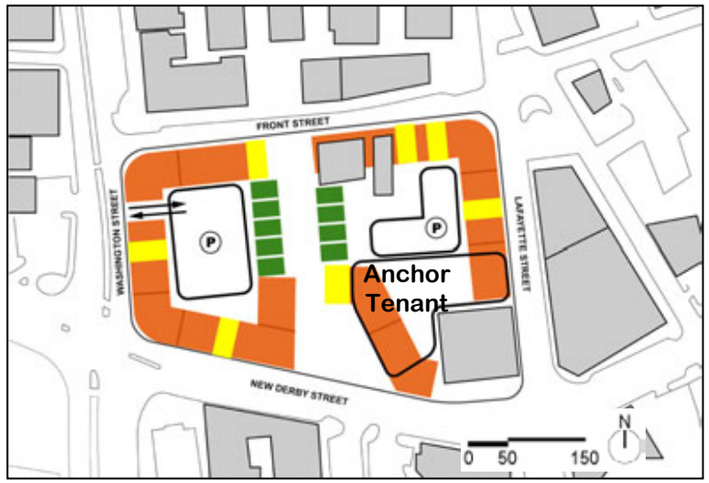
We recommend a townhouse typology with front gardens and steps up to private entrances. The scale should be narrow in width (no more than 35') and moderate height (no greater than 3.5 stories).

Surface Parking and Anchor Tenant

8. Locate Key Programmatic Amenities Surface Parking and Anchor Tenant

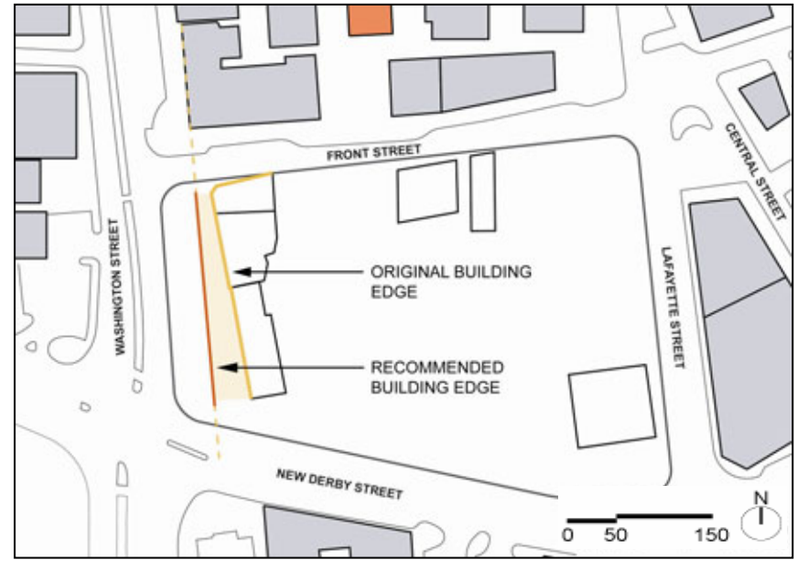
Surface parking is an essential part of the block's retail success. While the development provides for an abundance of underground parking, the 'quick-stop' shopper will be encouraged by convenient surface parking.

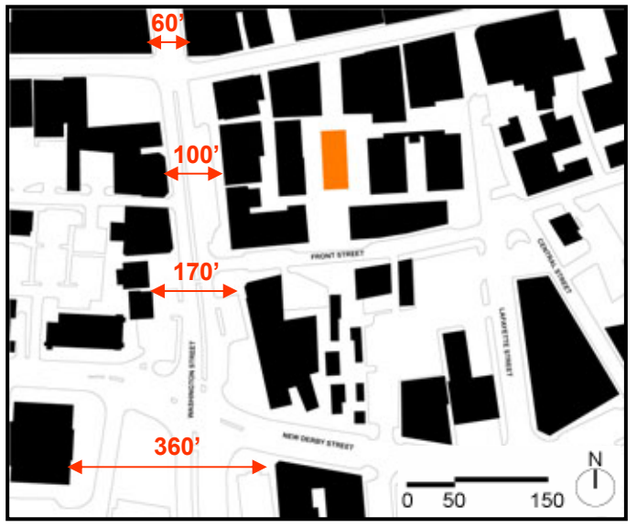
An anchor tenant (business occupying greater than 10,000 sf) at the plaza on New Derby Street will be an important draw to the block and will ultimately help the rest of the block's shops and restaurants by drawing larger volumes of people.



9. Match Building Street Edge Along Washington Street

By moving the building edge on Washington Street to align with the prevailing edge observed in the block to the north, a consistent street edge is achieved.





Existing Street Widths, Washington Street

Existing and Historic Street Edge- Washington Street

The width of the gap between buildings on Washington Street from Essex Street to New Derby Street varies from 60' to 360'. This is an undesirable condition.

Buildings of Historic Value

Buildings Under Consideration

In the opinion of Historic Salem, Inc. (HSI), the masonry building now occupied by the Edgewater Café is "…directly responsive to the scale, materials, and detailing of the earlier Front Street buildings." The Masonry building now occupied by Delande Lighting "…was used as the United States Post Office until 1935 and retains intact classical pilasters, entablature and pedimented doorway." They further elaborate that the buildings "…appear to be in reasonable condition" and recommend at a minimum that the facades be incorporated into the new development on the site.

The wood buildings of the Salem News block, are identified as :"the last wood-frame structure to survive in downtown Salem". HSI characterizes the two story building closest to New Derby Street as "…in particularly poor condition." They do not know the condition of the middle section of these buildings, but have asked to make a physical inspection, but concede that if these buildings cannot be saved, that the "…design of any replacement building be respectful of the scale of other buildings on Washington Street."

Delande Lighting Building,
22 New Derby Street

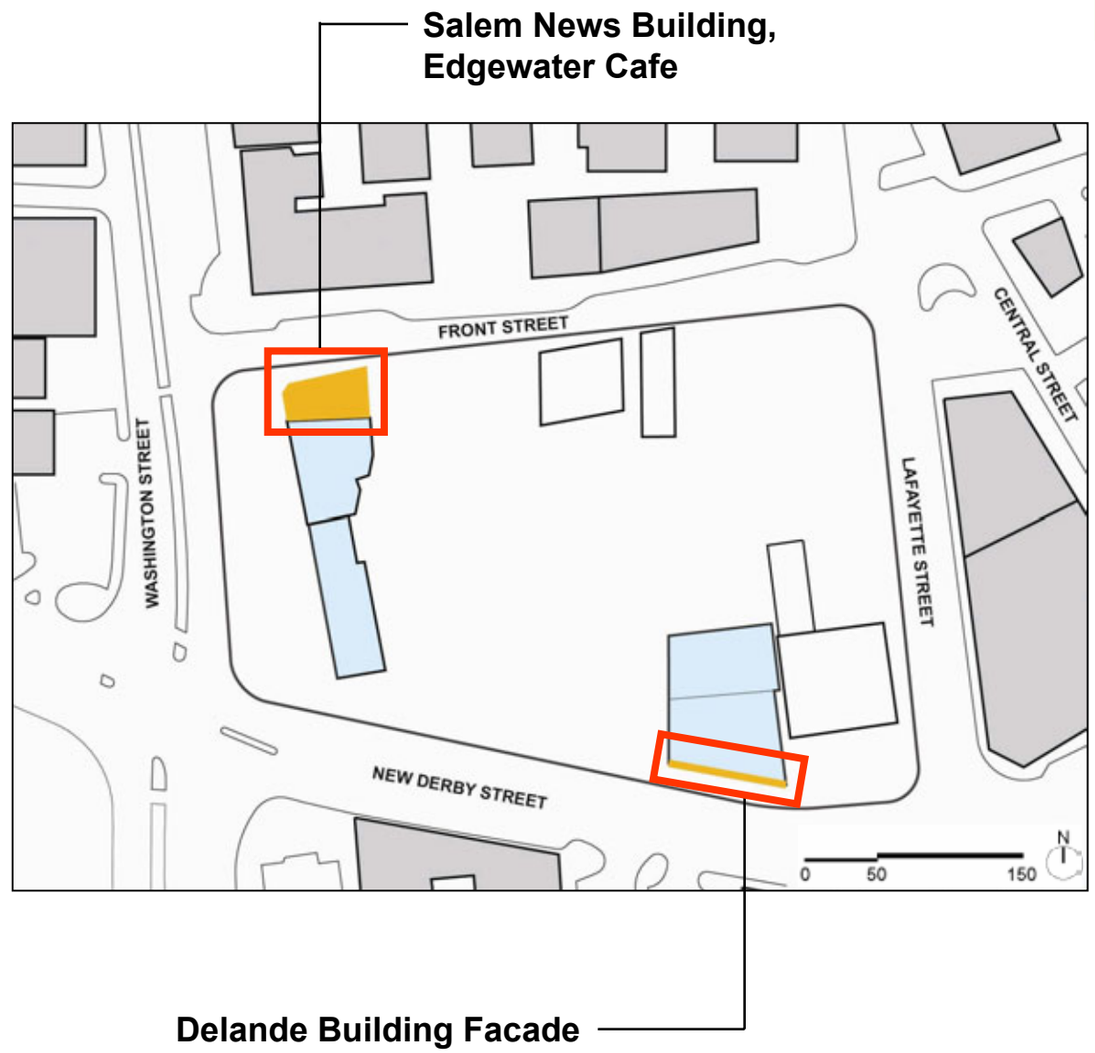
Edgewater Café (Old Salem News Building), 155 Washington Street

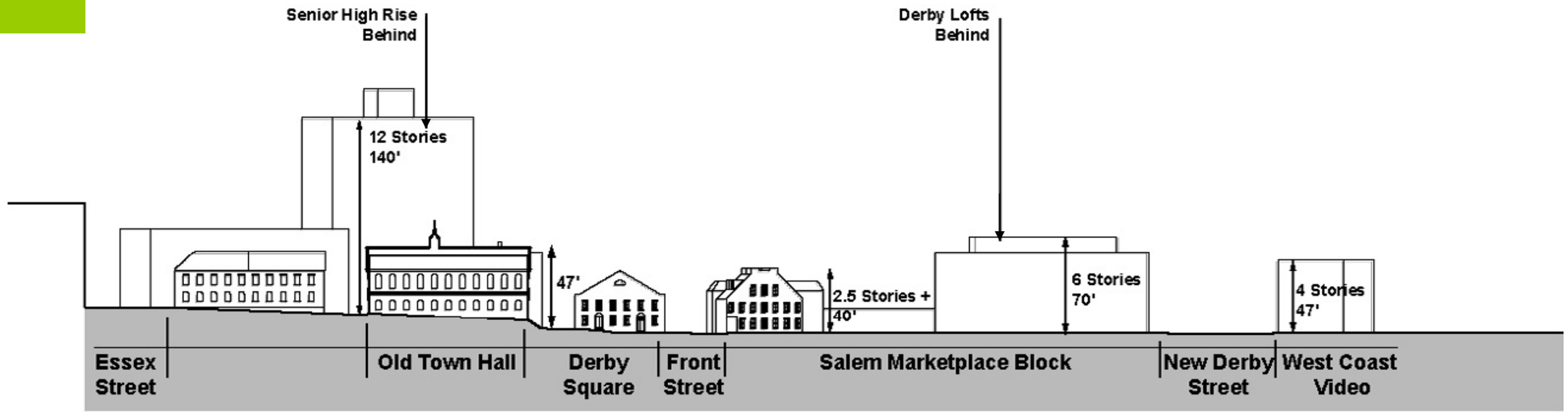
Salem News Building, Wooden Portions

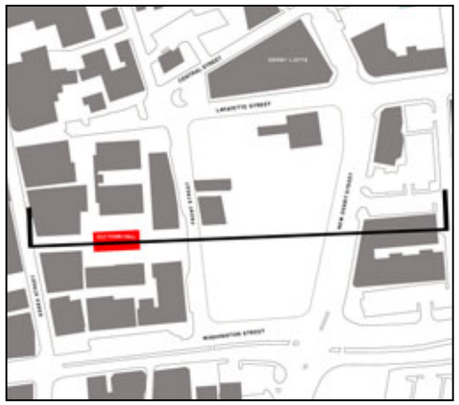
10. Retain Edgewater Café Facade, Footprint, and Height. Retain Delande's Façade.

There are a range of preservation options available for the buildings in the block. The recommendation for the Edgewater Café portion of the Salem News Building follows HSI's minimum recommendation to save the façade. Additionally, we recommend that the location of the current footprint and the existing height be duplicated with any new building re-using the façade. Based on the previously referenced letter from Historic Salem, Inc, the consultant team concluded that the building has historic value and will be valuable in terms of urban design to define an appropriate scale at the threshold of Front Street.

Following HSI's lead, the recommendation for the Delande Building calls for retaining the façade as part of the redevelopment of New Derby Street. Its retention will add historic and visual interest to the block and could easily be adapted to new retail uses at ground floor while additional stories are developed above it.







Existing Building Heights: Essex to New Derby Street

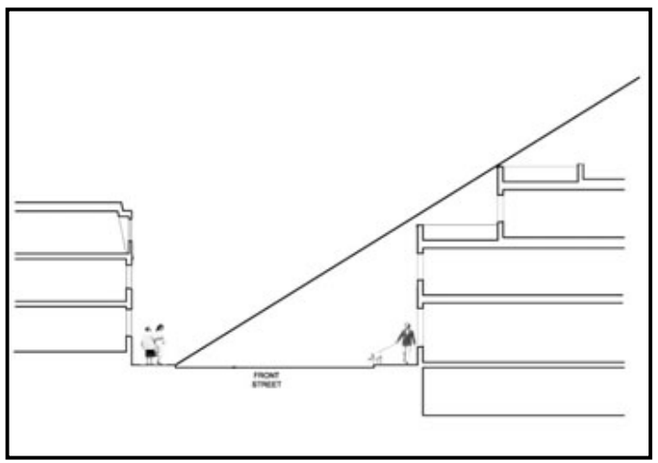
A comparative analysis of existing buildings in the Marketplace block and surrounding blocks in section shows the key relationships in scale and height. It is clear that the lower heights and scale of Front Street and Derby Square and its concentration of historic buildings require a different scale than New Derby Street.

Existing 2.5-3 Story Buildings

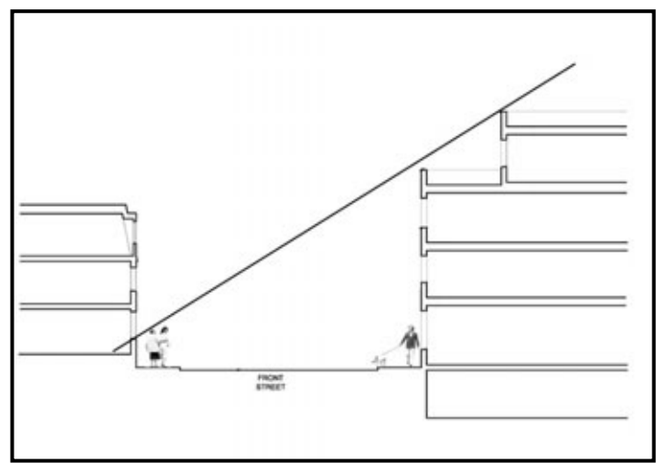
Existing 3.5-4 Story Buildings

11. Buildings at Front Street must not Exceed 2.5 - 3.5 Stories, or 47' Height

The scale of Front Street is very important to maintain, the buildings here must not dwarf them in scale. The surrounding urban fabric provides numerous precedents for 2.5 - 4 story buildings north of the Marketplace block, keeping Front Street in this height range provides for a better transition to higher buildings on the rest of the block.



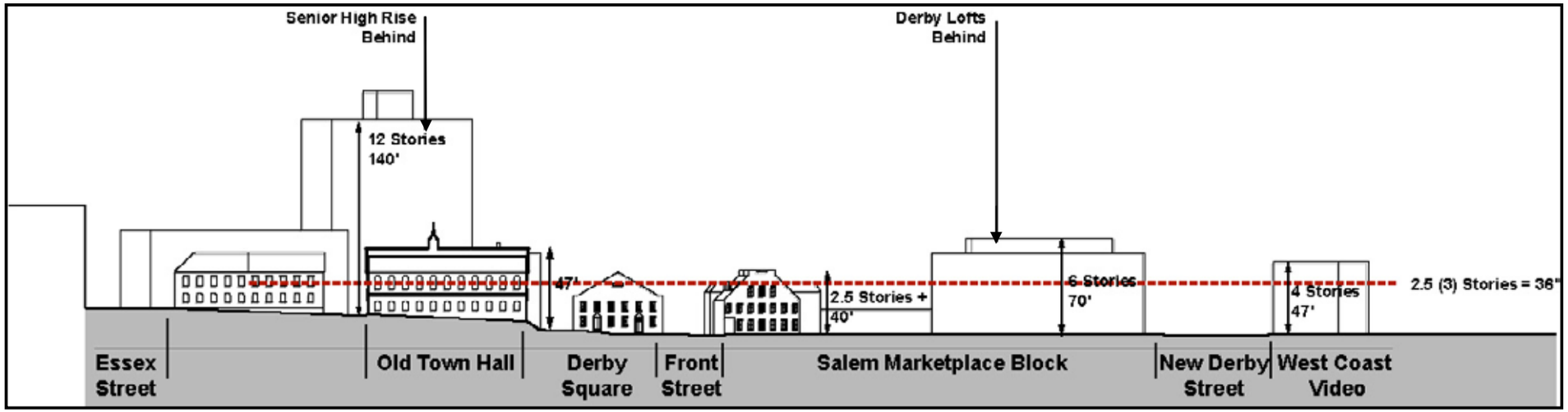
2.5 Story Building, Section at Front Street



3.5 Story Building, Section at Front Street

Comparative Building Height

2.5-3 Stories
36' Height



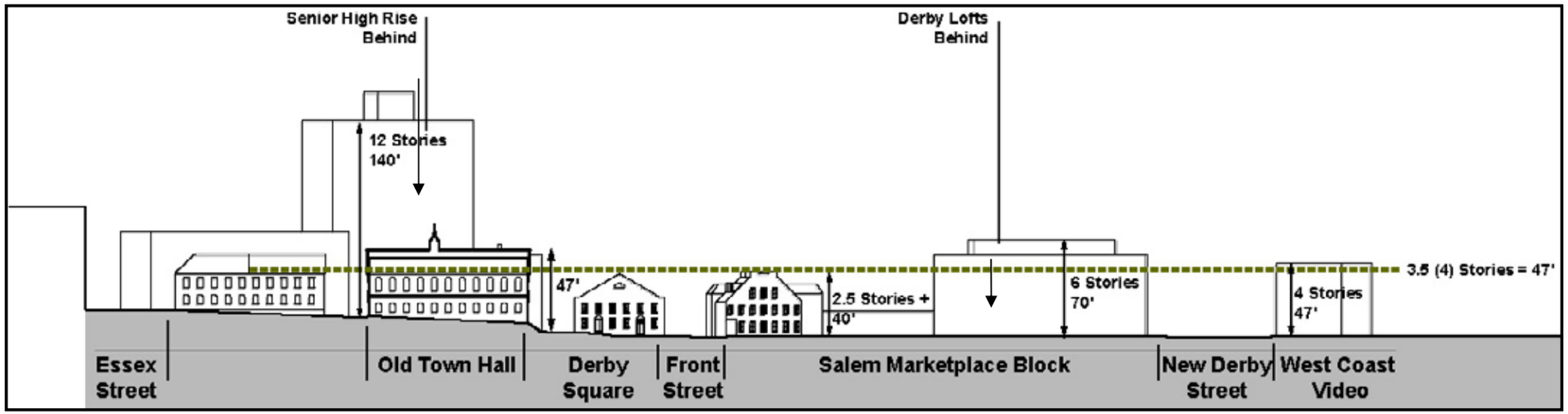
Proposed Building Height- 2.5 - 3 Stories 36' Height

New 2.5 - 3 story buildings at Front Street achieve a desirable height and relative scale to the rest of the buildings on Front Street. Old Town Hall retains its prominence in Derby Square because of its position on the rising topography.

Proposed Building Height- 3.5 - 4 Stories 47’ Height

New 3.5 - 4 story buildings at Front Street are still within a reasonable relative scale to the rest of the buildings on Front Street. Old Town Hall retains its prominence in Derby Square, although to a lesser degree.

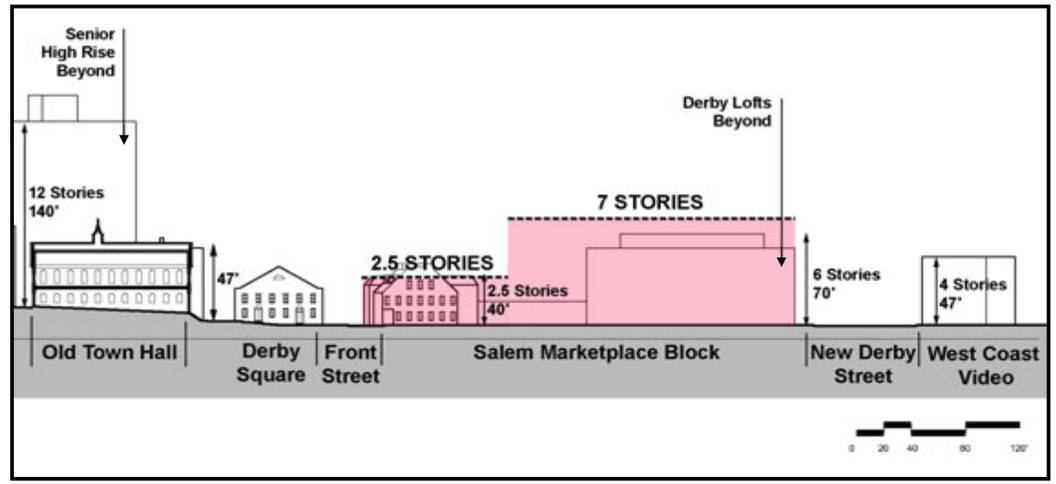
3.5-4 Stories 47’ Height



Building Height Across Block

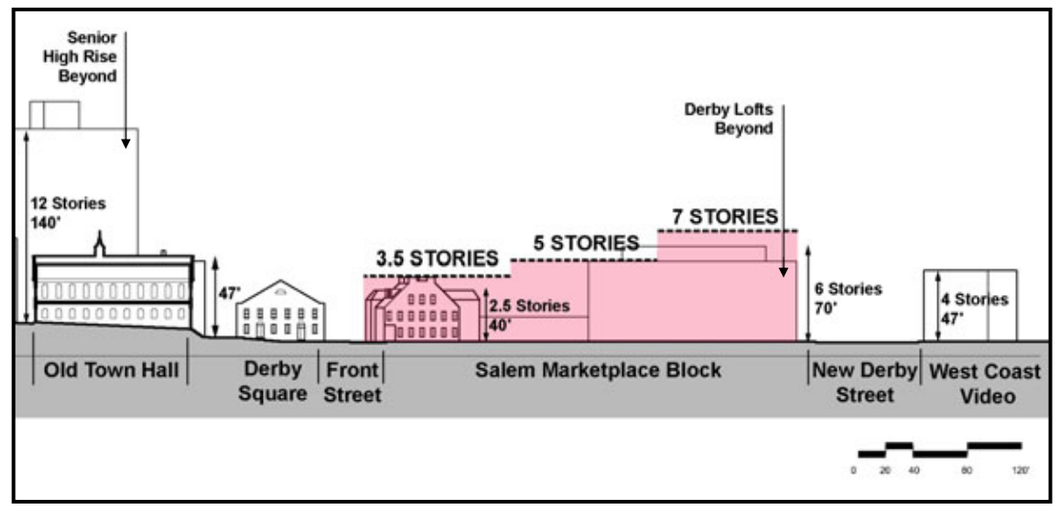
12. Consider Building Heights Greater than 6 Stories in Other Places on the Block

In order to maintain recommended low building height along Front Street and meet the density requirements for the financial objectives of the project, we recommend that further consideration of schemes with building heights greater than 6 stories be considered, especially in the southern portion of the block, or even embedded in the middle of the block, setback from the street edge. We feel that the larger scale of the surrounding buildings and the greater street width here is sufficient to support more height.



13. Vary Building Heights

We recommend great attention be paid toward achieving a varied combination of building heights. In observing the existing pattern of building heights in downtown Salem, the occurrence of varied building heights gives greater visual interest and mediates the impact of larger buildings in the overall perception of the street edge. A single building height along any one street edge is not approved.



14. Utilize Preferred Building Materials and Methods as Established by Existing Plans and Guidelines

In regards to new construction, our recommendations for building materials and methods closely follow the Salem Redevelopment Authority's Heritage Plaza East Urban Renewal Plan and City of Salem Department of Planning and Commercial Development's Commercial Design Guidelines.*

Stand-Alone Retail Buildings

"New construction within historic contexts (or alterations on historic buildings) requires a careful balance of respect for the integrity of older structures yet reflecting the best design of the day. New buildings need not, nor should they, imitate the styles or details of the past. It is inevitably more interesting to match materials, proportions and scale while using modern simple materials. Newer buildings, for instance, use more glass than historic structures, yet the use of similar compatible materials and matching cornice lines and setbacks can ensure that new structures contribute to the character to the district."
- *City of Salem's Commercial Design Guidelines, page 24*

*See appendix *A*

Successful Treatment of Street Level Facades and Entrances

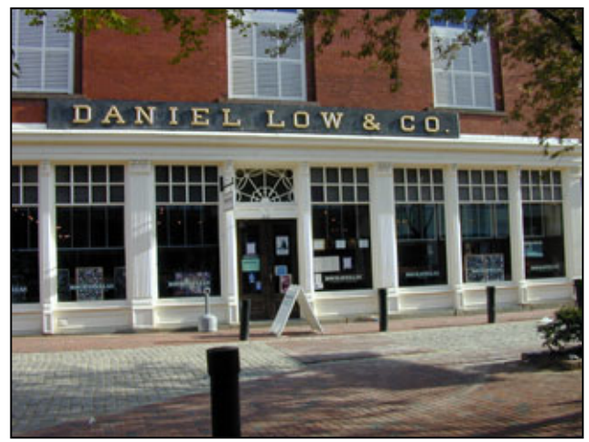
Storefront Identity

It is important to establish a clear storefront identity. The example, *top right*, shows a 'layered' approach with planted pots, an awning and interesting detailing. It also demonstrates the effectiveness of large, well-defined openings that establish a clear relationship between inside and out. A local example, *bottom left*, shows excellent architectural articulation of active ground floor program.

Wood

Although red brick and granite are thought of as the classic Salem material palette, Downtown Salem has several outstanding examples of architecture where a wood surface treatment meets the street and contributing to both the historic reading of the streetscape as well as the interpretation of building height and scale. All three examples shown here are excellent examples.

'Layered' Storefront



Restaurant on Essex Street, Salem

Salem Storefront

Architectural Variation and Material Shifts

Architectural variation and material shifts result in a richer and more complex reading of a continuous band of buildings and mitigate potentially negative aspects of scale, height and density. The Peabody Essex Museum is a good example of material variation and alternation along the face of a single building. This image is also a clear example of a desired system of massing.

Storefront on Essex Street in Salem

Retail Edge at Derby Lofts

Peabody Essex Museum

Conceptual Ground Floor Program

15. Implement a Version of Design Team's Conceptual Ground Floor Plan

The ultimate success of the development will rely on the performance of the ground-floor program and layout. Bringing greater civic and economic vitality to Downtown Salem will rely on activating the street edge, including the addition of larger sidewalks, particularly along Derby and Washington Streets, to allow for outdoor cafes and similar active uses.

Ground Floor Program Plan

A Conceptual Vision for the Marketplace Block and Downtown Salem

An idealized ground-floor program was developed as part of a collaborative design exercise involving the Peer Review Team, representatives from RCG and their design team with oversight by MRC committee leadership The plan has many features that address matters of massing, circulation, retail location strategy and parking. The ground floor program and its articulation on the site addresses many key issues for the Salem Marketplace Block.

Plan Key

1. Public Plaza
2. Visual and Pedestrian Connection to Derby Square
3. Townhouses with Stoops and Private Gardens
4. Re-located Marketplace Retail Location
5. Anchor Tenant
6. Street Edge Retail, Typical
7. Underground Parking Access

7a. Underground Parking Exit (residents only)

8. Surface Parking and Retail Service Access
9. Edgewater Café Building Remains
10. Delande Lighting Façade Remains

Common Ground and Tradeoffs

COMMON GROUND

COMMON GROUND issues are those that have garnered the greatest amount of consensus among the various groups, organizations, and individuals involved in the peer review process. Their inclusion here underscores their importance and broad appeal. In our working session with the Development and Design team from RCG, we found agreement on these issues as essential parts of the redevelopment of the block; whether a comprehensive or another approach.

Comprehensive Development

The development of the entire block by one development entity affords the greatest opportunity to achieve the development goals and objectives identified in this report. However, there are other potentially successful approaches that could incorporate the recommendations of this report.

Architectural quality: materials, detailing, and massing

These are issues of highest priority to the citizens and officials of Salem; any development must be true to the guidelines set forth by Salem's Commercial Design Guidelines and the Urban Renewal Plan.

Additional public parking- Surface and Below Grade

The increase in density requires the provision of adequate public parking facilities. The optimum arrangement must include convenient and affordable surface parking as well as the proposed below grade parking.

Meaningful *through block* public space

The continuation of this already established characteristic of Salem's existing urban fabric is a matter of paying attention to scale and massing, ground floor articulation, and creation of pedestrian-friendly spaces.

Varied building heights with low-scaled buildings along Front Street

Attention to surrounding buildings is a key indicator in calibrating the appropriate height and scale of new construction. This, in combination with quality materials are the most important factors in making this development successful.

The Marketplace Concept Continues

The Marketplace, as a place and a concept, is a part of the historical continuity of the block. Everyone agrees that it must be a central piece of any new development and continue to provide a civic function.

Preserve or Improve Views to Old Town Hall

The civic and historic value of Old Town Hall is unquestioned. The views to it must be preserved or enhanced by any new development.

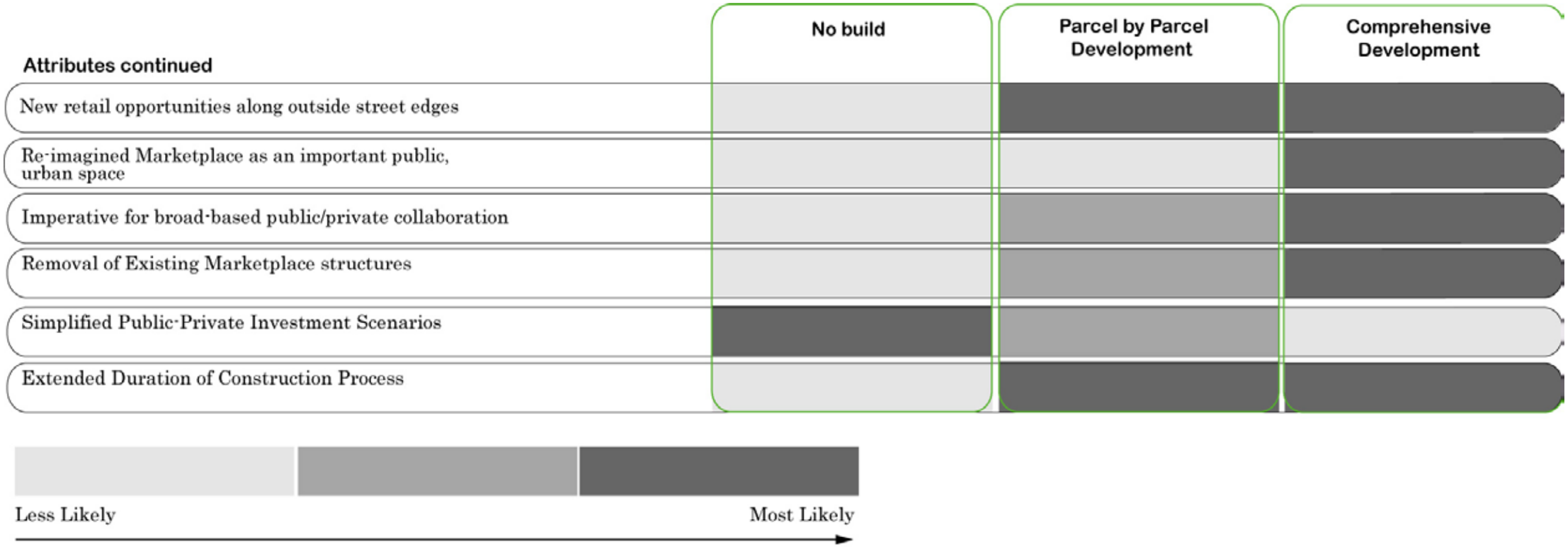
Tradeoffs - Three Possible Development Approaches

1	2	3	
"No build" This option holds the block in its existing condition for an indeterminate period of time. The owners and any potential developers decline to exercise their options on any of the parcels.	**Parcel by Parcel Development** A series of discrete private or possibly public building projects which would follow the established development process.	**Comprehensive Development** This is the development of the entire block by one development entity.	**Attributes**
			Removal of vacant and/or underutilized structures within the block
			Significant increase in public parking spaces for downtown Salem, structured and surface
			Preservation of pedestrian access through the middle of the block, linking New Derby Street to Derby Square and Old Town Hall
			Comprehensive parking structures, parking access, and service access points planned for the whole block
			Pedestrian movement through the block
			Continuation of street edge along Washington and New Derby Streets

These three development scenarios represent a range of approaches and they do not represent every possible scenario.

Less Likely → Most Likely

Tradeoffs - Three Potential Development Approaches



Additional Unresolved Issues

These issues are beyond the scope of the peer review and will be analyzed further when a development proposal is finalized.

Parking: The committee did not fully explore alternatives to the parking proposal, including provision of parking in other locations, issues with respect to financial feasibility, including assumptions about the financing of public parking, and further exploration of optimal entrances and exits of the parking below grade.

Use Mix: From the City's perspective, what is the optimal mix of uses and what is the direct and indirect economic impact and social impact of that mix?

Housing Types: What are the pros and cons of providing a variety of unit mixes – including housing for families and or housing with work space?

Phasing: How can phasing be managed to ensure that the entire vision is realized?

Traffic: A traffic study is imperative to understand the issues and impacts of this scale of development.

Construction Management: A detailed Construction Management Plan must be developed with the opportunity for input from the public and approved by the city to insure that the impacts of the project are as minimal as possible.

Costs and Benefits -There must be an analysis of the public costs and benefits; both tangible and intangible.

Public Spaces- Questions remain about the ultimate ownership, control and maintenance of the public spaces in the project

Infrastructure- Can the existing water, storm water drainage, sewer and electrical infrastructure sustain a development of this scale?

Additional Resources

Appendix A

- **Salem Commercial Design Guidelines**

  http://www.salem.com/Pages/SalemMA_BComm/design

- **Salem Redevelopment Authority Publication**

  Heritage Plaza East Urban Renewal Plan, PROJECT NO. MASS.R-95, Salem, Essex County, Massachusetts

- **City of Salem Master Plan Update and Action Plan, 1996**

- **American Institute of Architects Resources**

  Issue Briefs:

  Smart Growth: Building Livable Communities
  http://www.aia.org/SiteObjects/files/smartgrowth05.pdf

  Healthy Community Design
  http://www.aia.org/SiteObjects/files/healtheffectsofcommunitydesign.pdf

  AIA's 10 Principles for Livable Communities
  http://www.aia.org/liv_principles

- **Press**

Dalton, Tom. "Developer Bets Heavily on Salem's Future." The Salem News 8 Mar. 2006.

Dalton, Tom. "Public to Weigh In on Salem News Block." The Salem News 18 May 2006: A2.

Dalton, Tom. "Residents Speak Out on $80 Million Salem Development." The Salem News 23 May 2006: A1.

"Developer Wants More Condos in Marketplace." The Salem News 23 Jun. 2006

"Open Minds Required as Debate on Salem Marketplace Project Goes Forward." The Salem News 26 Jun. 2006

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Rosenberg, Steve. "Salem's Condo Appeal." The Boston Globe 1 Jun. 2006: NO2.

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Appendix B

Marketplace Redevelopment Committee

April 13, 2006 Meeting Notes

Perceived Opportunities and Topics of Greatest Interest

Italics indicate additional explanation added for clarity. The numbers in parentheses reflect the number of "votes" each item received by the MRC members participating

Opportunities

1. **Urban Development Opportunities**
   - Comprehensive Plan for a Whole Area (4)
     - Connections/Movement to Other Areas of the downtown (1)
     - Connecting Marketplace Site to the Sites Across Street (Walgreen's), Essex Mall and Waterfront (1)
       - Opportunity to Shift City Center *and connect Essex & Front Streets to Derby Street and the waterfront*
     - Recreate and Integrate Marketplace with Surrounding Blocks
       - Front Street has Opportunity to Thrive
       - Increase Vitality of Marketplace Stalls
   - Great Architecture (4)
     - Key Position/Opportunity for Great Architectural Planning
     - Redevelop SRA Lot Into a "Different Design" (1)
   - Visual Harmony, Enhance View to Old Town Hall (3)
   - Create Development that Anchors Downtown (1)
   - Open Space that "Works" in Plaza (1)
   - Anchor for Drivers <u>and</u> Walkers (1)
     - Get People Out of Car and Want to Walk Around/Explore
   - Bring More Residents Downtown (1)

2. **Desired Uses**
   - Farmer's Market/Temporary Vendors (4)
   - Right "Mix"/Offices, Restaurants, Retail, Residents (3)
   - Keystone Retailer in Downtown (3)
   - Destination Retail Store (LL Bean)
   - Urban Mall – Multi-story Retail (1)
   - Retail Along Edges (1)
   - Strengthen and Improve Retail (1)

   Other proposed uses:
   - Off Campus Dorms for College
   - Grocery Store
   - Retail for Small/Incubator Business
   - Home Based Business Model - *capitalize on new real estate trend by developing in-home office space along with housing*
   - Space for Public Events

Opportunities Continued

3. **Public use/Interaction**
    - Community (4)
        - Foster/Enhance Community
        - Retail – Open Space Enhanced
    - Four Seasons Use of Public Space (4)
        - Usability of Public Space
        - Year Long Market Areas
        - Covered Market Areas
    - Public Access/Walkable
        - Pedestrians
        - Walk Through
    - Traffic and Parking
        - Try to Solve Perceived Parking Problems
        - Parking – More Entrance/Exits
        - Redesign Traffic Flow

4. **Environment**
    - Sun/Natural Light (1)
    - Light, Wind

5. **Other**
    - Green Arch/Sustainability (1)
    - Market Study
    - Proposal for City Council in Use for Public Purpose/Access

Issues/Concerns

1. **Urban Design and Scale**
    - Urban Context Respected (8)
    - Front Street, Old Town Hall (4)
        - Derby Square – Preserving Integrity
    - Design & Architectural Detail to Keep Human Scale (3)
    - Human Scale (2)
    - Heights of Buildings – Vary Heights 2-3 (Front) or up to 8 (New Derby & Washington Streets)
    - Diversity of Height and Architecture of Buildings
        - Front Street (Less) (2)
        - New Derby (More)
        - Lack of On-Street Parking (Surface)
    - Monolithic Block (1)
    - Pedestrian Quality (1)

2. **Historic Preservation**
    - Preservation of Delande's "Post Office" (2)
    - Corner of Salem News be Incorporated (1)

3. **Traffic and Parking**
    - Traffic – managing Traffic – Traffic In/Out Parking Garage (1)
    - Adding more Traffic to Already Congested Intersection
    - Cost of Parking
    - Mixing Retail/Resident Parking *in the same project*
    - Poor Lighting in Underground Parking Garage – Security in Underground Garage

Issues/Concerns Continued

4. **Uses**
   - Demand for Condos – Who Are They For?
   - Diversity of Condo Types and Affordability
     - 40B Concern – *the development needs to consider and affordable housing component as Salem is at risk of falling below the 10%*

5. **Construction Phasing**
   - Phasing of Development – Notifying Existing Businesses (Limit Negative Impacts)
   - Phasing to Ensure Success (4)
   - Long Construction Process – Construction Management Plan

6. **Other**
   - Financial Feasibility (1)
   - Too Focused on One of Two Issues, Loosing Sight of the Big Picture (3)
   - Constraints of Derby Deed (Salem Marketplace)
   - Density Not a Concern

Marketplace Redevelopment Public Meeting

June 26, 2006 Meeting Notes

Mayor Kimberley Driscoll opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and providing an overview of the Marketplace Redevelopment review process to date.

Annie Harris, Chair, Marketplace Redevelopment Committee (MRC), went through the agenda of the meeting and introduced the members of the MRC.

LANDWORKS Studios and Office dA, peer review team consultants, went through the presentation of the project and their recommendations for improvement.

The public comments were as follows:

- The historic quality of the architecture and height should be maintained in this project. It might be fine to have heights up to 58 feet on New Derby Street but Front Street should remain 2.5 to 3 stories.
- The buildings should take elements of older buildings and incorporate them into the new. It was also suggested to rebuild the Derby Mansion on the site.
- Questions arose on whether the tax benefits were sizable enough to cover the costs. The City and MRC members responded that the projected tax revenue was sizable and the services, such as an influx of school-aged children, would most likely not be a concern with this project. The City further stated that all the costs and benefits would better be measured when a final project design and program materializes.
- Overall pleased with the progress and some of the ideas, such as saving the Delande's and Salem Evening New Building's facades.
- There was concern that the City land would not remain a public walk through space once it is sold to a developer.
- The developer should look at the other buildings, outside of this site, and determine what their eventual reuse will be so that the Marketplace Redevelopment has more context.
- The new plan shows that the City and the MRC is listening to the public. It is positive for the area and will add character to the downtown.
- The Mayor, Annie Harris and the MRC were commended for keeping up the dialogue. Overall pleased with the progress and some of the ideas, such as saving the Delande's and Salem Evening New Building's facades.
- The project should focus on the things of this project that are not measurable. Sunlight in the plaza, angles of the roof, parking and owner-occupancy are all measurable.

- Affordable Housing is critical and should not be bundled in downtown but actually putting money into other areas of the city.

- A new resident stated that he encourages retail in the downtown but questioned whether the downtown could support more retail and thought it would be helpful for the city to ask the new downtown residents what type of retail could survive and what could not. The MRC responded that the City is working with the Chamber and the Salem Redevelopment Authority (SRA) on looking at the downtown market.

- The viability of the underground garage was questioned and whether during a large rainstorm, it would become a lake. A member of the MRC stated that when the city experienced 10-inches of rain recently, one of the only things dry was the train tunnel; stating that it can be done.

- Issues of traffic and utilities need to be addressed. There is a concern with traffic from the garage coming right out on to Washington Street.

- The design should not be a row of monotonous buildings, rather should be a "good" design.

- The MRC was congratulated for a job well done. The revised plans are a step in the right direction. It was suggested that the developer and the City look at transferring development and density rights to the south side parcels of land that RCG currently owns.

- Concern that people who come to visit or shop in downtown will not want to pay to park in the garages, especially residents. It was stated that parking can "kill" merchants and no one would want a restaurant like Red's to close because people did not want to pay to park in the garages.

- Questions about how much the market can absorb with condominiums. This project just adds to the number of residential condominiums downtown.

- A statement was made that it was not a crime to raise children in Salem and that it is good to teach children that you do not have to drive in a car to get somewhere. The townhouses incorporated into the new Marketplace design will most likely be good for families looking to move to downtown.

- Issues with size and density of the project. If the developer cannot scale down the project and make if financially feasible, maybe it's not the right developer for the project.

- Concern with funneling people into the public plazas.

- The project is ambitious and aggressive and the details need to be worked out. Parking lots are empty in January and February and there is marvelous public transportation close by.

- Affordable housing should be incorporated into a project of this size.

- One of the scary things about parking in Boston is the underground garages. Do we want to have that in Salem?

- It is great to hear such positive comments from new Salem residents. With the increased population, the traffic increases and the City keeps shifting it. The development should be smaller.

- The City has historically made some mistakes both downtown and throughout the city. It's important to move slowly so that we do not make mistakes with this project.

- Concern about giving away the historic marketplace area.

- Important to bring quality downtown and this process helps to ensure that we get quality downtown. Thank you to the Mayor, the Committee and RCG.

Landworks Studio, Inc. - Office dA, Inc.