



CITY OF SALEM PLANNING BOARD

A public hearing of the Salem Planning Board was held on Thursday, December 2, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. via remote access. Public participation was possible via Zoom video and conference call.

Chair Bill Griset opens the meeting at 6:32 pm

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Bill Griset, Vice Chair Kirt Rieder, Tom Furey, Todd Waller, Noah Koretz, Carole Hamilton, Zach Caunter, Sarah Tarbet, Helen Sides (9)

Also in attendance: Elena Eimert, Hannah Martin (2)

II. REGULAR AGENDA

A. Location: 1 Harmony Grove Rd (Map 7, Lot 58), 3 Harmony Grove Rd. (Map 7, Lot 46), 5 Harmony Grove Road (Map 7, Lot 57), 60 Grove Street (Map 7, Lot 47), and 64 Grove Street (Map 7, Lot 48)

Applicant: Joe Correnti f/b/o 116 Bennington Street Realty Trust

Description: A continuance of a public hearing for all persons interested in the application of JOSEPH CORRENTI f/b/o 116 Bennington Street Realty Trust for the property located at 1 Harmony Grove Rd (Map 7, Lot 58), 3 Harmony Grove Rd. (Map 7, Lot 46), 5 Harmony Grove Road (Map 7, Lot 57), 60 Grove Street (Map 7, Lot 47), and 64 Grove Street (Map 7, Lot 48) in the I, R2, and BPD Zoning Districts for Site Plan Review in the Entrance Corridor Overlay District in accordance with the following sections of the Salem Zoning Ordinance: Section 9.5 Site Plan Review, Section 8.1 Flood Hazard Overlay District, Section 8.2 Entrance Corridor Overlay District, and 8.3 Business Park Special Permit. The applicant is requesting an amendment to a previously approved plan by reducing the number of units to 124 in three buildings, adding a fitness building, dog park, and basketball court. The proposed work includes razing any existing improvements, construction of the new buildings and amenities,

and pavement.

Attorney Correnti: Civil peer review remains outstanding. Tonight we would like to go over successful visit with the Design Review Board.

Zach Silva shares brief summary of initial presentation on September 9, 2021. Noting previous feedback, including:

- Plan too busy and looking like multiple sites.
- Buildings need to be more horizontal and possibly more muted.
- Community building needs to fit in better with the rest of the plan.
- Overall more unity needed.

Tony Bosivert shares the updated design approved by the Design Review Board. Latest version of plan focuses on simplification and unity. Updates to plan include:

- Removal of vertical aspects on three main buildings.
 - Lowered roof line.
 - Bump outs brought down to third floor.
 - Reduced scale of bump outs.
 - Dark banding at roof line.
 - Reduced color palette (higher end cement board and brick).
 - More brick around corners of building to better anchor.
- Subtle changes to Fitness Building.
 - Added more brick in lieu of wood tone product.
 - Reduced height of brick around entrance.
- Complete redesign of Community Building to better tie into project.
 - Introduced elements from three main buildings.
 - Flatted roof.
 - Echoed entrance to fitness building (same windows, colors, siding, etc).

Laura Rutledge shares updated landscape design plan approved by the Design Review Board. Plan includes:

- Detailed criteria for plant selection. Including architecture coordination, environmental factors, maintenance requirements, seasonal interest, owners preference, etc.
- North side of canal pathway (along canal):
 - Groupings of native shrubs and grasses. Including feathered reed grass, winterberry, inkberry and rosa virginiana.
- South side of canal pathway (along building):
 - Trees and shrub beds that correspond to light fixtures. Plantings include black gum, amelanchier, swamp white oak, red maple hydrangeas, fountain

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- grass, switch grass and andromeda.
- Working to create a park like atmosphere.
- Front side of main buildings:
 - Only 6 feet of planting space so has to be tight. Focal points along the way to provide vertical interest.
 - Plantings include crimson point cherry, hydrangeas, green wave yew, blue point juniper, hinoki cypress, spyris, inkberry, daylilies, catmint and golden mop cypress (owner's preference).
- Other side of roadway (across from front side of main buildings):
 - Plant with native trees. Including snowbell, blue spruce, eastern red cedar, swamp white oak. Mixed with wild flowers, pfitzer juniper, black gum and red maple.
- Grove street entrance:
 - Fairly large planting bed at entrance.
 - North of entry: hydrangeas, blue spruce, andromeda, perennials, rhododendron, etc.
 - South of entry: conor hornbeams, daylilies, pfitzer juniper.

Tom Furey: Beautiful! Salem is suffering from its past and this is a great opportunity to redeem this area. Beautiful setting for families. A renaissance for a bright new future. Really looks like a nice green park area along the canal. Looking forward to more progress being made.

Kirt Rieder:

- Can you speak to the demolition plan? Assume there will need to be large trees removed from the fitness building area.
- People will be actively recreating in this area (fitness center, basketball court). Makes sense to drop in some large trees for shade. Could also dampen some of the noise.
 - Bob Griffin:
 - No plan that maps out existing vegetation. Laura has done a good job of supplementing with landscaping plan. Unfortunately there is not a lot of opportunity to save existing vegetation.
 - Opportunity on west side of basketball court to plan large trees.

Kirt Rieder:

- Looks like there is not a lot space between curb and buildings. Missed opportunity here. Building will be sun bleached all day.
- Very much like the hornbeams. Squinting at the spruce at the entrance. Possibly consider adding something to arch over the entrance. Would provide better

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separation between active roadway and residence.

- Can you point out where the transformers are for this project?
 - Bob Griffin: Transformers will be across the road from building 3.

Kirt Rieder: Seeing four or five opportunities to connect this site to a public way.
Disappointing to see that those opportunities were missed.

- Attorney Correnti: Not missed opportunities. A topic of much discussion. It was made very clear that abutters do not want these connections. We're not blind to it.

Sarah Tarbet:

- I agree with the width of value in connecting the neighborhood.
- Additionally, agree with concerns about the exposure of the southwestern facade. Being bare is not great from a sustainability standpoint.
- How are you addressing flooding and extreme rain events through plant selections/placement?
 - Laura Rutledge: Materials chosen can tolerate some moderate heavy rain. None of the plants can tolerate a submersion situation.
 - Bob Griffin: Temporary inundation is expected during extreme events. Though flooding at this location is temporary even during extreme conditions.

Sarah Tarbet: Additionally wondering if mechanical equipment is accurately shown here?
Have you done any studies on what Beaver Street might see from that hill?

- Zach Silva: With plantings, I think visibility will be normal.
- Sarah Tarbet: I'm not convinced that units aren't going to be visible from the residents above. Maybe consider a screen. That would be great to have. Aside from this, renderings are beautiful.
- Zach Silva:
 - We will look into screens.
 - Mechanical units are typically 30x30. Efficiency in modern equipment allows for them to be rather small.
 - We plan to place them strategically down the center of the building for sound ratings. So far away from edges of the buildings that sight lines would have no presence.
- Kirt Rieder:
 - Units look larger than 30x30 in rendering.
 - It is not unusual for this board to request screens around equipment.
 - Would like to be reassured that units are right down the center. You've said verbally, but would like to see visually.
- Helen Sides:

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- In regards to the rooftop units, we always request that all equipment is a dark color for visual purposes.
- I've followed this project for many years now. This is a difficult site. Very happy with the changes made so far. A lot of improvements. If we had longer it would be even better. Grateful for your team's willingness to work through this. Thank you.

Zach Caunter:

- Looks like a great project. I like the changes made so far.
- It does seem like the project is entirely car dependent. Thinking about connectivity. Also don't see any bike infrastructure.
- There are open parcels that abut Beaver Street. Are there any plans on what to do with those parcels? Maybe a way to do something aside from connecting vehicular traffic.
 - Bob Griffin:
 - Bike racks are placed at community building and likely buildings one, two and three.
 - Proximity to transportation will be a major draw.
 - Project is at a significantly high elevation which naturally disconnects it from surrounding area.
 - Things are going on within parcels that don't need to be addressed in this project. Will likely cause a disturbance. Looking to leave Beaver Street neighbors alone.

Noah Koretz:

- Same point on connectivity. I do think this is a little bit of a broken record at this point. Neighbors don't want it, but we are supposed to be looking out for the welfare of the overall city.
- Very understandable that an abutter wouldn't want a path next to their house. But we should be weighing against the welfare of the city.
- Project after project we run into the same problem. When do we start planning as we are building in a city instead of a singular development.
 - Bill Griset: What would you have us do with that issue in this development?
 - Noah Koretz: I would leave it up to them. Not feeling the need to open it up with this particular case.

Kirt Rieder: As someone who runs this area, it would be excellent to see a stairwell there. Know it would be expensive and complicated. Just comes to the will of the board, willingness of the client and the neighbors.

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Attorney Correnti: This project was permitted for over two and a half years. The issues raised tonight have been raised, heard and discussed. Connectivity issues are nothing new. This project is actually one of the most connected projects we have seen. Peabody/Salem path will eventually connect through this site. Project has received new funding from the state for this. Everything being mentioned is of course important. Points being raised were seriously looked at.

- Kirt Rieder: What we are pointing out is the connection between Harmony Grove and Beaver Street. Not trying to put applicant on defense. More so bringing up the issue and have it on public record going forward.

Comments from the public:

- George Belleau, 29 Boardman Street: Not an abutter, just someone in the area. Have not followed project very closely but have paid a lot of attention tonight. Noticed there was no conversation about unit make up in this development. Would like to see the board push more towards family units. one and two bedroom units are great for attracting people out of town but not for those already here or with large families. I also wonder about connectivity for community building and why there is no footbridge to the community building? The initial design seemed more interesting. This design seems a lot more homogeneous.
- Meg Reccardi, 23 Orchard Street: Excited for project! Great area to revitalize. I have only been on council for ward six for two years. Time has passed and I have received feedback from Beaver Street and Boston Street area. People are becoming more aware and interested. Could be a great opportunity to connect new development to Boston Street area. Putting myself out as a resource if conversation wants to be held with neighbors.

A motion to continue to December 16, 2021, meeting, is made by Kirt Rieder, seconded by Helen Sides and passes 9-0 in a roll call vote.

Bill Grisct	Yes
Kirt Rieder	Yes
Tom Furey	Yes
Todd Waller	Yes
Noah Koretz	Yes
Carole Hamilton	Yes
Zach Caunter	Yes
Sarah Tarbet	Yes
Helen Sides	Yes

B. Location: 373 Highland Ave (Map 7, Lot 58), 355 Highland Avenue (Map 7, Lot 46), 2 Cedar Road (Map 7, Lot 57), 3 Cedar Road (Map 7, Lot 47), 5 Cedar Road (Map 7, Lot 48), 6 Cedar Road (Map 7, Lot 56), and 10 Cedar Road (Map 7, Lot 55)

Applicant: Joe Correnti f/b/o Berman Properties, LLC/Tropical Products

Description: A continuance of a public hearing for all persons interested in the application of JOSEPH CORRENTI f/b/o Berman Properties, LLC/Tropical Products for the property located at 373 Highland Ave (Map 7, Lot 58), 355 Highland Avenue (Map 7, Lot 46), 2 Cedar Road (Map 7, Lot 57), 3 Cedar Road (Map 7, Lot 47), 5 Cedar Road (Map 7, Lot 48), 6 Cedar Road (Map 7, Lot 56), and 10 Cedar Road (Map 7, Lot 55) in the B2 and BPD Zoning District for Site Plan Review in the Entrance Corridor Overlay District in accordance with the following sections of the Salem Zoning Ordinance: Section 9.5 Site Plan Review, Section 8.2 Entrance Corridor Overlay District, and 8.3 Business Park Special Permit. The applicant specifically proposes to construct a warehouse with an approximately 70,000 square foot footprint and all associated improvements. The proposed work includes razing any existing improvements, construction of the new building, and pavement.

Attorney Correnti:

- Peer review comments have been received. Actively working on responses for that and will have them ready for December 16 meeting.
- Additionally received traffic pattern review and comments. Development team is working to get those ready for presentation.
- Tonight we have Maine Drilling and Blasting to talk about rock. This project contains a lot of ledge that will need to be removed in order to lay building.
- Mr. Berman and team are on call to share a brief presentation of analysis and scope of removal.

Andy Dufore, Maine Drilling and Blasting, shares presentation detailing previous projects in area, blasting safety, processes and options for this specific project.

Ray Hamwey shares presentation detailing the rock crushing processes, removal processes and options for project. Option one would entail crushing blasted rock on site, allowing for minimal construction traffic. Option two would entail crushing rock offsite. Resulting in larger amounts

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of construction traffic and prolonged process. Though option 1 is not silent, it would allow project to move quicker.

Helen Sides: Last project that this came up on had a lot to do with the proximity to existing houses. This project seems more open and farther away. Hopefully the rock crushing would be farther away from houses.

- Kirt Rider: We also have to be sure no rock will be brought on site to be crushed in order for us to agree.

Comments from the public:

- Patti Morsillo, Ward Three Counselor: A neighborhood meeting was recently held regarding this project. Neighbors are very excited and supportive of project. Only questions were around how much blasting and if there needs to be a rock crusher on site. We were initially told minimal blasting. Neighbors have made it very clear that they did not want rock crushing on site. Urging Planning Board to take this into consideration. The site sits right next to the animal shelter. Hope the board will consider.

A motion to continue to December 16, 2021 meeting, is made by Sarah Tarbet, seconded by Helen Sides and passes 9-0 in a roll call vote.

Bill Grisct	Yes
Kirt Rieder	Yes
Tom Furey	Yes
Todd Waller	Yes
Noah Koretz	Yes
Carole Hamilton	Yes
Zach Caunter	Yes
Sarah Tarbet	Yes
Helen Sides	Yes

III. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

A. Deliberate and vote on a recommendation to the City Council on a Zoning Ordinance Amendment relative to the Waterfront Industrial Overlay District (WIOD) summarized below:

An Ordinance Amending Zoning Section 8.6 – Waterfront Industrial Overlay District (WIOD) of the City of Salem Zoning Ordinance by adding a new table entry to 8.6.3 – Permitted Uses with the following:

PRINCIPAL USES WIOD

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C. HOUSING USES

Planned Unit Development..... N

Heard second.

Helen Sides: Seems dangerous to me. Too open ended. Too limiting to site. Reacting to a submission from developer. Cutting off options without anything to review. Undermining our jobs and how we would review projects being presented to us. Don't think it is a good idea.

- Todd Waller: Agreed. Think it is reactionary. Broad implications that are not entirely known. A little bit dangerous. Based on good faith. Not totally in favor.
- Tom Furey: Agree with Helen. All options should be on the table. This project could be the Cummings Center of Salem. Also could play a large role in housing, much like Beverly Cummings Center. Overlooking housing is doing the city an injustice. Voting for this throws housing and development out the window.
- Bill Grisct: Agree with Helen, Todd and Tom. Are there other members who feel significantly different?
- Zach Caunter: I feel the same.
- Kirt Rieder: I wouldn't say this is dangerous, more so defensive and preemptive. Basically saying we don't trust the Planning Board.

*A motion to recommend that the City Council **not** adopt amendment to Waterfront Industrial Overlay District, is made by Noah Koretz, seconded by Tom Furey and passes 8-0 in a roll call vote.*

Bill Grisct	Yes
Kirt Rieder	Yes
Tom Furey	Yes
Todd Waller	Yes
Noah Koretz	Yes
Zach Caunter	Yes
Sarah Tarbet	Yes
Helen Sides	Yes
Carole Hamilton	Abstains

B. Almeda Subdivision - Deliberate and vote on bond and future sidewalk plan.

Heard first.

Walter Erikson: This project was approved back in 2016, involved the extension of Almeda Street. Proposing a bond amount for construction improvements. One of the conditions was that we submit a plan to the board that shows the potential of the city to construct a future sidewalk.

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Elena Eimert: Project was held in stasis after 2016 decision while undergoing litigation. Bond figure was approved by staff in both departments (Planning and Engineering). We have seen plan and has been reviewed and approved. Bond figure now needs to be approved before work can commence. Sidewalk plan needs to be approved before plans can be submitted.

Carole Hamilton: Can you refresh my memory? Is the sidewalk to be constructed?

- Walter Erikson: No. It is a future build-out plan if the city decides to extend Alameda Street. Intent is to confirm the ability for it to be constructed if needed in the future.

Bill Grisct: Have we confirmed that the litigation has ended?

- Elena Eimert: We have not, but we will.
- Carole Hamilton: I think we are ok to vote and have litigation verified later.
- Todd Waller: Agreed.

A motion to approve bond amount as recommend by the city and accept future sidewalk plan as approved, is made by Helen Sides, seconded by Carole Hamilton and passes 9-0 in a roll call vote.

Bill Grisct	Yes
Kirt Rieder	Yes
Tom Furey	Yes
Todd Waller	Yes
Noah Koretz	Yes
Zach Caunter	Yes
Sarah Tarbet	Yes
Helen Sides	Yes
Carole Hamilton	Yes

C. Meeting Format in 2022

Elena Eimert: Governor's executive order states public meetings can be virtual until April 1, 2022. All boards and committees asked by the Mayor's Office to consider doing hybrid format until April 1, 2022. We are polling to move into a hybrid setting or continue virtual setting.

Bill Grisct: I believe we do not need to move to a hybrid setting with the new variant spreading and safety measures being reinstated. Not comfortable with changing format yet.

Board agrees.

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IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of the July 14, 2021, Joint Public Hearing Minutes

Helen Sides: I was not present, minutes indicate that I was.

A motion to approve the July 14, 2021 Regular Planning Board Minutes, with minor updates, is made by Kirt Rieder, seconded by Sarah Tarbet and passes 7-0 in a roll call vote.

Bill Grisct	Yes
Kirt Rieder	Yes
Tom Furey	Yes
Todd Waller	Yes
Noah Koretz	Yes
Zach Caunter	Yes
Sarah Tarbet	Yes
Helen Sides	Abstains
Carole Hamilton	Abstains

B. Approval of the July 22, 2021, Regular Planning Board Minutes

A motion to approve the July 22, 2021 Regular Planning Board Minutes, is made by Helen Sides, seconded by Tom Furey and passes 8-0 in a roll call vote.

Bill Grisct	Yes
Kirt Rieder	Yes
Tom Furey	Yes
Todd Waller	Yes
Noah Koretz	Yes
Zach Caunter	Yes
Sarah Tarbet	Yes
Helen Sides	Yes
Carole Hamilton	Abstains

V. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn, is made by Helen Sides, seconded by Kirt Rieder and passes 9-0 in a roll call vote.

Bill Grisct	Yes
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Kirt Rieder	Yes
Tom Furey	Yes
Todd Waller	Yes
Noah Koretz	Yes
Zach Caunter	Yes
Sarah Tarbet	Yes
Helen Sides	Yes
Carole Hamilton	Yes

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Approved by the Planning Board on February 3, 2022.