



## CITY OF SALEM PLANNING BOARD

A public hearing of the Salem Planning Board was held on Thursday April 20, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. via remote access. Public participation was possible via Zoom video and conference call.

Chair Grisette opens the meeting at 6:30 pm.

### I. ROLL CALL

*Present:* Bill Grisette (Chair), Tom Furey, Carole Hamilton, Zach Caunter, Jonathan Berk, Helen Sides, Josh Turiel, and Sarah Tarbet (*arrived 6:50pm*) (8)

*Absent:* Kirt Rieder (1)

*Also in attendance:* Elena Eimert, staff planner

### II. REGULAR AGENDA

- A. Location: 266 Canal Street (Map 32, 0038), 282 Canal Street (Map 32, Lot 0037), 286 Canal Street (Map 32, Lot 0036), 282 Rear Canal Street (Map 23, Lot 0144), and 2 Kimball Road (Map 32, Lot 0102)**

**Applicant:** Joseph Correnti f/b/o Canal Street Station, LLC

**Description:** A continuance of a public hearing for all persons interested in the application of Joseph Correnti f/b/o Canal Street Station, LLC, for the property located at 266 Canal Street (Map 32, 0038), 282 Canal Street (Map 32, Lot 0037), 286 Canal Street (Map 32, Lot 0036), 282 Rear Canal Street (Map 23, Lot 0144), and 2 Kimball Road (Map 32, Lot 0102) in the RC (Residential Conservation), B2, and I Zoning Districts for Site Plan Review in accordance with the following sections of the Salem Zoning Ordinance: Section 9.5 Site Plan Review, 7.3 Planned Unit Development Special Permit, 8.2 Entrance Corridor Overlay District, and Section 8.1 Flood Hazard Overlay District Special Permit and Section 37 of the Salem Code of Ordinances, Stormwater Management Permit.

The applicant proposes to redevelop portions of the parcels located at 266, 282, 282R & 286 Canal Street and 2 Kimball Road into a multi-use Planned Unit Development consisting of residential units, 20% of which will be affordable, commercial space along Canal Street, and over 9 acres of open space. The redevelopment of the property will include razing and removal of all existing buildings and infrastructure, construction of five new buildings, which total approximately 73,615 square feet, 250 residential units, 117 surface parking spaces, 196 garage parking spaces, and supporting infrastructure.

***\*\*This item was heard third\*\****

Attorney Joe Correnti is here for the Applicant. The Applicant team has received a first letter on the traffic peer review process and will discuss it at the next meeting after the team has reviewed. The civil engineering peer review is ongoing. Dave Seibert, Marc Tranos, and Bob Uhlig are here with the team.

- Bob Uhlig, Halvorson (a Tighe and Bond Studio), shares his screen to walk through several changes since the last meeting. Have introduced more of a continuous green area with the idea of continuing the tree canopy and lower plantings but distinguishing they are. Pull off areas and turnaround areas are introduced. Minimizing the width further allows for traffic calming. Signs for “loading only” as well. Introduced some parking where there is now area between the buildings. Regarding Canal Street, the team focused more on a continuous tree canopy and the elimination of seating along Canal Street. The team has spoken with the city tree warden. *Screen shown with the new species of proposed trees.* Along the Rail Trail, the team thought the suggestions from the last meeting were spot on. The intent between rail lines was to introduce a stone dust path and there may be thinning growth to enhance the view of Rosie’s Pond. May introduce signage with information about the wetlands. The trash was moved, and the team looked at the idea of seeking out more community space. Considering this a floodable but usable space. There is also the idea of providing more amenities. The cadence of the building has changed, and a pool area has been added. Garage entries are now at the ends of the buildings.
- Dave Seibert, BK architects. Where the pool is shown, the distance is now 36 feet wider due to sliding building D and shortening building C 18 feet each. The dimension down the boulevard is 50 feet. Bob Uhlig jumps in with answers to some of the other previous comments, i.e., the Salem Diner car redevelopment would not be appropriate for this development; trash truck maneuvering, it works at the prior and current locations; we are clarifying that the edges of the building will be native perennials and the developer is committed to establishing this; regular cleaning of common areas in and out. Bike Storage within each parking garage for every parked car, plus blue bikes, and external bike racks with 200 bike accommodation on this site.
- Attorney Correnti lays out that they are in front of many boards right now with a timeline hoping to wrap up in June.

**PLANNING BOARD COMMENTS**

- Josh Turiel likes some elements of evolution. Thinks they still need a shorter entrance or people will “cow path” the fastest way to the trail and burrow their way through the site. Shifting the position of buildings C & E is nice but still has concerns with building A and the way it fronts Canal Street, the rental office will not activate the site. Still see a generic development. He would like something that speaks to Salem and Canal Street better.

- Jonathan Berk finds that the pinch point at the crosswalk to the trail, if it narrows too much, could be difficult. Maybe wider clearance.
- Sarah Tarbet feels community resources added are great, and building A is the spot with more potential for activation. The pool was an interesting addition. Buildings, particularly A, don't have contextual façades and still reads a little flat. Does not like the large sizes paneling everywhere. Marc Tranos, Juniper Point Investment Company counters that building A is also home to a gym and other amenity spaces and will be further resident activated with these.
- Helen Sides would like to hear what Sarah would say about the trees. Sarah Tarbet understands why monoculture is not good but does not understand the nuances. Bob Uhlig says that historically, landscape architects looked at 1 species by 1 block and now we think out of the box with a different cadence of trees.
- Tom Furey finds the project devoid of meaningful neighborhood feel. The abutting neighborhood will have no connection. Why is it jammed into 5 buildings and not more of a community with building on the Eastern Bank and Big Apple sites? Attorney Correnti reminds the board that the other properties were not for sale. This was not an option for the project. The project proposes 250 units of rental with 50 units of affordable housing. Rather than asking the owner if he would like to live here, the question should be about the creation of 50 units for the unhoused. And another 200 units too, what we are told is the city's number 1 priority. This project is not creating luxury housing, and this is not for everyone but is responding to a community need by adding 250 units to the housing stock. Josh Turiel finds no problem with overall size but is concerned with the traffic integration. This is not being integrated into a neighborhood because it has never been a neighborhood.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

### Written comments

There is one written comment from [Polly Wilbert\\_7 Cedar Street\\_04192023.pdf](#)

Jeff Cohen

5 Hancock Street

Canal street seems like a whole bunch of strip malls. Feels this is an opportunity to create something that other projects in the future will reflect. Easier to access money to make projects sustainable. Takes issue with Tom Furey's comments regarding the development's obligation to create a neighborhood.

## **PLANNING BOARD COMMENTS, continued**

- Sarah Tarbet addresses the neighborhood comment and whether the developer is responsible for creating a neighborhood. The idea is that you are fostering community

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of some sort. Not good practice to build 250 units and not think how they will live together.

Motion to continue to the May 4, 2023, meeting is made by Josh Turiel, seconded by Sarah Tarbet, and passes 8-0 in a roll call vote.

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Bill Grisct     | Y |
| Tom Furey       | Y |
| Carole Hamilton | Y |
| Zach Caunter    | Y |
| Jonathan Berk   | Y |
| Helen Sides     | Y |
| Sarah Tarbet    | Y |
| Josh Turiel     | Y |

### III. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

#### A. 9 and 11 Franklin Street (Map 26, Lot 375) - Review and vote on minor modification

***\*\*This item was heard second\*\****

- There are 3 tiers of changes to approvals of this board – Administrative, via the Planning Director; Site Plan Review Revision - this involves any changes that impact the review criteria described in section 9.5.6 of the zoning ordinance; and an amendment, which includes full filing with the board, public notices, and an appeal period. Amanda Chiancola will come before the board in the future to give examples of each category.
- Dave Cutler is here for the Development Team of 9-11 Franklin Street, residing at 35 Belleau Road, Salem. Mr. Cutler is asking for approval or recommendations to the proposed changes. Mr. Cutler shares his screen showing differences between the original and the proposed changes.
  - The original plan had 4 entrance doors, one for each unit with a central staircase going from the door to the unit. This did not allow for much interior garage space. The new design provides 1 staircase front and back for units 2 & 3 and exterior doors with staircases for units 1 & 4. This adds 10.5 feet between the four units for interior garage space.
  - Façade changes include elimination of balconies, changes to windows, and changes to materials.
- **Planning Board Comments**
  - Helen Sides is shocked by the changes and finds it radically different to the original proposal and unacceptable.
  - Carole Hamilton seconds what Helen has said. This is a downgrading of the building.

- Bill Griset reminds that they are asked to comment and review and vote as to whether a minor modification.
  - i. Elena Eimert clarifies that the board has 3 options: vote to approve as modified, deny as modified, or comment and ask that Mr. Cutler come back with further modifications considering the board's comments at a future meeting.
- Bill Griset concerned with the 3<sup>rd</sup> option. How do we fine tune what we do not see as a minor modification?
  - i. Elena clarifies that with consultation with the Planning Director that this falls within the middle bucket. They do not rise to the level of requirement for an amendment but are too significant to be approved administratively. The Board does not need to act tonight, and Elena can report these thoughts to the Planning Director. The board does not see this as a minor modification.
- Mr. Cutler would like to return for the May 4, 2023 meeting. He would like to see what the board would like to see. But he will talk about other changes this evening: small balconies were eliminated to put the focus on the private outdoor patio areas on the ground floor. But can put small Juliette balconies back; changes were made in color to the current beige/gray/white color scheme with black doors and windows.
  - Helen Sides feels it is not as simple as adding back elements. It has lost all its life and vitality. The Seger presentation was interesting. There is nothing here.
  - Josh Turiel pleased with the original planning process for this project. This is not a minor modification, more "a starting from scratch." Though, not opposed to changing entrance ways. Everything other than that is dull.
- Amanda Chiancola, Deputy Director of Planning and Community Development, City of Salem. Department has been identifying threshold for when changes happen to the site plan. The Amendment process is the larger level – it requires a new public hearing, etc. This is a site plan review, there were no findings (i.e., if it was a Planned Unit Development or in the North River Canal Corridor), we are looking at review criteria, so we look at how this affects the decision. We point to the compatibility of the architecture of nearby buildings. Does this building rise to a new appeal period and is it compatible with the surrounding buildings? It is up to the board if they want to make this require an amendment. It would be helpful to give the applicant feedback if the board does not support applying for an amendment.
  - Chair Griset still does not feel this is minor and would not have approved it if the original. Suggesting this needs a whole new process.

- Jonathan Berk is concerned with the design and the lack of pedestrian experience.
- Helen offers that the board would have recommended this project for the Design Review Board in hindsight. Something that has been so radically changed needs further review. She would like to deny, and it needs to start over. Will not approve the project.
- Zach Caunter asks what triggered this change was extra garage space? Mr. Cutler states that it was the initial change and that the other changes are as a result.
- Mr. Cutler would like to withdraw and come back at the next meeting.
- On a final note, Carole Hamilton would like to comment that having the 2 side entrances makes them secondary and will make approaching the buildings confusing.

**\*\*No voting needed as this is not a public hearing agenda item. This project will appear on a future meeting agenda.\*\***

***Sarah Tarbet has joined the meeting 6:55 pm***

**B. 16, 18, 20R Franklin Street (Map 26, Lots 400, 401, and 402) – Review and vote on an extension request**

- Attorney Correnti is here for the Applicant. The Chapter 91 license has yet to be issued. Received a written determination from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) which answers the questions necessary to issue the Ch. 91 license and on the back was a draft Chapter 91 license.

**Motion to approve extension request to November 22, 2023, is made by Helen Sides, seconded by Josh Turiel, and passes 8-0 in a roll call vote.**

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Bill Grisct     | Y |
| Tom Furey       | Y |
| Carole Hamilton | Y |
| Zach Caunter    | Y |
| Jonathan Berk   | Y |
| Helen Sides     | Y |
| Sarah Tarbet    | Y |
| Josh Turiel     | Y |

**C. Updates from Staff**

- 4 Franklin Street (Cataldo Ambulance) update

- Chapter 91 license is recorded, and Request for Bids are out and are working through selecting a contractor and through prebuilding permit conditions. Attorney Correnti is here for answering *simple* questions
- Tom Furey asks when it will be possible to remove the building. Attorney Correnti explains that demolition has been explored but that it is prohibitively expensive to knock down a building without a contractor in place.

i. This will be added to the May 4, 2023, agenda.

- Members of the board still need to complete the Ethics training.
- Let Elena know about any upcoming absences.

#### IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

##### A. Approval of the March 30, 2023, regular Planning Board minutes

***\*\*This item was heard first\*\****

Motion to approve the March 30, 2023, regular Planning Board minutes is made by Helen Sides, seconded by Carole Hamilton, and passes 7-0 in a roll call vote.

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Bill Grisct     | Y |
| Tom Furey       | Y |
| Carole Hamilton | Y |
| Zach Caunter    | Y |
| Jonathan Berk   | Y |
| Helen Sides     | Y |
| Josh Turiel     | Y |

#### IV. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Helen Sides, and seconded by Josh Turiel, and passes 8-0 in a roll call vote.

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Bill Grisct     | Y |
| Tom Furey       | Y |
| Carole Hamilton | Y |
| Zach Caunter    | Y |
| Jonathan Berk   | Y |
| Helen Sides     | Y |
| Sarah Tarbet    | Y |
| Josh Turiel     | Y |

Adjourned at 8:05 pm

Approved by Planning Board on May 18, 2023

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