

**City of Salem Massachusetts  
Public Meeting Minutes**

<b>Board or Committee:</b>	<b>Redevelopment Authority, Regular Meeting</b>
<b>Date and Time:</b>	<b>Wednesday, January 9, 2019 at 6:00 pm</b>
<b>Meeting Location:</b>	<b>93 Washington Street, First Floor Conference Room</b>
<b>SRA Members Present:</b>	<b>Gary Barrett, David Guarino, Dean Rubin</b>
<b>SRA Members Absent:</b>	<b>Chair Grace Napolitano, Russ Vickers</b>
<b>Others Present:</b>	<b>Tom Daniel – Director of Planning and Community Development, Kathryn Newhall-Smith</b>
<b>Recorder:</b>	<b>Colleen Brewster</b>

Mr. Guarino calls the meeting to order. Roll call was taken.

**Projects Under Review**

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**Executive Directors Report:**

Mr. Daniel stated that;

- A. Work Plan: The work plan will be updated. The HDIP expansion was approved by the City Council in December. The Adapt Reuse Ordinance is being continued at tonight's City Council Meeting and Councilor Madore is the new Council liaison. When she was in the SRA in 2018 she requested the SRA establish goals, which they should continue but the discussion should tie into the fiscal year.
- B. 289 Derby: The City Council approved subdividing the lot and transferring part of it to the SRA where it will be subdivided along the perimeter wall facing the lot. They will negotiate an easement agreement, but it must go through the Planning Board.
- C. Superior Court and County Commissioners Buildings: The buildings are still being mothballed, the method of closing of the windows has been favorable, and the City will continue to work with Kate from DCAMM and Utile on developing the RFQ language. Mr. Daniel met with developers for opportunities in Salem and the Courts are a priority. The City Council is likely to transfer the crescent shaped lot to the SRA.
- D. Board Packets: Will be done electronically to streamline the process for everyone. At the February SRA meeting Kate will ask applicants to submit electronic application and all meeting items will be sent out with live links to documents and the associated regulations. These will be done consistently throughout all the Boards. Mr. Rubin noted that Board members will need to use electronic devices during the meetings which will change the dynamic. Mr. Guarino was in favor of this change. Mr. Daniel added that this will encourage the use of the screens in the meeting rooms that everyone can see. The same will be discussed with the DRB members at their next meeting.

**Urban Renewal Area Projects Under Review**

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1. **155 Washington Street (Adriatic Restaurant):** Discussion and vote on Small Project Review for proposed vestibule.

Mr. Daniel spoke on behalf of Adriatic Restaurant regarding the project.

Mr. Daniel stated that the DRB recommended approval unanimously with one small item to change, that all the side windows were the same size as the window in the door.

*Guarino opens public comment.*

Gary Gill, Ward 3. Requested a description of the proposed plans. Mr. Rubin responded that the addition of an exterior vestibule will only be used during the winter months and removed the remaining three seasons.

No one else wished to speak.

*Guarino closes public comment.*

Rubin: Motion to approve as recommended by the DRB.  
Seconded by: Barrett. Passes: 3-0

**2. 2 East India Square (Downtown Mall):** Discussion and vote on proposed installation of signage.

Brett Marley of Marley Properties was present to discuss the project.

Mr. Daniel stated that Marley Properties added window decals to the downtown mall in 2017 without a permit or board approval and the Board made various attempts to communicate with the applicant and notify him of the need to get SRA approval. Mr. Daniel further noted that in the proposal Marley Properties finally submitted to seek approval, the decals do not exceed the maximum allowed 20% of the window face. Moreover, the SRA considers the application incomplete since there are other signage concerns for the property that are not included in the package.

Mr. Marley asked what font choices were preferred and noted that the existing bar under the sign is concealing power lines. They will update the lighting to LED and power will come from directly behind the sign. Rather than address these individual points, Mr. Daniel replied that it is imperative that Marley Properties address all details such as the signage square footage, attachment details, Mr. Daniel added that the façade on garage is city real estate and there needs to be a city agreement to use that façade. The SRA is only part of the sign approval process, the Building Department needs to issue a permit but the SRA need to be satisfied first. Mr. Marley asked if the Essex Street sign also requires approval. Mr. Daniel noted the signage also requires DRB review and approval.

Mr. Guarino noted the SRA's frustration with the lack of response from the applicant. Mr. Rubin agreed and added that the applicant was unreachable and willfully violated the city's signage process and unfairly moved forward with signage changes while all other business owners properly follow the required approval process. Mr. Rubin further noted that these steps are necessary and there are resources to aid in that process. The application should have been resolved earlier and he needs to be caught up. He asked if the official name of the downtown mall had been clarified. Mr. Daniel noted the discrepancy between Witch City Mall at Museum Place and East India Mall. Mr. Daniel noted that Museum Place is the private real estate name and the courtyard is East India Mall.

Mr. Marley noted that he is not familiar with the process since he's only come before the Board once in 17 years. Mr. Barrett noted the applicants needs to read the ordinance to see what is required and to not be non-responsive.

Mr. Daniel stated that the signage on the garage side was unknown to the SRA. Ms. Newhall-Smith from the Planning Department offered to reach out to Mr. Marley and to work with him on the requirements for an SRA and DRB review such as dimensions, materials, lighting, attachments, etc.

*Guarino opens public comment.*

William LeGault, 2 Orne Street. Noted the applicant's lack of respect for the Board. Mr. Marley replied that medical issues were the cause of his delayed response.

Alisa Connery, Ward 1. Shared concerns about walking under the Church Street entrance atrium glass since it is heavily cracked with missing pieces and asked when it will be fixed. Mr. Marley replied that the atrium is scheduled for repairs in the Spring of 2019.

City Councilor Madore, Ward 2 Councilor. She is glad that Mr. Marley is present and wants this property to succeed and reiterated that there are city resources to help him improve the mall. As a former member of the SRA, she knows it's taken nearly 2 years to get a preliminary response from him.

Gary Gill, Ward 3. Stated that this building has been an eye sore for years as the interior is not welcoming, and visitors are directed to bathrooms elsewhere due to the appearance of the mall bathrooms. The Church Street facade is never cleaned, and the doors are hard to open. The metal facade and metal roof along Essex Street are faded and the windows are discolored. This nearly 50-year-old building is lacking curb appeal.

Brian Miles, Ward 1. Requested the scope of proposed renovations to the mall. Mr. Marley replied that that is not part of the scope of this meeting.

*Guarino closes public comment.*

Rubin: Motion to continue.

Seconded by: Barrett. Passes: 3-0

### **3. 211 Bridge Street (Bridge at 211): Update on developer selection.**

Dale Yale, Co-Chair for Bridge at 211 Board of Directors, and Bob Farley, Architect, were present to discuss the project.

Mr. Daniel stated that the SRA holds a facade easement on the building. The CPA awarded Bridge at 211 a \$68,000 grant to replace windows on the wing that was added to the building in 1898. The window replacement details require SRA review and approval.

Ms. Yale stated that Mr. Farley has experience in Salem and with ecclesiastical buildings. Many want to see this building survive as it houses a food pantry, a repair café to fix broken items, and the Salem Arts Association and Artisan Shop. A 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Hall is used for events and there is also an historic hook organ. They are planning a focus group in the spring to seek input on what other uses will enhance what already exists in the City and to plan for future maintenance and restoration of the building.

Mr. Farley stated that all 26 windows on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor will be replaced in 2 phases. Phase 1 will begin soon and only consist of replacing the lower windows. The upper windows will be replaced in Phase 2 with work expected to begin within 1-2 years. The windows are 7' high x 4' wide with larger

windows along the North (facing Bridge Street and East,) while the South side windows face the alleyway. The exterior stone sills will remain; however, the exterior molding at the head and jambs are rotting and will be replaced with painted mahogany and sealant to fill the joint between the brick façade and the wood. The windows operate using weight boxes in the jambs. The same window replacement method was used at the library two years ago and this replacement will last for many years. All the sashes will be rebuilt matching the 1898 window pane profile and the historic single pane glass will be reinstalled. Window Woman, a wood window restoration company in Amesbury, will complete the job. The existing exterior storm windows will be reinstalled after the restoration work is complete.

Mr. Rubin asked if there was additional work the applicant would like to complete. Mr. Farley replied that replacing the window with a new manufactured window with a high R-value and easier operation without weights, but that would not be historically correct. Chains will be used in lieu of ropes for a smoother operation.

Mr. Guarino asked if work would be done at the remaining North side of the structure, in a Phase 3. Ms. Yale replied that all the windows need to be addressed. They selected the windows with the most need first and will return at another time for the remaining windows.

Mr. Daniel stated that Bridge at 211 took the opportunity to market themselves along with The Tabernacle Church to receive CPA funding. The Salem Historic Commission will also meet with them and provide the required letter of support.

Mr. Farley noted that a smaller window at a toilet room has been reduced in size using plywood but will be restored to a window size that was originally in place.

*Guarino opens public comment.*

Tim Jenkins, 18 Broad Street. Replaced 12 of their 18th century windows at the Pickering House and their analysis shows that they saved money by replacing not restoring, and they also reinstalled the glass. The materials are better now, and their original windows were mostly made of pine and oak. He appreciates the effort the applicant is going through.

Gary Gill, Ward 3. Asked if there were original pictures of the building that could be used for a possible fundraiser to restore the steeple at some point. Ms. Yale replied yes, and they have a section of balustrade in the basement to use to replicate what was previously installed. Suggested removing the storm windows so the building looks as it once did. Commended their decision to match original details. Mr. Farley replied that eliminating storm windows would require thicker muntins to insulate the glass and retain heat in the building.

*Guarino closes public comment.*

Rubin: Motion to approve as presented  
Seconded by: Barrett. Passes: 3-0.

## **New / Old Business**

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### **1. 5 Broad Street (Former Salem Senior Center):**

Mr. Daniels stated that Bill Luster has returned to provide information on their proposed plan for the building.

Mr. Luster stated that they need to rectify the minimum bid price issue and will submit a final proposal to the SRA within 3-5 weeks. They've decided to duplex down all the first-floor units not just 1 at the rear left corner. They can remove approximately 18" to add 2 more rooms to each unit and can absorb the cost of removing the basement floor even if they encounter ledge. This will enable him to come closer to the minimum bid requirement. The entire first-floor will have 2 bedrooms with 2 rooms downstairs. The third-floor units were all 1 bedroom, but to double their purchase price they will demolish the third-floor, add a new lower third-floor, and new 4<sup>th</sup> floor loft units although the value of lofts is still being determined. They will retain the historic character but believe the dormers are original. They will seek advice from design firm Pitman & Wardley before they consult with the Salem Historic Commission.

Mr. Luster stated that the HDIP is moving forward and if they get it they might add a second affordable unit. A 10-20-year tax increment will increase buyers purchase power and they can move forward with the tax credits. This is a project that could take a significant amount of tax credits, but it might not be as competitive, in the eyes of the state, as a higher unit building in another town or city.

Mr. Luster noted several other concerns meeting the minimum purchase price such as a possible inflated appraisal value and the affordable unit proposal. A large 2- or 3-bedroom unit will add some cost and can give money back to SRA. He hopes to discuss that at the next meeting.

Mr. Guarino suggested the applicant expedite their revised proposal, so it be reviewed by the SRA and discussed at the February 13, 2019 meeting. Mr. Luster replied that he will try to meet that deadline and present what they can

Mr. Rubin asked for the second-floor ceiling height. Mr. Luster replied there is 28-feet from the second-floor to the peak of roof and a fourth-floor would be good for the loft spaces with possible inset balcony at the rear, which would not change the peak roof. The second-floor ceiling height is 13-feet and could be lowered to 10-feet 6-inches. They want to leave first and second floor corridors and stairs and don't want to change their unit count of 12.

Mr. Rubin asked if the HDIP would be a required approval. Mr. Luster replied that he hopes it would be offered to them but not a requirement, Mr. Daniel states that there is a possibility of a local tax exemption rather than the state tax credit but does not want to rely on these things to make the development feasible.

*Guarino opens public comment.*

Lou Sirianni, 6 Botts Court, Representative of Historic Salem Inc (HSI.) Commended the SRA on selecting developer that suggested 12 units, since it was a goal for HSI and the neighborhood to achieve a low unit count, and he believes the dormer idea could be done well like in the Back Bay. He's encouraged to see the SRA so supporting and he will let the Board know if he finds the amendments reasonable. He suggested that the appraisal may be wrong and that a new appraisal may bring a new result, especially since neither of the 3 developers came close to that it. \$1 Million or just under is reasonable and the restoration work will take a lot of money. Mr. Daniel replied that they've investigated the appraisal and found it to be valid.

Jessica Herbert, Chair of the Salem Historic Commission. Stated that the Historic Commission will watch over this project closely, 12 units is ideal, and hopefully the financing can be worked out. Mr. Daniel replied that the City Ordinance requires that the minimum purchase price be outside the

appraised value unless the units are all senior housing. The proposed amendments, such as dormers that may not be original are attractive currently and can be approved; however, a Historic Preservation consultant should review it before it comes back to the SRA again. She is excited for this to come together.

Jeremy Schiller, lives across the street. Asked how these decisions will be made going forward and if there will be a public input and oversight. Mr. Daniel replied that the SRA owns it and will oversee the process. The SRA put together the RFP and needs to make a recommendation to the City Council to recommend Charing Cross in February. The City Council can accept the SRA's recommendation or not. Milestones are included, and land disposition and local permitting can occur concurrently. The Planning Board and Salem Historic Commission will review it too. The City Council is currently in session to discuss the permitting path for this project and he hopes it will be adopted soon. There was a mixture of options in the proposals submitted, but the purchase price is a requirement of the ordinance. The public can participate in both the Planning Board and Salem Historic Commission review process.

Mr. Guarino stated that public comment is critical to the process and the SRA picked what was in-keeping with the neighborhood and the City.

Mr. Luster added that the municipal ordinance required the minimum bid be met. Mr. David Hart did the appraisal and although they have some concerns with his findings, they must meet the number.

*Guarino closes public comment.*

Barrett: Motion to continue.  
Seconded by: Rubin. Passes: 3-0.

## **Adjournment**

Rubin: Motion to adjourn the January 9, 2019 meeting.  
Seconded by: Barrett. Passes 3-0.

Meeting is adjourned at 7:30 PM.

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