

**City of Salem Massachusetts
Public Meeting Minutes**

Board or Committee: Redevelopment Authority, Regular Meeting
Date and Time: Wednesday, August 10, 2016 at 6:05 pm
Meeting Location: 120 Washington Street, Third Floor Conference Room
Members Present: Vice-Chairperson Matthew Smith, Conrad Baldini, Robert Curran, Russell Vickers
Members Absent: Chairperson Grace Harrington
Others Present: Tom Daniel – Director of Planning and Community Development, Andrew Shapiro – Economic Development Planner
Recorder: Colleen Anderson

Vice-Chair Matthew Smith calls the meeting to order. Roll call was taken.

Executive Director's Report

Tom Daniel expressed his appreciation for being back working for the City of Salem and noted that he looked forward to again working with the SRA and community.

Urban Renewal Area Projects Under Review

1. 288 Derby Street (Bambolina): Discussion and vote on proposed installation of blade sign

Shapiro stated that the applicant is requesting to install a 12 ½"x54" blade sign and that the bottom of the sign will be more than 10 feet above grade. The sign meets both the design standards and the City ordinance for signage. Black metal brackets and fasteners will be used. The DRB requested that the screws that attach it to the building will also will black. The DRB has recommended approval.

Baldini: Motion to approve as recommended by the DRB.
Seconded by: Curran. Passes 4-0.

*87 Washington Street (Opus) was taken out of order, later in the meeting)

2. 90 Lafayette Street (Adea's Mediterranean Kitchen): Discussion and vote on proposed installation of signage (including A-Frame sign), and outdoor seating area

Shapiro stated that the applicant is requesting to install two signs, one building sign above the storefront pinned to the metal façade with ¼" thick black lettering and 1" deep pins to make the sign sit in front of the façade by 1". Existing gooseneck lighting above the storefront will illuminate the sign and no additional lighting is proposed. A second 2'x3' wood A-frame sign with chalkboard is being requested. There is sufficient room to place the sign on the sidewalk within 10 feet of the entrance. The DRB suggested that the applicant could have the frame of the a-frame sign be silver, red or black to match the color theme, if he so chose. Two sets of tables and chairs are proposed, the

tables would have an aluminum top finish and the chairs would be red metal. The DRB has recommended approval.

Vickers: Motion to approve as recommended by the DRB.
Seconded by: Curran. Passes 4-0.

3. 161 Essex Street / East India Square (Peabody Essex Museum): Discussion and vote on proposed loading dock area improvements (enabling phase of Museum expansion project)

Bob Monk and Philip Johns of the Peabody Essex Museum (PEM) were present to discuss the project.

Bob Monk, of PEM, stated that to keep the museum operations running smoothly during the expansion, the loading dock would need improvements. The new loading dock would cover the same area, and will be skewed, but would be covered and will allow delivery trucks to back-up to the dock and be sealed to enhance security, which has been a problem previously for the museum. Five parking spaces will be maintained in the lot for contractors and vendors, etc. The electrical system, which has been temporarily moved onto the lawn, will be moved back to its original location. The cover will be clad in metal paneling to match all other metal components. New landscaping, screening, and a four foot high hedge will be installed along Charter Street. Details of the landscaping plan will be part of the museum expansion project. Monk noted that if this work were approved, the PEM would begin construction in mid to late October.

Vickers asked how the dock will be sealed. Monk replied, with a weather seal at the opening, which will provide security during art deliveries and separation from the dumpster.

Shapiro asked when the transformers would be relocated and how it will be screened. Monk replied that they would be removed with the larger expansion project. National Grid will be providing a new service to serve the full capacity of the museum and expansion. Monk noted that the hedge along Charter Street will be four feet high and will continue around the side of the loading dock area. It will be backed up by an eight foot high foliage screen to conceal the electrical components and the dumpster from the neighbors but they are prohibited from National Grid to place permanent barriers around the equipment to allow them access.

Shapiro asked when the landscaping component would be completed. Monk replied that would be provided with the larger museum expansion proposal and it will be reviewed by the DRB.

Baldini: Motion to approve as recommended by the DRB and as shown on plans dated August 10, 2016.

Seconded by: Vickers. Passes 4-0.

4. 87 Washington Street (Opus): Discussion and vote on proposed alley lighting and shade sale installations for outdoor seating area

Mark McDonough, owner, was present to discuss the proposed installations.

McDonough stated that he wanted to highlight the alleyway and his rear seating area with brightly colored flags and four sails in three different colors. The crisscrossed LED alleyway lighting and flags would require several connections to the exterior wall of City Hall. Salem Five has given their permission to connect to the trees on their property in the courtyard and to provide firefly lighting at the trees.

Daniel asked if the proposed connections will be made to the brick. McDonough replied that they would be made to the mortar.

Shapiro noted that the DRB did not have a particular recommendation for any of the three schemes shown on the plans being presented. Vickers noted that the scheme should be left up to the owner depending on what will work best. Shapiro noted that prayer flags will also be installed with the alleyway lighting.

Daniel asked what the timeline was for the installation. McDonough replied within the next two weeks.

Shapiro noted that a sculpture is being proposed in the rear courtyard that needs the Public Art Commission's approval, but the SRA needs to approve a concept and location. An image of a sculpture that could serve as an inspiration of a commissioned piece has been submitted and the location would be in the corner of the courtyard closest to the seating area.

McDonough noted that the planters shown on the plan have also been being eliminated and are no longer being considered for the project.

Vickers: Motion to approve as recommended by the DRB with the applicant to select a scheme and the art piece subject to the Public Art Commissions approval.
Seconded by: Baldini. Passes 4-0.

5. 9-11 Dodge Street, 217-219 Washington Street and 231-251 Washington Street (Dodge Area LLC c/o RCG LLC): Discussion and vote on Design Development submission

Matthew Picarsic and Andrew Zimmerman of RCG LLC were present to discuss the project.

Picarsic stated that this presentation covers the Design Development set and a review of the exterior materials of the South and West facades. He noted that they met with the DRB in July and the images have been updated to reflect the DRB's recommendations. The Hospitality Group that they are dealing with has their own hotel design standards that Hilton will need to approve before it comes before any Salem boards. The same architect and contractor will be used for both structures.

Daniel asked if the projects will be built at once. Picarsic replied that the structure will be built simultaneously although the garage will need to be completed before the hotel opens. The mixed-use building and garage will start first.

Zimmerman noted that the connector stair entrance has been widened at the base to make it more inviting and less industrial, as recommended by the DRB. Picarsic noted that the material changes are the upper metal material has been changed to light cembrit fiber-cement panels and the colors vary. Zimmerman added that the lower level will be cast cement nichiha panels. Picarsic noted that the lower two floors are for commercial use and the upper levels will be residential. Balconies are proposed and one of the DRB's comments was to determine the balcony edge detail and material at the underside of each balcony.

Zimmerman noted that the public entrance at the courtyard / residential lobby there will be a transformer screened with a removable corten metal that may match the wall of the courtyard. A bench, possibly with a wood seat and corten base will begin outside and continue through the glass wall and into the mixed-use lobby. A feature wall made up of a large format wall tile that looks like metal will be placed on the two story feature wall within the lobby. A two story metal stair will connect the upper public parking level to the Lobby and the glass exterior wall will provide visibility. A bluestone like concrete paver will be used as the courtyard flooring material.

Picarsic noted that the building directory location has not been finalized but is still shown on the images. The lower level of the South building (Mill Hill) will be a thin brick, in a traditional red color, on a metal backer which will allow the building structure to be wood. Baldini asked if the bricks were panels or individual. Zimmerman replied individual but with corner pieces and it will have vertical control joints every 30 feet.

Daniel asked if the top level would be metal and if the window would be operable. Picarsic replied that it would be a grey cembrit material and that the windows would be operable. Zimmerman noted that brick areas will have cast stone headers and lintels to mimic a typical masonry building.

Picarsic stated that the top level of the South building will house a large amenity space – a community deck facing the water, kitchen space, gathering space, and fitness center. Baldini stated in his opinion that is a great project and one of the best projects added to the City of Salem.

Zimmerman noted the five recommendations stated by the DRB:

1. Widening of the alley stair – has been added
2. Develop and consider alternative materials for the underside of the balconies – still under development
3. Alternate placement of building directory – still under development and it is no longer is shown in the rendering
4. Lintel color at the brick façades – the recent rendering shows it lightened it was previously grey
5. Consider locations for public art in and around the project – A final location has yet to be determined although they have been in touch with Deborah Greel (Salem Public Art Planner) to determine the best location as well an appropriate type (sculpture, mural, etc.) and scale for a project of this size.

Picarsic noted that they are working towards the 50% mark of the construction documents. There will be at least one more meeting with the DRB and following the approval of the hotel design by Hospitality Group, the hotel will be presented to the Salem boards in the fall. Abatement is currently underway for the existing one story building and the demolition should follow within the next couple of weeks. The City should wrap up its dealings with Massworks funded infrastructure improvements by the end of August. Shapiro noted that the time frame could be extended to later in the fall. Picarsic noted that a bulk of the utility, site work, roadway realignment, transformer pad relocation, etc., are ongoing and depending on the weather they hope to apply for a foundation permit in September and being excavation by October or November.

Baldini stated this is project will clean up and make this a great area and he is in favor of it. Daniel stated that he is in favor of this exciting project and asked why a ceramic wall treatment was being proposed and not a continuation of the corten metal. Zimmerman replied that the corten is resting on concrete footings and is meant for exterior use while the ceramic treatment is meant for indoor application, and that is what has been recommended by their projects architectural firm, Arrowstreet.

Picarsic noted that the DRB suggested placing the public art along that wall, and it is a consideration, however; there is an outdoor plaza is a high profile location with greater visibility that may be better suited to public art. Daniel stated that public art on public property vs. private property is something to be determined. Picarsic noted that the wall outside the lobby is private property.

Daniel stated that the sidewalk treatment along the West building reads differently than the rest of the site. Zimmerman replied that landscape details and patterning shown are still in development but there will be some permeability with the finish material.

Vickers asked about vehicular access to the site. Picarsic replied that there are three entry locations at the three different levels. Two at the 18 foot grade change along Dodge Street - one at the far end of Dodge Street Court for the lower level parking to possibly become assigned parking, a second near the intersection of Dodge Street Court and Dodge Street to be mostly use by hotel guests, and a third off of the curved end of Washington Street to get to the 3rd level for visitors and the public.

Baldini asked how many rental units there will be. Picarsic replied 67 residential units, 3 live/work spaces, one unit was eliminated to include more amenity space, and 110+ hotel rooms. There will be 15,000 SF of mix-use commercial space. Picarsic noted that the hotel is very excited about moving into Salem.

Vice-Chairperson Smith opens public comment.

Councilor Tom Furey, Salem Councilor-At-Large. Councilor Furey stated that this project is the missing link to the entry corridor of Canal Street and believes this project is exciting and impressive.

Picarsic replied that they are taking the vision of the structure as you approach the stop light seriously and they are exciting about the activity this project will bring to the downtown.

Vice-Chairperson Smith closes public comment.

Vickers: Motion to approve the Design Development as recommended by the DRB.
Seconded by: Smith. Passes 4-0.

New / Old Business

2. 65 Washington Street (former Salem District Court Property): General project updates

Daniel stated that a meeting is planned for Thursday, August 11th, with the developers to check on their progress. There is a projected cost of \$850,000 to remediate the building of hazardous materials. The Commonwealth's Housing Development Incentive Program (HDIP) seems to be the best fit to help the developer access funds at this time, although other options such as the City's Revolving Loan Fund for environmental remediation and Mass Development Brownfields program will also be considered. Shapiro noted that more information will be available at the next meeting and that the developer is still in their due diligence phase to investigate the site due to a delay in receiving their last license agreement from DCAMM for a final site investigation – soil and the underground tank. Once that is addressed the financing gap will be addressed. Daniel stated that they will help however they can to move the process forward.

Minutes

The minutes from the July 13, 2016 regular meeting were reviewed.

Vickers: Motion to approve,
Seconded by: Curran. Passes 4-0

Adjournment

Baldini: Motion to adjourn the meeting.
Seconded by: Curran.

Meeting is adjourned at 7:10PM.

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

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