

**City of Salem Massachusetts
Public Meeting Minutes**

Board or Committee:	Redevelopment Authority, Regular Meeting
Date and Time:	Wednesday, August 10, 2022, at 6:00 pm
Meeting Location:	Virtual Zoom Meeting
SRA Members Present:	Chair Grace Napolitano, David Guarino, Cynthia Nina-Soto,
SRA Members Absent:	Christine Madore, Dean Rubin
Others Present:	Tom Daniel – Director of Planning and Community Development, Kate Newhall-Smith, Principal Planner
Recorder:	Colleen Brewster

Regular Meeting

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Daniel stated that there was no report to make at this time.

Projects in the Urban Renewal Area

1. **5 Higginson Square/10 Derby Square** Small Project Review – Replacement of building's windows on the north façade of the third floor

Michael Proscia of Jones Architecture was present to discuss the project.

Mr. Proscia stated that he went before the DRB in August and received a favorable recommendation for a window replacement. The project consists of the replacement of the third-floor windows on the north and west façade, with details, colors, and window manufacturer to match the windows replaced in the Spring, and the existing windows would be salvaged. The new windows would sit within a 1-inch wood subframe, which will be clad in aluminum.

Mr. Guarino noted that the DRB requested the window must be identical, but they are close but not exact. Mr. Proscia confirmed that the windows would be identical to the previously replaced window, the wood subframe would be the only difference, and the DRB had no issue with that.

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: Guarino made a motion to approve subject to the DRB recommendations. Seconded by: Nina-Soto.
Roll Call: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Napolitano. 3-0 in favor

2. **41 Lafayette Street:** Small Project Review – Painting of mural on exterior of Barrio

Maggie Osborn of Barrio was present to discuss the project.

Ms. Osborn stated that the new interior décor is hand painted custom piece in a day of the dead theme on the Central Street façade, which the artist believes fits in with the neighborhood. The artist is highly experienced and takes great pride in making sure the mural will fit the community. None of the other Barrio locations have a mural like this. The face of the brick would be primed black with the mural of a woman over it using colors that match those used in the interior space. The artist's other works use high quality Sherwin Williams paint and have lasted for years without the need for touch-ups.

Mr. Guarino stated that the proposed artwork is beautiful, and the façade isn't in great shape, so this will be an improvement. He asked how the two existing vents in the façade would be treated. Ms. Vallie replied that the vents were non-functioning and have been removed with the openings filled with wood; they will be primed and painted.

Chair Napolitano noted the concern regarding painting the brick and following the Secretary of Interior Standards for Historic Buildings. She asked if the SRA was restricted to follow the guidelines despite the DRB's enthusiasm. Ms. Newhall-Smith replied that the Historical Commission Guidelines suggest avoiding painting brick which traps moisture, but the guidelines don't prohibit it.

Chair Napolitano asked if there was an alternative to painting brick. Ms. Osborn replied no, painting the brick was selected by the artist to freshen up the brick façade which isn't in good shape, but the brick pattern will be visible through the mural.

Mr. Guarino noted the DRB's suggestion to review the proposal with the Public Art Commission (PAC). Mr. Daniel replied that PAC review and expertise would need to be a suggestion or condition of the SRA. The SRA can approve it in concept with a referral to the PAC for any modifications.

Mr. Guarino asked about future direction for business owners seeking to paint murals. Mr. Daniel replied that the current process makes sense, because the business owner needs confirmation that painting of a façade would be allowed by the SRA. Ms. Newhall-Smith noted that when applicants apply for public art, the Senior Planner for Arts & Culture, Julie Barry, is also notified and can communicate directly with the applicant should she have any questions or concerns through the online application portal.

Public Comment:

Polly Wilbert, 7 Cedar Street. Suggested an approval of this proposal sets a precedent for all the SRA properties. Kokeshi was in this space previously and she's concerned with space downtown that may make future tenants hesitant to occupy the space. She also raised concern with the tenant's official use of the space and whether what's proposed would be considered art or a sign. She noted that sandblasting to remove the mural may cause a deficit in the façade, but other sign downtown appears to be vinyl and removable, and that should be considered. It would be unfortunate for art, which is a personal choice, becomes controversial. It's trendy now but may not be appropriate when they control so many facades. If approved, all possible ramifications should be considered.

Chair Napolitano asked what obligations are on a former occupant to remove a mural they painted. Mr. Daniel replied that it would be addressed in the terms of their lease, but they may be

obliged to restore the façade if they were to move. Ms. Osborn stated that they received approval from the building owner, and the artists see this mural as a gift to the community and a landmark to the city. Mr. Daniel noted that these are matters area also what the PAC needs to weigh-in on, when murals extend beyond the life of the business, who is required to maintain or remove it. That needs clarification since it is a legal obligation. The PEM used vinyl applications on a couple sides of their buildings, but they may be temporary and what's proposed for this application would last longer.

Ms. Nina-Soto asked if the PAC would make a recommendation on whether a vinyl application would be preferred, and whether the SRA approval or denial would be pending the PAC's recommendation. Mr. Daniel replied that the SRA could approve it in concept and the discussion on how to advance the design would be discussed by the PAC.

Ms. Osborn noted that vinyl isn't preferred, although she understands the concerns of painting over brick. If the mural isn't approved, they would only seek to install a sign for their business, but the artist sees this as an improvement like what has been done elsewhere in Salem. She noted that Seagrass has painted their entire façade and she raised concern on how that was reviewed and approved. Ms. Newhall-Smith replied that Seagrass sells medical marijuana, and their mural was part of a community benefits agreement; the owners are in charge the mural's maintenance. Mr. Daniel noted that the sculpture for Brix and murals at Real Pirates went through the SRA process and the PAC process. Chair Napolitano raised concerns of providing an approval without knowledge of the details that need to be determined, particular for future applicants within the SRA Urban Renewal Area. Ms. Osborn stated that she would take on responsibility for maintaining the mural and she will change it if they were to leave. The piece was also selected with Salem in mind, not Barrio. Mr. Guarino stated that he didn't remember this level of discussion regarding Seagrass or Real Pirates, but it should be handled how those were or the process should be defined.

Ms. Nina-Soto stated that she's inclined to move it forward because it is representative of Salem's past, present, and future. The current condition of the wall is also not good, and this would be an improvement. This discussion is getting into the weeds when the review and recommendation should really be with the PAC. She noted that several murals downtown are representative of who used to live in Salem and who currently lives in Salem.

Chair Napolitano reiterated her concern with understanding the process rather than the proposal, which she was also in favor of. She's comfortable with sending it to the PAC but would want it to return to the SRA along with the terms required by the PAC. Mr. Daniel noted that the PAC has a jurisdictional role, and they have a different authority which includes to negotiate it as a gift to the city. The details and terms can be defined by the PAC and return to the SRA for review.

Public Comment:

Christopher Barlow, 289 Essex Street. The murals at Seagrass were painted over by Deschamps Printing Company. He is in favor of the proposed mural.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

Ms. Osborn stated that she is on the PAC's August agenda.

VOTE: Guarino made a motion to continue pending review and approval by the Public Art Commission. Seconded by: Nina-Soto.

Guarino amended the motion to include that agenda item will be continued to the September 14, 2022, regular meeting. Seconded by: Nina-Soto.

Roll Call: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Napolitano. 3-0 in favor

3. **298-302 Essex Street:** Small Project Review – Painting of commercial window and door trim and painting of residential entry door trim.

Bill Levin, Owner of the property, was present to discuss the project.

Mr. Levin stated that considering the recent sidewalk repair that has lightened the walkways, they would like to darken the trim elements on the commercial storefronts, which will continue the look at 304 Essex Street onto this façade. There is currently white trim around the first-floor windows and doors, which they are proposing to paint Inkwell Black by Sherwin Williams to match the color of the new retail doors that the board approved at a previous meeting.

Ms. Nina-Soto asked if the painting will be on the first floor only and if it is proposed at the upper floors. Mr. Levin replied that there are no plans to continue the painting above, the white trim would remain at the residence above and black at the commercial level.

Public Comment:

Christopher Barlow, 289 Essex Street. In favor of the painting proposal.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: Nina-Soto made a motion to refer the application to the DRB for review. Seconded by: Guarino.

Ms. Newhall-Smith suggested an SRA approval pending DRB approval or the application would return to the SRA.

Guarino amended the motion to include an SRA approval subject to DRB review and approval. Seconded by Nina-Soto.

Roll Call: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Napolitano. 3-0 in favor.

4. **27 Charter Street:** Small Project Review – Installation of additional wireless antennas with support equipment for DISH Wireless.

Matt Burke of DISH Wireless was present to discuss the project.

Mr. Burke stated that they are seeking to collocate with other wireless carriers by creating a new network. Six antennas are proposed as well as a rooftop platform, and they will match the existing conditions that the SRA has approved in the past. From the north, new antennas would be added in the middle of the rooftop parapet, matching the look of the brick and concrete, one antenna mounted on the façade and the other secured on a sled mount. From the east, the installation would not be visible. From the south, antennas would again be added toward the

south-west corner of the rooftop parapet, with an installation to match the façade. From the west, antennas would be added on the parapet and the tops of new equipment would be partially visible.

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: Guarino made a motion to approve pending DRB approval. Seconded by: Nina-Soto.
Roll Call: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Napolitano. 3-0 in favor.

5. **43 Church Street:** Small Project Review – Construction of a one-story addition on the rear of the building to extend the restaurant’s dining area. A portion of the proposed addition is located on land owned by the Salem Redevelopment Authority, continued from June 8, 2022.

Kathi Turner and Jim Turner of Turner’s Seafood were present to discuss the project.

Ms. Turner stated that to make this project less complicated they’ve simplified the proposal. They would still install a new handicap rear door and construct the parapet design, but they will make the structure more temporary and to serve only 38 people, which would no longer require a lease for the use of the property. They will also grade the area, repair the brick, and make drainage repairs. A revised design will be presented at the next meeting. Mr. Turner noted the previous proposal raised concerns with how to use the SRA land, and the temporary structure and agreement with East Regiment Beer Company was a simpler process that received more support. With pre-COVID conditions returning in 2023 it made sense for a simple but similar design.

Mr. Guarino asked if the deck would be temporary. Ms. Turner replied that the deck would be in small sections that could be removed for access. There will need to be openings to secure the posts, but they will also be removable.

Chair Napolitano suggested organizing a similar License Agreement modeled after East Regiment and the conceptual project could continue with the DRB for review.

Public Comment:

John Kucinski, VP of Facilities at Salem Five Bank. Salem Five provided a letter and those concerns are still applicable. They also have concerns with storage of the temporary elements. Ms. Turner replied that storage would be off-site.

Ms. Newhall-Smith noted that the letter is in the file for DRB review.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: Guarino made a motion to authorize the city staff to draft a licensing agreement for the outdoor deck proposal. Seconded by: Nina-Soto.
Roll Call: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Napolitano. 3-0 in favor.

VOTE: Guarino made a motion to refer to the DRB. Seconded by: Nina-Soto.
Roll Call: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Napolitano. 3-0 in favor.

6. **252 Bridge Street and 32-34 Federal Street:** Review of DRB's Design Consultation of the Exchange Salem – Part 1: Redevelopment of 252 Bridge Street, the 'Crescent Lot' into a six-story mixed use building with approximately 7,325 square feet of commercial space, up to 120 residential units that will be offered at varying levels of affordability, creation of public spaces, and site improvements.

VOTE: Guarino made a motion to continue to the next regular meeting on September 14, 2022.
Seconded by: Nina-Soto.

Roll Call: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Napolitano. 3-0 in favor

7. **73 Lafayette Street and 9 Peabody Street:** Schematic Design Review – Review of DRB Recommendation for the demolition of existing building at 73 Lafayette Street and construction of new, mixed-use structure with 35,000 square feet for the North Shore Health Center, pharmacy, and urgent care facility and for income-restricted senior housing residential units. Construction of a new mixed-use structure on 9 Peabody Street with income-restricted senior housing residential units, commercial and gallery space, continued from July 13, 2022.

VOTE: Nina-Soto made a motion to continue to the next regular meeting on September 14, 2022.
Seconded by: Guarino.

Roll Call: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Napolitano. 3-0 in favor

8. **301 Essex Street:** Schematic Design Review – Erect a 3-½ story addition above the existing building (known as Jerry's Army & Navy Store) with ten (10) residential units and twelve (12) onsite parking spaces located inside the building at the first-floor rear with retail space fronting on Essex Street, continued from July 13, 2022.

VOTE: Guarino made a motion to continue to the next regular meeting on September 14, 2022.
Seconded by: Nina-Soto.

Roll Call: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Napolitano. 3-0 in favor.

New / Old Business

1. **30 Church Street:** East Regiment Beer Company Request for License Renewal

Mr. Josh Engdahl was present to discuss the license renewal.

Mr. Engdahl stated that they have had no issues with the city to date and he suggested a multi-year renewal of three or five years, and if any issues arise, he could return to the SRA during the term of the lease. The business would rather not attend yearly meetings.

Chair Napolitano stated that the renewal fee for the licensing agreement would need to be amended too and possibly the financial term. Ms. Newhall-Smith noted that the terms could be discussed tonight and voted at the next meeting. Mr. Guarino asked if the condition changes with the building if it would revert to the annual renewal.

Chair Napolitano suggested a 3-year renewal. Ms. Nina-Soto replied that it was not set in stone, the costs can go up, and asked if there was another agreement to reference. Mr. Daniel replied no, this is a unique situation for the SRA. Chair Napolitano noted that she was comfortable with

\$1,500 for a 3-year renewal. Mr. Guarino agreed. Ms. Nina-Soto suggested a slight escalation. Mr. Guarino suggested city staff refer to the Turner's agreement for reference.

VOTE: Guarino made a motion to continue to the September 14, 2022, meeting. Seconded by: Guarino.

Roll Call: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Napolitano. 3-0 in favor.

2. Redevelopment of the Historic Courthouses and the Crescent Lot: Update on Project Status

Mr. Daniel stated that they continue to meet with DCAMM and WinnDevelopment and the project will go before the SHC next week because the team wants to seek historic tax credits. Winn has plans with suggested uses by their preservation consultant, but once tenants are secured amendments will be required. Tax credits have three rounds a year with \$200,000 available per round, and they will repeat the process to accumulate funds. Winn has been seeking partners for the courthouses. Earlier this year they surveyed the exterior and windows with a National Park Service to evaluate their reuse for tax credits.

Ms. Newhall-Smith noted that applying for historic tax credits is a big step forward for the courthouses. The application is due to the state at the end of August. Most talk has been about the crescent lot but this progress on the new courthouses is encouraging. Winn will go before the Planning Board (PB) in fall but consultants for peer reviews are being assembled now to work begin review of the proposal. Mr. Daniel noted that the PB lost two members, and it is best to begin a process with more than seven members, so the review process doesn't need to restart do to voting eligibility. The city is working to fill the vacancies.

3. SRA Financials

Approval of Minutes

1. Review of July 13, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes from July 13, 2022, will be reviewed at the next regular meeting.

Other

Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that the Annual Meeting will be in September, most likely after the regular meeting. The Annual Report and proposed goals for fiscal year 2023 will be provided for the SRA's consideration.

Adjournment

VOTE: Nina-Soto made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by: Guarino.

Roll Call: Guarino, Nina-Soto, and Napolitano. 3-0 in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30PM.

Know your rights under the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 39 §23B and City Ordinance Sections 2-028 through 2-2033.