

**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, August 9, 2023, at 6:00 pm</b>
<b>Meeting Location:</b>	<b>Virtual Zoom Meeting</b>
<b>SRA Members Present:</b>	<b>Chair Grace Napolitano, Christine Madore, Cynthia Nina-Soto, Dean Rubin</b>
<b>SRA Members Absent:</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Others Present:</b>	<b>Tom Daniel – Director of Planning and Community Development; Kate Newhall-Smith, Principal Planner</b>
<b>Recorder:</b>	<b>Colleen Brewster</b>

**Executive Director's Report**

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Mr. Daniel stated:

1. Charolette Forten Park:
  - a. The City issued an RFP for 2023 programming, however; delays made procurement infeasible and the party they were going to award management to was understanding and the RFP will be issued again, later in 2023.
  - b. They are continuing to work with the proposed shade structure design at Charolette Fortin Park, which is funded through ARPA (American Recovery Plan Act).
  - c. Memorial: The process slowed because the national endowment for arts and humanities requiring historic review approval. Mr. Rubin noted that 12 artists responded, and a finalist will be selected by the end of September. They had to wait for funding before they could start seeking artists and committees have been set up to review certain finalists. Mr. Daniel noted that the park designer is part of the technical review of the shade structure to ensure nothing is damaged.
  - d. DPS contacted them due to concerns with maintaining the flower beds at Charolette Forten Park. They are proposing to use funding from the easement transaction to maintain the park. Ms. Newhall-Smith will post an RFQ requesting quotes from companies to nurture the plantings since it is more than what DPS can handle. They don't want to plant shrubs for easy maintenance as the DPS suggested, because the site has indigenous planting that need more care. Ms. Newhall-Smith noted that they are seeking monthly clean-out and seasonal maintenance.

**Downtown Business Update**

Ms. Newhall-Smith stated:

1. The owner of Chez Casa on Bridge Street will open a pizza parlor, possibly with a seasonal liquor license, at the former Flip the Bird location on New Derby Street. They may want to open soon to capture the fall tourist season.
2. Jennie Stuart moved her retail operations from Church Street to Front Street.
3. The Wine Shop will move into Jennie Stuart's former Church Street space, and the owner of the spaces confirmed that he has a NOI (Notice of Intent) with an interior design firm for the current Wine Shop space.

4. Jodie Bee Bakes is for sale.
5. Melt is for sale and looking for a buyer to keep the business going.
6. Theara Spicy Kitchen has opened in East Regiment Company on Church Street.
7. Salem Plant Witch: Moved to second floor of 201 Washington Street (the Hawthorne Building).
8. Black Craft: The company is installing a haunted house in the modern addition portion of the former Santander bank building on Essex Street. There will also be a café in the location. There are currently no plans for exterior changes, but they are aware that they would need to come to the SRA before they make any exterior changes on the building.
9. Outside the Urban Renewal area:
  - a. Salem Hospital: Dr. Roberts, who provided medical guidance during the COVID-19 pandemic, has left his position, and they dedicated the hospital lobby to him.
10. Ms. Madore asked if the PEM painting the corner of a building required city approval. Ms. Newhall-Smith replied that they don't typically require approval for PEM promotional events, but she will investigate it.

## **City Initiatives**

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### **1. 21 Church Street: Improvements to the Salem Green Parking Lot**

Dave Kucharsky, City of Salem Traffic and Parking Director.

Mr. Kucharsky stated that they are working to repave, repair, and provide accessible spaces to the Church Street lot. They proposed a parking kiosk with resident rates, EV charging stations through grant funding, and will work with Salem Five and the SRA to provide better screening at the dumpsters. After meeting with businesses, they will move and screen the dumpster within view of the public way. They are working with City Solicitor to obtain license agreements and will return to the SRA for approval of the screening design. There is no specific timeline, but the project is moving forward.

Mr. Rubin stated that the improvements are wonderful and sorely needed.

Ms. Madore asked if there was a net change in the number of spaces and whether the parking lot is over or underutilized. Mr. Kucharsky replied that they will lose 2 parking spaces to screen the dumpsters and the parking lot is fairly used and include reserved spaces for Salem Five through a reciprocal license agreement, however; the loss of 2 spaces isn't overall detrimental. Ms. Madore suggested eliminating an additional parking space to provide parking for 5-6 bikes, prioritizing sustainability within the city. Mr. Kucharsky replied that they have been working with Tom Devine (Senior Planner) and Brendan Linard (Transportation Planner) on assessing bicycle parking, and they will provide more bicycle parking throughout the city with concerns about walking distance to businesses, etc. Ms. Madore noted that the current bike parking crowds the ramp and crosswalk along Church Street and a relocation of it would be welcome.

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wishes to speak.

## **Projects in the Urban Renewal Area**

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There are no projects to review.

## **New / Old Business**

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Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that the current duties of the Treasurer are to sign checks occasionally related to the courthouse project, however; when they move forward with the financial policies in the fall, she would like the Treasurer to also review the bank statements. This current opening is only to serve out the remainder of David Guarino's term and having someone from the SRA review the financials would also be beneficial.

### Election of Treasurer

**VOTE:** Nina-Soto made a motion to elect Christine Madore as Treasurer. Seconded by: Rubin.  
Roll Call: Madore, Nina-Soto, Rubin, and Napolitano. 4-0 in favor.

Mr. Daniel noted that potential new SRA members are being vetted by Mayor Pangallo with the hope of them joining in September.

Redevelopment of the Historic Courthouses and the Crescent Lot:

Mr. Daniel stated that they hope to close on the remnant parcel in the next few days. WinnDevelopment and USG are continuing to reach out to stakeholders and city board chairs with the hope of seeking more community dialog. WinnDevelopment is also working on their application for local housing tax credit and how best to use their UPP (Underutilized Property Program) grant funding.

## **Approval of Minutes**

1. Review of July 12, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes

**VOTE:** Rubin made a motion to approve the minutes from July 12, 2023, with Rubin's edits.  
Seconded by: Nina-Soto.  
Roll Call: Madore, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano. 4-0 in favor.

## **Executive Session**

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To review and approve draft minutes from the June 14, 2023, Executive Session. These minutes represent Board discussion of WinnDevelopment's request to partner with Urban Smart Growth (USG) for the historic restoration, redevelopment, and reuse of the two court buildings at 32-34 Federal Street if the Chair determines that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body.

Chair entertains a motion to enter into Executive Session and states the Board will not reconvene in Open Session at the conclusion of the Executive Session

Chair Napolitano calls the meeting to order. Roll call was taken.

Rubin: Motion to begin executive session to review and approve draft minutes from the June 14, 2023, Executive Session. These minutes represent Board discussion of WinnDevelopment's request to partner with Urban Smart Growth (USG) for the historic restoration, redevelopment, and reuse of the two court buildings at 32-34 Federal Street if the Chair determines that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body.

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Seconded by: Nina-Soto.

Roll Call: Madore, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano. 4-0 in favor.

Rubin: Motion to end executive session.

Seconded by: Madore.

Roll Call: Madore, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano. 4-0 in favor.

## **Other**

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### **Adjournment**

Rubin: Motion to adjourn.

Seconded by: Madore.

Roll Call: Madore, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Napolitano. 4-0 in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 6:40PM

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