

City of Salem Massachusetts Public Meeting Minutes

Board or Committee:	Redevelopment Authority, Regular Meeting
Date and Time:	Wednesday, April 11, 2018 at 6:00 pm
Meeting Location:	120 Washington Street, Third Floor Conference Room
SRA Members Present:	Chair Grace Napolitano, David Guarino, Dean Rubin, Gary Barrett
SRA Members Absent:	Russell Vickers
Others Present:	Tom Daniel (Executive Director), Matt Coogan (Principal Planner)
Recorder:	Colleen Brewster

Chair Grace Napolitano calls the meeting to order at 6:05PM. Roll call was taken.

Projects Under Review

Executive Directors Report:

- A. Daniel stated that the May meeting will take place in the new large conference room at 98 Washington Street.
- B. Coogan distributed the ULI report and Daniel noted that Salem is on the developers' "radar".
- C. Witch City Mall: Daniel stated that there has been no progress with the signage. The Building Department has followed up but the mall owner has been non-responsive.
- D. Superior Court & County Commissioners Building: Daniel stated that they need input from Secretary Galvin who seemed receptive at their last meeting to modifying the legislation. The Tabernacle Church had requested to be included in the zone and they are interested in continuing with the process as ULI recommended. The Bridge at 211 (former Universalist Church) is also interested in joining the process. A meeting will be set up between The Tabernacle Church and The Bridge at 211 to review the general process. Lastly, DCAMM is still working on the mothballing the two court buildings.

Urban Renewal Area Projects Under Review

1. **Essex Street Pedestrian Mall (Salem PD):** Discussion and vote on adding reflective tape detectors on pedestrian mall bollards.

Chief Mary Butler was present to discuss the project.

Board member Gary Barrett arrives.

Daniel stated that the Salem Police would like to make the bollards more visible during night patrols. Chief Butler stated that three cruisers have recently hit bollards which are low to the ground and painted dark colors, and giving them some additional visibility would be beneficial. The main direction of travel is from the PEM towards Washington Street so reflective tape is only needed on one side. Rubin suggested the reflective tape be installed all the way around the bollard. Guarino agrees noting that vehicles could travel in either direction. Daniel had no concerns.

Chair Napolitano opens public comment.

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Napolitano closes public comment.

Rubin: Motion to approve adding reflective tape detectors on pedestrian mall bollards but to be placed the tape all the way around the bollards.

Seconded by: Barrett. Passes 5-0

2. **203-209 Essex Street (Hotel Salem):** Project update on remaining façade restoration and related SRA approvals.

Rich Cooper was present to discuss the project.

Cooper stated that they are ready to begin the work, they will close on their refinancing of the hotel on April 20th and this work will be the first. The sign band takes between 2-3 weeks to fabricate and it should be installed in mid May, as the same time as some painting.

Daniel stated that there are several items to be completed. Hotel Salem submitted a letter stating that the lower cornice is failing and needs repair, the sign panel which was just addressed, cleaning and restoration of the stone and brick façade. Cooper noted that the cleaning and restoration is on the agenda for the spring. Although he is unsure of the extent the restoration work will be and it should be done before the rooftop restaurant opens.

Daniel stated that the SRA and DRB reviewed this project and read the minutes of the October 20, 2016 meeting stated that “the basic exterior scope is brick repair, stone cleaning and repairs, cornice repairs and painting, new storefront, new pressed zinc band in the same location, secondary signage in the classic lettering style on the new sign band. All restoration work will be done within the standards of historic rehabilitation”, which is similar to what was expressed during a 2015 meeting. Daniel stated that the expectation was that the brick façade and relief panels would have been cleaned and restored by now. Cooper replied that they are going to do it and the refinancing will help them complete the list of items. They are painting the top, the sign band will be done, and they will clean the façade but he won’t promise something they can’t do. Daniel noted that these items are part of the project, their temporary Certificate of Occupancy was based on the future completion of the remaining work, such as at the cornice, and there is a level of work that the SRA was expecting to have been completed. He suggested a future private meeting to discuss those items. Rubin suggested a meeting before the refinancing has gone through and the money is gone since the money they receive may already be designated for other items.

3. **5-7 Derby Square:** Discussion and vote on repairs to exterior brick entry stairway and installation of hand railings.

David Dietz, condominium resident, was present to discuss the project.

Dietz stated that they are replacing deteriorating exterior stairs and adding handrails. One stair will have a stone tread due to excessive water falling off the roof at that corner. The DRB has requested that the new mortar match the existing.

Coogan stated that the DRB did review the project and recommended approval with the condition that the mortar match the existing color.

Chair Napolitano opens public comment.

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Napolitano closes public comment.

Guarino: Motion to approve with mortar stipulations.

Seconded by: Rubin. Passes 5-0

4. 65 Washington Street (District Court): Discussion and vote on final review of development project.

Daniel stated that in March the City Council approved the tax increment exemption (TIE) agreement and the Planning Board approved the Site Plan Review and Planned Unit Development (PUD). At their monthly DCAMM meeting, DCAMM was excited to hear about the progress. The City has a Memorandum of Agreement for this project. August is the deadline, DCAMM is aware of that deadline, and that can be extended if necessary in order for closing to occur. The application for preliminary certification has been submitted to DHCD. The second step in that process is the conditional certification and at that time the allocation amount is determined and the year in which those tax credit will be awarded.

Merrill Diamond (Developer), Greg Winter (Project Manager), Jeff Hirsch (VP of Operations for Urban Spaces and the Senior Project Manager), and Steve Tise (Architect) were present to discuss the project.

Diamond stated that they are hoping to receive money from the state to help with remediation. They've received approval from the public art working group with the help of Deb Greel for art to place along Federal Street. They will move on to the DRB next for approval so some of the items in the presentation are things they are considering but haven't been reviewed by the DRB.

Daniel noted that the project received Schematic Design approval from the SRA. This presentation is the start of the final design process and the SRA will decide whether it should move forward to the DRB. After it receives DRB recommendation it will return to SRA for approval.

Tise stated that they have been through the Planning Board and DRB for Schematic Design. The building is the same concept and the major modifications are in the details. The public art working group had a meeting on 4/10/18 and art direction has been determined. The building design has improved with the input received. The number of units and height remain the same and the internal changes were made as part of the peer review by Planning Board. They have modified parking layout and circulation to accommodate those suggestions.

Hirsch presented the approval image from August 2017 and their recent changes. The window design has changed, the base has been revised so that it contributes to the liveliness on Washington Street, the parking is still concealed behind a faux storefront, and the entrance canopy over the main entry has been revised. Tise noted the change to an Italian rosewood panel at the bays, an extruded aluminum material with an applied veneer. Diamond noted that the panels have changed color over the course of the project and the large rectangles have been darkened to tone down the building so it can work with the historic architecture along Washington Street. This building is a bridge between the old and new Salem. The style of building is transitional, not traditional or contemporary. Material samples will be provided for review. When the public art is integrated at the corner of Washington and Federal Streets it will fit in very well with its surroundings.

Tise stated that the major driving factor to make the project feasible was the parking. The plan is to reuse the basement of the existing courthouse for parking. New columns are being introduced into the existing basement structure, a new elevator and stairs, and there will be minimal contaminated soil displacement and no need for sheeting at the backs of the sidewalks. Hirsch noted that this will allow for a faster and less noisy construction cycle and a less messy construction site. Tise noted that there are other potential uses for the lower sub-basement level, which currently has some water in it, but they are investigating making it usable space.

Tise stated that the Ground Floor Plan has minimal changes. Along Federal Street there will be a two dimensional art treatment. Hirsch noted that the parking ratio is still 1:1, plus 6 tandem spots and approximately 21 spaces that can be equipped with stackers. He noted that more than 1 parking space may be preferred by some of the condominium owners. There will also be bicycle spaces and a separate door on Church Street for bike riders to enter, as well as a package concierge system/computerized lockers for delivery package storage in the Lobby.

Tise noted maintaining the 2 foot difference from the sidewalk to the First Floor remains to keep the existing foundation in place. There is 14 foot First Floor ceiling height and 10'-6" floor to floor at the upper levels.

Tise stated that at the Washington Street end by Federal Street there is a stone base with inset stone face panels. A dynamic cut metal panel art treatment will run down Federal Street but it will start at the front left-hand corner of the Washington Street facade. The building's name may be integrated into the Washington Street panel. Hirsch stated that when they release the name and marketing of the building the artwork, building, its name, interior and exterior treatment will start to make sense. Tise noted that the ground plane treatment has morphed into a series of images that will relate to the building as a whole.

Tise stated that in terms of the façade details, ladder-like elements will be added next to bedroom windows. They will be abstract window shutters, a series of tubes that are back fastened, will protrude 2", and will alternative which sides of the windows they are placed on from floor to floor. Hirsch noted that the symbol on the façade will be custom grill vent covers to conceal the venting.

Chair Napolitano asked what will be placed on the banners. Tise replied possible branding for the building that could change annually. Daniel noted that the DRB will review the banners. Diamond added that they may not remain, they will need the DRB review as well as an internal review if they want to keep them in place.

Tise stated that the entryway is a two-story lobby now that they've eliminated the floor above it. A stair at the rear of the Lobby will lead to the Second Floor common spaces at the rear of the building. They also hope to install a canopy above the entrance. They will conceal the accessible ramps behind the planter boxes and they are proposing back-lit translucent glass to make the back walls of the ramps more pronounced in the evening. There is a possibility of using a fret detail at the panels. Diamond stated that they need another City Council vote for the protruding bays, entry canopy, and roof cornice. A license agreement is needed for them to extend beyond the property line and the public right-of-way. Daniel asked about the Federal Street landscape strip and its easement. Tise replied that it will be redeveloped and they will provide the up-keep of the strip.

Guarino asked where the storefront begins. Hirsch replied along the left side of the building next to the ramp. Daniel asked about the material change at the columns. Tise replied that the columns were brick but they are now stone clad. The 24" columns are now 28" due to the need for fireproofing and the smaller black columns are integrated into the storefront.

Tise stated that they are working with a lighting consultant and submitted a lighting design to the Planning Board. They will include LED up-light the canopy that won't disturb the penthouse

tenants, recessed LED down-lights underneath at the awnings, and back-lit glass at the ramps. The back-lit glass will be along the parking and will start next to the emblem.

Hirsch stated that the cornice has been toned down. The 6th floor windows have been revised to integrate with the walls of the revised floor plan. Tise noted that small sections of the same aluminum panel were added at that floor where walls meet the exterior wall. Hirsch noted that the façade now has some brick fenestration, differences between the running bond and soldier coursing, and variation in the color of the brick patterns.

Guarino asked what the storefront will look like and if there will be advertising placed there. Tise replied back-lit glass. Coogan asked if the ramps are for entry to the retail space. Tise replied that the two ramps, the front will get the common main entrance, and the second on Church Street is for access to the retail space. Chair Napolitano asked for the square footage of the retail space. Hirsch replied that there is 3,000 SF retail space available for up to two tenants. Tise noted that they are making provisions for a restaurant with a shaft space through the building for a commercial hood. Rubin noted that trash pickup for a restaurant is different than regular trash pickup and that should be considered. Diamond replied that they have received interest from two restaurants so far and they hope to activate this end of Washington Street.

Tise stated that a landscape plan was presented to the Planning Board for review. Hirsch noted that the street trees on Church Street will remain, there will be new trees on Federal but they must remove some existing trees first, and artwork and seating will be included on the building to soften that side for the residential neighbors across Federal Street. The sidewalk treatment was discussed, but Salem doesn't have a consistent pattern, so the Landscape Architect will determine what will work best. The new planters added along Washington Street will be 6" high and will house perennials. Daniel stated that the DRB will review the sidewalk treatment and the city doesn't have a uniform sidewalk treatment.

Hirsch stated that the main entrance proposed canopy is polycarbonate and the 6th floor has the only protruding balconies along Church, Washington, and Federal Streets. The central inner core has balconies on all the floors.

Rubin asked if a home owners association (HOA) will have some covenant over the building, if things fall from the building. He noted the clear windows in the presentation but asked if there will be uniform window treatments. Diamond replied that there will be an HOA when 50% of units are sold and they will write up the agreements that related to the building management moving forward. Tise replied that a dual track with the same outside curtain will be installed for consistency. Rubin asked if the train running below will cause any problems. Diamond added that the trains run under the opposite side of Washington Street and will not be an issue. Hirsch noted that lighting placed along the ramps will help deter homelessness.

Guarino noted that there is still no visual of Federal Street provided, which is the Gateway to the City, and he urged them not to think of it as the forgotten façade. Will the park-like setting be used? Hirsch replied that there was a change in artwork so they did not present that façade in the presentation. The DRB needs to approve it before it gets discussed by the SRA. Tise added that a Federal Street neighbor is a member of their small art discussion so they are in favor of the selection. Guarino asked if the park at the rear gets used. Hirsch replied that the rear interior courtyard will get the same attention as the other facades of the building. Diamond stated that they can return to show the artwork and the Federal Street façade after the DRB has approved their art concept.

Chair Napolitano stated that there have been improvements to the project, the rosewood panels soften the façade which is more welcoming than the previous version.

Chair Napolitano opens public comment.

Councilor Tom Furey. He attended last week's Planning Board meeting. This development will change this end of Washington Street and will be a "window on Main Street." This is a catalyst for new developments across the way and along the North River Corridor. It's an exciting development for Salem. Diamond stated that the Councilor has been extremely supportive with this project and he appreciates his comments.

Chair Napolitano closes public comment.

Rubin: Motion to refer to the DRB as presented.

Seconded by: Chair. Passes 5-0

New / Old Business

1. Discussion of 2018 Goals

Mr. Daniel distributed a memo to follow up from the February discussion. The goals have remained the same.

- A. Sale of the 65 Washington Street property
- B. Issue an RFP for the Superior Court & County Commissioners Building
- C. Engage with the Historical Commission which will occur at the May 2018 meeting where Patti Kelleher will present the downtown survey
- D. Ensure that stakeholders feel involved in the SRA process through ongoing communication.

Minutes

The minutes from the November 29, 2017 regular and joint (w/DRB) meeting were reviewed.

Rubin: Motion to approve November 29, 2017 minutes with Daniel's edits.

Seconded by: Guarino. Passes 5-0.

The review of the minutes from the December 11, 2017 regular meeting was continued until the next meeting.

The minutes from the December 13, 2017 regular meeting were reviewed.

Barrett: Motion to approve December 13, 2017 minutes with Daniel's edits.

Seconded by: Guarino. Passes 5-0.

The minutes from the January 10, 2018 regular meeting were reviewed.

Guarino: Motion to approve January 10, 2018 minutes with Daniel's edits.

Seconded by: Rubin. Passes 5-0

The minutes from the February 14, 2018 regular meeting were reviewed.

Rubin: Motion to approve February 14, 2018 minutes with Daniel's edits.
Seconded by: Guarino. Passes 5-0.

Rubin asked how long the short term wood art project at the corner of Washington & New Derby Streets would remain. Daniel replied that it will have been there a year this June and they will follow up with Deb Greel.

Rubin stated that he received an e-mail today about having a Board e-mail address. Daniel noted that this email was sent a year ago, that you can forward them to a personal e-mail address. Their purpose is for Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests because Board related work would only be done at that address and the address needs to be searchable. Only 50% of Board and Commission members signed up so the recent e-mail was to encourage others to sign up. Chair Napolitano asked if replies from private e-mails are searchable. Guarino replied that the response may have to be on the City server. People who work in public office in some municipalities have replied from a private e-mail and if challenged others have tried to gain access to those private e-mail accounts. He suggested that she continue to forward it to her personal e-mail address but reply from her Salem.com account. Daniel noted that members are not to discuss projects through e-mail, they must only be discussed in a public forum; however, e-mails can be sent to him or Coogan individually. Chair Napolitano noted that non-quorum discussions outside of the meeting are allowed. Daniel replied that the merits of a project can not be discussed.

Rubin stated that the 289 Derby Street lot is under construction but the SRA did not review it again. Daniel replied that it's not subject to SRA approval but the SRA and DRB had input to the design as part of the public participatory design process. . It has been designed to accommodate potential changes along the neighboring commercial building. The Clarke property owners are starting their design process to create a harbor walk to connect.

Rubin noted that bike rentals from Zagster can now be returned to any bike rack. Coogan noted that the app is being redeveloped so bikes can be left at any bike rack not just Zagster bike racks.

Councilor Furey noted that Brew on the Grid is no longer coming to Salem. Daniel stated that the owner decided not to proceed with the project. Count Orlok will move into that space and the old Count Orlok space at 285 Derby Street is available for rent.

Guarino asked what else can be done about the Hotel Salem. Daniel replied that the hotel only has a partial Certificate of Occupancy and a list of items to fix and they need to finish that construction. Chair Napolitano asked whether the hotel needs to complete the list of items in order to receive a full Certificate of Occupancy. Daniel replied that the Building Department will need to get involved to ensure the work gets done.

Adjournment

Guarino: Motion to adjourn the meeting.
Seconded by: Rubin. Passes 5-0.

Meeting is adjourned at 7:45PM.

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