

**City of Salem Massachusetts
Public Meeting Minutes**

Board or Committee:	Redevelopment Authority, Regular Meeting
Date and Time:	Wednesday, October 12, 2022, at 6:00 pm
Meeting Location:	Virtual Zoom Meeting
SRA Members Present:	Chair Grace Napolitano, Christine Madore, Cynthia Nina-Soto
SRA Members Absent:	David Guarino, Dean Rubin
Others Present:	Tom Daniel – Director of Planning and Community Development
Recorder:	Colleen Brewster

Regular Meeting

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Daniel stated that

1. Things are busy in Salem as October is underway, he spoke with Kate Fox of Destination Salem and there are even larger crowds this year.

Projects in the Urban Renewal Area

1. **41 Lafayette Street:** Small Project Review – Review of Proposal and DRB Recommendation for the painting of a mural on Central Street façade of Barrio, request to continue to November 9, 2022.

VOTE: Madore made a motion to continue to the November 9, 2022, regular meeting. Seconded by: Nina-Soto.

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

2. **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, request to continue to November 9, 2022.

VOTE: Nina-Soto made a motion to continue to the November 9, 2022, regular meeting. Seconded by: Madore.

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

New / Old Business

1. FY23 Community Preservation Plan – Request for Comment/Input

Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that comments are due October 21, 2022, and can be submitted electronically to Patti Kelleher.

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

Mr. Daniel stated that since the last SRA meeting, he and Ms. Newhall-Smith met with a couple of perspective partners to understand their interest in the courthouses. They want to develop an MOA and to complete their due diligence. The Crescent Lot is with the Planning Board (PB), the peer reviews are ongoing, the applicant will meet with the PB again this month, as well as with the DRB to continue their design review.

3. SRA Financials

Approval of Minutes

1. Review of July 13, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes
To be reviewed at the November 9, 2022, regular meeting.
2. Review of August 10, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes
To be reviewed at the November 9, 2022, regular meeting.
3. Review of September 14, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes
To be reviewed at the November 9, 2022, regular meeting.

Other

Adjournment

VOTE: Nina-Soto made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting. Seconded by: Napolitano.
Roll Call: Madore, Nina-Soto, Napolitano. 3-0 in favor

The regular meeting adjourned at 6:12PM.

Annual Meeting

Roll Call:

SRA Members Present:	Chair Grace Napolitano, Christine Madore, Cynthia Nina-Soto
SRA Members Absent:	David Guarino, Dean Rubin

Executive Director's Report

1. Mr. Daniel stated that this is the 60th year of the SRA which began with urban renewal and demolition and shifted to historic preservation in the 1970's, and now to high quality design. There has been continued growth, investment, and new people. He noted that before Ms. Madore left the SRA to become a City Councilor, she suggested the SRA adopt annual goals which they've continued to do so each year.
 - a. Goal 1: Continue with the North Downtown Visioning that came from the 2018 workshop, which lead to the Courthouse & Crescent Lot Project.

- b. Goal 2: Relationship building including the City Council, the Affordable Housing Trust, and other economic partners. An on-boarding session was held with the new City Councilors in early 2022. They also worked with the Economic Development Partners through the Economic Development Recovery and Revitalization (EDRR) Task Force.
- c. Goal 3: Internal organization and documents. Chair Napolitano, Dean Rubin worked with Ms. Newhall-Smith to update the by-laws.

Projects:

- *Charlotte Fortin Park*. The SRA has funding from the sale of the easement to 285 Derby Street. Ms. Newhall-Smith and Julie Barry (Senior Planner – Arts & Culture) are looking to develop a program for calendar 2023 so there is clearer access to funding. Other funds are available through ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act), and they supported some projects through Main Streets and Shakespeare in the Park.
- *The Courthouses* are a huge project and progress has been made but more work is needed.
- *285 Derby Street* modified their façade and has new tenants, which was part of the vision for Charlotte Fortin Park, to provide transparency and connections to the park.
- *38 Norman Street* was reviewed, the SRA questioned the design and encouraged the design team to reconsider their design, and there was community engagement lead by Councillors Madore and Hapworth.
- *73 Lafayette (El Centro)* and affordable housing was developed by the Northshore CDC. They have started their permitting projects which continue to develop, and the SRA should be commended for their evaluation of whether demolition was appropriate and for requesting that a peer review be conducted.

Signage: Several new signs were proposed in FY 2022. The retail vacancy appears to be approximately 4-5%, however, several businesses with leases haven't opened or re-opened, so the vacancy is closer to 2%. Ms. Madore noted that the Army Barracks is closing and asked if another lease was forthcoming. Mr. Daniel replied that they were aware the Army Barracks would be leaving at the end of the year but received no additional information. Ms. Newhall-Smith added that she will have a meeting with the business recruitment team in early November to determine how it's being marketed and if a new lease is in place.

Outdoor Pandemic Dining: The rules have been suspended and Ms. Newhall-Smith will investigate those changes for next year and notify restaurants.

Public Projects:

- *Old Town Hall:* Plans are in the works for physical improvements to the building, mechanical systems, structural, fire suppression as well as programmatically and Culture House did an activation report for future programs.
- *Main Streets:* Continues to be an important partner downtown, the city provided them EDA funding to augment support for programming how events are permitted. Kylie Sullivan is looking at advancing.

Board changes: Russ Vickers who served for many years resigned and Christine Madore rejoined the SRA.

2. Financial Report: Winn advanced money to the SRA for pre-development expenses for their outside council and development consultant Matt Zahler. A second account is for Charlotte Forten Park which has expenditures this past fiscal year.
3. Fiscal Year 2023 Goals
 - a. Goal 1: They will continue the North Downtown Visioning Workshop goal from the past fiscal year with the courthouses. Ms. Newhall-Smith is working with Traffic and Parking on a parking development study.
 - b. Goal 2: Continue relationship building by inviting some economic development partners to attend an SRA meeting to discuss their work related to downtown and economic development.
 - c. Goal 3: Organizational systems - A focus on the finance and accounting systems which can be augmented from their current practices.

Ms. Madore stated that building a relationship with the Housing Trust was a goal and the City Council is currently reviewing a proposal to amend the land disposition ordinance, which made her wonder how that would impact the SRA and if additional coordination would be needed. Mr. Daniel replied that that topic can be explored over the next fiscal year.

VOTE: Nina-Soto made a motion to adopt the 2023 goals. Seconded by: Madore.
Roll Call: Madore, Nina-Soto, Napolitano. 3-0 in favor.

4. Election of Officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer

Mr. Daniel stated that the current slate of officers has stated that they will continue to serve in those roles.

VOTE: Nina-Soto made a motion to re-elect Grace Napolitano as Chair, Dean Rubin as Vice Chair, and David Guarino as Treasurer. Seconded by: Madore.
Roll Call: Madore, Nina-Soto, and Napolitano. 3-0 in favor.

5. 2023 Meeting Schedule

Chair Napolitano stated that the meetings will continue at 6PM on the second Wednesday of every month. Ms. Newhall-Smith added that no conflicts with holidays were found.

Ms. Madore stated that she would not be available on November 9, 2022.

Other

Adjournment

VOTE: Nina-Soto made a motion to adjourn the annual meeting. Seconded by: Madore.
Roll Call: Madore, Nina-Soto, Napolitano. 3-0 in favor

The annual meeting adjourned at 6:30PM.

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