

**City of Salem Massachusetts
Public Meeting Minutes**

Board or Committee: Design Review Board, Special Meeting
Date and Time: Wednesday, January 22, 2020 at 6:00 pm
Meeting Location: 120 Washington Street, Third Floor Conference Room
DRB Members Present: Chair Durand, David Jaquith, Glenn Kennedy, Catherine Miller, Marc Perras, Helen Sides, J. Michael Sullivan
DRB Members Absent: None
Others Present: Kate Newhall-Smith
Recorder: Colleen Brewster

Chair Durand calls the meeting to order at 6:00PM. Roll call was taken.

Signs

1. **30 Church Street: (Hive & Forge):** Discussion and vote on sign package – *Continued from 9/25/19, Request to Continue to February 26, 2020*

Jaquith: Motion to continue to the next regular meeting.
Seconded by: Sides. Passes 7-0.

Kennedy offered to meet with the applicant to discuss the signage.

2. **9-11 Dodge Street, 217-219 and 231-251 Washington Street (Hampton Inn/Mixed Use Development):** Review of Hampton Inn Blade Sign

Ken McClure, Owner's Rep, was present to discuss the project.

McClure stated the he presented a 95 SF sign at last meeting and the new sign is proposed for the same location. It's hard to see the signage when approaching from Canal Street; however, the SRA was concerned with overly large signage. They presented 4 new sign options to the SRA in January. The SRA felt that 40 SF could be acceptable even though it's larger than what is allowable, because it made sense with the size of the building and the hotel needs to be recognizable. Hampton Inn's request was to place the sign high on the building and above the proposed trees. The proposed Red Maple trees will be 35-feet-high at maturity and will block most of the building. The first sign is at the 6th floor (top floor) because there are 3 levels of parking. The other options place the sign between the 2nd and 3rd floors, although it's view would be hindered by the trees.

The proposed sign is a halo lit box sign that will glow around the perimeter of each letter. Chair Durand stated that the proposed location isn't allowed by the ordinance making this precedent setting and a blade sign mounted this high is troublesome. McClure replied that the people that will be coming to the property will be looking for it and will need to see the sign (they won't be residents/community members). They want to reduce the likelihood of visitors cutting across the two lanes of Washington Street to reach the entrance. No U-turns are allowed at this intersection, but GPS will also help people find this location.

Chair Durand asked what other signage could be presented if they didn't approve the current options. McClure replied horizontal wall signage attached at the top of the building wouldn't be noticeable until you were half-way past the building and Hampton Inn has no small square logo as an option for a smaller blade sign. The hotel's Signage Consultant told them this was their sign package. Kennedy noted that Holiday Inn broke off their brand to create signage for this type of situation, but this is not the correct execution for this type of brand. Sides stated that she is okay with the proposed sign location but the sign itself is unattractive and wasn't designed to be part of the building. Chair Durand noted that the setting of a precedent is most important, and this signage isn't appropriate for downtown Salem. McClure stated that, originally, the larger sign was approved and passed through to the SRA and these are issues that weren't addressed originally. A change in sign would need numerous approvals through the corporate channels, he would rather have it at the 24 SF sign approved rather than nothing.

Sullivan noted that at the Portland, Oregon and Portland, Maine properties were pushed to install a sign that fit the district, despite the building being new construction. Kennedy stated that the Portland, Oregon hotel opened in 2018.

Chair Durand noted that Scheme D2 is close to what is being proposed. Miller asked if the text could be smaller because the script seems squished to fit in the sign. Jaquith noted that the sign will be angled 90 degrees along Washington Street.

McClure noted in Scheme D1 vs. D2, they could lower the large sign and eliminate the smaller sign. Chair Durand suggested they place the bottom of the Hampton Inn sign at the bottom of the small sign. Newhall-Smith noted that the tops of the signs should not extend beyond the bottom of the 2nd floor sills.

Perras asked if there was a mechanism for allowing a divergence from the ordinance due to a signage program type (i.e. 'signs for hotels'). Chair Durand replied no. Perras added that if the signage was program-based not a lot of hotels will be constructed in downtown Salem. Newhall-Smith noted that the sign for the restaurant on the Salem Jail was granted relief from some of the tenants of the Sign Manual because the project was a historical preservation project and there was no logical place to install a sign that complied with the Manual. Kennedy found it troublesome that the DRB had to find the precedent at two other locations, and both were recently completed rather than the corporation offering alternative designs that it would find acceptable. The proposed is not a good execution of their brand. Jaquith agreed with new placement but he likes the Oregon sign better.

McClure stated that the sign package was originally approved months ago. Jaquith replied that the SRA didn't approve of it and the DRB only provided an advisory comment on the sign package. McClure noted that Hampton Inn didn't mention why a special accommodation was made for their Oregon location. They've reduced their sign count from 2 blade signs to 1, to help get closer to the allowable signage and moved the sign closer to the corner to maximize the view of the sign. Kennedy noted that it's a significant building, but a sign approval is being forced. He suggested they recommend approval of the Oregon style sign to the SRA. Newhall-Smith noted that the sign illumination would need to be halo-style, not pink neon like in the Oregon image. Kennedy added the sign should feature the same block letters but in the blue and white

color scheme with halo lighting. McClure stated that the Oregon signs are larger than the proposed Salem sign, but they could scale it down.

Chair Durand opens public comment.

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Durand closes public comment.

Kennedy: Motion to approve lowering the sign so that the bottom of it is located 16'-4" from grade and to convey a first preference for a similar design to the Portland, Oregon Pearl District sign, with a preference for their execution and a precedence already set on a new building in a historic urban environment, and to convey a second preference to the SRA to approve the standard logo in the location as detailed.

Seconded by: Sides. Passes 7-0.

Urban Renewal Area Projects Under Review

1. **15 Crombie Square:** Review of replacement of rotting column on rear porch of 3-unit residential structure – *Request to continue to February 26, 2020*

Sides: Motion to continue to the next regular meeting.

Seconded by: Miller. Passes 7-0.

2. **1 Derby Square:** Review of Installation of barrel dormers and installation of new replacement windows on second floor – *Continued from December 18, 2019.*

David Jaquith recused himself as the architect for this applicant.

David Jaquith, Architect and John Spinale, Owner, were present to discuss the project.

Newhall-Smith stated that the SRA referred the project to the DRB but had reservations with the original proposal for skylights.

Jaquith stated that Spinale Automotive has owned this building for 5-years. The original proposal was to add two skylights; however, one SRA member was opposed. There is HVAC equipment in the attic and until recently you had to access the area through the ceiling tiles. Sides asked if an interior renovation was proposed. Jaquith replied no, HVAC venting in the summer has been manually operated, the proposed plan was modeled off of the Salem Athenaeum, the slate will be saved, some windows were illegally removed, and they will be replaced with Brosco windows. Newhall-Smith asked how many windows were vinyl replacements. Mr. Spinale replied all around second floor on both sides.

Jaquith stated that the new proposal is for copper barrel vaults to be installed on the roof. Sides noted that they will provide for better ventilation on this side of the structure. Jaquith replied that interior walls prevent them from having access on the opposite side of the building, where the hotel is located, which would reduce their visibility from the public way. Perras noted their elegant solution.

Newhall-Smith noted that the Historic Preservation Planner suggested conditions for the preservation of the existing slate roof.

Sides: Motion to approve as submitted with the conditions suggested from the Preservation Planner.

Seconded by: Kennedy. Passes 6-0.

Jaquith returned to the Board.

New / Old Business

The Juicery: Perras asked about their entrance door being painted green. Newhall-Smith replied that the SRA administratively approved the door change color.

Settler Restaurant: Perras asked if the SRA overruled the concerns of the DRB regarding the new windows at the Lynde Street restaurant. Newhall-Smith confirmed this and replied that she can update the DRB on various projects through her reports, so they know what has changed since they reviewed any agenda items.

217-221 Essex Street: Perras asked who to approach if there are unfavorable site conditions. Newhall-Smith replied the Building Inspector is the enforcement entity, but she can also share information with the inspector as well.

Adriatic Restaurant: Perras asked if there was a cutoff date for small projects that don't come before us to items applicants have added without review and approval, such as the outdoor vestibule at the Adriatic Restaurant. Newhall-Smith replied that their seasonal vestibule was previously approved.

Minutes

The minutes from the November 6, 2019 regular meeting were reviewed.

Miller: Motion to accept the November 6, 2019 regular minutes.

Seconded by: Kennedy. Passes 7-0.

The minutes from the December 18, 2019 regular meeting were reviewed.

Sullivan: Motion to accept the December 18, 2019 regular minutes.

Seconded by: Jacquith. Passes 7-0.

Adjournment

Jaquith: Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by: Sides. Passes 7-0.

Meeting is adjourned at 7:15PM.

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