

**City of Salem Massachusetts
Public Meeting Minutes**

Board or Committee:	Design Review Board, Regular Meeting
Date and Time:	Wednesday, February 22, 2017 at 6:00 pm
Meeting Location:	120 Washington Street, Third Floor Conference Room
Members Present:	Paul Durand, David Jaquith, Helen Sides, and Ernest DeMaio
Members Absent:	J. Michael Sullivan, Christopher Dynia, and Glenn Kennedy
Others Present:	Andrew Shapiro, Economic Development Planner
Recorder:	Andrew Shapiro

Chairman Paul Durand calls the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Urban Renewal Area Projects Under Review

1. **184 Essex Street (Omen):** Discussion and vote on proposed installation of signage and new paint color for awning.*

*This item was taken out of order from how it was presented on the agenda. The submission under review includes; a signed application, a sign package including; dimensions, and existing and proposed elevation photos. Ken McTague of Concept Sign was present on behalf of the applicant.

McTague provided additional information that was not included in the member packets, showing that window graphics along the top and bottom of the additional storefront window of the project would continue in the same way as existing window graphics.

Shapiro explained that the application was fairly straightforward, that the application is in compliance with the City's sign ordinance and commercial design guidelines, and that member Glenn Kennedy provided his comments on this project via email just prior to the meeting.

Durand expressed a desire see more of the building and existing surroundings.

Shapiro noted that Kennedy recommends approving the sign proposal, but expresses reservations about painting the awning.

Durand said that he is fine with the signage. DeMaio concurred with Durand.

With respect to painting the awning, Durand expressed a reservation and a hope that the property owner could present something more comprehensive.

McTague said that he has been in contact with the property owner, who may entertain the idea of painting all of the awnings.

Durand then noted that the execution of the painting of the awning is crucial. What is "good paint?" It needs the right prep and product.

McTague explained that he had pointed out to the property owner that an oil based paint would need to be applied to the metal awning, and to use a spray for application.

Durand said that he would like to know more about the process of painting the awning.

Shapiro asked the Board if they had any reservations about one awning having a different color (in this case copper/gold), than all of the others. If so, would they also be okay with other applicants coming before the Board to request painting their respective awnings different colors?

Sides did not agree with the idea of one store owner painting one awning. The building is much larger and has several elements. The property owner should present a comprehensive plan.

DeMaio expressed that he felt the opposite of Sides' stance on the subject. The applicant would be painting only one field. If the building did not have awnings on it to begin with, store owners could install awnings of varying colors, which is the case on several buildings elsewhere. Every project should be considered on a case-by-case basis, which means that the Board can allow this project to proceed without feeling compelled to approve future projects if it does not seem that they will be well executed. He added that this change in color could be refreshing for a building that has remained much the same for the better part of 25 years.

Durand agreed with DeMaio, noting that the new paint color would add variety to the streetscape and could compel other storeowners to do something similar to their awnings.

Sides held firm to her belief that what was proposed to be painted was not an awning per se, but part of the building's structure.

Jaquith noted that his only concern would be how the paint is applied to the awning structure.

Shapiro suggested that the Board could consider approving the painting of the awning, conditional upon the applicant returning to the Board for approval of the product to be applied and the method for application.

Durand agreed that that could be an acceptable path forward. He reemphasized that more context along the street could be helpful to see in a future submission.

Observing that Sides still did not feel comfortable enough with the proposal to paint the awning Durand suggested that perhaps the Board would have to consider continuing that portion of the application to a future meeting when more Members would be present.

Sides said that she likes the way the copper makes the sign band pop, but she is concerned with the method of application and how the result will make the rest of the building look. She expressed wanting to see a perspective showing more of the building with the proposed copper awning shown in context.

Jaquith: Motion to approve with the proposed signage and to continue the proposal to paint the top of the awning.

Seconded by: Durand. Passes 4-0.

2. **21 Church Street Salem (National Grid): Continued** discussion and vote on installation of “switchgear” equipment.

The submission under review includes; existing and proposed plans and existing and proposed elevation photos. Daniel Cameron of National Grid was present to discuss the proposed new switchgear project.

Shapiro explained that a site visit for the Board had taken place the week prior. The DRB Members present at the site visit eventually expressed support for the current proposed configuration of having a manhole installed at the first parking space, which will not result in the permanent loss of a parking space, nor will it require the planting area to expand in size. Existing plantings in the planting bed would need to be removed to make way for the installation of the 3’ high switchgear that is painted green. New plantings would need to be provided and planted by the applicant.

Cameron reiterated that they would do whatever necessary to properly screen the unit, so long as it would still be accessible. A gate or fence could also perhaps be installed. They have a certified arborist on staff who could inform the planting strategy.

Durand: Motion to approve the proposal conditional upon the applicant returning to the Board for approval of plantings to screen the switchgear.
Seconded by: Sides. Passes 4-0.

Minutes

Approval of the minutes from the January 25, 2017 regular meeting.

Sides: Motion to approve the minutes.
Seconded by: Jaquith, Passes 4-0.

Adjournment

Durand: Motion to adjourn the meeting.
Seconded by: Jaquith. Passes 4-0.

Meeting is adjourned at 6:24 PM

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