

Board or Committee:	Design Review Board – Regular Meeting
Date and Time:	Wednesday, August 23, 2023 at 6:00 pm
Meeting Location:	Remote Participation via Zoom
DRB Members Present:	Chair Paul Durand, David Jaquith, Glenn Kennedy, Catherine Miller, Marc Perras, J. Michael Sullivan, Sarah Tarbet
DRB Members Absent:	
Others Present:	Kate Newhall-Smith
Recorder:	Colleen Brewster

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

Signs in the Urban Renewal Area

1. 30 Federal Street: Museum of Torture, continued from 7/26/23

Ken McTague of Concept Signs and Jason Kloos (owner) were present to discuss the project.

McTague stated that the proposal was revised based on Kennedy's previous suggestion. The board questioned whether the blade sign should be located on the corner of the building facing Washington Street or near the Federal Street entry door. An A-frame sign would be placed at the end of the bushes near the corner of Washington and Federal Streets, where it can be moved and would not create accessibility concerns.

Acting-Chair Perras stated that the board preferred option 2, placing a sign by the door. He questioned the exiting process. Kloos replied that visitors would enter and exit from the Federal Street entry door because the rear door is emergency egress only. They will work with the neighboring owners since this is closer to their property line. They appreciate and agree with the suggestions for their signs to clearly identify the entrance.

Perras requested the estimated number of visitors. Kloos replied that tickets are on a reservation basis that is pre-booked. They will only have 15 people at a time every half hour within their 800 SF of space. The hours of operation will be from 6-10PM, with the last group entering at 9:30PM. There will never be more than 15 people waiting at a time, so there will never be a long line, keeping the area safe.

Perras asked if an accessible entrance was provided. Kloos replied no, and they worked with the city to try and solve that issue. The signage and a-frame sign will indicate the lack of accessibility, and ticket purchasers must agree to terms and conditions to understand how the museum functions.

Kennedy recommended flipping the "reservations required" and "book your experience today" text on the A-frame sign and noted that the outside rule is more prominent than anything else on the sign and it visually, and it should be thinner or match up with the lines on the scrolls, so the name business name is the first thing that stands out. He questioned locating the building sign to the right of the window rather than the left to give

it more space. McTague suggested extending the bracket length to place the blade sign further away from the building and the A/C unit. Jaquith agreed that the relocation would provide more balance. Kennedy suggested making the placement of the building sign a condition.

Newhall-Smith noted that the sign regulations stated that the A-frame sign must be within 10-feet from the entry door. Kennedy suggested leeway because of the organization of the building. McTague noted that the A-frame sign would still on the property and the front path leads straight to the sidewalk. Kennedy noted that the sign should be along the walkway. Newhall-Smith noted that the sign review committee can grant a waiver. Kennedy agreed to review the placement to find the proper placement. Newhall-Smith suggested the board state that in their motion.

Public Comment:

Newhall-Smith stated that she received the following public comment letters:

- HSI, 9 North Street, dated August 16, 2023
- Pam Broderick, 28 Federal Street, dated August 18, 2023
- Jane Stauffer, 1 Washington Street, dated August 18, 2023
- Donna Seger, 7 Chestnut Street, dated August 22, 2023

Pam Broderick, 28 Federal Street. Thanked Mr. Kloos for providing some clarification, requested the Board address the violation of the policy regarding signage in this district for multi-tenant buildings. Acting-Chair Perras replied that the ordinance is relatively objective, and they feel the proposed location, nested against the building, is the most appropriate location since it would not be appropriate on Washington Street. Newhall-Smith noted the precedence of Workbar on Washington Street where the Board allowed different signage to suit the multi-tenant spaces. Jaquith noted that the business needs some identity to see if from Washington Street. Kennedy agreed.

Durand joined the meeting.

Sullivan joined the meeting.

Ryan Durkin, 1 Chase Street. Noted that the QR code is very dense which can mean a long URL, and suggested they swap it out for a less dense code. Kennedy replied that the QR code, which he tested, functions perfectly and leads directly to Ticket Spice. Kloos added that the ticket link functions on their website and it is redirected when necessary, and they found rerouting to be more complicated.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: Kennedy: Motion to approve with the blades sign location change from the left to the right of the windows, suggestions of the outside rule, flipping the text on the A-frame sign, and the A-frame sign location outside of the 10-foot requirement to be determined. Seconded by: Jaquith.

Roll Call: Jaquith, Kennedy, Miller, Sullivan, Tarbet, Perras and Durand were in favor.
Passes 7-0.

McTague stated that he will expedite the A-frame and will have it available next week for Kenney to review.

Durand resumed as Chair of the meeting.

2. 233 Washington Street: RE/MAX

Ken McTague was present to discuss the project.

McTague stated that the proposed sign is next door to The Hive, and will use the same materials, have the same dimensions, and use the same installation methods.

Jaquith was not in favor of the proposed graphic. Kennedy noted that he was bothered the building owner didn't establish signage guidelines, as the DRB initially suggested. Chair Durand suggested using a cream background. McTague replied that the white background is part of the RE/MAZ logo. Kennedy noted seeing a similar sign elsewhere. Miller suggested a reduction in the text size. Kennedy noted that the building was the issue, and he had no issue with this sign, which the DRB did ask for signage standards along the way. Perras noted that they started a precedent and the sign fits in as best as it can.

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: Perras: Motion to approve as submitted. Seconded by: Jaquith.

Roll Call: Jaquith, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sullivan, Tarbet, and Durand were in favor.
Passes 7-0.

3. 14 New Derby Street: Garçon Super Slice Pizza

Ken McTague of Concept Signs was present to discuss the project.

McTague stated that the proposed building sign would be an aluminum tube frame with an extruded moldings and the blade sign would be 2-feet-high x 2-feet-wide and located at the far end of the building. He noted that this building has a sign band, and he would make this sign fit within the 24-inch-high x 96-inch-wide band.

Kennedy asked if the blade sign would be reused. McTague replied that it would be removed noting it was built into a frame with lighting. He noted that the owner wanted a simple blade sign.

Kennedy and Perras had no concerns.

Miller suggested reusing the old holes from the blade sign or repairing them. McTague replied that there will be some patching at the old conduit opening, and they will mount the blade bracket with 4 small lag bolts. Miller suggested using a larger plate size to cover the holes from the patch. Durand and Kennedy agreed.

Miller asked if all the building signs max out the brick area. McTague was not sure and noted that all businesses have a small blade sign. He noted that the wall sign is proposed to fit the length of the brick course rather than making it longer. Miller suggested reducing the height to show some of the brickwork above and below within the same band, which may squish the lettering. Kennedy disagreed.

Kennedy asked if the orange outline would be removed from the pizza blade sign. McTague replied that it would be included.

Perras asked if window signage was proposed. McTague replied that it wasn't proposed but store hours could be placed on the window or door.

Sullivan asked if the blade sign would be in line with the Garcon Pizza sign. McTague replied that the bottom of the sign would be 8-feet above grade to match the neighboring signs.

McTague asked if he would need to return if the owner wanted to include the business hours to the window. Newhall-Smith will investigate it.

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: Jaquith: Motion to approve as presented, and to extend the bracket size of the blade sign. Seconded by: Perras.

Roll Call: Jaquith, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sullivan, Tarbet, and Durand were in favor. Passes 7-0.

4. 15 Derby Square: Whimsey's

Alena Taylor (owner) and Meg Nichols (sign maker) were present to discuss the project.

Taylor stated that the business address is 23 Front Street within Derby Square. She purchased Maria's Sweet Something's in March. They will apply their logo on a cedar sign with water base acrylic and match the size of Maria's wall sign. Miller asked if the red line would remain. Nichols replied no. They will use a similar bracket for the 30" W x 28" H sign and they shouldn't need to adjust the mounting to keep the bottom of the sign 9-feet above grade.

Tarbet asked if the sign would be lit. Taylor replied that there is a burnt-out bulb in place that she would like to use, if allowed, although it may be the only sign with a light on the

street and she would like to fit in with the neighboring signs. Chair Durand noted that the conduit is not favored but its existing.

Kennedy suggested a shadow be applied like on the mushroom, to provide visual interest and help with visibility given the remaining artwork. Nichols agreed to outline it as she did with the word Whimsy's and noted that she would also make the 36-inch-high x 24-inch-wide A-frame sign which was Maria's and is metal and plastic sign. Taylor will use 1 A-frame and resume the metal a-frame or purchase a new one. Jaquith suggested the black shadow also be applied to the A-frame. Kennedy also suggested reducing the line spacing between the business name and "Sweet Life" to give the business name more white space.

Taylor raised concerns with the use of two blade signs, and asked if she can put the A-frame sign at the rear where there is no sign. The Board agreed.

Tarbet noted the presence of multiple fonts on the sign and the similarity of "Welcome to the Sweet Life" text and "Whimsy's." She suggested a simpler font to make the logo stand out. Kennedy agreed and suggested the use of no more than 3 fonts with variations to clean up the sign. Nichols noted that she would also eliminate the dash between "ice" and "cream."

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: Kennedy: Motion to approve with highlighting the business name using shading, eliminating a fourth font style, increased spacing between the A-frame text, and location of A-frame sign at the rear entry. Seconded by: Jaquith.

Roll Call: Jaquith, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sullivan, Tarbet, and Durand were in favor. Passes 7-0.

5. 283 Derby Street: Notch Brewery

Chris Lohring was present to discuss the project.

Lohring noted that the size of sign isn't exact, but they want to fit the proportions of the neighboring Brothers Taverna sign and to place it at the same height for increased visibility. He noted that the blade sign would be metal with a steel rod, like neighboring blade signs.

Kennedy suggested making the sign the height of the Brothers Taverna sign rather than the sign band, to reduce the font size to give more space, and to reduce the arrow size to highlight the grittiness of the business font. Sullivan noted the proposed placement seemed too close to the roof.

Kennedy requested the bracket type. Lohring replied a bracket that mimics Real Pirates or Home Décor, but to keep it simple rather than decorative. Sullivan noted that the bracket plate should be anchored with screws to the masonry.

Tarbet requested the sign material. Lohring replied a black metal bracket black, and a metal sign that won't corrode or a decal that won't fade. He noted that they are using Lebel Signs in Peabody to fabricate the sign. Kennedy was in favor of the use of metal for the sign.

Perras asked if they used the arrow elsewhere. Lohring replied yes, for the harbor walk signs and whenever they need to have a directional arrow. Perras raised concerns with the shape of the arrowhead. Jaquith agreed. Kennedy suggested the arrowhead fit the shape of the notch in the logo. Sullivan asked if the red background would be constantly used. Lohring replied that the starburst is a 2-tone based on the letter printing and is used on all their signage.

Public Comment:

Russ Tanzer, 281 Derby Street (landlord.) Encouraged them to have a blade sign to help direct the public to their establishment. They like what they see and hope to see it approved by the Board.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: Kennedy: Motion to approve with reducing the height of sign to match the Brothers sign, to reduce the font size and arrow to give more it air space, the bracket to be simple and black, and to adjust the shape of the arrow as suggested. Seconded by: Jaquith.

Roll Call: Jaquith, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sullivan, Tarbet, and Durand were in favor. Passes 7-0.

6. 270 Essex Street: Texture

John Kurpusik was present to discuss the project.

Kurpusik stated that the sign is a wood composite, sealed with epoxy, white letters, "Glass Bar" text will be red, and the sign background is meant to represent the earth. The sign would be 30-inches in diameter with a straight bar bracket. Kennedy suggested the bracket match the neighboring brackets and noted that the texture on the earth has more detail which works well.

Perras liked the concept but found it hard to read. Kurpusik noted that the background is dark blue which will make it stand out more.

Miller asked if the shop was a ground level shop or an additional sign. Kennedy replied that it is on the second floor. Miller asked if All Soul's Lounge sign is at same elevation.

Kurpusik replied yes and noted that the 3 other signs are spaced apart and suggested placing the blade sign outside the left edge of the door near the corner. Kennedy suggested centering the sign on the column to the left. The Board agreed.

Perras was okay with the concept, reiterated his concern with the legibility of the sign, and suggested the earth fade into the background allowing the letters to stand out.

Public Comment:

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: Miller: Motion to approve as presented, with a bracket to match existing, to center the sign on the left column facing the door, and to be placed at the same elevation.

Seconded by: Jaquith.

Roll Call: Jaquith, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sullivan, Tarbet, and Durand were in favor. Passes 7-0.

Projects in the Urban Renewal Area

1. **23 Summer Street:** Modification of Approved Design – Request to remove slate roof and replace it with GAF Slateline fiberglass/asphalt shingle and request to change from Hardie siding to LP Smart Siding, continued from 6/28/23.

VOTE: Jaquith: Motion to continue to the September 27, 2023 regular meeting.

Seconded by: Tarbet.

Roll Call: Jaquith, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Tarbet were in favor. Passes 5-0.

Projects Outside the Urban Renewal Area

1. **275 Lafayette Street:** Entrance Corridor Overlay District – Design review of proposed renovation of the existing building to create five residential units and construction of a new, three-story residential building with five units. Associated site development work will include concrete walkways, paved access drives, parking areas, stormwater management, and utility installations.

Daniel Ricciarelli of Seger Architects, Attorney Scott Grover, Drew Murphy of MD Property (owner) were present to discuss the project.

Atty. Grover noted that the property is halfway down Lafayette Street when heading away from downtown and towards Salem State University. The property fronts both sides of the block and at the far end is the 1930's chapel building along Summit Avenue. The chapel was most recently used as an education facility and the present owner is proposing to convert the parcel to residential use for consistency with the neighborhood, to contain 5 new units with minor exterior renovations. They will also construct a new building along Lafayette Street with 10 new residential units. Review is needed by ZBA to grant them a special permit and variances, the Salem Historical Commission (SHC) reviews the project because the site is within the Lafayette Street Historic District, and the Planning Board (PB) has jurisdictional review because more than 6 units are

proposed, and the property is in the entrance corridor overlay district which requires a recommendation from the DRB to the PB.

Ricciarelli stated that with the neighboring historic building styles on Lafayette Street, they are proposing to in-fill at this missing area. The existing is a 1-story post war building with minimal changes, although they are adding a couple dormers and inset balconies. One HC ramp will be removed to provide yard space and the other will remain for access. They will remove the existing clapboards, reskin the building, and Summit Avenue will remain the main entry. The site is 100% paved so the proposed changes will be an improvement.

Ricciarelli stated that they conducted a massing study for the SHC, the property and district jogs all the way to Summit Ave. They want to match porches, datum elevations, etc. to be a better historic match. The DRB has jurisdiction over anything 150 feet away from the center of Lafayette Street, including the rear of the chapel building. A 20-foot-wide curb cut is proposed, the mechanical units being the building and will be enclosed in stockade fencing. They will introduce 1 tree for every 3 vehicles, a lawn and planting bed for a sense of privacy. They may install a solid board fence if privacy is a concern. No signage is proposed other than the address since the use will be 100% residential. He noted that the SHC approved the rear building, and they wanted to work with both the DRB and SHC at the same time to come to a consensus.

Ricciarelli noted that 5 units are proposed at the new building, 2 on the ground floor creating an upside-down townhouse, 2 units above and 1 unit at the top. The existing street edge along Lafayette Street is strong, so they want to align it with neighboring buildings to hold the edge. This is a contemporary take on the architecture, with overhang details, hip roof, standing seam roof, with a dark grey body color. There will be solid board fencing to enclose mechanicals, large areaways for garden level spaces and aligned porches. The SHC suggested focusing on the center bay and adding railing above the porch roof. There can be no fencing for 25-feet back from the street, and fencing can only be 4-feet tall from 25 - 150 feet back. Neighboring buildings have two-story porches which lead to the discussion on adding height to the front entry.

Sullivan stated that this is a nice project with very strong symmetry, and he asked why it was being broken up with center bay window alignment. Ricciarelli replied that it will be addressed, and the symmetry will return, ganging the two sets of windows.

Sullivan asked if HC parking was available. Ricciarelli replied yes. Jaquith suggested having addition space for the vehicle parking along the rear of the chapel building to back out of their parking space. Ricciarelli replied that there is sufficient space for a drive to back up straight while flush with the façade and doing a 2-point turn before existing.

Jaquith suggested adding more ganged windows to the rear of the new building to provide more light and air. Ricciarelli agreed. Kennedy and Durand agreed.

Jaquith noted that the proposal fits in well with Lafayette Street.

Perras stated that the pediment on top relates to the chapel at the rear but suggested it relates to the neighboring buildings instead. Ricciarelli replied that the Commission

agreed, but they didn't want to make it match the neighboring properties too much, they could add a new datum line.

Kennedy noted that the oculus references the rear building. Chair Durand believed it related well. Sullivan agreed and noted that breaking up the variety of shapes is better than a continue line of second empire details, because it provided some relief. Kennedy and Perras suggested the pediment be eliminated and replaced with a dormer. Tarbet noted that the neighboring buildings have a continuous cornice that harkens back to the chapel. Perras noted the large amount of upper wall being out of place. Jaquith suggested the fascia continue to unify the gable it flanks, lightening the pediment, and adding a continuous board. Perras suggested adding a second-floor bay window that engages with the cornice. Kennedy noted that the upper level feels like a Nantucket style that doesn't fit within Lafayette Street.

Sullivan agreed with doing more with the single central window on second. Ricciarelli suggested the SHC recommended balustrade and converting the single window to door.

Miller suggested adding 2 more street trees including 1 off the driveway and making the 5 trees at the parking lot shade dress not flowering trees, since the city is losing more mid-block large street trees which impact climate change. She noted that the concrete wall on the southeast corner has a chain-link fence but it's under the height limit and doesn't require approval, and suggested the driveway be a 20-foot width rather than 24-feet which is basically a small road. Atty. Grover replied that the 24-foot curb cut is from the entrance corridor overlay district but could be the maximum allowed. He noted that they will meet with the PB on September 7, 2023, to review more site related items.

Perras noted that the patios wrap around the existing building and asked if any outdoor space was proposed at the new building. Ricciarelli replied no, they are right on the street where nothing is allowed, the space is very tight, and additional ZBA relief would be required to reduce the parking requirements. Atty Grover noted that the parking is set at 1.5 spaces per unit, and they are too far from the train station to make less acceptable without ZBA approval.

Tarbet suggested placing the drive aisle on the right-hand side of the property. Ricciarelli replied that it started there. Atty. Grover noted that their abutter would only support the project if the drive aisle was flipped. Tarbet noted that it would place two 20+ foot curb cuts next to one another.

Kennedy left the meeting.

Public Comment:

Drew Murphy, MD Property owner. Stated that he was available to answer any questions.

Councillor Jeff Cohen, 12 Hancock Street & Ward 5 Councillor. The development team has been extremely responsive to the neighbors through community meetings and to the ZBA suggestions. He was supportive of the project.

Filipe Zamborlini, 19 Linden Street. Will have a view of this property, this is a great residential opportunity, he hoped the parking could be decreased. He is Chair of Affordable Housing Trust Fund and noted that housing in Salem is getting worse since the city is tackling both housing availability and affordability. He hoped the DRB can move this forward quickly and is happy to see an underutilized and mostly vacant property in-filled with residences.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

Miller noted the discussion related to outdoor space and suggested both the front stair and front walkway match the width of the porch creating an area of residents to enjoy.

Perras suggested the applicant return for an additional review when more the design has been fleshed out. Newhall-Smith replied yes.

VOTE: Motion to recommend approval with changes to landscape, symmetry added to the central bay of Lafayette Street facade, adding upper story windows to the rear, with a final design to be presented at a later date. Seconded by: Jaquith.

Roll Call: Jaquith, Miller, Perras, Sullivan, Tarbet, and Durand were in favor. Passes 6-0.

New / Old Business

1. Approval of Minutes:
 - a. July 26, 2023

VOTE: Tarbet: Motion to approve the July 26, 2023, meeting minutes. Seconded by: Miller.

Roll Call: Jaquith, Miller, Perras, Sullivan, Tarbet, and Durand were in favor. Passes 6-0.

2. Staff Updates, if any:

Miller and Tarbet asked about the promotional items added to the PEM neighboring brick building. Newhall-Smith noted that Ms. Madore from the SRA also questioned it. Perras believed it is a cling for temporary promotional use. Miller suggested the promotional elements were excessive noting that they only applied a single promotional sign to other buildings. Newhall-Smith agreed to investigate it and determine where the Urban Renewal District ends.

Miller noted the DRB approval for the blade sign at Annie's Asian Mart but not the painted sign in their window sign for the business, among other items. Perras suggested a resolution in the ordinance for painted signs or making them temporary/seasonal only. Newhall-Smith noted that the regulations change with the name of each new business, so there is no resolution. Miller noted that Gulu Gulu also has their name painted on their window above dogs. Perras suggested an update to the sign ordinance. Newhall-Smith to ask her boss, the Director of Planning and Community Development, Tom Daniel. Perras noted that the PEM will be a forgiveness situation, but it is odd that the PEM can do anything they want while others on Essex Street cannot.

Adjournment

Miller: Motion to adjourn. Seconded by: Tarbet.

Roll Call: Jaquith, Miller, Perras, Sullivan, Tarbet, and Durand were in favor. Passes 6-0.

Meeting is adjourned at 8:15PM.

Know your rights under the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 30A §18-25 and City
Ordinance Sections 2-028 through 2-203