

City of Salem Massachusetts Public Meeting Minutes

Board or Committee:	Design Review Board – Regular Meeting
Date and Time:	Wednesday, July 28, 2021 at 6:00 pm
Meeting Location:	Remote Participation via Zoom
DRB Members Present:	Paul Durand, Chair, David Jaquith (arrived at 6:45pm), Glenn Kennedy, Catherine Miller, Marc Perras, J. Michael Sullivan
DRB Members Absent:	Helen Sides
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. **14 New Derby Street:** Flip the Bird continued from 4/28/21

Brandon Currier, Barlo Signs, was present to discuss the project.

Currier stated the proposed Sign A is for face-lit a digitally face printed channel letter sign mounted flush to the brick façade to match the neighboring signs. Sign B is a blade sign that was redesigned based on comments they received, to include an external wash lighting rather than internal illumination. The sign is metal and has multiple layers of acrylic. Signs C & D are vinyl decals to be placed on the entry and exit door with their hours of operation and to direct traffic and out of the restaurant. They ensured that their branding and signage remained understated without being distracting.

Miller suggested the image of the chicken be the same size on the entry and exit doors. Kennedy suggested they increase the “ENTRANCE” characters by 10% and decrease the “EXIT” characters to balance them out. Due to square footage limitation Sullivan suggested that only the “EXIT” sign be reduced. Kennedy suggested aligning the hours of operation to decrease the square footage. Currier agreed. Miller noted that both images should be at the same height. Chair Durand asked what is seen from inside the restaurant. Currier replied that the back side of the vinyl, which is a solid color.

Kennedy requested clarification on Sign A being face-lit with a print over it and potential comments from the city, which technically violate the signage code. Currier replied yes, it's also consistent with their other locations. Chair Durand noted that the proposed screening may have the same effect as the edge lit lettering the DRB has previously approved. Newhall-Smith noted that the yellow in the sign would glow at night rather than the white edging creating a halo effect, which may not be approved by the Executive Director on behalf of the SRA, who has the final say. Miller asked if the yellow could be made opaque to create a halo effect without light coming through. Kennedy replied that it would be difficult to do given the font which that doesn't have a straight edge. He referred the applicant to the SRA sign manual which specifies no internally illuminated signage. Miller asked if the signage could be turned into a halo style. Currier replied that halo lighting requires a pan on the back which doesn't fit their brand. Halo light on brick gets absorbed and he wouldn't recommend that to any of his clients. Kennedy stated that an alternate sign will need to be determined since the current sign could be rejected due to current sign regulations. Newhall-Smith reiterated Miller's suggested of making the yellow opaque so only the white edge is illuminated. Kennedy

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and Currier discussed a halo light sign with a perimeter channel to focus the light on the white edge which would resemble the look his client wants to achieve. Miller suggested approving all signs as presented with an alternate.

Currier stated that the blade sign also had a built-in LED wash with a light housing built into the curved bracket for the LED lights rather than gooseneck fixtures. Kennedy praised the execution of the blade sign that can be recommended for approval in the event that the wall sign must be redesigned.

The Chair opened public comment.

Mary Whitney, 356 Essex Street. Appreciated noting what the current ordinance states, noted how well lit the street is at night, appreciates the owner wanting to stay true to their brand and referenced the signage at the Dunkin Donuts on Washington Street that fits into the downtown historic character.

Gideon Coltoff, co-owner of Bit Bar, 278 Derby Street. Thinks the sign is beautiful and it will be a great addition to the area.

The Chair closed public comment.

Kennedy: Motion to (1) approve the blade sign as presented, (2) approve the door decals with the hours/text adjusted and the size of 'Flip' the chicken identical on each side, while ensuring that they do not cover more than 20% of the window area, and (3) approve the wall sign as presented.

Seconded by: Miller.

Roll Call: Durand, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sullivan in favor. Passes 5-0.

Projects in the Urban Renewal Area

1. 234 Bridge Street: Small Project Review – Installation of cellular infrastructure on existing historic light pole, continued from 2/24/21, request to continue to 8/25/21

Perras: Motion to continue to the August 25, 2021, regular meeting.

Seconded by: Kennedy.

Roll Call: Durand, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sullivan in favor. Passes 5-0.

2. 217-221 Essex Street: Small Project Review – Replacement of existing and installation of new cellular infrastructure on rooftop.

Attorney Dan Klasnick, Duval & Klasnick, LLC was present to discuss the project.

Atty. Klasnick reviews the proposal: Verizon Wireless is proposing to mount a total of 12 antennas (six new, 4 replacements, 2 existing antennas on mounts with remote radio heads). They will be installed in a variety of ways, side mounted to the lower building, installed within a stealth enclosure, side-by-side mounted on an existing single pipe and stacked on new pipes. Existing antennas will be swapped out and remote radio heads added. The purpose of this upgrade is to provide enhanced service to customers.

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Perras requested that the conduits be painted. Atty. Klasnick replied yes, all Verizon conduits can be painted. Sullivan agreed with Perras.

Jaquith joins the meeting during this application, 6:45pm.

The Chair opened public comment.

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

The Chair closed public comment.

Sullivan: Motion to approve as presented with the recommendation to paint the conduit, if owned by Verizon, to blend with the building façade.

Seconded by: Perras.

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

3. **278 Derby Street:** Small Project Review and Sign Review – Patio wall paint and brick up lighting for Bit Bar, continued from 6/23/21

Gideon Coltof, co-owner of Bit Bar, was present to discuss the project.

Coltoff reviews the façade elements that were approved at the SRA meeting and stated that the SRA members pre-emptively approved the remaining elements upon successful completion of DRB review. He stated that teal or white uplighting is still proposed on the face of the brick using the existing lighting and the interior of the patio wall has been painted teal to match the interior space. He presented two wainscoting options for the exterior face of the patio wall, a teal wall with black perimeter framing or a teal wall with black perimeter framing and a thin copper trim. The Board discussed potential colors options. Perras suggested eliminating the uplighting on the brick. Chair Durand agreed and noted that uplighting would contribute to light pollution. Sullivan agreed. Kennedy stated that he is not in favor of a teal patio wall and suggested black with a subtle copper or teal wash of light under the existing granite cap in a channel matching the width of the entry door frame. Miller agreed. Coltoff agreed to a mock-up for the Board to review.

The Chair opened public comment.

Mary Whitney, 356 Essex Street. Thanked the DRB wanting to eliminate the light pollution but lighting the patio wall is also light pollution, the patio is small and the street it well lit, so the additional light isn't necessary.

Tim Jenkins, 18 Broad Street. Suggested applying neon light at the ramp which would serve two purposes and could resemble the lighting around the entry.

The Chair closed public comment.

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Miller: Motion to (1) approve the black paint on the outside side of the patio wall while allowing the teal paint to remain on the inside of the wall, (2) deny the request for brick up lighting in any color above the cornice on the front façade, and (3) consider future lighting applications for hidden accent lights along the patio wall.

Seconded by: Jaquith.

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

Newhall-Smith confirms that the SRA pre-approved the façade elements discussed tonight. Mr. Coltoff will not need to attend an SRA meeting for the final approval of these elements.

- 4. 285 Derby Street:** Small Project Review – Façade modifications to rear tenant space, including creating new entry doors, murals, exterior lighting, and the construction of a paved walkway along the side of the building in the easement area of Charlotte Forten Park, continued from 6/23/21.

Attorney Scott Grover, Ken McTague of Concept Signs, Steve Livermore, Architect, Bill Golden, Real Pirates, and Russell Tanzer, representing the property owner, were present to discuss the project.

Attorney Grover reviews the façade elements that were approved at the SRA meeting and stated that the SRA members pre-emptively approved the remaining elements upon successful completion with DRB review and approval of the lighting fixtures and alleyway façade.

Livermore reviewed the revised building elevation that place all gooseneck light fixtures, three per bay, at the same height within the brick band rather than placing them higher at the entrance and one lantern at each pilaster also at the same height. The revised alleyway elevations with a revised proposal of installing 3/4-inch MDO plywood boards with battens painted bronze like Notch Brewery rather than the previously proposed stucco. Of the three or four gooseneck and lantern light fixture options submitted, the preferred color would be bronze. Chair Durand asked why so many light fixtures were proposed along the park. Livermore replied that they will light the new public walkway along the building and illuminate murals on the wall panels. Newhall-Smith stated that the Design Guidelines recommend providing light at entries rather than to illuminate the building but three lights per panel to highlight artwork seems excessive. Atty. Grover noted that the Public Art Commission will weigh-in on the lighting as well. Golden stated that at least six paintings relating to their exhibit are proposed although they could reduce the number of fixtures from three to one. The closest light source in the park is nearly 40-feet away from the building and closer to the waterfront is a low granite wall and if it were not well lit it could become a liability issue for the City. Livermore added that the city would like to see more activity in the park which require more illumination. Chair Durand stated that there are too many light fixtures on the building, one above each bay and one lantern at each pilaster would be sufficient. McTague suggested keeping three lights over the two entrances. The Board agreed.

Miller noted her concerns will allowing murals on the façade of the building that relate to the museum and could be considered advertising while also not knowing what the murals would be. McTague noted that the pirate museum across the street had a mural

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wall. Kennedy noted that Seagrass has façade murals but there is a fine line when murals become marketing. Newhall-Smith noted that the applicant will return for a review of the proposed artwork.

Sullivan suggested the lantern height be raised so it can't be reached from grade. The Board agreed.

The Chair opened public comment.

Mary Whitney, 356 Essex Street. Appreciated the Board requesting a reduction the number of light fixtures and one gooseneck between two sconces should provide enough light.

The Chair closed public comment.

Sullivan: Motion to approve the proposal with the following recommendations (1) the finish on the gooseneck lights shall be bronze, (2) the number of gooseneck lights shall be reduced from three to one per panel except for over the entrances, where each entrance may have three gooseneck lamps, (3) install the gooseneck lamps along an even horizontal plane, (4) approve 'Option 3' for the wall sconces in a bronze finish, (5) install the sconces slightly higher on the façade, approximately 12" higher, so that they are out of arms reach, and (6) approve the MDO panels with batten seams in a bronze finish as infill material along the alley façade.

Seconded by: Jaquith.

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

Newhall-Smith confirms that the SRA pre-approved the façade elements discussed tonight. The Real Pirates team will not need to attend an SRA meeting for the final approval of these elements.

5. 140 Washington Street: Small Project Review – Façade modifications including new paint, exterior lighting, and signage.

Marnie Greenhut, owner of the business and Ken McTague, Concept Signs, are present to review the project.

Ms. Greenhut proposed to repaint the façade, doors, and window frames on Barton Square and Washington Street, install new exterior light fixtures at entrance, and install new signage (wall signs, projecting signs, and window decals). The storefront paint colors would match the existing building with white columns, light green trim, and a parchment color sign band. The existing gooseneck light fixtures will receive a new coat of dark green paint to match the rest of the building. The exit door on the north façade is now proposed as 'sunshine' yellow rather than green. The double door entry is still proposed as yellow, and the lantern style light fixture will be replaced with a fixture that will no longer be hit by the entry door.

McTague stated that the sign band signage will be individual 1" thick PVC letters with a black face and the sides in a variety of pastel-colors. A vinyl graphic will be applied to the window. A double-sided round blade sign is proposed at the north-east corner of the

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building like the neighboring businesses. A red arrow was added below the blade sign to call attention to the Barton Square entrance. Above the exit door is a flat ACM panel with black lettering with pastel edging. The double-door store entrance will also have a double-sided blade sign with a red arrow on a new bracket to direct customers to the entrance.

Kennedy stated that the arrow detracted and overpowered the entrance signage and suggested inverting the arrow to a white arrow with a red rule. Greenhut noted the difficulty seeing the white arrow from either side of Washington Street and the current confusion over the two sets doors, so her preference is to keep the arrow. Kennedy added that the tone of the yellow is overpowering the green trim. Miller agreed.

Miller noted that the lettering in the two sign bands differ. McTague replied that the Washington Street letters are individual PVC and the sign over the exit door is a flat AMC panel with a printed graphic. The Board discussed the need for consistency of the spacing of the wording on all the signs. Sullivan stated that the proposed character size of the text on Washington Street is the largest and should align with the neighboring signage. Kennedy suggested raising the lower lettering higher. The Board agreed. Jaquith stated that the "Salem, MA" on the window vinyl seems like an afterthought. Newhall-Smith noted that she informed the applicant that the window decal was too large. McTague noted that the window decal will be reduced by 10-20%.

Perras requested clarification on the rear double-door entrance. Greenhut replied that the store was designed so the main entrance is further down the street and the exit at the front corner. Kennedy suggested adding the word "ENTER" in black font onto a white arrow to highlight the main entrance more effectively.

Chair Durand stated his concern that the yellow half round window may detract from the signage. Kennedy and Greenhut replied that the trim would be minimally visible.

The Chair opened public comment.

No one in the assembly wished to comment.

The Chair closed public comment.

Kennedy: Motion to approve the proposal with the following recommendations (1) adjust the spacing of the text on all signs so that it is even and all signs match, (2) adjust the color of the arrows from red to either black or white and include the word 'Enter' in either black or white text on the arrow, (3) approve the façade painting upon submittal of color samples for all façade elements. For recommendations 2 and 3, the applicant may submit new renderings and the color samples to staff who will coordinate review with Glenn Kennedy for administrative approval of these project elements.

Seconded by: Jaquith.

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

- 6. 38 Norman Street:** Schematic Design Review – Construction of a new mixed-use building with commercial uses on the ground floor and residential uses above.

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Ryan Whittig and Matthew Moore (developers), Philip Sima (Founder/Architect at Balance Architects), and Attorney Scott Grover of Tinti & Navins.

Attorney Grover reviews the process that has led up to this meeting. This project has gone through several design iterations before coming to the DRB. The current project has been scaled back twice and currently includes the construction of a four-story building with 20 residential units on the upper floors with commercial space, a tenant lobby, and parking on the first floor. The project meets all ZBA ordinances but they city staff asked them to consider a smaller building with less density to improve the parking ratios.

Mr. Sima reviews the project basics:

- Four story building:
 - Upper three floors will have 20 residential units (11, 1-bedroom units and 9, 2-bedroom units) with 2 private roof decks and 1 common roof deck
 - First floor (at grade) includes a narrow commercial space fronting on Norman Street at the Crombie Street corner and a tenant lobby fronting on Norman on the corner near the roundabout.
- 25 onsite parking spaces (1.25 spaces per residential unit)
- Landscaped buffer areas at property lines, vegetation on roof, tenant outdoor space at Crombie Street side property line.

Sima stated that the proposed design has eliminated the top mansard roof, maintained the face brick façade, dark trim at the bay windows, and a dark first-floor base with the potential for outdoor seating at the commercial space along Norman Street. Evergreen screening will shield patio from the new 23 Summer Street development, and the trash area and outdoor seating could be in the narrow portion of the parcel to the north. Shadow studies of the four-story structure have minimal variation compared to the five-story structure and shadow lines will be slightly reduced. The parking entrance is still proposed off Crombie Street and above it, where the structure transitions to a three-floor structure next to their direct abutter, the façade will transition to clapboard siding with private roof decks on the top floor.

Jaquith praised the design teams progress along with the help of Historic Salem Inc. He suggested 2 over 2 windows rather than 6 over 6 to better match the building style as well as an alternative to the multi-pane look proposed at the first-floor. He was in favor of the sidewalk usage, the noted that the reduction in the number of floors and transition to a clapboard façade were a great improvement. Sullivan agreed and suggested the clapboard transition at both sides be recessed 1-foot or more rather than abut the masonry. Sima agreed. Sullivan asked a pattern for the masonry has been selected. Sima replied that they haven't determined all the details, but the masonry base will be at least 30-inches high with painted trim above, fiber cement clapboards at the sides, and an undetermined paneling at the openings next to the parking area. Sullivan suggested that the retail area be distinguishable from the parking area on the façade. Chair Durand and Jacquith agreed. Miller suggested incorporating a green wall.

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Perras suggested that the current iteration could appease the abutters and public easier than the previous iterations, the detail could start to resemble the neighboring buildings so the design looks less residential, a square bay rather than angled, a less refined mullion pattern on the windows, eliminate the mullions at the first floor, and to apply a different cornice termination where it meets the brick. Kennedy stated that the proposed brick color appears pink compared to the orange and red brick in the area so they should be careful when it comes to the actual brick selection.

Chair Durand noted that retail with granite base and glass above doesn't work well for multiple tenants unless it's a restaurant due to the difficulty of breaking up a space or to add additional entrance doors to the façade. Whittig replied that they had in mind that the commercial space would have only one tenant. He asked their thoughts on accordion doors versus traditional windows. Chair Durand replied that the Department of Public Health has issues with them when it comes to kitchens and tenants wanting that configuration were required to enclose their open kitchen for sanitation purposes. Kennedy added that there has been more consideration to open air concepts due to the current pandemic. Wittig noted that the first-floor commercial space is just over 1,600 square-feet and they envisioned any cooking being done in the basement space, although transporting items between floors could be a challenge.

Jaquith requested the proposed parking ratio. Wittig replied 1.25 unassigned spaces per unit.

Miller raised concern with how the residential and commercial entrances will be expressed as well as the address placement and suggested the use of plantings to distinguish the entrances from one another. She requested a landscape plan listing specific plantings and spacing when they return for their next review. The bay windows appear as a remnant from the mansard roof iteration and should be further developed. Perras suggested the brick bays to match the façade. Jaquith noted his preference for boxed bays. Miller suggested the design team come up with an alternative to the widely used boxed bays in new construction. Sullivan noted his preference for the angled bays for the views for the interior views they would provide. Chair Durand agreed with Sullivan. Jaquith suggested the bay window design be at the discretion of the architect.

Sullivan asked if mechanical systems would be located on the roof. Sima replied that split systems are prevalent, quiet, and they can be placed on the roof. Private decks will be placed on the roof but there will also be piping, and vents so smaller mechanical units could be placed there too. Miller asked if a landscape architect will be brought onto the project. Sima replied yes, MDLA is their landscape architect.

The Chair opened public comment.

Newhall-Smith acknowledges the letters that were submitted to the SRA during their review process and states that she has not received letters for this DRB meeting.

Ana Gordan, 12 Crombie Street. The focus has been on the design of the building; however, she has larger concerns that she also mentioned during the SRA's public comment. 1) the impact this will have on traffic and parking for current Crombie Street residents, the traffic backup creates by customers exiting the strip mall parking lot across the street. 2) Parking layout: spaces 13 & 25 at the entrance will be challenging. 3)

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Drivers entering would need to wait for the garage to open which could back-up the vehicles behind them. 4) Customers of the proposed retail may be tempted to park in the strip mall parking lot. 5) The direct abutter at 18 Crombie Street uses her side door, near the proposed grill areas, and she presumed that the abutter wouldn't be comfortable with that configuration. 6) The blocking of natural light to the neighbors north of this development. She created her own shadow studies and 4-6 of the winter months, 15, 16 & 18 Crombie Street and the strip mall businesses would be adversely affected. 7) The setbacks are appreciated, a mansard roof works better at 4 stories rather than 5, and the headhouses may be unsightly for the resident's uphill on Chestnut Street. 8) She appreciated the developers proposed to develop the lot but it's essential that it be the right fit.

The Chair closed public comment.

Perras asked if the rear of the building was open air. Sima replied yes, the garage door is only to close off the driveway entrance and there is a fence and vegetative buffer to conceal the parking. Perras suggested eliminating the garage door. Sima suggested a rapid open door but from an urban design perspective they do not want to leave the driveway entrance open, so the parking spaces are concealed. Miller noted their snow storage concerns due to uncovered parking. Sima replied that some snow can be placed at the grill area but that will be determined with the help of their civil engineer. Jaquith added that the snow could also be taken off site.

Miller asked where the trash storage would be located. Sima replied that the residential area is to the west of the building and a potential second area to the north near the grills.

Newhall-Smith, the Board, and the design team discussed providing an approval of the schematic design with the understanding that they will see the design again in the Design Development phase.

Sullivan: Motion to recommend approval of the schematic design with consideration of the comments and suggestions made by DRB members and with the knowledge that this project will be before the DRB for additional design review at various stages of design development and construction document development.

Seconded by: Jaquith.

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

7. 32-50 Federal Street and 252 Bridge Street: Schematic Design Review – Restoration of historic courthouses and development of mixed-use structure.

Winn Development: Adam Giordano, Adam Stein, Christina McPike. Cube 3: Brian O'Conner and Steve Prestejohn. VHB: Stephanie Kruel

Newhall-Smith reviews the steps that has brought us to this point in the project. She describes the design evolution through the Design Working Group – an ad-hoc group of volunteers from the Planning Board, the SRA, and the DRB.

Giordano began the presentation. Winn Development has applied for Schematic Design Review of the courthouse and crescent lot project. Winn is proposing to restore the two

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courthouses in accordance with the draft PR and lease out the interior spaces with a mix of commercial and residential tenants (tenancy is TBD). Greenery would be added to the exterior as well as accessible public space. O'Connor stated that on the Crescent Lot, Winn reduced the height and scale and are now proposing a six-story building (first floor at Bridge Street grade) with commercial space on the first floor and five levels of mixed-income residential units above. The building has moved to the edge of Bridge Street creating a streetscape with the public realm to the north allowing for a smooth transition for pedestrians from the lower to the higher elevation of Bridge Street with entry points for residents into the building.

Prestejohn stated that public courtyards will be placed behind the courthouses and at the high end of the crescent lot to extend the activation spaces, shield pedestrians from the vehicles, and draw them to the waterfront. Moving the crescent lot building against Bridge Street creates an urban edge. The building has no back side and will have a layering effect to highlight the base, middle and top using contrasting materials with an emphasis on the corners using glass. Changes in wall plane will be used to soften the urban edge along Bridge Street. The north façade is the entryway to downtown and the face of the structure steps back to create open terraces that manage the scale and provide outdoor amenity spaces. The north façade stair, shared use path, and ramp can be accessed from the lower Bridge Street MBTA entrance, and they all lead to the higher Bridge Street elevation.

Giordano stated that this site is transient oriented site next to the MBTA garage with a bus line in a walkable city with various bike paths. Their goal is to achieve at least .75 parking spaces per residential unit given the nature of the site. 38 parking spaces are currently proposed at the lower level of the building although they are working to increase that number. They hope to lease spaces during off-peak hours at the MBTA garage, as well as the potential purchase of passes at the Museum Place garage and Universal Steel lot. They are seeking 60 spaces in a pool of 1,725 between the 3 facilities.

Energy and Sustainability

McPike stated that at the courthouses they will prioritize sustainability and maximize energy performance think about the outcomes of each design decision and work in accordance with the historic preservation requirements to integrate high performance design and energy efficiency, as they've done with their previous historic adaptive reuse projects. At the crescent lot new construction, they will design to passive house standards through a robust building envelope design that will downsize the mechanical systems, reduce fossil fuel use, and overall long-term operation costs. Residents will have the proximity of public transportation to help reduce the overall carbon footprint. The building will also be designed to adapt to the changes in climate.

Climate Resiliency

Kruel noted that the current lot is in the flood plain, low lying, and on made land which creates design challenges. Subject to the flooding portions of the Massachusetts Building Code they are required to elevate building elements and systems with floodproofing methods, materials, and construction. Due to sea level rise, flooding is

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likely to be more frequent so the first occupiable floor has been raised to the upper Bridge Street elevation with parking at the river level below in a space designed to allow for flooding, and the public parking will remain viable even during times of flooding. There is no way to provide flood protection at other sites on the crescent lot but the design won't preclude the City from implementing those measures in the future.

Perras appreciated their focus on sustainability and resiliency, was impressed by the siting of the building and the pedestrian experience, liked the massing although the material articulation needs work given the nature of the neighboring masonry and stone civic buildings, they should look closely at their material palette despite their residential program.

Kennedy agreed with Perras and appreciated the site lines and pedestrian pathways. Chair Durand asked how people with disabilities navigate the pedestrian path. O'Connor replied that the ramp design is still in progress and not needing incorporate exterior elevators with their limited site area. Stein noted that they were considering have the bike ramp double as an accessible route. Sullivan suggested decreasing the massing closest to the MBTA garage because from the North Street bridge the view to the city is blocked off. Jaquith agreed with the roofline statement but as an entrance building the downtown becomes a surprise and suggested the right side raised and a cornice added to give the building more motion. It's fitting with the transportation aspect of the city.

Miller stated that in the view from the North River bridge the references to the neighboring buildings are overwhelming because they are trying to match their scale, it should have its own identity and not try to tie into the MBTA garage to the east and to the Ruane Courthouse on the right. The details of the landscaped areas and site should be worked out, the public space feels like a residential front porch that doesn't feel welcoming and could feel more open, possibly because it's covered. Pedestrians may be unsure if it's public space because it's part of their building. The landscape architect could provide elegant solutions to the accessibility issues, potentially with a switchback ramp that integrates into the landscape with a cascading garden feel. She was skeptical of separate ADA ramps when the purpose of the ADA law is not to separate people based on their abilities.

The Chair opened public comment.

Mary Whitney, 356 Essex Street. Asked Winn to supply the previously asked and answered public meeting questions. Hoped they are making more progress determining the Chapter 91 requirements. Asked how emergency vehicles can access the site when Bridge Street is closed for flooding. Noted that it's unclear to her what land is being conserved. Asked if they were aware of the assets in the historic buildings that should be preserved. Noted that the term "timeless modernity" is subjective, but she hoped the concept looks as good in the future as they presume it will. The historic courthouses are blocked by the new construction and no left turns are allowed so they won't be seen. They deserve much better from the previously city owned parcel that is becoming the gateway to the downtown but the developers claim they need this many until to restore the courthouses but there are many examples worldwide that didn't require a parcel of land with insufficient parking, in a flood zone with current flooding concerns.

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Newhall-Smith acknowledges the comment letters submitted to the SRA as well as comment letters submitted to the DRB in advance of this meeting:

- Lara Fury, 126 Federal Street, July 28, 2021
- Anonymous Comment, July 28, 2021
- Lisa Lyons, 1 Broad Street, July 28, 2021
- HSI, July 28, 2021
- Tim Jenkins, 18 Broad Street, July 28, 2021

Jane Stauffer, 1 Washington Street. Agreed with all of Whitney's comments and added that the B5 district is required to have 1.5 parking spaces per residential unit on site. Currently there are 90 spaces used by commuters that even during the pandemic are close to full occupancy, and another 178 parking spaces are required for the 119 new units, totaling 268 vehicles required on site. She asked where the 178 vehicles will go on site.

Pamela Zombeck, 119 Gedney Street. Agreed with the comments made, particularly regarding aesthetics and a design seem numerous times in Salem. If the desire is to connect to historic courthouses more inspiring concepts could be incorporated. There was a lot of discussion regarding commitment to environmental concerns, but they are building on a flood plain that floods. Concerned with feeling that residents of Salem belong and not just residents of the building. The overflow of parking onto neighboring resident parking only streets result in the Traffic Department being contacted that issue parking ticket put still leave them with no place to park, particularly during snow emergencies. .75 parking spaces per unit is not sufficient with residents have a minimum of one vehicle per household, but you can't assume that most residents will be transient and as developers in Salem say that traffic continues to get worse. This project deserves more study to determine a design that fits the community.

Anne Sterling, 29 Orchard Street. Agreed with the previous public comments and that .75 is not sufficient for the crescent lot. Noted that no comments have been made regarding where parking will come from for the two courthouses that are expected to share parking on Federal Street with the Ruane building with its 11 court rooms and the many residential buildings. The crescent lot sidewalk may create a canyon effect choked with vehicles and unfriendly to pedestrians, can that sidewalk be made safer for pedestrians.

The Chair closed public comment.

Stein stated that their website www.Salemgateway.com list the previously asked question from community meetings and their answers, dates for community meetings, etc. and he will work with Newhall-Smith to better advertise it on the city website.

Jaquith: Motion to continue to August 25, 2021.

Seconded by: Miller.

Roll Call: Durand, Jacquith, Kennedy, Miller, Perras, Sullivan in favor. Passes 6-0.

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Projects Outside of the Urban Renewal Area

1. **342 Highland Avenue:** Entrance Corridor Project – Design review of proposed convenience store and 12-pump gas station

Anthony Guba, civil engineer for A Prime is present to discuss the project.

Guba proposed to construct a 3,353 sq. ft. convenience store and 12-pump gas station on the vacant property. The Planning Board referred the project to the DRB for design review in accordance with the Entrance Corridor Overlay District Ordinance, section 8.2 of the Zoning Ordinance. Parts of the property are within 200-feet of the Forest River, and they will have to meet with the Conservation Commission and Planning Board following this review and a peer review of the traffic and storm water management. Their motor fuel storage license will also require approval from the City Council and permitting from the MassDOT for their driveway. An Environmental Notification Form (ENF) will be required from MEPA and state approval for the Pyro-Chem fire suppression system for the fuel dispensing island.

The lot is vacant that was previously two residences, there are residences on both Highland and Barcelona Avenue, however; the neighboring parcels along Highland Avenue are zoned business. An abutters driveway encroaching on to the property that they claim in their right and they will legally allow the abutter to continue their use of the driveway.

They've removed some proposed parking and pavement at the request of the Planning Board to be replaced with landscaping, including a total of 30 proposed trees and over 135 additional plantings. Proposed is a convenience store, 12 fuel islands, a fuel enclosure away from the street, fencing to conceal them from the Barcelona Street neighbors with plantings on both sides, landscaped frontages along Highland and Barcelona Streets. Two driveways are proposed, a separate entrance and exit only onto Highland Avenue, and a shared driveway onto Barcelona Street that will accommodate tractor trailers needing to access Highland Avenue.

The lighting will have all sharp cut-off fixtures and four proposed light poles on the property, one at each driveway opening, one at the trash area and two wall packs fixtures at the building. LED lighting is proposed at the underside of the building fascia and lighting under the canopy has been kept to a minimum, and task lighting at the dispensers.

The façade will be white split faced block, blue at the entryway and a yellow canopy at the perimeter of the building but limited to the sides facing Highland Avenue and the fuel islands. A freestanding sign is proposed in the island between the Highland Avenue entrance and exit. The signs meet the requirements for the Business Highway Zone, the free-standing sign is approximately 85% of what the bylaw allows, and the overall signage area is approximately 65% of what the bylaw allows.

Miller suggested even more separation of the lot from the neighborhood behind it by sliding the pumps and parking lot closer to Highland Avenue since such a wide buffer along the main street doesn't benefit anyone. Some of that space would be more

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beneficial to the residential neighbors rather than the few pedestrians that walk along Highland Avenue. She suggested a second alternating row of trees. Guba replied that the larger shade trees are interspaced with the arborvitae and plantings on either side of a 6-foot-high fence. Elements can't be shifted due to maneuvering and setback requirements under 6.3 for fueling facilities, because of the zoning setbacks, and the proximity to riverfront, they are squeezed onto the site. Jaquith suggested the applicant offer additional plantings to the Barcelona Street abutter. Miller suggested four conifers be offered to pronounce the entrance into the neighborhood, block light coming from the site, and lessen the noise.

Chair Durand noted that the ECOD allows 2 curb cuts not three. Guba replied that despite the divider island the separate entrance and exit is only considered one curb cut, they are under MassDOT jurisdiction.

Chair Durand asked if the rooftop mechanicals on the convenience store and fuel islands can be screened. Guba replied that they could be screened, like what was done on Lafayette Street in Salem, which was requested by the Planning Board.

Chair Durand suggested relocating the "A Prime" to the building sign above the entrance could be relocated to the auto grille and located the "Auto Grill" above the entry doors. Guba replied that they'd prefer not to since it would deviate to provide cohesiveness between locations. The Lafayette Street location was before they changed their site design. Kennedy agreed with Chair Durand and suggested reducing the height of the arch, separating the "Auto" and "Grill" to either side of the entry door and placing "A Prime" in the middle band above the door. Guba replied that the small building gives the impression at the design elements are overpowering but the arch is less than 6-feet-high.

Kennedy stated that the price sign on the fuel island canopy is oversized. Guba replied that Lafayette Street has slower speeds and Highland Avenue has higher speeds so the numeral size needs to correlate to the speed of traffic so a driver can read the sign and decide whether to enter the driveway. The proposed numerals would be larger than what exists on Lafayette Street. Chair Durand and Kennedy agreed that the sign is oversized. Sullivan suggested matching the numerals to the freestanding sign or eliminating the canopy price since also on each gas pump and is repetitive information. Miller noted the entire building acts as a sign and they would capture all of the south bound traffic on Highland Avenue. Guba replied that they compete based off their prices and providing a quality product since they don't have the prominence of other gas stations or incentives to encourage repeat customers. They are competing with every station a person will drive by on their way to their destination not just neighboring gas stations. Their location is also hidden by vegetation on Highland Avenue. He agreed to reduce the sign of the canopy fuel price sign.

Newhall-Smith requested the snow storage location. Guba replied that two paved areas are proposed, at the parking spaces in the south-west corner along Barcelona Avenue and the paved area at the corner of Barcelona and Highland Avenue. Contractors can also properly remove and dispose of the snow if necessary. No landscape storage is proposed as to not damage the landscaping and to control and treat the sediment and stormwater runoff.

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The Chair opened public comment.

No one in the assembly wished to comment.

The Chair closed public comment.

Sullivan: Motion to recommend the following to the Planning Board: (1) incorporate the design-focused ECOD regulations into the recommendation, (2) reduce the size of the numerals on the canopy sign so that they are the same size as the numerals on the freestanding sign, (3) encourage the applicant to reach out to the abutter on Barcelona Avenue to offer the planting of an additional 4 trees on the abutter's property to provide additional screening.

Seconded by: Jaquith.

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

New/Old Business

1. Approval of Minutes:
 - a. April 28, 2021
 - b. May 26, 2021: Durand reviews one edit to the draft.
 - c. June 23, 2021

Miller: Motion to approve all three sets of minutes as presented, except for the correction to the 5/26 draft as discussed.

Seconded by: Jaquith.

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

2. Staff Updates, if any

Miller states that she reached out to the company who designed the wayfinding signs and received the entire sign package with design specifications. She will pass them along to Newhall-Smith who will upload them to a shared drive so all members can view them.

Adjournment

Miller: Motion to adjourn.

Seconded by: Jaquith.

All in favor, passes 6-0.

Meeting is adjourned at 11:00PM.

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