

**City of Salem Massachusetts  
Public Meeting Minutes**

<b>Board or Committee:</b>	<b>Design Review Board – Regular Meeting</b>
<b>Date and Time:</b>	<b>Wednesday, May 26, 2021 at 6:00 pm</b>
<b>Meeting Location:</b>	<b>Remote Participation via Zoom</b>
<b>DRB Members Present:</b>	<b>Chair Paul Durand, David Jaquith, Glenn Kennedy, Catherine Miller, Marc Perras</b>
<b>DRB Members Absent:</b>	<b>Helen Sides, J. Michael Sullivan</b>
<b>Others Present:</b>	<b>Kate Newhall-Smith</b>
<b>Recorder:</b>	<b>Colleen Brewster</b>

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

**Signs in the Urban Renewal Area**

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1. **51 Charter Street:** Charter Street Cemetery Informational/Rules Signage, continued from 4/28/21

Patricia Kelleher, Salem's Preservation Planner, was present to discuss the project.

Kennedy stated that he was not able to meet with Kelleher as he has planned but will reach out to her this week. Kelleher stated that she spoke with Lisa Cammarata, Salem's ADA Coordinator, who reached out to their consultant that also had comments and revisions to the draft sign. With Kennedy's help she will be able to revise the sign.

Jaquith: Motion to continue to the next regular meeting. Seconded by: Miller.

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

2. **2 East India Square:** Cinema Salem, decals on marquee sign

Marshall Strauss, owner, and Ken McTague of Concept Signs were present to discuss the project.

McTague stated that the owner is not proposing to replace the large marquee sign, but to add a black band across the top 15-inches of the marquee. The black band will feature 'Cinema Salem' three times across the width of it. Newhall-Smith noted that the proposed signage meets the allowable signage square footage.

Perras stated that he likes the look of the continuous band. Kennedy suggested moving the outer text closer to the middle to split the difference of the black background, so they are evenly spaced. Strauss agreed.

Chair Durand opens public comment.

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Durand closes public comment.

Miller: Motion to approve with Kennedy's suggested to evenly space the text.

Seconded by: Jaquith.

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

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### 3. **1 Derby Square:** Maison Vampyre A-frame sign

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

McTague stated that the sign will be 24-inch-wide by 36-inches-high, wood double-sided A-frame. It will have an aluminum face, but a square chalkboard applied panel.

Perras suggested the font on the A-frame sign be gold leaf to match the blade sign. Kennedy agreed. McTague noted that white may have been proposed to match the black and white QR code. Perras noted that the sign should be kept out of the accessible path.

Chair Durand had no preference on the font color, but suggested white may be better against the chalkboard background and to not use a black background. Kennedy suggested replicating the gold leaf logo and rounded corners to match the blade sign.

Chair Durand opens public comment.

Gideon Coltof, co-owner of Bit Bar, 278 Derby Street. The sign looks good with the white letters which he agreed would work best with the chalk background.

Chair Durand closes public comment.

Kennedy: Motion to approve with the suggestion to use gold font color rather than white.  
Seconded by: Jaquith.

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

### **Projects in the Urban Renewal Area**

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1. **73 Lafayette Street: Schematic Design Review** – Redevelopment of 73 Lafayette Street and 9 Peabody Street through the construction of mixed-use structures for affordable elderly supportive housing, compact residential units, the North Shore Health Center, and additional space for non-profit organizations, continued from 3/24/21, request to continue to June 23, 2021.

Jaquith: Motion to continue to the June 23, 2021 regular meeting.

Seconded by: Perras.

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

2. **234 Bridge Street: Small Project Review** – Installation of cellular infrastructure on existing decorative light pole, continued from 2/24/21, request to continue to June 23, 2021.

Miller: Motion to continue to the June 23, 2021 regular meeting.

Seconded by: Jaquith.

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

3. **302 Essex Street:** Small Project Review (Moon Baby Salon) – Installation of new door with security door

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Melissa, Moon Baby's front of house manager was present to discuss the project.

Melissa stated that the main right-side entry door has a crack in the bottom panel and the door and the lock isn't secure. They would like to install a new door to match their other door but want to keep the other locked as well as a security door to keep locked but to allow for air flow. Both doors will be painted to match, and the new door will be mostly glass door with mullions.

Perras noted the drastically different looks between the two entry doors. Kennedy agreed and noted the difference that would be created between all the neighboring entry doors. Melissa replied that they are open to replacing both. Jaquith noted his preference for all four doors along the front of the building to match. Chair Durand stated that the glass storefront door to the left that could provide some symmetry with the proposed door style.

Perras noted that a white enamel finish on the door would be a better fit than black.

Melissa replied that a dark blueish-green paint was proposed for the entirety of the door, but they could paint it white.

Jaquith suggested an alternative, installing a white security door. Melissa noted that they open the doors for customers when they arrive to the salon, and they would like to keep that security protocol in place. Jaquith suggested the security door be placed on the interior so the egress door can still swing out, given that it is a commercial space.

Chair Durand noted that their occupancy needs to be determined, which will inform them as to whether the door must swing outward.

Newhall-Smith stated that business owners need to be supported so their employees can feel safe in their space, and she supports the Board finding a solution tonight that is appropriate and meets their requirements.

Chair Durand stated that egress for an occupancy more than 50 persons required the door to swing out. Melissa replied that the 1,600 square-foot space only has 2-3 employees at night. Miller stated that the building owner should be made aware of the change in door swing due to potential interior impacts.

Melissa replied that the building owner is okay with what has been proposed. Jaquith reiterated that the security door should be on the interior and the exterior should open out against the brick wall. Miller agreed but with the use of similar doors.

Newhall-Smith asked if the interior security door could be black or whatever the manufacturer provides. Miller agreed.

Chair Durand opens public comment.

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Durand closes public comment.

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Miller: Motion to approve replacing both doors using glass commercial door with white trim that swings out, a security door to remain black, and be attached at the interior. Jaquith seconded the motion.

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

4. **118 Washington Street:** Small Project Review and Sign Review – Painting, lighting, material replacement, installation of new entry doors, and signage

Gene Nigrelli, co-owner, was present to discuss the project.

Nigrelli stated that they are taking over 118 Washington Street space, it will be named Ginger Cajun Seafood. The design will fit within the neighborhood, exterior lights will be installed around to the side of the building, and the wood base will be replaced in kind for a more authentic look. The single front door will become a double door and the doors and surround will be painted white. The new awnings will be black with red lower trim and the restaurant name will be at the center awnings only while all the awnings will be plain.

Miller asked what will be done with the doors on the side of the building. Nigrelli replied that they will be painted white, and the solid kitchen door will remain in place.

Perras noted that the exterior lights appear to be highlighting the awning and not the façade. Jaquith noted that the awnings are only 24-inched deep, and light will spill out onto the ground; the rendering is not drawn to scale.

Kennedy suggested not including the rule below “Ginger” and using yellow font not white for consistency within their logo. Chair Durand and Miller agreed.

Chair Durand opens public comment.

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Durand closes public comment.

Kennedy: Motion to approve with façade to be painted white, lighting to wrap the building, awning logo to have the rule line removed, yellow font not white in the logo, and entry changed from a single to a double door.

Seconded by: Jaquith.

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

5. **278 Derby Street:** Small Project Review and Sign Review – Painting, light installation, and new signage for Bit Bar

Gideon Coltof, one of the Bit Bar owners, was present to discuss the project.

Coltof stated that they will leave the Salem Jail and move to old Beer Works space in August. The highest sign will be no higher than 23 ½ feet from grade and their total signage square footage is 74 for their 75 SF limit, meaning a variance is not required. The entry sign above the entrance will replace the Salem Beer Works Sign and they are proposing that it be front channel lit. The blade sign will be repurposed from the Salem

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Jail. The patio wall sign will be turned 90 degrees and installed over the door. They are proposing to paint their trademark teal logo on the low wall at the patio with applied lettering. Solid LED strip lighting is proposed to surround the entrance and it will be solid color not pulsating. They would remove the existing awning and panels and installed the same LED strip lighting around each panel to highlight their second entrance. They would repurpose some of the lighting from Salem Bear Works, paint them teal and turn the up to highlight the brick. They proposed copper paint be applied to the webbing of the I-beams on either side of the main entrance. Net LED lights would be strung over the patio, and they are unsure of the furniture color for the front patio. They will maintain the same interior.

Miller stated that the blade sign appears to be lit internally. Coltof replied that the light does come from inside the sign, the lettering has a copper backing with the letters cut out and translucent face. Kennedy liked the reuse of this sign but noted the concern with using it in the downtown area when it was intended to be halo lit.

Newhall-Smith stated that she spoke to the Executive Director of the SRA and this sign will not be a big issue since it is repurposed and it's a not a large glowing box.

Coltof stated that the wall sign also has a copper backing and will be front channel lit but he will get more information on the proposed sign.

Perras suggested the right side of the sign be vertically aligned with the edge of the storefront.

Kennedy noted his concern with the ability to read the main entry sign due to its height. Newhall-Smith stated that the Executive Director also questioned the readability of the sign and lack of consistency between the signs. She requested a night-time rendering be submitted for review. Miller noted that detail at the cornice that will be lost.

Coltof stated that the patio wall sign would have anodized aluminum letters anodized on 1-inch standoffs. Newhall-Smith noted that the sign would function as a free-standing sign. Jaquith agreed. Kennedy and Miller agreed that the front wall signage is taking away from the other signage. Coltof proposed a black wall with a 4-6" high stripe of teal as an accent color.

Miller noted that the interior renovations will show through the glass and become part of the streetscape, so adding a sign to this wall is distracting and not necessary. Kennedy agreed to work with the applicant.

Kennedy suggested the LED lights have a slow color transition from the teal to light blue to copper. Chair Durand and Jaquith stated that the copper accents detract from the building.

Newhall-Smith stated that the proposed lighting within the downtown historic street isn't appropriate, but she is okay with highlighting the door only rather than turning the entire storefront into a video game experience. Chair Durand agreed.

Jaquith agreed with Miller that there will be sufficient light coming through these windows. Perras agreed with adding lighting around the entrance only but with so much

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going on they should remove the painting at the front wall and the copper accents at the entry, since the building does not need all this color and decoration given what people will see through the windows. Miller and Jaquith agreed.

Coltof replied that the copper highlights would only be seen during the day. Perras noted that this isn't their current space, which is hard to find, so it doesn't need to be highlighted as much as is proposed.

Kennedy requested a revised image with less signage. Miller noted that a slight emphasis at the two doors is most appropriate, since one restaurant should not be highlighted more than the others, so the building continues to fit in with its surroundings.

Chair Durand open public comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Durand closes public comment.

Kennedy: Motion to approve the blade sign, repurposed wall sign, wall sign over the door to be 34-36-inches high, not the blue up lighting and copper at the sides of the entry door, and to continue the review of the LED lighting, copper at the arbor, neon around the entry doors, furniture, and front wall painting and associated signage.

Seconded by: Jaquith.

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

### **Projects Outside of the Urban Renewal Area**

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1. **4 Franklin Street: North River Canal Corridor and Entrance Corridor Overlay Districts** – Construction of a business office and ambulance facility with associated employee parking area, utilities, landscaping, and harbor walk path along the North River, continued from 4/28/21.

David Stockless of Icon Architecture was present to discuss the project.

Stockless stated that they used their feedback to revise the proposed drawing as well as feedback from the Planning Board hearing last week. The building will be placed in the front corner of the site, and they are required to provide an entrance along the street although the actual main entry will be at the rear of the building. They are creating a step in the building to separate the spaces and minimize the surrounding of the new doorway along North Street with no street level access. They have toned down the front entrance, lowered the sign, incorporated but simplified the front bays along North Street without providing access, added larger trees at the suggestion of the Planning Board, and toned down the front landscaping. Subtle changes were made to the rear entry corner by making the sloped roof flat, lowered the entry feature and adding an eyebrow with light over the entry door. They created different detailing to highlight the different uses, lightened the panel color to make the building appear lighter and dropped the building height by 3 feet. The signs will also be located below the second-floor windowsill just under 19-feet 6-inches above grade. The wide metal panel relates to the Hardi plank siding, and the color palette will be Charcoal Grey entry Hardi panel, Slate

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Gray between the first and second floor windows, and Dove Grey as the vertical metal panels.

Chair Durand opens public comment.

Newhall-Smith stated that they have received the following letters:

1. HSI, 9 North Street, submitted a letter dated May 20, 2021.
2. Colleen Downy, 12 School Street, submitted a letter on May 25, 2021.
3. Jane Stoffer, 1 Washington Street, submitted a letter on May 25, 2021.
4. Mary Wilbert, 7 Cedar Street, submitted a letter on May 26, 2021.

Geoff Molar, 29 Boardman Street. The letter published in the Salem News is fair when comparing the proposed building to the buildings across North Street. The proposed building does not fit Salem and the DRB should push for a design that does fit in.

Anne Sterling, 29 Orchard Street. The Planning Board stated on May 20, 2021, that they would like the building to have a strong civic look, similar to City Hall, Essex Law Library, the Ladder No. 2 firehouse, and the Salvation Army, by using a brick façade as the exterior treatment. Their ambulance depot in Danvers is a rehabbed firehouse faced with brick and stone which could be used as a model and use of those materials has been written into the NRCC to be in line with North Field and the gateway to the historic.

Emily Udy, HSI. Re-emphasized the importance of materials, discourages that the notable buildings referenced is not fair to the neighborhood or the site. The Board should discuss materials and the presence of this building because this building deserves that same level of discussion.

Chair Durand closed public comment.

Jaquith stated that although he missed the previous DRB meeting he read the letters that were submitted. The applicant needs a better response to the materials and their locations to make this building fit in.

Perras noted that the surrounding neighborhood does not have a lot of great architecture in immediate context. This is the threshold to downtown, but this commercial site doesn't need to be a given style, but it should share some of those same traits. The design has improved, been scaled down, and has a more horizontal look, but there should be some link to downtown Salem and there are other ways to approach this from a materials standpoint.

Miller stated that the Design Guidelines state brick and that is how they ended up with the current Jiffy Lube building which is not something to strive for and materials alone do not do it. Perras agreed.

Miller stated that the door facing North Street still resembles the front door. Perras suggested eliminating the awning. Stockless noted that minimizing this corner of the building may invite more comment that this building is not important. They don't want an unapproachable front door, but the stone wall creates a visual barrier. The proposed building in Phase 2 could be more prominent leaving this building to be more utilitarian. Perras suggested making the main entrance for everyone or adjusting this location.

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Miller stated that the front awning is larger, white, and more prominent than the rear which is grey. Chair Durand noted that moving the building forward on the site kept the urban edge of Salem. Many letter writers had issue with the metal panels not being part of the NRCC guidelines, the scale reduction is successful as are the rear changes, but this building should improve its surroundings. Perras suggested the panels be wood and not a repetitive metal façade. Chair Durand suggested the structure not resemble a fire house and note that the metal panels give it a warehouse feel.

Jaquith stated that the building still seems too tall. Stockless replied that they anticipate 36-inches of steel to cover the 50-foot span. Jacquith suggested they pitch the higher roof and make 8-foot ceiling heights in the sleeping quarters, but to not use wood grain paneling only flat.

Perras stated that there are good things going on, but next step should be make changes in the materiality since other types of panels have been used successfully in Salem. He suggested they relocate the front sign to the ambulance bay side of the building and to eliminate the vertical paneling in a darker material to connect the first and second floor windows.

Newhall-Smith suggested the applicant be given addresses for guidance. Stockless replied that he is looking for a clear direction, his client knows that metal panel isn't accepted and introducing brick may not be the best answer, but they could ground the building with a low water table, sill, cornice, and a board and batten façade, and the façade facing the river will be blank.

Miller suggested the residential end of the Hampton Inn with a clean and modern brick design or Halstead Salem Station. Perras suggested the Dodge Street side of the Hampton Inn.

Kennedy exited the meeting.

Jaquith: Motion to continue to next regular meeting.

Seconded by: Perras.

Roll Call: Jacquith, Miller, Perras, Durand in favor. Passes 4-0.

### **New/Old Business**

1. Approval of Minutes:
  - a. April 28, 2021  
Continued to the next regular meeting.
2. Staff Updates, if any  
Newhall-Smith stated that Governor Baker will lift the emergency order on June 15, 2021, but there may be a transition period through the summer. If there are comments or concerns, please contact her. The city wants to do a hybrid model, but the technology will need some upgrading.

Miller stated that at the City Council meeting where the cell installation on Bridge Street was discussed and it was implied that the DRB is prolonging the process. It was poorly represented since the applicant is requesting continuances, not the Board. She doesn't



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want the DRB to be blamed for delaying the project. Newhall-Smith replied that Councillor Riccardi apologized for the way it came across and acknowledged that the applicant requested the continuance.

Miller stated that Laurie Cabot's shop painted a purple stripe across their building with a purple rope light that was not reviewed by the DRB. Newhall-Smith replied that she will investigate it.

**Adjournment**

Jaquith: Motion to adjourn.

Seconded by: Miller.

Roll Call: Miller, Perras Jacquith, Durand. Passes 4-0.

Meeting is adjourned at 8:45PM.

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