

Board or Committee:	Design Review Board – Regular Meeting
Date and Time:	Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 6:00 pm
Meeting Location:	Remote Participation via Zoom
DRB Members Present:	Chair Paul Durand, David Jaquith, Catherine Miller, Marc Perras, Sarah Tarbet
DRB Members Absent:	Glenn Kennedy, J. Michael Sullivan
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

Refer to Projects in the Urban Renewal Area.

Projects in the Urban Renewal Area

1. 278-282 Derby Street: Small Project and Sign Review for Funhouse Donuts – Review of proposed façade painting and sign package.

Wren Werner, Owner, was present to discuss the project.

Werner stated that her store has been a pop-up for over 6-years, and she is opening her first storefront location, in the former Jodi Bee Backes space. It will have a funhouse/carnival themed donut shop. Newhall-Smith stated that the projecting signage over the door will be in the same location as All Soul's Bar has placed theirs. The proposed wall sign goes above the bank of windows, and decals are proposed to be placed on the front entrance door. The existing awning over the entry door would be removed. Werner proposed painting alternating striping on the columns between the window bays, so they stand out without taking too much attention away from the building or their neighbors.

Miller asked if the mounting of the wall sign was selected to avoid the street tree. Werner replied yes. Miller recalled DRB discussions with Bit Bar regarding painting the pilasters with a relief, and the DRB's desire to maintain the integrity of the building. She was in favor of the top striping and signage, but believed the striping on the pilasters detracts from the historic building. She suggested painting the frieze area on both sides of their entry door only, like Bit Bar. Jaquith agreed with Miller. Perras requested additional information. Miller replied that after some discussion the DRB agreed to allow Bit Bar to paint only the recessed portion of the pilaster to match their color theme, and suggested Funhouse only be allowed to paint the recess of their pilasters a solid color. The Board agreed.

Perras was in favor of the proposed signage. The Board agreed.

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Miller asked if signage was proposed for the larger windows. Werner noted her desire to keep the window blank and add seasonal artwork to the windows to attract customers. Perras emphasized the need for window applied artwork to be seasonal and not permanent.

VOTE: Jaquith: Motion to approve as presented with the change to paint the recessed and decorative area of the pilaster a solid color, on either side of the entrance door only and matching the top of the accent color height at Bit Bar. Seconded by: Miller.
Roll Call: Jaquith, Miller, Perras, Tarbet, and Durand were in favor. Passes 5-0.

Newhall-Smith noted that the proposed façade work must also be reviewed by the SRA on December 13, 2023, prior to the start of any painting.

Projects Outside the Urban Renewal Area

1. **Franklin Street:** North River Canal Corridor – Design review of amended elevations and landscaping, continued from 10/25/23.

Marc Tranos (Owner) and Mark Yanowitz (Architect at LYF Architects) were present to discuss the project.

Yanowitz stated that they incorporated a lot of the constructive criticism and suggestions received by the DRB, to work with the original design, simplified elements, and paying attention to good elements like windows and horizontal banding. They significantly changed their approach to the exterior, which has a two-tone approach, with a light Seaside Grey base, white banding, and a Blue Spruce board and batten siding at the upper floors, and Charcoal Gray trim to complement both colors. The landscape plan has improved, and includes an exterior utility shed at the end of the townhomes, that no longer reads as a singular entity now that the shed roof design has been repeated at the townhome entrances and above a second-floor bay window. Additional double windows were added to the façade and the parking level at the base of the building is full height with split block in a medium gray as well as punched window openings. Punched openings were added to the stairwells, unlike the previous design which had no windows and read as a solid tower. He believed the simplified elements are an enhancement to the original design.

Chair Durand requested the location mechanical units. Yanowitz replied that units on the roof of the larger buildings would be screened with parapet walls and the townhomes may have wall mounted ductless AC condensers adjacent to the rear garages outside of public view. Tarbet requested the proposed parapet wall height and a roof plan identifying their location. Yanowitz estimated the parapet height at 4-feet-6-inches, the units will tie into the stairwells at the center of the building, and their location will be identified on the permit set. Tarbet stated that the changes were responsive to the DRB's comments, noted her preference for less contrast between the two materials, and

suggested a body color darker than Seaside Grey to further accentuate the trim color. She asked why the small windows along the Franklin Street façade were misaligned. Yanowitz noted that 3-foot-wide powder room at the first floor and a wider walk-in closet above. Yanowitz and Tranos agreed to align the windows. Jaquith had no concern with the small windows on the front façade but raised concerns with the row of small windows along the top floor rear. Yanowitz replied that those windows are for the master bath toilet rooms and closets. Jaquith suggested incorporating larger bathroom windows for variety. Yanowitz stated that the windows were smaller for privacy reasons since they will face the larger buildings beyond. Tranos suggested larger closet windows. Chair Durand asked about the use of elongated vs. wider windows. Jaquith suggested elongated windows on a double window with one window in each room, anything to break up the monotony.

Chair Durand had no issue with the misaligned front small window since there is a method to the staggering. Jaquith agreed. Tranos asked if the Board has concerns with the staggered windows between the second and third floors. Chair Durand, Jaquith, and Tarbet had no concerns. Yanowitz noted that the end units have longer front porches and triple windows to bring additional variety. Jaquith stated the changes are far superior. Perras agreed and noted that the window pattern on the larger buildings are too regulated. Yanowitz suggested turning some double windows into single windows. Jaquith suggested creating 1-foot deep mini-bays to introduce more variety on the long and short elevations. Yanowitz suggested incorporating two-story bays as well.

Perras agreed that the revised plans were an improvement, despite not being a fan of the sloped roofs but the strategy is being used over several elements. He noted that a letter was submitted to the DRB this afternoon.

Chair Durand asked if the Blue Spruce is as dark as it appears in the rendering. Yanowitz replied that will appear slightly lighter, a medium tone. Tranos added that it will also appear bluer.

Public Comment:

Newhall-Smith stated that a letter was received this afternoon.

- Mary Beth Bainbridge, 7 Prescott Street, Salem. Received November 15, 2023.

Chair Durand stated that there are code requirements that allow developments in a flood zone if the elevation is elevated. Tranos noted that entire site will be raised from elevation 7 to 11, which was approved by the D.E.P. and Conservation Commission. They have a path to access Franklin Street that is above the flood elevation. They have 1.5 parking spaces per unit, which complies with the Salem Zoning Regulations, an acre of greenspace between the buildings and the waterfront that is open to the public. Chair Durand stated that what's proposed is allowed by right and the DRB does not have to purview to address those concerns. Yanowitz added that those issues relate to the Planning Board (PB) and the project has been approved, at this time they are only trying

to enhance the building elevations. Tranos noted that they've already obtained a Ch. 91 license from the state which address those concerns.

Jaquith requested the proposed materials. Newhall-Smith replied that the materials are being stored at the Planning Department. Tranos noted that the newly proposed Blue Spruce can be provided, and the last page of the new submission includes links to each product manufacturer.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

Newhall-Smith believed there was an understanding between the Board, architect, and owner about what needs to be done, and she feels confident that they can do what was spoken about, but a continuation may not be necessary. Miller suggested a motion including a Board member to review the revised drawings to ensure that changes were made. Yanowitz noted that revised drawings can be provided within 2 weeks and the DRB must also review the permit drawings to ensure consistency. Newhall-Smith suggested a conditional approval requiring DRB review of the permit set like in the original decision. Miller suggested a revised preliminary set only. Jaquith volunteered to review the revised preliminary set.

VOTE: Miller: Motion to approve with the condition that the applicant revise the preliminary set of drawings per the discussion, including some variation in the facades by incorporating bays on the larger buildings and window variations on the rear of the townhomes, to be reviewed by a DRB member. Seconded by: Perras.
Roll Call: Jaquith, Miller, Perras, Tarbet, and Durand were in favor. Passes 5-0.

Jaquith left the meeting.

New / Old Business

1. Approval of Minutes:
 - a. October 25, 2023

VOTE: Miller: Motion to approve the October 25, 2023 meeting minutes. Seconded by: Tarbet.
Roll Call: Miller, Perras, Tarbet, and Durand. Passes 4-0.

2. Staff Updates, if any:

Newhall-Smith stated that the commercial space at BRIX was sold as a condominium to the owner of Settler Restaurant, Aaron Chambers. He shared that he is not relocating Settler Restaurant, but it will be similar with a French twist rather than a Mediterranean twist. They are seeking funds to help with the build-out of the blank space that they hope to open in the summer.

Newhall Smith stated that Wicked Good Books along the Essex Street pedestrian mall is merging space with Silly Bunny on the next block of Essex Street. What will occupy the current space hasn't been confirmed.

Newhall-Smith encouraged the Board to review the sign manual update project scope prior to the next meeting.

Perras asked about The Cove sign along Bridge Street. Newhall-Smith replied that it is a site plan review project in an entrance corridor with regulations that don't give purview for sign review outside of the typical administrative process but not for the Urban Renewal Area and NRCC projects. Tarbet added that if the PB referred a project to the DRB, the signage would not be reviewed because it is not part of the purview of the PB. Newhall-Smith noted that signs along Entrance Corridors are reviewed administratively by a representative of the SRA - Tom Daniel (Executive Director), a representative from the Planning Department - Amanda Chiancola (Deputy Director), and the Building Commissioner - Stavroula Orfanos. Signage outside of the downtown, not along an entrance corridor and not along the NRCC are reviewed administratively within the Planning Department by Beth Forrestal (Planning Assistant) and Amanda Chiancola signs off on them. Miller asked if The Cove sign when through that process. Newhall-Smith replied yes, they received a sign permit in July of 2023. Miller asked if there is an opportunity to request adjustments to the signage. Newhall-Smith believed that the design of the signage, when reviewed administratively, isn't looked at as closely as the conformance with the sign code, and this sign met those requirements. Tarbet added that other areas do include signage review and she questioned whether the overlay district along Bridge Street would have triggered review of their sign.

Adjournment

Miller: Motion to adjourn. Seconded by: Tarbet.

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

Meeting is adjourned at 6:55PM.

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