

SALEM HISTORICAL COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
August 16, 2023

A regular meeting of the Salem Historical Commission was held on Wednesday, August 16, 2023, at 6:00 pm. **VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING**. Present were: Vijay Joyce, Rebecca English, Mark Meche, Jamie Graham, Larry Spang (Chair), Kelly Tyler-Lewis. Not present: Reed Cutting, Milo Martinez, Mark Pattison.

1 Pickering Street

Joseph Locke submitted an application for a Certificate of Hardship to alter perimeter walls

Ms. Kelleher stated that the applicant is still preparing drawings for Commission review and requested a continuance.

VOTE: English made a motion to continue to the September 6, 2023 regular meeting. Graham seconded the motion. Roll Call: Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Graham, English, and Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

136 Federal Street

Bridgewell submitted a Certificate of Appropriateness for architectural roof shingles

Ms. Kelleher reported that this application was revised for in-kind replacement and was approved under a Certificate of Non-Applicability.

Salem Common

The City of Salem submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install raised planting beds

Andrea French, Girl Scout Troop Leader 10175 and several troop members were present along with Alexandra Hayes (Salem Common Neighborhood resident and active member of the community) and Councillor Andy Varela (Ward 7 Councillor – representing himself and Co-Owner of Maitland Farm).

Ms. Hayes stated that they want to build 3 raised garden beds to create a barrier/pollution filter around the park. They believe it will revolutionize this area of the Common, an underused crucial area of Salem. The troop has been working on the project for some time and they are seeking silver award level status. Ms. French noted that the troop is working on their Breathe Journey, they toured all Salem parks and noticed that Salem Common did not have a garden. They determined that this area would benefit from having a food forest, pollen filter, and a natural sound buffer, that would also make a beautiful addition.

Mr. Meche joined the meeting at this time.

Councillor Valera noted that they have a food farm and a food forest at Maitland Farm which provides 3-8,000 pounds of vegetables for the community annually. The Girl Scouts came to him for assistance given his history of agricultural related city projects, and he felt Salem Common was a great place to do this due to its agricultural history. It would also introduce a new city initiative on the planting of native species, with pollen that are low maintenance, for the neighborhood to identify for free. Various berry varieties will be used that will act as pollinators. They want to create appropriate boxes that complement the aesthetics of the Common. The boxes will have a charred exterior, which they felt was appropriate since Salem is a sister city of Ota, Japan, and would be 3-feet deep x 12-feet-long x 3-feet-tall, large enough that DPS would need to move them. They worked with Signature Parks, Parks & Recreation, and DPS staff to determine the best locations for the boxes.

Mr. Joyce asked if the boxes would be shaded by the trees. Councillor Varela replied that it depends on the time of day, and the plantings that favor shade will be placed in the shade planter boxes.

Mr. Joyce asked if the charred finish would be applied to the boxes in advance. Councillor Varela replied yes, at Maitland Farm. He noted that the finish will be 3-4mm deep, so it won't transfer if someone rests against them.

Ms. English asked if the boxes would remain in place year-round. Councillor Varela replied yes.

Chair Spang asked if the finish had been tested. Councillor Varela replied yes, and it's preferred over a stain. Chair Spang suggested the finish be manufacturer applied and suggested examples be provided for Commission review.

Chair Spang asked about the construction of the bottom of the boxes. Councillor Varela replied that they will use landscape cloth for permeability.

Ms. Graham asked if the boxes would be fenced in to keep animals away. Councillor Varela that it will not be a concern since the boxes are 3-feet high, rodents would be their biggest concern.

Mr. Joyce questioned who would perform maintenance. Councillor Varela replied they he will mulch the top and touch-up them up the first few months, however, light maintenance will be required in the fall and spring.

Ms. French noted that the Girl Scouts are in 9th grade and will be around for 4 years, then the upkeep will be passed onto the 6th graders.

Mr. Joyce noted that he was in favor of the idea and to educate neighbors on native species to plant in their own yards.

Public Comment:

Jeff Cohen, 12 Hancock Street. Ward 5 City Councilor and former vice-chair of Sustainability and Resiliency Committee. He and the Mayor toured the garden at Palmer Cove, which has allowed people to obtain free food, and what's left goes to the Salem Pantry. It's a beautiful program, the high school sophomores are involved, and children are more receptive to the concerns of the climate crisis. He noted that grass would not have been present on the Common in such a large quantity and what's proposed is good for the environment.

Sharon Corrigan, 6 Briggs Street. This is a commendable project for the Girl Scouts. She asked where the boxes would be located. Councillor Varela presented the site plan that was designed with the assistance of DPS and noted that another review with DPS will determine the final location. Ms. Corrigan asked if the troop would maintain them. Councillor Varela replied yes, and he and Maitland Farm have agreed to maintain the boxes in perpetuity after the Girl Scouts are gone. Ms. Corrigan suggested installing 2 boxes rather than 4 as a test. Councillor Varela replied that they felt 4 was sufficient. Ms. Corrigan noted that some find the common unsightly, its purpose was to maintain an open and clear space for martialing, and it's one of the few New England commons that hasn't been drastically changed. She encouraged the applicants to keep in mind the original intent of the Common and raised concerns about the lawn mowers hitting the boxes. Councillor Varela replied that the boxes are not necessarily fixed to the site, mowers could hit it without destroying them and they won't be in the way of the general maintenance of the park. Ms. Corrigan encouraged the Historical Commission to maintain the long-term historical purpose of the Common. Ms. French noted that the Girl Scouts met with historians and learned that the early use of the Common was for agricultural and marshland purposes. While she's in favor she doesn't want it to set a precedent for other planting beds being added to the Common.

Rich Hamel. Agreed with Ms. Corrigan. He had no issue with it but raised concerns about the Common becoming a community garden which he doesn't think is appropriate.

Ms. Kelleher noted public comment letters received in favor of the project:

- Salem Common Neighborhood Association, dated August 15, 2023.
- Brook Nagle, 35 Washington Square North, dated August 15, 2023

Gabe Ciociola, Chair of Salem Common Neighborhood Association. Provided the letter mentioned by Ms. Kelleher, he suggested that this idea not be considered as a precedent, but as a venture to try something new and different. If it works it will serve as a precedent for success and if not, it can be removed. Chair Spang agreed and suggested it be considered a new teaching tool on the Common.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

Mr. Meche noted that the boxes resemble furniture and can be disassembled and removed.

Chair Spang was intrigued by the proposed finish and its ties to Japan. He noted that this new opportunity would be installed in the spring of 2024.

VOTE: Graham made a motion to approve as submitted. Joyce seconded the motion. Roll Call: Meche, Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Graham, English, and Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

44 Derby Street– continuation

Kate Lerner submitted a Certificate of Appropriateness for paint colors

Ms. Kelleher stated that Mr. Joyce and Mr. Martinez met with the owners, who couldn't attend tonight's meeting.

Mr. Joyce reported on the meeting. The building trim was painted, and the siding was stained, which is now fading, aging and looks splotchy, and areas of rotted wood were also replaced. He and Commissioner Martinez used the precedent of neighboring homes and the Commission's earlier feedback to develop their proposed plan. They decided upon "Cogswell Cedar" in an eggshell finish for the body, which has a red finish, and "Shaker Beige" for the trim color, both by California Paints. The gutters, downspouts, rake boards and corner boards will also be painted the trim color, "Shaker Beige". The clapboards will be painted and not stained for color consistency.

Public Comment: No one in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: English made a motion to approve Cogswell Cedar and Shaker Beige. Graham seconded the motion. Roll Call: Meche, Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Graham, English, and Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

149 Federal Street– continuation

Joseph Archambault submitted a Certificate of Appropriateness for paint colors and fencing

Ms. Kelleher stated that the applicant delayed submittal of their materials due to health concerns.

VOTE: Joyce made a motion to continue to the September 6, 2023 regular meeting. English seconded the motion. Roll Call: Meche, Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Graham, English, and Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

149 Federal Street– continuation

Joseph Archambault submitted a Certificate of Appropriateness for rear entry porch (after the fact)

VOTE: Joyce made a motion to continue to the September 6, 2023 regular meeting. English seconded the motion. Roll Call: Meche, Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Graham, English, and Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

275 Lafayette Street– continuation

MD Property Development LLC submitted a Certificate of Appropriateness to renovate building and new construction

Daniel Ricciarelli of Seger Architects was present to discuss the project.

Mr. Ricciarelli noted that the City hadn't advertised their project correctly for the DRB so they were extended another month. They are still seeking feedback from the DRB although the SHC has jurisdiction. They have provided more detail on the plans, massing with appropriate datum lines and details. They've focused more on the central entry bay as the Commission previously directed, expanded the porch, and provided screening – the same solid board fence around the equipment and trash areas. This area is an urban entry corridor, where the 6-foot-high fence may not be considered screening, the same screening that the Commission approved at the rear chapel. They want to include larger windows on first floor, living space on the second, and dormers on third floor. They want to keep in the scale of the entry corridor that will be reviewed by the DRB, so the setback is in line with neighboring buildings and their porches, with similar banding lines.

Ms. Graham recalled earlier conversation regarding setback alignment, which she felt was more important than tying into the chapel beyond.

Chair Spang stated that the project has taken a nice step forward, and suggested the porch roof become occupiable with the addition of a decorative railing, although it's location off of a central common hallway could mean liability concerns. Mr. Ricciarelli was in favor of the idea and suggested a configuration of the upper level unit allowing the balcony to become a private space.

Chair Spang asked if a deep rich color would be preferred. Mr. Ricciarelli replies yes, a dark grey.

Mr. Ricciarelli stated that no vote is being sought tonight.

Chair Spang requested elevation drawings and renderings to see the details not easily visible on the rendering. Mr. Ricciarelli replied that the first-floor Dutch clapboards with a 7-inch exposure and at the upper level a clapboard with 6-inch exposure.

Chair Spang suggested that regarding historical accuracy, the lines of front dormer intersect the windows, and suggested the side pieces of the dormer should come down and carry through rather than be interrupted by the pair of windows on the left and the single window to the right. The interruption at the bay windows was less bothersome. Mr. Ricciarelli agreed to review the detail. Chair Spang noted that an adjustment had also been made at the bay windows.

Mr. Joyce thought the details were more thought out than before which is a great interim step, he agreed with adding a balustrade on the second floor porch to break up the upper half of the siding, and with seeing more detail in the future.

Ms. Graham stated that the central window seemed off with the amount of siding surrounding it, and suggested the circle window was a detail pulled from the rear chapel, which seems out of place and not in line with the neighboring buildings. Ms. Graham noted similar houses have a center window, where the second floor window is a certain size and a smaller scale window or a detail of is used at the window above.

Mr. Meche noted the East and West Elevations are hipped while the gables are dormer, and the combination of a full gable on one end and a hip on the other is concerning. He noted that while this is not a historic structure, it's an important building that needs to reflect the context of the neighborhood, while also not making the design indistinguishable from the other buildings of that period. Mr. Ricciarelli replied that it is a struggle to determine what contemporary elements to add but they will get there.

Ms. Graham reiterated using a detail to connect the second and third windows, and if a circular third floor window was desired, the top of the second-floor windows should be arched to connect them. Chair Spang agreed and noted that other homes have more elaborate details at their front entries.

Public Comment:

Ms. Kelleher stated that she received the following e-mail today regarding the DRB review process.

- Polly Wilbert, 7 Cedar Street. Dated August 16, 2023. Ms. Kelleher noted that as Ms. Wilbert's letter stated, a DRB review is required. Ms. Kelleher strongly argued that the historical review take present as this is within a local historic district, with the entrance corridor being secondary, which she can relay to staff.

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Mr. Ricciarelli stated that he will return at a future meeting after DRB review.

16 Kosciusko Street

Margarida Goncalves submitted a Certificate of Appropriateness for building renovations and chimney removal.

Margarida Goncalves and Jermaine Malcolm of Malcom Contracting Services were present to discuss the project.

Mr. Malcolm stated that they are proposing to remove the chimney which needs repair, and because the new heating system doesn't require it. They also want to dig down into the lower basement due to secure the wall structurally due to water intrusion through the porous bricks. They will add new LVL's to increase the ceiling height and construct a new waterproof foundation since the current structure has been shopped up over the years and is compromised. He noted that the home has no gutters which has led to water infiltration at the basement level. Ms. Goncalves noted their desire to use the basement for storage and to install the already approved gutters.

Chair Spang questioned the existence of brick and limestone foundation wall. Mr. Malcolm replied that the limestone is under the second tier of the brick foundation, a coating was applied on the interior to smooth the surface and stop water infiltration, but it is crumbling, and water is once again entering the basement. The owner is now seeking to resolve it and to install the gutters and downspouts.

Chair Spang mentioned the need for revised foundation plans for the Building Inspector to review. If provided he could better understand the impact on the historic aspects of the house. Mr. Malcom replied that drawings were provided, that structural framing would not impact the exterior of the building, and the exterior historical nature of the building will be kept intact.

Chair Spang noted the proposed foundation would be placed below the existing foundation and asked if the existing foundation wall had been parged and painted. Mr. Malcome replied yes, but a previous contractor, but it has eroded and is causing water leaks. The new system would have a French drain to help keep the building intact. Mr. Meche asked on what side of the foundation the waterproofing would be placed. Mr. Malcom replied that the original membrane will have a 6 mm plastic behind it, they will knee wall the interior with 1 or 2-inches of foam board, then a closed-cell spray foam, another layer for 6 mm plastic across the entire interior with steel mech.

Mr. Meche questioned the addition of a rear entry door as shown on the plans. Mr. Malcom replied that it is the same rear entry and roof, there is a 4-foot interior swinging door with an interior landing and stairs down to the basement/half-height crawl space.

Chair Spang asked if the rear of the property faces the National Park site. Ms. Kelleher replied yes and noted that some of the rear is visible from a public way at the park. She suggested a site visit to allow the Commission to better understand the proposed work, noting that while rainfall is one factor there is also a rise in the water table.

Ms. Goncalves believed the water infiltration was from rainwater and the neighbor's garden which was install next to their basement foundation wall. Chair Spang noted that the downspouts have not been installed and suggested the rear entry porch is being changed. Mr. Meche noted that the rear entry is drawn on the plans as new. Ms. Goncalves noted that her biggest concern is the basement and removing the chimney.

Chair Spang asked if the existing brick foundation would remain or be added onto below it. Mr. Malcolm replied that they will put a weeping tile system and sealing the interior of the foundation, which they've done before. Mr. Meche noted that they are not far from mean high tide and should include a sump pump. Mr. Malcolm replied that the weeping system will be channeled to the sump pump, and they can revise the drawing to show the new work. He suggested installing a faux chimney above the roof line that keeps the historic look.

Public Comment: No one in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: Joyce made a motion to continue to the September 6, 2023 regular meeting for the purpose of a site visit. Graham seconded the motion. Roll Call: Meche, Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Graham, English, and Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

106 Broadway

Joseph Gagnon submitted a Waiver of the Demolition Delay Ordinance to remove more than 50% of roof on building older than 50 years

Daniel Ricciarelli of Seger Architects and Joseph Gagnon, the owner, were present to discuss the project.

Mr. Ricciarelli stated that the street has seen a lot of investment over the years and this one-story house was in tough shape and is not reflected in the neighborhood. The proposal is to expand it to 3 units requiring the removal of the roof. He noted that the zoning district is Industrial, and they will also go before the ZBA for approval but are proposing massing approval only from the Commission.

Mr. Meche asked what ZBA approval they were seeking. Mr. Ricciarelli replied a Special Permit for massing on top of the 1935 construction. Chair Spang noted that a removal of the building vs. more than 50% seems more likely and asked if the existing interior wall will remain. Mr. Ricciarelli replied that it is unknown, there is a substantial foundation they plan to construct on top of, but they need to determine if anything will remain above the foundation. He noted some historic details on front porch.

Chair Spang stated that the roof is slate with a small triangular dormer. Ms. Kelleher agreed with the roof being slate, the existence of an eyebrow dormer, some detail on the porch posts, nothing that this is a rare example of a Craftsman style bungalow in Salem. Chair Spang suggested a site visit.

Public Comment:

Jeff Cohen, 12 Hancock Street, Ward 5 Councillor. This structure is in his ward, the street is becoming more appealing towards the other end near Canal Street where a burned-out structure is being rebuilt. He noted that the driveway is a road and not a driveway and when the SWAT team raided the building it resulted in a lot of interior damage. He noted that housing is needed in Salem and he's in favor of it going forward because he believes the design team wants to make it a quality building.

Chair Spang suggested seeing what interior details are preserved.

Mr. Joyce asked if the footprint would be retained, to maintain the dimensions and build up to keep in the era of how the street is being developed. Mr. Ricciarelli replied yes. Chair Spang noted that porch roof additions are in many instances existing and not new construction, and that either would force the demolition delay to go into effect.

Mr. Joyce suggested salvaging some of the slate and repurposing the hip detail on the porch. Chair Spang noted that houses across have been modified but their porches were retained and retention of the porch at this property may help to keep some of the historic appearance.

No one else in the assembly wished to speak.

The Board requested a site visit and interior photographs. Mr. Ricciarelli noted that the interior is occupied but the Commission can walk the exterior.

VOTE: Joyce made a motion to continue to September 6, 2023 for the purpose of a site visit. English seconded the motion. Roll Call: Meche, Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Graham, English, and Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

319 Essex Street

Marijke Ameigh submitted a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace windows

Marijke Ameigh was present to discuss the project.

Ms. Ameigh stated that all the windows are painted or screwed shut, and she wants to replace them using Coastal Windows, an all-wood custom insulated window made to match the existing grid and shape. She would replace 19 of the 20, including some at the rear that aren't visible from the street. White and Almond are the closest color options, and she is willing to paint them to match the trim color on the house.

Ms. Kelleher noted that Harvey Majesty wood window with an aluminum exterior are proposed and the Commission has approved on a case-by-case basis. She noted that she couldn't tell if the existing windows were original, although they are single glazed with true divided lites. Ms. Ameigh noted that she would not reinstall the storm windows. Ms. Kelleher noted that the windows are 6 over 6, 6 over 9, and 9 over 6, but there is no record of windows being replaced. Chair Spang suggested the windows are either original or their replacement predated the district. Ms. Ameigh noted that she will not replace the front attic window because it is minimally used.

Chair Spang suggested the applicant seek to repair the windows which could be less expensive than replacement. Ms. Ameigh replied that the window company representative said they weren't worth salvaging, but she is also concerned with energy savings and the recent water damage. Mr. Meche requested a site visit. Chair Spang suggested a window information or a sample be made available for their site visit.

Public Comment: No one in the assembly wished to speak.

VOTE: Meche made a motion to the September 6, 2023 for the purpose of a site visit. Tyler-Lewis seconded the motion. Roll Call: Meche, Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Graham, English, and Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

Other Business:

- a. Meeting Minutes;

VOTE: English made a motion to approve the April 5, 2023 regular meeting minutes. Joyce seconded. Roll Call: Meche, Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Graham, English, and Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

VOTE: English made a motion to approve the May 17, 2023 regular meeting minutes. Joyce seconded. Roll Call: Meche, Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Graham, English, and Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

b. Violations;

Ms. Kelleher stated that there are several outstanding violations, 15 Cambridge Street, the EV charging station, 20 Hawthorne, the home with the white paint and replaced windows, that will need to go through the City Solicitor to discuss next steps for violations.

c. Correspondence

d. Other:

Historic Courthouses: Chair Spang stated that he and Mr. Joyce toured the courthouse buildings. WinnDevelopment is working on the crescent lot with the architectural firm Cube 3, and with an urban programming group on the courthouse with a goal to convert a portion of the red brick building into housing and the historic spaces into public uses with a commercial tenant or event space. The granite building will be converted into housing and the interior was mostly replaced in the 1960's and 70's. There is a preservation restriction on the exterior and major spaces of the interior and changes would go before the Commission. Ms. Kelleher noted that specific details and elements are being protected, like the stairs between the two buildings and many of the interior details. Chair Spang stated that the developer is seeking historic tax credits which will review the interior details. Ms. Kelleher noted that the developer is seeking both state and federal tax credits and they are required to preserve the interior space as a volume. She noted that is important to have these levels of protection.

Crescent Lot: Chair Spang stated that on the crescent lot they will construct 150 units to help fund the renovation of the courthouses. Ms. Kelleher noted the agreement with the city that the crescent lot construction cannot begin until the courthouse construction begins. Chair Spang noted that the passive ventilation systems would be lovely if maintained from a sustainability standpoint.

Plummer Home: Ms. Kelleher stated that at the next meeting, representatives from the Plummer Youth Promise. The home is constructing a new set of buildings and restoring the historic structure on the campus. They submitted a project notification form (PNF) to MHC for their review and are seeking comments from the Commission.

Salem Willow Phase II: Ms. Kelleher stated that it will go through an environmental review for landscape and hardscape improvements at the paved area next to E.W. Hobbs Popcorn leading to the pier. The wall repair is associated with pier replacement.

Camp Naumkeag: Chair Spang asked if the Commission letter was sent to the Mayor. Ms. Kelleher replied that she has received no response other than questioning the Commissions role in the project and noted that the demolition delay has expired but they have an advocacy role as an Historical Commission.

123 Federal Street: Ms. Graham asked if anything ever came of the low fence the applicant wanted to motorize with a mechanism to turn it into a sliding gate, which wasn't part of the application. Ms. Kelleher to investigate the matter.

Salem Public Library: Ms. English noted that the new book drop has been installed and looks good.

7 Lynde Street: Ms. Graham noted that a faux slate roof shingle was installed, the roofline was odd, and the roof may not have been repaired. The product looked thin, so she suggested it not be preferred for historic districts. Mr. Meche noted that the Commission did want to use this as a test case. Ms. Kelleher noted the noticeable border around each individual shingle and agreed to e-mail the Commission a list of test case products, roof shingles and windows, and their associated addresses for Commission to review.

Adjournment

VOTE: Joyce made a motion to adjourn. Graham seconded the motion. Roll Call: Meche, Joyce, Tyler-Lewis, Graham, English, and Spang were in favor and the motion so carried.

The meeting ended at 8:45PM

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Brewster
Historical Commission Clerk