

**City of Salem Massachusetts
Public Meeting Minutes**

Board or Committee:	Redevelopment Authority, Regular Meeting
Date and Time:	Wednesday, October 9, 2019 at 6:00 PM
Meeting Location:	98 Washington Street, First Floor Conference Room
SRA Members Present:	Chair Grace Napolitano, Gary Barrett, David Guarino, Dean Rubin, Russ Vickers
SRA Members Absent:	None
Others Present:	Tom Daniel – Director of Planning and Community Development Kathryn Newhall-Smith – Senior Planner
Recorder:	Colleen Brewster

Chair Napolitano calls the meeting to order. Roll call was taken.

Projects Under Review

Executive Director's Report:

Mr. Daniel stated that;

1. The letter to City Council regarding Councillor Milo's Church Street order will be drafted soon.
2. In the broader housing agenda, Council is looking at different policy tools, one being Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's). A committee meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, October 10th at 6:30PM before City Council's Ordinances Licenses & Legal Affairs Committee, who will consider it. It's been deliberated on by the Planning Board and public hearings were held, where it had a lot of support. The regular City Council will be held at 7PM where a public hearing will also take place, but commenters must sign-up in advance.

Urban Renewal Area Projects Under Review

1. 2 Lynde Street (Settlers Restaurant): Small Project Review

Atty. Joseph Correnti of Settlers Restaurant, owners Aaron & Shanna Chambers, Architect Tony Rozine of Nahant, and Doug Dubin of Double D Construction in Swampscott, were present to discuss the project.

Atty. Correnti stated that the former Firenze Trattoria restaurant owners have sold the property to the applicants. Mr. Chambers stated that he's worked as a chef at numerous restaurants and they are now starting their own family-owned, locally-sourced restaurant and want to revitalize the space.

Mr. Rozine stated that the façade needs a refresh and a better exterior presence. The weathered awnings will be replaced and the signage simplified. The aluminum windows and door will be replaced with commercial grade products, and the windows will have divisions. The brick doesn't stand out so it will be painted. The tin frieze has faded and will be painted to match the brick to create a uniform façade. Two sconces will be added to each end of the restaurant to illuminate and

highlight the boundaries of the façade. The brick to be painted off-white, the windows black, and the door will be black walnut with glass panes.

Mr. Rubin stated that he would refer to the DRB for comment regarding the painting of the brick. Mr. Dubin replied that the paint would be latex and could be water-blasted off if necessary, no structural changes are proposed, the header above the window will remain so the new windows will be the same size. The proposed windows are a residential aluminum clad exterior by Andersen and their style will keep the same wood style. Ms. Newhall-Smith asked if the proposed style of window is typically used in restaurants in commercial areas. Mr. Dubin replied that the mullion pattern is a nicer and more historic look than what exists. Mr. Rubin stated that if the Anderson window is too residential the DRB might request something commercial, unless it is dual purpose.

Chair Napolitano opens public comment.

Darlene Millis, 115 Federal Street. Asked if they've discussed the wind tunnel effect at that point in the sidewalk and how it would affect customers as people enter the space. Mr. Dubin replied that a tapestry on a shade roller inside the restaurant could be used to eliminate the wind tunnel effect.

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Napolitano closes public comment.

Rubin: Motion to approve and refer to the DRB for approval.

Seconded by: Guarino. Passes: 5-0

2. 9-11 Dodge Street, 217-219 and 231-251 Washington Street (Hampton Inn/Mixed Use Development): Review of Sign Package

Ken McClure, Owner's Representative, was present to discuss the project.

Mr. McClure stated that he's presented the signage package to the DRB four times, and they've recommended approval of the entire signage package. The proposed signage is as follows;

1. Hampton Inn sign: 20-feet-long, will be mounted to the building, and will fit perfectly above the vehicular entrance. It's also halo lit from behind. The DRB asked for a "Salem" add on but Hampton Inn refused.
2. Parking 'P': Reduced from 4-feet in diameter to 30-inches in diameter, to make it less obtrusive, and the bottom of the sign remains at 8-feet-8-inches above grade. All parking will be valet and there will be HC parking spaces for universal access. The hotel has 113 guest parking spaces and 69 public parking space. There will be a fee for parking and retailers will be able to validate parking. 10 parking spaces on the second floor. There is parking at the 3rd floor off of Upper Washington Street as monthly rental spaces for tenants for the businesses. There will be no blue parking sign for that upper level parking to eliminate any confusion to take their cars off the street. Mr. Daniel stated that there was an agreement, when they sold the old parking lot, to provide as much public parking as possible. Mr. McClure added that they will also have several electric vehicle parking spaces.
3. Deleted
4. Restaurant placement signage located at the corner, larger to be placed on Dodge Street.
5. Restaurant placement signage located at the corner, small sign to be placed on Washington Street.
6. Hampton Inn Blade sign – see comments below.
7. Retail sign: Place holder; to be determined by future tenants
8. Retail sign: Place holder; to be determined by future tenants

9. Retail sign; Place holder; to be determined by future tenants
10. Residential: The sign has a steel channel with a flat face facing outward, on a couple stand-offs. Overall dimension 12-foot-long x 3-foot-4-inch high total to be halo lit. The 231 is a cut out with clear acrylic illuminated externally with stainless steel lettering below.

Hampton Inn blade sign: Regarding the large blade sign, members state that other signage along Washington Street is smaller and more pedestrian scale. Mr. McClure notes that other signs get larger as you travel closer to upper Washington Street (Dominoes', Sammy's Roast Beef, Steve's Market.) Chair Napolitano replied that those are all outside of the SRA district. Mr. McClure added that they reduced the originally proposed signage and moved it to the corner to a more prominent location. They modeled this sign after the size of Portland, ME sign. The DRB wanted to add a small "Salem" sign below it that Hampton Inn would have no jurisdiction over. The DRB didn't make it a condition in the approval but it could be eliminated to have fewer signs. Mr. McClure submitted a superimposed image of the sign in place and it seems to fit better with the building and surroundings. Trees will be added closer to the building which may help reduce the prominence of the sign. The proposed sign is 24-feet-tall x 4-feet-wide. The "Salem" sign would be 4-foot-6-inches tall x 4-feet-wide. The box sign would be halo lit with mounting pins to make it stand-off the surface. This sign hasn't changed since it was first accepted with the original design.

Mr. Daniel stated that the signage is not part of the prior approval. Mr. Guarino asked if the "Salem" sign would be back-lit. Mr. McClure replied that it depends on the material of the final sign, the lighting could switch to a spotlight. Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that the DRB wasn't concerned with vertical text, would support the size with the ZBA approval, and thought the sign fit well with the building. The DRB also liked having some reference to Salem. Mr. McClure added that the Salem sign could have no lighting, so it's only seen during the day. Mr. Daniel stated that he spoke to DRB Chair Durand about this sign not complying with city signage requirements. He stated that the DRB felt the sign worked for the building but didn't discuss it in relation to the rest of the downtown. They also knew it wasn't in compliance and that it may not proceed. The SRA doesn't have full authority over the sign, so relief would need to be sought. It has to be approved by the SRA before it can be reviewed by the ZBA. Chair Napolitano asked if the ZBA would give the applicant parameters to follow. Mr. Daniel replied that the ZBA would grant a variance for a specific proposal not tell the applicant what the size of the sign could be.

Mr. Vickers asked if there were any recommendations from the DRB for this sign. Mr. Daniel replied nothing beyond the report. The Salem Jail has a vertical banner/blade sign since there was no place for a standard horizontal sign. There is no basis for the approval of this type of sign given the signage requirements. Mr. Rubin replied that DRB may not have wanted to be the bad guy. Mr. Guarino stated that it should have been looked at in context of the downtown. Chair Napolitano asked if there was a plan B for this sign. Mr. McClure replied no, they had to work with the DRB to get them to understand how to get this project buildable and the signs were just an architectural feature, and eliminating other items on the building has made this sign stand out. Chair Napolitano asked if Hampton Inn always requires a blade sign. Mr. McClure replied that it was designed for the City, it was always part of the signage and alternatives haven't been explored.

Mr. Daniel stated that other hotels in Salem don't have this type of sign. Mr. Rubin noted that this could set a precedent because the previously mentioned large signs are outside the district. Hampton Inn has encountered this before and should find another solution. Mr. Guarino agreed and opposed the blade sign since there is nothing near it that is similar, and this is a gateway corridor so the sign will dominate the view, despite there being no other Hampton Inn sign on Washington Street. Mr. Vickers stated that he is uncomfortable with DRB approving this sign without a rationale given. The design deserves more attention by the DRB and they need to recognize the SRA's concerns with it. Mr. Barrett noted that it's the DRB's job to review design for the SRA. It should be sent back to the DRB explaining the SRA's concerns. Mr. Rubin stated that the top of the sign is at the top of the 4th floor, which is too high. The sign should conform to the sign regulations. Mr. Daniel replied that

the direction should come from the SRA for the applicant to return with a sign that meets the regulation rather than referring it back to DRB without any specificity.

Mr. McClure stated that he needs direction from the SRA because his team may have comments. Chair Napolitano replied that the sign should be a lower and smaller. Mr. Daniel added that it could be a projecting sign or wall sign at the corner of Washington. Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that a wall sign must either; have the top no higher than 25-feet above the street level, not above the tops of the sills of the first level of windows above the first story, or the height of the building at the building line. The blade sign must either be no more than 24-square-feet maximum and has the same height thresholds as a wall sign. Vertical lettering is mentioned in the sign manual, which should be read. Mr. Guarino and Chair Napolitano requested a mock-up. Mr. McClure replied that he will return with options. Mr. Guarino suggested the revised signage go before the DRB, with the comments of the SRA to speed up the process.

Chair Napolitano opens public comment.

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Napolitano closes public comment.

Guarino: Motion to approval package absent the blade sign.
Seconded by: Rubin. Passes: 5-0

Guarino: Motion for the applicant to return with a blade sign that conforms to the regulation.
Seconded by: Rubin. Passes: 5-0

3. 30 Federal Street: Review of Development Project – REQUEST TO WITHDRAW

Chair Napolitano opens public comment.

Darlene Millis, 115 Federal Street & Chairman of Tree Commission. As of January 2019, there is a new Tree Ordinance. As of July 1st 2019, that ordinance went into effect as it pertains to a new category called Protected Trees. Any tree 8-inch in diameter or larger, or a multiple trunk tree, needs to be reviewed by the Tree Warden, Bob LeBlanc, as part of the due diligence process. It's not the purpose of the Tree Ordinance to make projects stop; however, the intent is to ensure that applicants are mindful of trees providing shade on the street or those within 20-feet of the sidewalk. If they must be removed, they must be planted elsewhere on the property or a neighbor's property or paid for into the revolving tree replacement fund. 30 Federal Street has two (2) 30-year-old trees along the sidewalk, as well as other smaller trees that may measure 8-inches in diameter or larger. The applicant must account for all of those trees. This is the first time the Tree Commission has had any downtown impact, but there is an active issue at the Daniel's Inn. Mr. LeBlanc has been informed of this property and spoken to the property owner about the trees.

Chair Napolitano closes public comment.

New / Old Business

1. 289 Derby Street: Acceptance of Deed from City

Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that they received the deed for the 20-foot-wide strip of land along the building that borders 285 Derby Street; though it is missing the subdivision plan. The SRA can vote to accept the deed.

Guarino: Motion to accept the deed subject to receipt of the plan.
Seconded by: Vickers. Passes: 5-0

Mr. Daniel stated that the terms of the easement will be discussed at the November SRA meeting.

2. Superior Court and Crescent Lot: Update

Mr. Daniel stated that he and Ms. Newhall-Smith met with the four development teams. Ms. Newhall-Smith is working on the preservation restrictions, a preservation consultant is under contract, and a photographer still needs to be secured. The DCAMM conversations are ongoing and they've asked for guidance regarding whether the Registry of Deeds were to move into the new or old buildings, further clarification is needed. He's continuing to work with the MBTA on the triangular snub of land and obtaining a soil condition report on the garage. They are also exploring the feasibility of amending the harbor plan to include the crescent lot and provide some flexibility. Other technical items are also being worked on at the staff level.

Minutes

Rubin: Motion to approve the August 14, 2019 regular meeting minutes with Rubin's edits.
Seconded by: Vickers. Passes: 5-0

Executive Session

1. To review the submittals to the Request for Qualifications for the redevelopment of real property located at 32-34 Federal Street and 252 Bridge Street, Salem, MA because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body.

Guarino: Motion to request an Executive Session.
Barrett, Guarino, Chair Napolitano, Rubin, Vickers. Passes: 5-0.

The SRA entered executive session at 7:15PM.

Guarino: Motion to adjourn the Executive Session.
Barrett, Guarino, Chair Napolitano, Rubin, Vickers. Passes: 5-0.

The SRA adjourned the Executive Session at 7:45PM.

Chair states that the Open Session will not reconvene at the conclusion of the Executive Session.

Minutes

Guarino: Motion to approve the June 12, 2019 regular meeting minutes with Rubin's edits.
Seconded by: Rubin. Passes: 5-0

Guarino: Motion to approve the July 10, 2019 regular meeting minutes with Rubin's edits.
Seconded by: Barrett. Passes: 5-0

Adjournment

Barrett: Motion to adjourn the meeting.
Seconded by: Guarino. Passes 5-0.

Meeting is adjourned at 9:00PM.

Know your rights under the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 30A §18-25 and City
Ordinance Sections 2-028 through 2-2033.