

**City of Salem Massachusetts
Public Meeting Minutes**

Board or Committee: Redevelopment Authority, Regular Meeting
Date and Time: Wednesday, September 12, 2018 at 6:00 pm
Meeting Location: 93 Washington Street, First Floor Conference Room
SRA Members Present: Chair Grace Napolitano, Dean Rubin, Russ Vickers
SRA Members Absent: Gary Barrett, David Guarino
Others Present: Tom Daniel – Director of Planning and Community Development, Matt Coogan
Recorder: Colleen Brewster

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

Projects Under Review

Executive Directors Report:

- A; New Legislation: Mr. Daniel stated that the ceremonial signing of the new legislation will be Wednesday, September 19, 2018 in the Governor's Office and SRA Board members are welcome.
- B. Alleyway lighting: Mr. Daniel stated that there has been some delay and should be installed by mid-October because Kate Luchini is waiting for some equipment to arrive. Mr. Rubin asked if the installation during October is the best timing versus waiting two weeks after Halloween. Mr. Daniel replied the proposed lighting will have limited impact and the night-time impact will be worth it in the end. If there is any further delay it will make sense to delay its installation.
- C. Artist's Pilot Program: Mr. Coogan stated that the Public Art Commission is doing a pilot program and will work with a few artists to create street art and using items already on the street like bollards and street lights. There is No exact plan for which artists will paint what item; however, this will take place within the Essex street area and it can start soon. The art would be temporary, and the Public Art Commission want the SRA to know because it's within the Urban Renewal Area. Mr. Rubin noted that someone should oversee the process. Mr. Coogan replied that the Commission will provide the oversight. The SRA had no other concerns.
- D. East India Square: Mr. Daniel stated that he, Mr. Coogan, and others walked the Essex Street Pedestrian Mall. They looked at vendor placement and the associated clearance issues and accessible paths. Mr. Coogan will investigate how it functions because some areas last year were problematic. Some businesses have done things that weren't permitted and they need to be brought into compliance.
- E. Old Salem Jail Project Assessment: The DRB will conduct an evaluation of the Old Salem Jail to see what can be learned from this process and the outcome. Mr. Coogan should hear back from the DRB in October.
- F. Witch City Mall Signage: Mr. Coogan stated that no dates for compliance have been given but numerous attempts were made to reach the property owners and they've made no effort to remove the signs or get them permitted. The Building Department is the authority on this issue, but he hasn't received an update from them. The SRA wants a resolution. Mr. Daniel stated that there are building issues with the garage and mall and the City had developed a relationship with the building

owners from the garage stairwell repairs and will help work through the issues in a friendly manner. All Board members agreed to send another letter to the Building Department.

Mr. Rubin: Motion to send another letter the Building Department asking them to reach out to the mall property owners again.

Seconded by: Mr. Vickers. Passes: 3-0

G: Downtown Visioning Process: Discussion of scope for visioning process and next steps for planning.

Mr. Daniel stated that the scope of work was discussed, and the funding approved at the September meeting. Their goal is to set broad visioning goals for the northern end of downtown and to make the Superior court and County Commissioners buildings the top priority. The City owned crescent shaped lot can be combined/offered with the two court buildings, and the ULI suggested including the Tabernacle Church. The Church Street parking lot has also received some interest. They want public input for these broad goals for cluster each and those goals will become more specific as the process moved forward. They have reached out to Utile for assistance, who previous suggested changes to the Essex Street Pedestrian Mall are mostly complete. They also helped organize Imagine Salem.

Tim Love and Jessica Robertson were present from Utile.

Mr. Love stated that assisting towns and cities with visioning goals is only one aspect of what their firm does. They prefer to get involved in the beginning of the process to help with the upfront planning and visioning. They were the lead planners with Imagine Boston and are in year 3 of Envision Cambridge. Their firm will scope out underutilized assets north of Essex Street and will think about them collectively and socialize the opportunity with the public at large. This will inform the future life of the downtown, the physical quality of the urban fabric, and will address wayfinding, circulation (both look and feel), and make the train station more central to the future of the downtown. These items were being thought of with urban planning, but they are aiming for higher level discussion and will use engagement tools for this process.

Mr. Rubin asked how this will work with Image Salem and which one feeds into the other. Mr. Love replied that Imagine Salem made the neighborhoods important because they didn't just focus on the downtown. That helped them discover the diversity in Salem and maximizes the participation in the city, which can provide clues for the downtown as a whole. The conversation is more interesting when there is more input. Mr. Daniel suggested this public meeting be held at the new CLC. Chair Napolitano noted that they need the get people interested in participating.

Mr. Love noted that they toured some downtown buildings that can be part of the project. There are numerous assets downtown that are the historic resources but repurposing them is difficult. They will need to set expectations for how the process may unfold. They have done this before using Mass Development funding for RFP's and have studied an armory in downtown Providence, so they are familiar with projects of this magnitude.

Mr. Love replied that structures are much more expensive to convert to residential or commercial uses when they are historic because of obligations of cost. In a Providence project, a two-step RFI then RFP process was used to see what entities were out there, but that is most helpful with non-profit projects. The value in the RFI process is that it is used as a call for potential tenants of developers to create a match-making process and to see who would want to participate with whom.

Mr. Daniel noted that the SRA will own the two courthouse buildings and changes are being considered to the facilities that the SRA won't be directing, but this will provide awareness to the public, as will the ground-up opportunities, such as the crescent shaped or Church Street lot. The

ULI Panel noted that the SRA owns the Church Street property and should never consider developing it without leveraging it. It is a viable opportunity because of its value in parking and could be combined with the mall garage as a future big picture option. Mr. Rubin asked if the focus was just on these assets. Ms. Robertson replied that they are thinking about how these aspects related to downtown Salem. There is an underwhelming arrival to Salem from the train and how the redevelopment of those court buildings affects that entrance is something to consider.

Mr. Rubin asked how the SRA can help with the process. Mr. Love replied that Utile will draft the agenda items to be discussed including; the list of properties included, the level of control, activation, wayfinding, circulation, and parking. They can also provide a survey to make it more engaging but that needs to be planned. Letting the public know how the SRA is looking at this is good. Ms. Robertson noted that Utile wants to bring to surface the larger goals for how the sites can contribute to the downtown and the City overall not specifics.

Mr. Love suggested eliminating the slip lane from Bridge Street onto Washington Street and give some property back to the building for the stairs that once led to it. Ms. Robertson noted that the crescent shaped lot is a larger parcel that allows for a more conventional development and a higher return and could be leveraged to implement some of the public realm elements.

Mr. Vickers asked if they should prioritize a few specific goals and objectives in the RFQ/RFI to measure the responses against. If so, they will need specifics and a limit on the goals. Mr. Love replied yes, the RFQ's must be fundamental enough to allow creativity from the developers using precisely those goals or more directive lines. The crescent shaped lot has more access to get to the waterfront, MTBA and pedestrian crossings. Some spaces may be better for the City and more enticing and valuable for developers.

Ms. Robertson noted that ground up vs. reused sites may need to be treated differently. Reused sites are more of challenge and it may be better to layer community goals on them and not additional capital expenses. Mr. Love noted that the two churches are difficult properties and will benefit from the public conversation since they have similar spaces to those of the courthouses. Mr. Vickers noted that there needs to be some level of understanding between the public and private, and the link between them needs to be firm but with contingencies. Mr. Daniel noted that the City's deal is with the court buildings and with a 2-stage process they will learn from the development world and it will act as a vetting process. Mr. Love stated the public process could stimulate creativity from the developers and the RFQ process will provide flexibility.

Mr. Rubin questioned whether eliminating the churches would simplify the process, especially as there is no interest in redeveloping them. Jessica replied that it will be good for developers who don't know about Salem, to be aware of other spaces that can be used. A map of the different building types could be included to let everyone know where each is located. Mr. Love suggested a 3-stage process; 1) public workshop, 2) RFQ to define the items and maximize the specificity, and 3) RFP to let people know the churches are associated with the process. Mr. Daniel noted that marketing for the other properties will be provided. Mr. Love suggested keeping options open but to note the availability of the churches.

Mr. Daniel stated that the City is working with the MBTA to determine if they can sell the nub of the crescent shaped lot to the City. Mr. Rubin suggested structuring a conditional sale deal with them and allowing the inclusion of the crescent shaped lot as leverage for the other properties. Mr. Love replied that the market will determine that, and the crescent lot makes a strong case for MassWorks money since it provides access on both sides of the street. Chair Napolitano asked if it was the City's goal to continue to own the crescent shaped lot. Mr. Daniel replied that the process is currently stuck and the timing may not work. They want the City Council's input on the SRA acquiring it and the RFQ would be tailored to include it. Mr. Love stated that the RFP draft can

be used when meeting with the MBTA. Ms. Robertson noted that the draft will let the MBTA know where the City is in the process and show them their goal. Mr. Daniel added that he spoke with a consultant who became interested in bidding on the project himself. The crescent lot will add value to the project and some may want that lot on its own and may find the court buildings burdensome. The RFQ process will provide the SRA with some flexibility. He noted that the ULI panel sent out the 5 Broad Street project and found others who were interested.

Mr. Rubin asked again what Utile needs from the SRA. Mr. Love replied that he will draft a plan for the workshop and will need feedback from the SRA. The more outreach the better the process will be and they will help with getting the word out to get a great turn-out and interest from the development community. Mr. Daniel stated that the SRA will work with Utile and will provide additional information.

Emily Udy, Historic Salem, Inc. Stated that this is a fantastic idea, Imagine Salem should be included in the process so residents will be able to connect the two and see the benefits from the Imagine Salem process.

Urban Renewal Area Projects Under Review

- 1. 203-209 Essex Street (Hotel Salem):** Project update on remaining façade restoration and related SRA approvals

Brendan Murray, of Murray Masonry, was present to discuss the project.

Mr. Murray stated that the restoration progress is going well, the cutting and demolition is complete, they are cleaning and repointing now, and are on schedule to complete the work by the end of next week. They encountered nothing unexpected. He noted that during their pre-construction meeting he noted that they may not get the limestone completely clean due to heavy atmospheric staining and that is exactly what occurred, the staining won't completely go away.

- 2. 27 Charter Street (T-Mobile):** Discussion and vote on Small Project Review for wireless antenna relocation.

Jerry Squires was present to discuss the project.

Mr. Squires stated that they already have antennas mounted on the building, they had to move their antenna and a structure was built in the location they would've used. A temporary sled mount installed on the rooftop and they want to mount the sled-mount onto the side of the building. AT&T has a similar side mounted installation at the corner of the building. Heavy snow loads can become an issue, so they want to install a permanent antenna attachment. The new will be painted to match so it blends-in like the existing AT&T antenna. Mr. Coogan stated that the antennas are visible, and it should be referred to the DRB for matching the façade how the existing antennas match.

Chair Napolitano opens public comment.

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Napolitano closes public comment.

Rubin: Motion to approved subject to review and recommendation by the DRB.

Seconded by: Vickers. Passes: 3-0

3. 132 Essex Street (Philips Library, Peabody Essex Museum): Discussion and vote on Final Design Review.

Mr. Monk, of the Peabody Essex Museum) and Mr. Traficonte, of Schwartz/Silver Architects, were present to discuss the project.

Mr. Monk stated that they went through DRB review process and received good feedback. The current presentation will show the revisions that were based on that feedback.

Mr. Traficonte stated that they met with the DRB twice and presented the revised landscape drawings with a list of DRB comments.

1) The trees on Essex Street were Gingko Biloba's, then became American Elm Trees, and will now be 4 new Red Maple trees. Mr. Monk noted that the recommendation came from the City's Tree Warden who worked with the Lorax Committee to standardize City tree species. Mr. Traficonte noted that the proposed Elms on Brown Street will remain. Landscaping and a granite curb will extend down the driveway. The Stacks wing will be removed and landscaping added in its place. The 4 tall lights poles were changed to lit bollards like the Gardner Pingree House and they will be placed along the gravel driveway extend along the edge of the new rear path towards Armory Park. LED lights will be fixed into the underside of the railing to provide light at the back stair.

2) Brown Street: Mr. Traficonte stated that they will extend the brick sidewalk down to the Armory and will widen the walk by 12-16" towards the Essex Block. They looked at various fence options and decided to repair the existing fence, brick piers, and extend it the length of the site on Brown Street. The left side parking entrance will be removed and the parking lot spaces will be reduced. The Federal garden and the path to the parking lot at the back of the Essex Block will be restored. The garden and parking lot will be separated by a new row of Poplar tree. The paths will extend through the hedge and various other plantings will be planted. The transformer behind the Ward House will have the plantings surround it replaced.

Mr. Monk stated that they hadn't heard back from Mass Historic until the beginning of this week, and they approved the same as Salem Historic Commission except for the replacement of the stairs from in front of the Connector to in front of Plummer Hall. The local Commission was in favor of replacing them, but the state ruling must be enforced. They are working to reconcile the differences of opinion and will return to the SRA to let them know what will happen.

Mr. Rubin asked if there will be a constraint on parking by eliminating half of it. Mr. Monk replied the lot provides business related parking and staff in need of accessible parking. The 16 spaces will be reduced to 8. Site drainage issues will be incorporated into this project and that design requires less parking. Long term, the parking lot may be eliminated, and the structures reoriented on the site.

Mr. Rubin asked if the lighting was decorative or for security purposes. Mr. Monk replied decorative. He noted that the existing National Grid lights aren't shown but will also provide lighting on the site.

Mr. Daniel stated that Councilor Christine Madore sent a letter requesting ADA ramped entrance at the street for a mid-span cross walk. Mr. Monk replied that the PEM will do it but will need details from the City on what they want installed. They would also require the City Engineers input on its placement. The work will be done in the Spring of 2019.

Chair Napolitano opens public comment.

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Chair Napolitano closes public comment.

Mr. Vickers: Motion to approve final design review subject to resolution of the stair at Plummer Hall and a follow-up report be sent to the SRA and the condition that the applicant work with the City to locate a new crosswalk.

Seconded by: Mr. Rubin. Passes: 3-0.

New / Old Business

1. SRA Work Plan Review and Discussion

a. Planning for joint meeting with the City Council

Work Plan Overview

Mr. Daniel prepared a memo and table to work through of all the SRA related projects that related to the City and visa versa. He requested feedback and sequencing of the items. In addition to the regular meetings he noted the special joint meeting with the City Council, the public downtown visioning process meeting, and the potential multiple meetings needed regarding the 5 Broad Street project.

The joint meeting will allow the two groups to meet and connect so the Council can be made aware of the work going with the SRA, where the two entities will intersect in the future, and Councilor Christine Madore suggested that Bill Tinti present a brief history of the SRA.

Mr. Daniel assembled the following agenda for the SRA to review and modify;

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Interactive engagement activity modeled off Imagine Salem
3. SRA Background and overview including the Urban Renewal Plan
4. History of the SRA, preservation and the ongoing work
5. Downtown Renewal Plan, Design Review and real estate disposition
6. Downtown needs and supporting its revitalization
7. Current work plan and what points will intercept with the Council
8. Discussion

Mr. Daniel stated that Mr. Tinti is open to participating in a meeting with the SRA but they should focus on the current needs and goals. Mr. Daniel suggested a separate public meeting to see his full presentation. The joint meeting is on hold for October 2nd but the Councilors need to confirm.

Mr. Rubin asked what the SRA wants to know about the Council that could impact how the SRA operates. Mr. Daniel replied that the downtown visioning will lead to a broader conversation and the desire to meet with them. Mr. Vickers added that the SRA needs the Council's support.

Councilor Tom Furey stated that the SRA should show their presence at the Council meetings, as should Bill Tinti, to reinforce how the SRA is important to the City. Chair Napolitano and Mr. Vickers agreed that including a presentation on the history of the SRA by Mr. Tinti would be instrumental to the process.

Mr. Vickers stated that they need to summarize the SRA's overview. Mr. Daniel replied the expanded version can be made available for the Council and the public. He wants the Council to understand who the SRA is, what they are doing, and how they need to work together. Mr. Vickers asked if they should discuss each project and its involvement. Mr. Rubin replied that they need to manage the feedback since there is a separation of overview between the two entities. Chair Napolitano suggested they highlight what will go before the Council only. Mr. Daniel agreed and added that only projects needing the use of financing tools that may require Council approval or commercial TIFs be discussed since some financing options.

Mr. Daniel stated that the Downtown visioning will be on October 16th, possibly at the new CLC building. Mr. Love and Ms. Robertson will return in November to present their findings.

District Court: Mr. Daniel noted that the District Court project will return in October to present the Federal Street façade and hope to close in early November. The Vice Chair will need to execute a check for \$1.

5 Broad Street: Mr. Coogan is managing the project and noted that there were approximately 20 people present at the walk-thru, both locally and through the ULI's announcement of it. Mr. Daniel noted that proposals are due October 5th. Proposals would be reviewed and firms would be selected to interview on November 14th, a special SRA meeting to conduct interviews could take place in December 11th and 12th. The proposals will determine how many meetings would be necessary. The SRA's recommendation should come in January and the City Council would make the final decision. Alternatively, to speed up the process a special meeting could take place to select who to interview in November and make a recommendation to the Council in December, although the SRA and Planning Department will need time to review the proposals. Mr. Rubin and Mr. Vickers agreed that accelerating projects is always a good thing and a Board commitment is required. Mr. Daniel suggested selecting a date between the 22nd and 31st of October for a special meeting and November 13th -15th for interviews.

289 Derby Street: Mr. Daniel noted that the Council is still discussing this site. When the City acquired this property the 285 property owner, Tim Clark, was supportive of it and considered how to reposition his property. They discussed having an agreement on a strip of land facing the park. The SRA requested the Council transfer this property to the SRA to negotiate the terms of that agreement. Money received from Mr. Clark would go back into the programming of the 289 park project. Mr. Rubin asked Councilor Furey the reasons why the Council's vote was divided. Councilor Furey replied that two Councilors had concerns with territory and jurisdiction over the land that he hopes can be resolved quickly.

Superior Court and County Commissioners Buildings: Mr. Daniel stated that a potential consultant he spoke with was impressed at the City's preparedness and previous studies and was interested in bidding on it himself. He provided both a good and bad example of an RFP. Dividing while preserving historic spaces is a concern, especially when trying to access historic tax credits. The RFQ will be developed and submitted in early 2019, however; there needs to be a discussion in October/November with the Council about the crescent lot and the City's willingness to participate in this process. The City's disposition process requires that a property must be declared surplus, like 5 Broad Street, so the City Solicitor needs to be included in the discussion moving forward. Mr. Rubin asked if the consultant suggested that other consultants be approached. Mr. Daniel received the names of three firms from MassDevelopment, but a consultant may not be needed.

Church Street cluster: For future discussion.

City related items: Mr. Daniel stated that the Adaptive Reuse Overlay has some intricacies. There was a public meeting in July but their approach has changed. They will finalize the next draft at the September 13th meeting, but the timeline proposed will be changed due to a need for a public meeting to be held possibly the first week in October. It will be introduced to Council October 11th and there will be a joint public hearing with the Planning Board within the next 60-90 days. Is a lengthy process that should wrap up in January or February.

HDIP and expansion of the program area: Mr. Daniel stated that this will be submitted to City Council in September or early October. The goal is to expand from the current 6 properties to include the B5 and NRCC zoning districts, 5 Broad Street, Immaculate Conception and St. James Church. The Planning Department has received feedback and encouragement to expand the HD zone so others can utilize the tool. The two church schools will need as many tools as possible and it could be used for 5 Board Street.

2. FY19 Community Preservation Plan: Request for Comment / Input

Mr. Coogan stated that the CPA is processing their fiscal year 2019 plan and are requesting feedback. The SRA did that last year also. Mr. Daniel noted that last they added the SRA as an asset. The Board agreed that nothing else could be included at this time. Mr. Coogan noted that the comment period will be open through October.

Other Items

Minutes

The minutes from the regular August 8, 2018 meeting were reviewed.

Vickers: Motion to approve with Daniels' edits.
Seconded by: Chair Napolitano. Passes: 3-0.

Adjournment

Rubin: Motion to adjourn the meeting.
Seconded by: Chair Napolitano. Passes 3-0.

Meeting is adjourned at 8:10 PM.

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