

**City of Salem Massachusetts
Public Meeting Minutes**

Board or Committee: Redevelopment Authority, Regular Meeting
Date and Time: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 at 6:00 pm
Meeting Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting
SRA Members Present: Chair Grace Napolitano, David Guarino, Dean Rubin,
Russ Vickers, Cynthia Nina-Soto
SRA Members Absent: None
Others Present: Tom Daniel – Director of Planning and Community
Development
Kathryn Newhall-Smith – Principal Planner

Recorder: Colleen Brewster

Chair Grace Napolitano calls the meeting to order at 6:05PM. Roll call was taken.

Projects Under Review

Executive Director's Report

Daniel stated;

1. The Covid-19 task force continues to meet and the newsletter are still sent out weekly. The most recent focus group met with Museums & Attractions, and there is a specialist in HVAC can provide services for businesses. The focus groups, town halls, and surveys will be continue.
2. They are supporting businesses across the City and working with a Mill City Community Investments which is helping businesses apply for PPP. They have English and Spanish speaking staff and will offer a free workshop on September 22, 2020 from 11-12:30PM to provide any help post-crisis.

Projects in the Urban Renewal Area

1. **7-9 Dodge Street:** Small Project Review - Final review of proposed fencing around parking lot

Andrew Longmire of RCG was present to discuss the project.

Mr. Longmire stated that he wants to add a fence to enclose their perimeter parking lot. The DRB's comment was to enclose the corner of the fencing so there is only a small opening at the corner. Ms. Newhall-Smith added that the DRB was in favor of the proposed fencing, did make the recommendation to add a corner post and leave enough space for ADA access leading across Dodge Street. The new fence will match the existing fence across the street.

Public Comment:

No one in the assembly wished to speak.

Vickers: Motion to approve as recommended.

Seconded by: Guarino. Guarino, Nina-Soto, Vickers, Napolitano, Rubin. 5 in favor.

2. **30 Federal Street:** Development Project Review – Final review of construction of a mixed-use addition with retail and 2 residential units, renovations to the exterior of the existing portion of the building, and a change in its use from commercial to mixed-use that incorporates two residential units

After approximately 30-minutes of technical difficulties the Board proceeded with the meeting.

Ms. Nina-Soto recused herself since she wasn't present for earlier review and discussion.

Dan Ricciarelli and Sanir Lutfija of Seger Architects, and Mike Becker (owner) were present to discuss the project.

Mr. Ricciarelli stated that they are seeking final approval for an addition to an existing building. They went before the DRB for a compliance review and the DRB felt their project was consistent with the Design Guidelines. Ms. Newhall-Smith noted that the Board reviewed the project, the **30 Federal Street: Design Inconsistencies with the Downtown Renewal Plan** document, and the **Summary of Abutters' Design Comments** document.

Ms. Newhall-Smith stated:

1. Building Roofs, Standard 3:3-B (10): States that the material should match the surrounding building. The DRB reviewed the revised plans and found that the proposal of architectural shingles matched the material of the abutting residential structures and the proposed flat EPDM roof will not be visible and is acceptable. Matching the slate and copper roofs of the courthouses would not be appropriate. The DRB voted unanimously that the proposal is consistent with the design standards.
2. Proportion and Pattern of Windows, Standard 3:3-C (3): States that the window pattern of the addition should acknowledge and respond to the window types and patterns of the existing building in terms of scale, rhythm and number of openings. The DRB reviewed the window patterns and proportions and determined that the proposed windows in the addition do not mimic those in the existing building, the play off the various typologies in the abutting condominium and the Brix building, as shown in the renderings. The proposed North façade windows do reference those at 28 Federal Street and mimicking the courthouse windows would not be appropriate. The DRB voted unanimously that the proposed presented an appropriate compliance alternative to the design standards for the reasons stated above.
3. Façade Projections, Standard 3:3-C (6): States that façade depressions along Washington Street must be a maximum of 10-feet. The DRB reviewed the revised plans and noted the measurements of the façade depression comply with the design standards. The DRB voted unanimously that the proposed design meets the standard and do not exceed the 10-feet.

4. Signage, Standard 3:3-C (9): States that signs shall comply with the sign ordinance, sign type, location and installation shall be consistent with other uses adjacent to and along the same street. The DRB agreed that the proposed schematic signage plan shows the applicant has given thought to how signage could be accommodated on the addition. The applicant is considering brushed aluminum letters for wall signs with the potential for adding small projecting signs at the Washington and Federal Street corners and at the northern corner of the building. The applicant and/or tenants seeking signage will return to the DRB for sign review. The DRB voted unanimously to find that the sign schematic is an acceptable compliance alternative for this standard since the tenants for the commercial space(s) have not yet been determined. When the applicant and/or tenants are seeking signage, he/she/they will return to the DRB for signage review.
5. Landscape Use and Orientation, Standard 3:3-E (1): States that the site, block and building orientation and configuration shall use landscape features to shield negative views, define edges, and frame streets and public spaces. The DRB agreed that the proposed design is minimal since it's built to the lot line which is allowed in the B-5 district, They have provided landscaping at the Federal Street courtyard, the building shields 3 or 4 parking spaces, and the applicant offered to plant additional landscaping that the neighboring condominium were not in favor of. The DBR voted unanimously that the proposed landscaping plan is appropriate compliance alternative for this standard of the reasons stated during deliberations.
6. Parking Landscape, Standard 3:3-F (4): States that generous landscaping areas shall be design to ensure plant health, including adequate areas for snow removal, and shall create planting strips of not less than 10-feet wide for trees. Landscape areas shall be placed at all exterior edges of the parking area that abut adjacent properties, streets, or public spaces. The DRB reviewed the revised plans and found that there were no opportunities for new landscaping within the parking lot given its proximity to the abutters property, because the existing parking lot was not changing, and no new parking area was being created. The DRB voted unanimously that this design standard is not applicable to this project since the existing access easements, adding landscaping around the parking space is not appropriate.

Other Site Considerations

- a. Trash Removal: Proposal – Indoor trash to be stored in the basement, to be placed on the curb for pick-up by a private contractor with a frequency TBD. The DRB found that the proposed method of handling trash generated by the residential and commercial tenants was appropriate.
- b. Snow Removal and Storage: Proposal – With minimal snow storage on site its highly likely snow will need to be removed from the site. There will be some storage on the Federal Street courtyard. The property owners and/or commercial tenants will be responsible for shoveling the sidewalks. The DRB found that this was an appropriate response but expressed concern with the clearing of Washington Street and urged the applicant to maintain snow clearance.

- c. Location of Wall Sconces: Proposed – Revised plans A-8, A-13 & A-14 indicated proposed light location. The DRB found that the cut-off style fixtures on the building were appropriate, suggested adding landscape lighting at the Federal Street courtyard to highlight features rather than for safety.
- d. Functional Parking Lot Configuration: Proposed – The revised plans, A-22, included a turning radius for a vehicle parked in a space adjacent to the property. The DRB found that the parking configuration is tight and not ideal but meet the zoning requirements. The Board questioned the probability of vehicles striking the building and urged the applicant to explore adding a bollard or other method to protect the building.
- e. HVAC location and screening: Proposed – The HVAC units will be mounted high on the wall under the covered parking with an alternative location on the tenant decks concealed from view by the solid walls. The DRB preferred the units be hidden in the parking area and any additional HVAC units must be screened from view or on the rooftop behind the elevator tower.
- f. Additional mechanical units: The applicant stated that no other mechanical are proposed at this time, but that is dependent upon the commercial space tenants. The DRB noted that planning for future tenants is difficult and reminded the applicant that changes or additions to the mechanical system will require SRA and DRB review.

The DRB voted unanimously that the applicant has adequately address each of the site considerations.

Mr. Rubin stated that the DRB discussed each item adequately. The higher buildings may dwarf this addition, but he's satisfied by the DRB's response. The view with the Brix building in the renderings is helpful and allows everyone to see it in context.

Mr. Guarino echoed Mr. Rubin's comments and added that the design has come a long way with everyone's comments and the design revision. He read all the letters in the past 24 hours and the process matters and was not thrilled with how this project started but the meetings with the designer, developer and abutters helped move the project along. Many may still be opposed but it fits within the aesthetic, and the look and feel of the downtown. It will improve the look of the dated building. He lives near-by and cares about the end result. A lot of time and effort have gone into making this right and he commended the DRB on their expertise.

Mr. Vickers stated he was pleased with the DRB's complete and thorough response as well as with their unanimous votes. It was well worth the time spent. Chair Napolitano agreed.

Mr. Rubin stated that the trash trucks should go to Federal or Washington Streets but not onto the shared driveway. The snow removal agreement should be renegotiated with all three condominiums since the snow storage area will not be the addition. He recommended a bollard at the corner of the addition to protect the column from vehicles. Mr. Becker replied that the trash will be removed through the back door and can be placed to either street. Snow will be removed from their four parking spaces and was always pushed to the end of the drive aisle. The additional will eliminate some of the snow needing to be plowed.

Chair Napolitano opened public comment:

Pam Broderick, 28 Federal Street. Thanked the SRA for accommodating her call by calling Mr. Daniel's phone given the access challenges of tonight meeting. Since the meetings have gone virtual some of the communication has been lost due to expediency. Only one Board member acknowledged re-reading previous public comments while other Boards acknowledge all letters that have been submitted. She suggested this Board acknowledge the letters out of respect of the citizenry, because the SRA is serving the greater good, and the need for common ground not just win - lose or approve - reject. She asked the Chair to confirm how many letters have been received and how many were in support. Mr. Rubin replied nearly 70 and 2 - 3 were in favor. Ms. Broderick noted her difficulty with following the abutters letters uploaded to SharePoint and requested a summary of the abutter's comments. Mr. Guarino noted that besides re-reading the letters, he also spoke to neighbors that were in favor but didn't submit letters. Mr. Rubin noted that he had also read letters submitted up until 10 minutes before the start of the meeting but there may be different points of view for how to create a historic look on a building that is not historic. Ms. Broderick thanked the Board members that acknowledged reading the letters, noted that their last letter was sent by 22 households and include the condition that a surety bond to ensure the project gets constructed.

Jane Stauffer, 1 Washington Street. The developer met with neighbors once because the SRA insisted on a meeting and she asked if there were any private meetings with abutters. Mr. Ricciarelli replied that there were at least two and they reached out to set up additional meetings. Mr. Becker and Atty. Grover noted 3-4 meetings, twice at The Bridge and one at Old Town Hall. Mr. Botwinik noted that he met a couple abutters at Seger Architects also and another was cancelled. Ms. Stauffer noted that many abutters only recall one meeting and they have been clear as to why they don't feel this project is good for the City or their neighborhood. She asked why it be beneficial. Mr. Guarino replied that after the construction and the Brix, the existing building will look out of place and it won't help revitalize this area of downtown. The design has come a long way and the existing form isn't in the best of revitalize this area of the downtown.

Ms. Newhall-Smith read a letter from Councillor Madore.

Ms. Stauffer stated that the goals and objectives of the SRA are in direct opposition to what exists in their neighborhood and that makes her feel very unwelcome as a City resident. They sent a long rebuttal and if it's building it will be a problem for them.

Joan Hopper, 28A Federal Street. Noticed they've included a turning radius plan and the 30 Federal Street space doesn't appear to have sufficient room to back out since they are closer to the curb at 28 Federal Street.

Anne Laaff, 20 Federal Street. Has a view of the walkway which will be obstructed and agrees with Ms. Stauffer. The neighborhood isn't being listened to and there are more letters in objection than in favor of the proposed design. The City has numerous empty commercial spaces that could become another urban blight that will go unfilled.

Bill Yuhas, 28 Federal Street. Requested that the residents at 28 Federal Street review the proposed color palette prior to them being applied. Mr. Becker and Mr. Ricciarelli agreed to

provide a total package to the SRA and DRB. Ms. Newhall-Smith added that the package will be available to view at the Planning Office.

Alice Merkle, 28 Federal Street. Also requested to review the proposed colors on site. Mr. Ricciarelli noted that the proposed color palette will also be reviewed through the DRB.

Eric Papetti, 11 Simon Street. In support of the project that is replacing surfacing parking with housing, wished there was a more streamlined process to get to this end result, and hopes to see more project like this in the City.

Mr. Rubin noted a recent comment on the disorderly look of the currently property and landscaping which should be cared for.

Mr. Daniel stated that a plan for trash and snow removal should be included for the record, and suggested language about deliveries to be made from Federal Street and not the shared driveway. The Commission and applicants agreed.

Mr. Rubin requested clarification on the snow storage. Mr. Uhaus replied that plowing the side parking area has been the case and they will lose a significant amount of snow storage now. The new building will create a condition when snow accumulation is significant, and the developer should remove the snow so they can park. Mr. Becker added that snow was pushed along Washington Street but not in the walkway leading toward Washington Street.

Bill Yuhas, 28 Federal Street. Agreed with including a condition for an agreement with the neighbors for snow storage.

Dan Botwinik. Stated that the neighbors have enjoyed their property as additional snow storage which will no longer be the case.

Pam Broderick, 28 Federal Street. Has photographs of 8-foot snow piles from 2016 and indicated that snow gets moved around the property since there is limited snow storage towards the end of the parking row. In 20-years they've never had to pay for snow removal and if it's required it should be the responsibility of 30 Federal Street.

Eric Sullivan, 20 Holly Street. In support of the project.

Linda Finn, 1 Washington Street. Asked how the equipment and material storage be handled during construction so that it doesn't have an adverse effect on the abutters parking. Mr. Becker replied that all staging will be on his property.

Public Comment closed.

Mr. Rubin supports an agreement on trash removal but not on snow removal because 30 Federal shouldn't agree to pay for it outright, there should be a discussion between the 3-parties. Mr. Vickers and Mr. Guarino agreed.

Ms. Newhall-Smith suggested including another condition for one off-site parking that the applicant is allowed to provide that off-site and the purchase of one parking pass for the

residential tenants in the existing portion of the building, in perpetuity or until the unit is no longer used for residential. The parking on site should also be recorded with the Registry. Mr. Becker noted that the parking space can be rented in the garage or another off-site facility within 1,000 feet of the property. Ms. Newhall-Smith noted that the applicant must provide proof of this off-site location.

Mr. Daniel agreed with all suggested conditions. Ms. Newhall-Smith state that the consistency with design plans, off-site parking, sign plan location, planting plan, trash removal, and not using the common driveway, and final review of the 100% Construction Documents, etc. must also be reviewed by the DRB. Mr. Daniel stated that Ms. Broderick suggested the inclusion of a surety or performance bond if the project were to stall. The Commission discussed the inclusion of a bond. Ms. Newhall-Smith noted that they are used for street construction or the public way not a private development property. Mr. Botwinik noted that they can only make sure the sidewalks are maintained not private property and he is not comfortable with uncommon condition on private property.

Motion: Guarino approve with the conditions with the following conditions; for an agreement with the neighbors for snow storage, trash trucks to use Federal or Washington Streets but not the shared driveway, one off-site parking to be provide through the purchase of one parking pass to be recorded with the Registry.

Seconded by: Vickers

Roll Call: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Vickers, Napolitano, Rubin. 5 in favor.

New/Old Business

1. FY21 Community Preservation Plan – Request for Comment/Input

Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that the CPA has ask for review and comment on the next fiscal year plan. Comments are due October 16th 2020 and she can collect them from the Commission to they can e-mail their comments directly to the CPA.

2. SRA Goals for FY 2021

Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that the document has a new goal, No. 4 - to explore initiatives, preferences and policies that align with the work of the Salem Affordable Housing Trust regarding affordable housing education, policy and development, building a relationship with the Trust so both boards are working in alignment to realize the City's affordable housing goals.

Mr. Guarino stated that public notification and engagement has been revitalized which is good and asked if they could request addition funding or send letters. Mr. Daniel replied that the City is working to streamline this abutter notification process to reduce the administrative load that will work with all the Board. Mr. Rubin suggested including that it stays true or consistent with the SRA's overall goals. Mr. Vickers agreed.

Motion: Rubin motion to approve as presented with the addition of staying true to SRA goals.

Seconded: Nina-Soto

Roll Call: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Vickers, Napolitano, Rubin. 5 in favor.

3. Superior Court and Crescent Lot: Update and Public Comments Received

Mr. Daniel stated that the SRA compiled questions for the respondents and responses were received at the end of August, with updates and new details. Interviews and presentations from each development team are scheduled for next week, Tuesday and Thursday, at 5PM. SRA Executive Sessions will be held later in September or October. An article about the project was published in City news and it has received some public comment. Ms. Newhall-Smith noted that she posted comments received and agreed with Ms. Broderick that the Commission mention those that have submitted comments.

Ms. Newhall-Smith stated that comments on the Courthouse Project were received from the following;

Chris Ingersal, dated 9/1/20
David Bowie, dated 9/1/20
HSI, Inc., dated 9/8/20
Jeff Cohen, dated 9/8/20
Judith Riley, dated 9/9/20
Linda Cauphil, dated 9/8/20
President Keenan of Salem State University, dated 9/9/20
Velma Pacheco, dated 9/9/20
Rachel Lutz, dated 9/9/20

Mr. Daniel stated that they continue to meet with DCAMM, they are configuring a sub-division plan for to be reviewed by all parties to ensure they are in agreement with the driveway rights, the MBTA has finalized the MOA, and a development attorney from KP Law has been retained to discuss the documents they've received and to prepare for the interviews. Mr. Guarino suggested asking SATV to broadcast the interviews.

Public Comment:

Eric Papetti, 11 Simon Street. Thanked the SRA for their hard work. As a member on Bicycle Advisory Committee and the Traffic and Parking Commission he was encouraged to see the public realm inclusion in the proposals and JHR's proposal for pedestrian access to the downtown through the MBTA tunnel which will be the missing link for pedestrians and bicyclist since this location will be at the center of a regional rail link. A ramp rather than stairs and an elevator, would be preferred, particularly to separate the pedestrians from the and bicyclists with careful use of the MassWorks grant and he suggested a shift of the exit South-East to ensure accessibility. WinnDevelopment's proposal was strong and lacked a tunnel connection but was thoughtful. He didn't see any proposed bicycle parking and the Planning Board has approved a bicycle planning document that all developers should utilize or improve upon. The other proposal included a kayak launch was also nice.

Emily Udy, 8 Buffum Street & HSI, Inc. She thanked Tom for reading through the names of the public that submitted letters, asked if the questions in their letter could be asked in the interviews, and asked if there will there be any further opportunity for public comment. Chair Napolitano replied that public comment will be allowed after each interview and another potential meeting after the interviews. Mr. Daniel noted that comments can also be submitted in writing.

Approval of Minutes

Executive Session

To discuss the development proposals submitted in response to the Request for Proposals 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.

Rubin: Motion to begin executive session.

Seconded by: Nina-Soto

Roll Call Vote: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Vickers, Napolitano. 5 in favor.

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

Executive Session began at 8:50PM.

Rubin: Motion to end executive session.

Seconded by: Vickers

Roll Call Vote: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Vickers, Napolitano. 5 in favor.

Rubin: Motion to adjourn.

Roll Call Vote: Guarino, Nina-Soto, Rubin, Vickers, Napolitano. 5 in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30PM

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