

**City of Salem Massachusetts
Public Meeting Minutes**

Board or Committee:	Redevelopment Authority, Regular Meeting
Date and Time:	Wednesday, January 10, 2018 at 6:00 pm
Meeting Location:	120 Washington Street, Third Floor Conference Room
SRA Members Present:	Chair Grace Napolitano, David Guarino, Dean Rubin
SRA Members Absent:	Russell Vickers
Others Present:	Tom Daniel – Director of Planning and Community Development, Tom Devine – Senior Planner
Recorder:	Colleen Brewster

Chair Grace Napolitano calls the meeting to order at 6:10PM. Roll call was taken.

Projects Under Review

Executive Directors Report:

Daniel stated that Gary Barrett is the Mayor's replacement for Christine Madore and he should be able to start in time for the February meeting. The City is also hiring a new Principal Planner – Matt Coogan – who previously worked in Gloucester. Matt will report to Tom Daniel.

Tom St. Pierre informed Tom Daniel that there is a contract in place for the construction of the Ledger dumpster; however, the weather is delaying the start time.

The "Witch City Mall" property manager will submit a signage package to the DRB for the signage being used at the entire mall.

Christine Madore suggested a goals discussion and Daniel will include this in their meetings.

District Court: They are continuing their Planning Board process and the City Council will vote on the TIE agreement in February.

Superior Court & County Commissioners Building: There was a December state stakeholders meeting. They are waiting for response from Secretary's office to determine if they will require less square footage for the Registry of Deeds. Nothing conclusive came out of that meeting. Legislative changes are still needed to move forward as well as the Secretary's participation and support, and DCAM is continuing to work with them to facilitate the transfer of ownership.

Urban Renewal Area Projects Under Review

- 1. 203-209 Essex Street (Hotel Salem):** Project update on remaining façade restoration and related SRA approvals (No vote required, project update only)

Sean Shea was present to discuss the project.

Shea stated that the sign band is not on the building yet. Weaver Glass is under contract to install it before the February SRA meeting. Tom Devine provided them with two referrals for the restoration of the cornice band which he will follow up with before the next meeting.

2. 120 Washington Street (Peabody Block LLC c/o RCG LLC): Discussion and vote on proposed deck and entryway area.

Andrew Zimmerman of RCG, LLC was present to discuss the project.

Zimmerman stated that this project will follow the city's vacancy of the building. The retail base will remain at first floor, the 2nd floor is and will remain office use. There will be a conversion of the top 2 floors to 14 residential units and a new roof deck at the connector at the second floor. He noted that he presented to the DRB on the new deck and lobby renovations previously. 18,000 gross SF will transition to residential and the roof deck will be 720 SF. The parking count will decrease by 1 to house a new dumpster.

At the roof deck there will be a continuous railing at parapet facing the park with a double door entrance from the hallway. The posts are newel posts that line up with structure below but do not line up with face of retail and the pickets will infill between the newels. The posts will be white with accent trim to match the detail of what's below at grade. They will carry the newel post treatment to meet the ends of the second floor walls. Sconces will provide the required foot candles. Composite decking will be used for durability in a dark stain. Sconces will be added to the walls and to the interior face of the newel posts. Rubin asked if down-lights would be used so that light shines down and not out. Zimmerman replied that they will use a can down-light fixture in a white color.

Zimmerman noted that the DRB provided direction for the deck. They requested that 1) the newel posts be narrower in width, 2) to restrict the deck furniture to table height items or lower, and 3) to replace the proposed sconces with white can down-light sconce. They will locate those items and submit it to the DRB for final approval.

Rubin asked if umbrellas are allowed. Zimmerman replied that they were intending to use tables or chaise lounges. Guarino stated that they shouldn't for safety reasons. Zimmerman noted that they are fine with no umbrellas being allowed because they will be in charge of furniture since this building is a rental property.

Zimmerman stated that in terms of the front entry design outside of front entry doors, they proposed to narrow the ramp width of the double door, create planters on either side of new ramp, and a video intercom system will be added to the right side of new entry platform. The glass will be switched to frameless glass, corten steel will be used at the planter, they will add down-lights in the soffit above the entrance door, and the interior finishes are cosmetic. The entrance will be deinstitutionalized. he exposed brick will be painted white and a tenant list stenciled onto the wall. English Ivy will be put in the corten planter. The rail will be galvanized steel rail and pickets will be painted matte black. A broom swept concrete finish will be done at the ramp and landing, and the brick will be white washed. In the interior, they are taking the side walls down and painting the brick walls, stenciling on the wall, adding new cladding at the elevator, constructing a new ceiling, and adding a planter. The DRB's comments were to mount a 120 decal instead of physical numbers hanging down from the transom, to whitewash the brick instead of painting it all white (pending what they find when they uncover the brick), and lastly to mount a directory to the exterior wall instead so the names can be easily removed. They would return for approval of any specific signage.

Rubin stated that he appreciates the DRB looking for the historic features.

Guarino asked if the parking is for the residences or offices only. Zimmerman replied that they will have 21 spaces, just enough for residential only and the commercial units will need to look elsewhere for parking.

Guarino asked who the deck is for and if the number of tables has been confirmed. Zimmerman replied that it will be for all tenants both residential and commercial, and as table count hasn't been determined.

Guarino asked why the deck can't extend the entire length. Zimmerman replied that there are windows into units and existing HVAC equipment that the deck will be set back from.

Guarino asked if there are capacity issues with the deck. Zimmerman replied that a structural engineer is reviewing the plan and reinforcing will be added if required, although additional columns would interrupt the commercial spaces below if more support is needed to carry a heavier load.

Chair Napolitano opens public comment.

Gary Gill of Ward 3 asked if the deck will be ADA accessible. He noted that the existing area is not large and asked why office tenants would use the deck and not just the residents only. He asked if the elevator would change since it frequently breaks down. Zimmerman replied that deck surface will match with the interior and the rest of the building will be accessible and to code. The elevator renovations will be cosmetic only and it will be serviced for maintenance.

Chair Napolitano closes public comment.

Daniel stated that the deck and entry way require approval and the signage will need to return for further review. Not including umbrellas on the deck can be a condition.

Guarino: Motion to approve with condition to prohibit deck umbrellas.
Seconded by: Rubin. Passes 3-0

3. 9-11 Dodge Street, 217-219 Washington Street, and 231-251 Washington Street (Hampton Inn, Mixed-Use Development Project): Discussion and vote on proposed revisions to final design

Attorney Thomas Alexander of Alexander & Femino, Andrew Queen – assistant project manager at Opechee Construction Company, and Ken McClure – owner's representative, were present to discuss the project.

Atty. Alexander stated that they last presented to the SRA in September, and to the DRB in October, November, and December. The plans have been revised to reflect the DRB's input. The plan was approved by the Planning Board in Sept 2015. Prices were too high so the project was redesigned. They are looking for approval of the current design and hope to start construction in the spring of 2018. McClure stated that he is a registered Landscape Architect. All materials are premium quality and the DRB has assisted in bringing this project forward.

Queen stated that it has been three months since this project was the last reviewed by the SRA. Additional façade depths have been added and the masonry base color has changed a couple times. The cream bay windows have returned and the transition between the two buildings now includes a mechanical grill along the edge. The louver and apartment building helps break up the mass and scale of the building. The residential wing along Washington Street is similar to what was previously presented and it still has stoops down to the sidewalk. They have included a potential

storefront at the Washington Street corner along Dodge Street Court, although the market will determine what that space will ultimately become. The 2nd level of parking is for hotel valet only, the 1st floor is for hotel valet and possibly some public parking, and the 3rd level parking is residential parking, and there are a couple building entry points from the parking levels. The upper level 3 is a mixture of hotel and residential parking which has a roof.

Rubin noted that the front door changes to make it more inviting. Queen replied that the vestibule has been moved forward and granite steps were added at Dodge Street. Rubin asked if the elevation is high enough to access the 2nd level from Dodge Street Court and if the 3rd level is only accessible from the upper area of Washington Street. Queen replied yes, the grade towards the far end of Dodge Street Court slopes up to Washington Street. Guarino noted that a person can't move between floors within the parking structure and that it all must be done outside. Where to access the public parking will get confusing. McClure replied that they will determine how it will work; they do want public parking on first and third levels and it will be done in such a way to maintain access. There are two entrances on the first floor, and one on both the second and third floors. Daniel asked how a person will exit the garage after they've parked. McClure replied that there will be a safe walkway to exit the 3rd level. Daniel asked a person would exit the garage to use the commercial spaces. McClure replied that the brick drive is accessible to pedestrians on both sides, and only valet will be allowed on 2nd level so the cars can be parked closer to one another, and the parking could be closed off during Halloween to eliminate congestion. Daniel asked if there will be a gate system to secure the first floor. McClure replied no; however, the 2nd and 3rd floors will have a gate to access and the 2nd level is secure already being only available to hotel staff. Chair Napolitano asked where the valets will bring the cars when its time for them to be picked up. Queen replied that there is a one way loop and all will be returned to P1. Chair Napolitano noted that the one way in and out would create a traffic jam. McClure replied that the parking area along the vestibule can be the queuing area to keep traffic clear.

Guarino asked how the public will know there are spaces available. Queen replied through a graphic indicator. Grace added that during Halloween the garage would be extremely congested and a "garage full" indicator would help. McClure noted that previous iterations did include a "P" public parking sign only, but not a parking space availability system. Chair Napolitano asked if the cost for public parking had been determined. McClure replied that an agreement to provide it is in place. Daniel noted that a previous iteration had all of public parking on top level. Guarino noted that the public's maneuvering to the retail and how to get out of the lot will need to be determined.

Chair Napolitano stated that the entrance area is already tight and hotel patrons could park at the meters to avoid parking fees in the garage. Daniel noted that snow removal is an issue and they need clarity on where the storage areas are.

Daniel stated that the retail spaces could include smaller units for marketability, and asked if single doors could be used rather than the double door entrances currently shown. Queen replied that this does not work with the existing sloped sidewalk which limits the number of entrances. Daniel noted that retail units don't typically include a vestibule to enter through.

Rubin suggested that for safety reasons curbing be included so people don't fall into the road. Queen replied that they have used bollards in the past to provide those visual cues.

Guarino asked if the buildings sign shown in the renderings were new. Queen replied that they were new to this design, but the approved drawings showed signage. The upper levels are not commercial and will need signage. Daniel stated signage has changed; the Hampton Inn signage wasn't included because it wasn't a part of the project, and neither was the upper Washington Street directional entrance sign, which would need to return for review. 2nd floor signage is also not yet permitted.

Atty. Alexander stated that they will return with a full sign package that will also address the parking signage.

Daniel stated that the applicant is seeking approval of the final revision to the final design tonight. Transition option B was recommended by the DRB and their recommendations for items 1 and 2 have been incorporated into the current presentation. Item 3 is that the applicant will need to return for a review of the restaurant corner, outdoor seating, awning, and cornice. The applicant will also need to return to the Planning Board for review of the project changes.

Rubin asked what will happen with the newly proposed Washington Street retail space if it is left empty. Daniel asked if the exterior design would return to residential. McClure replied that if it is not leased it could become residential and the exterior look would be incorporated into the design of the 3-bedroom units. If it remains retail, this unit could help continue the retail up towards Lafayette Street. Rubin asked for the difference between a den and a bedroom. Queen replied the lack of a second egress or closet which can't legally be used as a bedroom. Several Board members ask if a restaurant tenant had been selected. Queen replied that no deal has been made, so they would rather not say. Atty. Alexander added that they have a big name restaurant interested in this location.

Chair Napolitano opens public comment.

James Rose, 25 Linden Street. He has retail concerns since the 135 Lafayette building has become a retail disaster since Salem's retail potential is mixed and a backup plan to make the space a corner residential unit would be good. Grace Napolitano asked what is plan B for that unit if the retail doesn't work. Atty. Alexander replied that they would return to the DRB with a new proposal if retail doesn't work. However, the 113 hotel units and residential units will bring vitality to that corner, so they are confident in the success of a retail component.

Gary Gill, Ward 3. He noted that the 4-story units along Dodge Street will impact the view which he thought it would be lower at the Dodge Street and Dodge Street Court corner to provide a view to the water. He asked why the building is not lower the closer it gets to Dodge Street. He noted that the parking seems tight and will become tighter with snow. They will need to rely on signage to get people where they need to be. The main entrance along Dodge Street will most likely be used by valet parking. He asked where the designated snow areas would be, and how the restaurant will have trash removal, loading, and vents for cooking. McClure replied that the original parking scheme was preferred by RCG, where the public had one level to park on but they wanted to accommodate what the community is asking for, so parking is now segmented. Gill added that all the activity will make it more confusing and suggested that they designate the areas now.

Chair Napolitano noted that there are 38 public parking spaces to account for and the 1st floor is confusing where the public parking and valet drop-off mix. Daniel noted that they have an agreement with the city to provide those public parking spots. Atty. Alexander noted again that the signage to indicate where vehicles go to park can be address in the sign package.

Guarino stated that the trash removal is a valid concern. Queen replied the second floor trash room is for the hotel and the first floor commercial tenant will define where the trash will be located.

Emily Udy, Historic Salem, Inc. She noted that they have participated with this project since the beginning which has the potential to define the downtown. She wants the SRA to consider to the design and to ask if it will add to the historic fabric of Salem, since it is a large site that will redefine Salem. The design change from what was approved was significant and they hoped for more attention with the design review process. Their review process was short; it seemed to have been dealt with in 1 meeting and the second meeting reviewed mostly the corner of Washington & Dodge Streets. There has been very little attention to detail so far in her opinion and she requests additional review by the DRB. She noted that the tenants will benefit from this location but wants to ensure

that the city is not negatively impacted by the design. The design should tie to Salem and be unique. For example, the Washington Street elevation with the different blocks could be anywhere. The previous plan went through four meetings and really evolved but the proposed revised plan is missing that same design quality. They should care about the design that presently looks generic with generic boxes.

Barbara Cleary, 104 Federal Street. The DRB and public worked hard on the previous design which had much more detail and the current design is disappointing. She's concerned with the lack of attention to detail and asked if the lower Washington Street side's 1st and 2nd floors have a use yet. Queen replied that upper Washington Street use will be determined by market research for what is rentable. They haven't gotten into construction documents yet so it's undefined. She asked if the entire structure will be built at once. McClure replied yes.

Rubin noted that the stairwells are expected to go to the residential area, but if the residential use doesn't materialize, will that area change physically? McClure replied that that face could change and handicapped access will need to be provided. Rubin stated that if something is approved for residential access and that area's façade turns to glass, that would change the perception of the building along that upper Washington Street area at grade. Atty. Alexander replied that they will return for review if that changes.

Rubin wondered what McClure's thoughts were on the public opinion on blending the historic with the present day. McClure replied that the DRB consists of multiple architects all with different opinions and this project is mixing the two styles. Salem does have some contemporary buildings and they are trying to marry the two. The DRB made them rethink the corner of Washington and Dodge Street because of the contemporary top and traditional bottom didn't work together, so they revised the plans based on those comments. Many buildings in Salem have a stone base that is retail, but that changed higher up on the façade, so rather than having a metal band dividing the upper and lower portions of the building, they continued the stone. Renderings make it look different, but the materials are the same as before and they are high quality that will speak to other material downtown. All the details take away the potential to make the structure build able. The project has evolved and he has reviewed the previous meeting notes from the previous plans to ensure that all of the Board's concerns have been addressed.

Gary Gill, Ward 3. He agrees with Ms. Udy's comments. The structure lacks curb appeal. The granite at restaurant is a hard surface to soften up. It will stick out and could look nice or bad, but the proposed building doesn't have any historical appeal.

Jessica Herbert, Webb Street. She asked if there would be a mechanical penthouse. She stated if the renderings don't show what the building will really look like, then how is anyone supposed to know what the building will really look like. Market research would be done before and not later in the process. The changes could give the building a new identity. The Dodge Street entrance is unfortunate and will be hidden around the corner along Dodge Street. She noted that there are important projects at either ends of the City that are proposed and Diamond Sinacori calls their proposed design transitional. There are several other hotels in Salem and this one deserves more details. Even if it can't capture the history of the other buildings it is worth more review. Queen replied that the mechanical units are self-contained within each room and the Lobby will be handled by a small rooftop system as well as the restaurant. The parapets sticking up higher than the roof line along Washington Street will conceal rooftop units that will feed retail and restaurant spaces. The apartment will also have mechanical units within their own space. Herbert replied that if the drawings are a suggestion and not a real picture, then she would like the final design images to be presented.

Tim Jenkins, 18 Broad Street. He stated that the renderings make it hard to see the quality of the first class materials and it's hard to imagine the final design with the current presentation or the last

iteration. The DRB should request more details, drawings, and renderings, which will help the SRA make their final decisions. The hotel design looks like a normal Hampton Inn with a rectangular shape. The high quality materials will make this more recognizable and will make everyone more comfortable and the building easier to visualize.

Cleary stated that the design has drastically changed, the agenda listed the project as proposed revisions to final design and she assumed that would be a review for awnings, etc. Many in the public only saw these changes a couple days ago.

Atty. Alexander replied that the plans have been continually revised after each DRB meeting. The DRB reviewed the actual materials and were pleased with them. The project has been very well vetted. The last design was not built after it went through 2 years of review meetings. This project is good and will get built.

Devine stated that the current design has been presented to the DRB at three meetings. At the first meeting the DRB agreed that changes were a substantial revision from what was previously approved and they felt that a substantial review was needed. The architect presented all of the materials proposed and in some cases the color of the renderings was different than the actual color sample. The review also included the consideration of HSI's comments presented at the December meeting, although the DRB and HSI do not have the same opinion of the design. The DRB hasn't completely approved the restaurant corner, cornice, and awnings so it will need to be reviewed again by both the DRB and SRA. At the end of the third meeting the DRB did feel confident in the process and confident in their recommendation to the SRA.

Chair Napolitano closes public comment.

Rubin asked if the project will be reviewed for just an aspect of the building. Daniel replied that the DRB's recommendation is to approve with the cornice, awnings, and the sign package (including parking signs) returning for further review. The Planning Board will also need to review it to make an amendment to their previous approvals.

Rubin: Motion to approve the DRB recommendation.
Seconded by: Guarino. Passes 3-0.

Minutes

No minutes to review.

Adjournment

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

Meeting is adjourned at 8:00PM.

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