

Jewelry District Association  
Monthly Meeting Minutes  
September 13, 2016

Meeting called to order at 4:06 pm by President **Salisbury** with a suggestion to see the minutes from the July 14th Minutes “on the JDA website.” The aforementioned minutes do not actually appear to be on the Website.

Salisbury then called on Lt. **Smith** of the Providence Police for his update: An expanded detail in Kennedy Plaza has visibly improved things. Four men all day. They’ve made 69 arrests since August 19th. Very concerned about effects of synthetic narcotics, which can include brain damage. State AG is working to make possession of a large quantity a felony. Car larceny seems to be lower. **Salisbury**: we’ve had 4-5 in the District in recent months. **Smith**: I will send some people over at night. Please tell owners to report break-ins.

**Lt. O’Connor**: Our trouble spot right now seems to be up on College Hill and on Benefit St. 1,400 students just moving back in. Most of the Jewelry District is construction projects. **Steele**: On walk through the park I see sleepers and the trash they leave behind. **O’Connor**: We’ve been moving people along; and ordered people out of the Richmond St.parking garage.

**Steele**: Our special guest today is Brain Poitras of Waldorf Capital Management. They own the Turk’s Head building and are now converting 95 Chestnut St. to apartments.

**Poitras**: By way of introduction, we’re finishing a \$2 million re-positioning and refurbishing of the Turk’s Head building. Condition and occupancy were down when we took over.

95 Chestnut is a new experience for us. Our past work has been industrial, with some residential mills in Massachusetts. 95 Chestnut has a very unusual shape. Martha Werenfels of Durkee Brown is the principal architect and is doing a fantastic job. We’re keeping as much of the original fabric and detail as we can. Historic Commission here has been very cooperative.

There have been challenges. We dug up the first floor and found brick channels feeding underground water to the old furnace and manufacturing processes.

We’re building in new technology, with an energy recovery cooling system.. the video entry system will buzz you in remotely – including lock-outs. Unit sizes are on the smaller side -- 400-1000 sq. feet. 59 units in 6 stories. 20 parking spots on site; we’re looking at leasing other spaces. Unit rental pricing isn’t set yet. It will be market rate, but with higher-end detailing. We hope for a February or March delivery date. Also, an experienced restaurant operator has opted for the ground floor space; which we’ll be sound-proofing.

**Salisbury**: No update on Parcel 42. The contracts have been signed for the Pedestrian Bridge.

Planning & Zoning: **Blake:** The TIP grant for CiTY WALK has been approved: \$1.8 million  
**Baudouin:** It's a Federal funding program for 10 years. CiTY WALK ranked really high, because it touches many neighborhoods and promotes bike and pedestrian use. Bonny Nickerson, Providence Planning Director did a really great job on this. It's important that the Planning Dept. gets RIDoT to cede this project to them. It's not about moving cars faster; it's to encourage safe biking and walking.

**Blake:** \$0.9 million this year, the rest next year. Streetscape improvements, signage identifying the pathway, safer crosswalks, bike paths, tree planting and an improved I-95 crossing from the Jewelry District to the West Side.

The City Solicitor has written a letter to the Whiskey Republic about their dumpster on city park land on Water Street. Essentially saying that if they don't remove it, they will be taken to court. And "adverse possession does not apply to city-owned property. Squatters rights do not apply.

**Dahlberg:** Brown U. is scheduled to move into South Street Landing next July. The project is on track. **Donovan:** The parking garage is going to be ready in October. It's unclear if there will be any public availability. **Laurelli:** Are the stairs going to stay open? **Salisbury:** They're supposed to be glass enclosed. Those gray panels don't match the rendering. Every time I talk to city Design Review, Chris says, "Wait until it's done..."

Parcels 22 & 25 **Salisbury:** The Pedestrian Bridge and the courthouse parking garage are critical factors – the initial phase of the project are conditional on beginning those two projects. Spring 2017?

Parcel 8 (East Side): Permitting now, may get underway first of the year. Steele: Mixed use. Illuminated glass wall on one end, overlooking the historical.

Pedestrian Bridge: **Steele:** Building Bridges group is planning a celebration of the green lighting of the project. I-195 and RIDoT pledged to fill in the funding shortfall. Money comes from the Gano St. Interchange re-do and the proposed reworking of the Dudley St. 95 exit at the hospital. There is considerable pushback from the Fox Point NA. But RIDoT signed the contract with a Massachusetts company to start work.

So we celebrated last Saturday. People from the JDA, Fox Point NA and the Downtown NA. At 8 am we started inflating the first of 1,000 balloons to stretch from one side of the river to the other. Thanks to the Providence Harbor Master for assistance! Stefan Pryor, Executive Dir. of the RI Commerce Corp. worked with us for an hour. Peter McNally, 195 Comm.; Mark Wang, Providence Dir. of Economic Development and Tom Calahan, Asst. Director of the Commerce Corp., delivered remarks and took a certain amount of harassment from Big Nazo characters who are eager to have a bridge they can live under once more. Also welcome support from Clean Plate and the East Side Oyster Festival, and Brown. U. **Salisbury:** And no one fell in the river.

Quality of Life Steele: Round-up of events — a drug bust nabbed the manager of the Tel Aviv bar on Water St.; incidentally, they're moving across the street in the former Lola's. Licenses suspended for Aqua and Van Gogh. Jeff Pine's ringing indictment of the mode of operation of the Board of Licenses runs to 13 pages. As of this meeting, Chairman Pichardo "had not read the report." City Council did a great job.

**Salisbury**: Report goes to council at 6 on Wednesday. Ordinances are already written. **Santurri**: We need to check each ordinance to see if it is enforceable. No point in having ordinances that don't have teeth. **Steele**: Lot of negativity and real pressure around the city. Can't have economic development without peace. **Salisbury**: last five weeks, there has been an emergency hearing every Saturday. **Steele**: License renewals begin December 1. **Salisbury**: The owners of the Fatt Squirrel space are still negotiating with possible new operators.

Concluding that there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:35 pm

Respectfully submitted, 10 October, 2016, by Lewis D. Dana