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MELROSE PLANNING BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

Regular Meeting

Monday, March 9, 2026

7:30 PM

Cassidy Conference Room, 562 Main Street, Melrose

PRESENT: Gregory Sampson, Beth Delahaij, Steven Barron, Paul King, Brian Gregory, Anne DeSouza Ward, and Michael Aveni

ABSENT: Tim Bailey, Carla Morelli

STAFF PRESENT: Lori Massa, Director & City Planner, Maya Noviski, Senior Planner, and Adam Forrester, Assistant Planner

The meeting was called to order at 7:37 PM by Mr. Sampson.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Planning Board Regular Meeting, February 9, 2026

Ms. DeSouza Ward made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Mr. Gregory seconded the motion. All voted in favor. None were opposed.

Design Review Subcommittee Meeting, February 9, 2026

Mr. King made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Mr. Barron seconded the motion. All voted in favor. None were opposed.

SITE PLAN REVIEW

Case 26-001, 174 Green Street, Nick & Samantha Riccio

Nick and Samantha Riccio, Applicants, Robert Bell, Attorney, Talia Cannistra, Architect, and Ali Javadian, Engineer, appeared before the Board to present the case. They provided an overview of the project, which involves demolishing the existing one-story commercial building and constructing six, 3.5 story townhouses in two buildings that are separated by a drive aisle. Each building will contain three townhouses.

Units A, B, and C are proposed to have three bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms, and a ground level, two-car garage with entrances to the units facing Green Street. Units D, E, and F are proposed to have the same number of bedrooms and bathrooms; however, each unit is proposed to have a one-car garage with access to a surface level parking space located in the back left corner of the property. Entrances to these units will face the driveway between the buildings.

There is limited outdoor space proposed. Plans show a private 50 ft. rear patio for each of the units D, E, and F and a 7.5 ft by 11.5 ft. roof deck facing the rear property line. Units A, B, and C each have a small front yard and a 9 ft. by 18 ft. roof deck on the rear of the building. Landscaping is also proposed in the back southeast corner of the property, along the western side yard, and the space between the driveway and unit A. A subsurface infiltration system is

proposed in the driveway to collect stormwater runoff from the driveway and the roof. Since the site is sloped, the proposal also involves some re-grading.

Attorney Bell noted that the Applicant appeared before the ZBA on January 14, 2026 to request variances for townhouse use and two principal dwellings on one lot. The Board had several comments regarding the design and the impact of the project on abutters, and the plans were revised prior to the Planning Board hearing to incorporate several of the Board's suggestions. The ZBA case was continued to March 11, 2026.

Lori Massa, City Planner, reviewed the Planning Departments comments, which included requests for additional information on the following:

- Details on fencing around the site
- Details on landscaping & snow storage
- Details on the location & need of a transformer
- Proposed location of the HVAC units

The Board had the following questions and comments; answers are listed underneath the question:

- Will a fence or vegetative screening be installed along the rear and side property lines?
 - There is an existing chain link fence that could be maintained. An updated landscaping plan shows hedges along the right-side property line and in the northwestern corner of the property.
- Where is the HVAC equipment located?
 - For Units A, B, and C the HVAC will be pad mounted on the back of the units. For Units D, E, and F, they will be pad mounted next to the patios.
- Explore reducing the height of the buildings.
- If a generator is needed for the sewer system pump to the main in case of a power outage, it needs to be shown on the plans.
- More details are needed on whether the retaining wall is necessary with the revised site grades for the infiltration chamber.
- The landscape plan should be more robust and should indicate the design, species, and narrative about the spaces and how they relate to the buildings or enhance the residents' lives.
- Explore reducing the drive aisle/paved area and using stamped concrete rather than asphalt.
- The entry awnings along Green Street could be better designed and scaled. The three cross gables facing Green Street should extend down to the meet the ground.
- Explore flipping the exterior parking spaces and the rear building so the parking spaces are on plan right and the building is on plan left.
- Calculations of the current and proposed percentage of impervious surface on the lot should be provided.
- Plans should be updated to show the grades outside of the property lines.
- Provide cross sections (north-south and east-west) showing how the project will interact with surrounding grades and buildings.

- Provide a perspective from the street that shows the height of the proposal in relation to abutting buildings.
- Provide an elevation showing how the patios on Units D, E, and F interact with the rear of the property.
- Explore striping/indicating a walkway from the rear units to the sidewalk.
- Explore whether a transformer is needed for the property and indicate where it will go on the plans.
- Ensure that the proposed slope of the driveway is accurate.
- Provide an elevation of the site to show the view from the porches of 180 Green Street.

Members of the public residing at 180 Green Street including Paula Renzullo, Irma Feizic, John McQuaid, Laura Nassen, Nancy Lesco, Debra Nelson, Alan Martin, and Joyce Zeiner, appeared to speak, as well as Robert Tullis of 8 Thurston Road, and Anthony Gentile of 109 Green Street. They had the following concerns:

- Stormwater/flooding
- Increased traffic
- The size of the proposal and the proximity of the buildings to 180 Green St.
- Screening for abutters at 180 Green St.
- The location of the roof decks on units D, E, and F
- Operational issues including snow storage/removal, mail & package delivery to rear units, and trash pickup and management considering slope of driveway and depth of the sidewalk
- Impacts on abutters during construction
- Locating the HVAC units on the back of units A, B, and C could create a chamber effect and the units should be placed on the roof

Gerard Cantin of 164 Green Street spoke in support of the project noting that the Applicants have addressed their concerns.

The Applicant requested a continuance to the Planning Board's meeting on March 23, 2026.

Mr. Aveni made a motion to continue the case to March 23, 2026. Mr. Gregory seconded the motion. All voted in favor. None were opposed.

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT PROPOSAL

Benjamin Lynde House Preliminary Study Report Review & Recommendations

Ms. Massa provided an overview on the Benjamin Lynde House Preliminary Study Report that was drafted as a part of a request that the City is making to designate 244 Main St. as a Local Historic District. The report must be submitted to the Massachusetts Historical Commission as a part of the approval process. Additionally, City Council will need to formally designate the parcel as a Local Historic District at a public meeting.

The Board reviewed and discussed the report. Members agreed that the report was helpful in explaining the history of the building and the property, and its significance to Melrose, and were supportive of designating the parcel as a Local Historic District.

Phillip Morgan of 11 Sargent Road wondered if the City voted to approve the Community Preservation Act (CPA), if those funds could be used to save historic homes. It was clarified that the CPA can be used for the acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of historic resources.

Ms. DeSouza Ward made a motion to recommend the adoption of a Local Historic District at 244 Main St. Mr. Gregory seconded the motion. All voted in favor. None were opposed.

OTHER

The next Planning Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 23, 2026.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 pm.