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**MELROSE PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

Design Review Subcommittee

Tuesday, May 5, 2026

7:00 PM

Cassidy Conference Room, City Hall, 562 Main Street, Melrose

PRESENT: Carla Morelli, Tim Bailey, Michael Aveni, & Steve Barron

ABSENT: Paul King

STAFF PRESENT: Lori Massa, City Planner and Maya Noviski, Senior Planner

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 PM by Ms. Morelli.

Case 23-005, 521-529 Franklin Street

Robert Johnson, Applicant, appeared before the Subcommittee to present a proposed lighting plan and to review the landscaping plan. Black, up and down light sconces are proposed on the bands between the third and fourth floors. The fixtures are 4.5 in. by 1 ft. and will be sourced from Hinkley. Mr. Johnson proposed installing recessed lighting on the soffits at the garage entry and along the outdoor bike parking, and ground lighting along the building on Greenwood Street. Members supported the lighting plan and agreed that the fixtures emphasize the building's verticality. Members suggested that Mr. Johnson install lights at the corner of the building facing the park to increase its usability. Mr. Johnson agreed and noted that the lights could be put on a timer to reduce light pollution at night.

Mr. Johnson reviewed the landscape plan noting that Planning Staff, the Tree Warden, the Director of Public Works, the Operations Manager, and the Water Foreman met at the site to discuss the public pocket park that he will install on the abutting municipal land. The site will be graded so that it is at grade and accessible from the municipal parking lot. Hydra permeable pavers by Techo-Bloc will be used for a patio area. On the patio will be tables and a bench. Shrubs and trees will be planted around the perimeter of the patio and a fence will be installed behind the plantings to separate the park from the rest of the municipal land. There are several existing trees on the land that will be retained; however, Mr. Johnson will remove the Norway Maples to make space for the patio and Japanese Knotweed, which has overtaken most of the site, both of which are invasive species. Members approved of the plan and agreed that the park would provide a nice amenity for the residents of the building and for the Highlands.

Documents: Lighting Plan Presentation submitted May 3, 2026
Landscape Plan dated February 26, 2024

Case 24-004, 186 Tremont Street

David Lucas, Attorney, Eric Bradnese, Engineer, and Douglas Annino, Architect, appeared before the Subcommittee to present updated plans for the project. Mr. Annino reviewed the changes, which include:

- A redesign of the bike room so that 28 spaces (25%) are ground mounted.

- A roof plan showing the location of the condensers and details on the decks for the residential units. Raised planters are proposed along the right and left sides of the decks to provide screening between units and a 4 ft. parapet is proposed to shield the condensers from the street.
- An updated elevation of the trash enclosure, which includes a white cedar fence around the dumpsters with two swing gates.
- The location of the EV charging stations. Mr. Bradnese noted that one additional space will be added to the plans to comply with the building code.
- Details on the window treatment on the left front corner of the building where the garage is located.

Mr. Annino provided samples of the proposed building materials, which include brick and Hardie Board/Panel. Members were supportive of the proposed colors and materials. Members reviewed the different facade treatment options for the left front corner along the base of the building to screen the parking space behind the wall and liked the storefront system option with tinted, smokey glass. Members discussed the proposed lights and agreed that they should be downlit only and that fixtures should be added to the decks on the fifth floor, framing the doorways. Additionally, the fixtures on the front of the building that are not at the porches/decks or lighting the signage should be removed. Mr. Annino confirmed that the fixtures will be black matte.

Members discussed the proposed trash enclosure and agreed that given the size of the doors, there should be access from the side so that the dumpsters are more accessible for residents. Members reviewed the proposed landscaping in the front yard and recommended clustering the bike parking in the right corner so that there could be additional outdoor seating. Additionally, Members requested that the landscape plan be revised to include two trees in the left corner of the front yard with taller shrubs along the base of the building to screen the parking space behind the storefront system. Members also requested that the Applicant install street trees and recommended planting two in front of the left side of the building and two in front of the right side.

Members requested that the Applicant provide the following items:

- A sample of the glass that will be used on the left corner of the building
- A cutsheet of the light fixtures
- An updated floor plan and roof plan that includes planters for the unit in the right corner of the building
- An updated trash enclosure elevation that removes the reference to the installation of a chain link fence and adds a door for resident drop off.
- An updated landscape plan

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.