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MELROSE HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES FOR MONDAY APRIL 6, 2026 @ 7PM

This meeting of the Melrose Historical Commission was conducted via in-person participation in the Trustees Room at the Melrose Public Library, 69 West Emerson Street, Melrose MA

CALL TO ORDER

This regular meeting of the Melrose Historical Commission was called to order by Chair Shane Egan at 7:00PM. Members in attendance included Rebecca Blumenthal, Joe Hunt, Gentry Andrews and Cath Giliberto. George Biblios and Darren Brown were absent. One member of the public was present, Nancy Clover.

ORDERS OF BUSINESS

The first order of business was to approve the previous meeting's minutes from March 2, 2026. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

The second order of business was to open the forum for comments from the public. Nancy Clover presented a photo of the plaque that is being manufactured for the Mary Livermore Park.

DISCUSSION

- I. ***Review Public Comment Policy***

- II. ***Demolition Delay—Status of Commission Change from Advisory to Regulatory***
 - a. *See 1.5.26 meeting minutes for earlier discussion of Demolition Delay.*

- b. The new regulatory status of the Historical Commission has been approved by the City Council. The Commission is now ready to review and regulate property demolition requests.

III. *Mary Stetson Clarke Award Plan Process*

- a. *See 6.2.25 meeting minutes for earlier discussion of the 2nd annual presentation of an honorary award for the purpose of recognizing a deserving recipient for their demonstrated commitment to the celebration and preservation of the history of Melrose, Massachusetts.*
- b. The call for nominations has gone out in the Melrose newspaper and via social media. The deadline for nominations is the end of May. The 2026 recipient will be announced around the Victorian Fair.
- c. The recent two awards have been presented to recipients based on their lifetime of promoting and preserving Melrose history, but the award recipients can be recognized for a variety of achievements related to Melrose's history.

IV. *Sewall Green Wright Dedication Update*

- a. *See 10.6.25 meeting minutes for more information regarding honoring the geneticist Sewall Wright, born in Melrose*
- b. The dedication will be placed at Sewall Woods. With winter over and the snow gone, the search is on for an appropriate rock on which to mount a metal alloy plaque. Chair Egan has identified a few options located in Sewall Woods and will contact Rob Carrillo at the Parks Department to discuss. Dr. Diddahally Govindaraju, the Harvard geneticist who is advocating for this recognition, and his team have provided some suggested wordage:

“Sewall Wright (1889-1988), born in Melrose and a descendent of the town’s Sewall family, ranks among the most influential scientists of the 20th c. His work laid the foundations of evolutionary and population genetics, plant and animal breeding, physiology, epigenetics, systems biology, causal inference, and biodiversity. His ideas continue to guide biology, medicine, social sciences, and artificial intelligence.”

- c. The MHC members discussed the wordage and suggested some edits. Chair Egan will reach out to Dr. Govindaraju about the wording and the funding and manufacturing of the plaque.

V. *Tremont Fire Station Tour Recap*

- a. The Tremont Fire Station was constructed in 1929. Demolition began today, April 6, 2026. Denise Gaffey, City of Melrose Project Manager of the Public Safety Facilities, offered the members of the Historical Commission a tour before the site was turned over to the contractors. Their visit was on its last day as an active fire station. Its equipment and staff will be transferred to the two other stations in Melrose during construction that is expected to last until Fall 2027.
- b. Those attending (Chair Egan, Darren Brown, Joe Hunt and Rebecca Blumenthal) inspected basement and attic storage and work areas as well as the overnight employee facilities and original furnishings. The Commission inspected all three floors and identified a windvane and historical signage to ensure that it would be preserved and transferred for storage during construction. All other significant historical artifacts had already been identified by the Melrose Fire Department for preservation.

VI. *Commissioners' Reappointment Meeting with City Council*

Joe Hunt, George Biblios, and Darren Brown all attended a recent City Council subcommittee meeting regarding their reappointment for continuing terms on the Historical Commission. Councilor suggestions included creating some interactive community tours. They commented positively on the Plaque Program. All members were recommended for reappointment.

VII. *Historic Home Plaque Program Project*

- a. *See 10.16.23 meeting minutes for a summary of the Historic Home Plaque Program*

- b. Vice Chair Joe Hunt updated the committee on the status of this program. Joe Hunt discussed his process of obtaining his own home plaque. He visited Markarian Sign Co. to follow up and he found the business to be busy. They had completed his plaque, and he obtained some photos of the process.
- c. Joe Hunt has created a series of articles on historic buildings in the city for the purpose of promoting the program. Chair Egan has started posting these articles. Applications are available at City Hall and will be available at next month's Research Your Home Night.

VIII. *MHS Senior Internship*

Chair Egan enrolled the Melrose Historical Commission in the Melrose High School Senior internship program through Assistant Principal Brian Corrigan earlier this year. No prospective interns reached out to the MHC for the spring 2026 internship period.

IX. *Research Your Home Night 5.16.26 Plans and Timeline*

- a. *See 11.3.25 meeting minutes for a summary of the most recent Research Your Home Night (RYHN).*
- b. The next RYHN is scheduled on Wednesday May 6th at the VFW on Main Street. Scott Macaulay has been contacted and will try to attend. Shane will update the presentation by next month's meeting.
- c. 38 families have signed up for this event. The Historical Commission will review the presentation at its May meeting preceding the RYHN on May 6th.

X. *Walter Stevens Photo Post Updates*

Chair Egan has scanned the photos he obtained that included several photographs of Melrose. He has been posting these photos online. Photos included downtown Melrose, a political parade, many views of the home of architect Walter Stevens

located on Crystal Street, and many views of Ell Pond and the icehouse that once stood on Main Street. They are now in Scott Macaulay's collection.

XI. *Social Media Post Status*

Chair Egan has been actively posting on the MHC social media sites. Posts have included promotion of the historical home plaques, Walter Stevens historical photos, the May 2026 Research Your Home Night, and solicitation for nominations for the Mary Stetson Clarke award.

XII. *Melrose Historical Society*

The inaugural planning meeting for a new Melrose Historical Society will be April 9th. Chair Egan has invited approximately 45 interested citizens including the mayor and members of City Council and local historians and collectors. This is an endeavor outside the scope of the Melrose Historical Commission however Chair Egan envisions a successful Historical Society as being an organization that works in cooperation with the City and the MHC.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Monday, May 4, 2026, at 7pm in the lower-level Trustees Room at the Melrose Public Library.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Egan at 8:00pm.