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**MELROSE BOARD OF APPEALS
MEETING MINUTES
Public Hearing
Wednesday, May 13, 2026
7:30 p.m.
Remote Meeting**

Present:

Bryan Thorp, Chair
Jeffery Ugino
Daniel Gelormini
Chris Coughlin
Benjamin Rosenberg

Absent:

David Roache
Raj Singh

Staff Present: Lori Massa, Director and City Planner, Maya Noviski, Senior Planner, & Adam Forrester, Assistant Planner

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting was conducted via remote participation. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting were found on the City of Melrose's website, at <https://www.cityofmelrose.org/195/Meetings-of-Boards-Commissions-Committee>. No in-person attendance of members of the public was permitted, but every effort was made to ensure that the public could adequately access the proceedings in real time, or in the event that we are unable to do so, on the mmtv3.org website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings was posted as soon as possible after the meeting. A link was also available on www.cityofmelrose.org.

Application materials were posted to the City's website:

<https://www.cityofmelrose.org/170/Board-of-Appeals>

CASES BEFORE THE BOARD

25 026 – 174 Green Street (Request to withdraw) -

The appeal of Nick Riccio and Samantha Riccio for a Variance from §235-5.2 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for townhouse use and §235-6.3.B for two principal structures on a lot, all to construct 6 townhouses on the lot owned by Robert D. Glendon, Trustee of ROG Realty Trust II at 174 Green Street in Melrose on a lot consisting of 10,476 sf and shown on Assessor's Map D11 0 64A.

The Applicants submitted a written request to have the case withdrawn without prejudice. The Board voted to accept the withdrawal of the application without prejudice, 5-0.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 25- 026
Request to withdraw letter dated 3.18.26

25 029 – 51 West Highland Ave (Continued Case) –

The appeal of Brendan Kent for a Variance from §235-9.2.D of the Zoning Ordinance for a fence exceeding three feet in height and §235-11.5.C for driveway width regulations on the lot with a two-family dwelling at 51 West Highland Ave in Melrose on a lot consisting of 5,380 sf and shown on Assessor's Map C12 0 111.

The Applicant submitted a written request to the Board to continue the case to the hearing on June 10th to allow for more time to update their plans.

The Board voted 5-0, to continue the case to the meeting on Wednesday, June 10, 2026.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 25- 029
Request to continue letter dated 5.7.26

26 008 – 6 Chester Street –

The appeal of Renus Suntareja for a Variance from §235-9.1.A.3 of the Zoning Ordinance for accessory building side setback requirements to install a carport in the right-side yard at 6 Chester Street in Melrose on a lot consisting of 3,785 sf and shown on Assessor's Map A6 0 10.

Renus Suntareja, Applicant, appeared before the Board to present the case. He explained that the carport was constructed to protect his car from debris falling from his neighbor's tree. He noted that it was constructed without a building permit. He has met with the Inspectional Services Department, and they explained to him that he needs a Variance from the Board of Appeals due to the carport being installed in the required side yard setback. He also added that he is coordinating with DPW about their concerns with the location of the carport as it is installed over a City drain easement.

The Board received one letter from the public in opposition to the project which was read into the record. Brian Gregory, 146 West Wyoming, appeared to speak during the hearing. He raised concerns over the impact on the City's drainage pipe, the precedent this case would set if the carport were allowed to remain, and the negative impact on abutters.

Members discussed the following concerns and questions:

- The need for CCTV inspection of the drainage pipe to confirm its condition. As well as the other requests listed in the DPW review.
- The lack of detailed construction plans of the carport that show the dimensions and materials.
- The impact on abutters and the issues raised by abutters
- Can the carport be modified to meet the required setbacks for accessory structures?

Members explained to the Applicant that they would need to review additional documentation before being able to vote on this request. They requested the following items:

- Complete the requests listed in the DPW review about inspection of the drainage pipe.
- Submit detailed construction drawings showing dimensions and materials, and photographs of the carport.

Mr. Suntareja requested to continue the case to June 10th so that he can present updated plans. The Board voted 5-0, to continue the case to the meeting on June 10th.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 26- 008

26 009 – 226 Beech Ave –

The appeal of Joel Tomchik for a Variance from §235-9.1.A.1 of the Zoning Ordinance for maximum cumulative coverage for all accessory buildings to build an Accessory Dwelling Unit at 226 Beech Ave in Melrose on a lot owned by James Caccese and Katie Dolbec consisting of 12,628 sf and shown on Assessor's Map F6 0 122-23.

Joel Tomchik, Applicant, and James Caccese, property owner, appeared before the Board to present the case.

The Board did not receive any public comments, and no one appeared to speak during the hearing.

Board Members were supportive of the proposed project to add an ADU on the lot that also contains a detached garage. Additional details on the Board's discussion can be found in the Decision.

The Board granted the Applicant's request for a Variance, 5-0.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 26- 009

COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT CASE

25 014 – 34 & 55 Summit Avenue – (Continued case)

The application of Summit Development LLC for a Comprehensive Permit pursuant to M.G.L. c. 40B, s. 21 to develop 28 for-sale townhouses and 39 parking spaces (combined garage and outdoor) on two adjacent parcels of land at 34 & 55 Summit Avenue in Melrose containing 115,774 sf and shown on Assessor's Map B13 0, Lots 21-27 and B14 0, Lots 1-2. Seven of the project's units will be affordable as is required and regulated under the law.

Ron Lopez of Summit Development, LLC, and Christopher Agostino, Attorney, appeared before the Board.

Lori Massa, Director and City Planner, provided an overview of the revised draft conditions of approval and waiver language, noting that most updates clarified intent and timing requirements. The full list of conditions and waivers is available on the City's website for review.

The Board had the following questions and comments. Answers are indicated underneath the question:

- Some members expressed continued concern about the proposed drainage and stormwater management system working on the site. Only models and examples on other sites that are not comparable have been presented.
- There are major issues with the grade of the road. Proposed condition #3 is a good solution to this issue.
- Due to the steepness of the site, achieving an 8% maximum road grade would require a significant redesign of the project.
- Did the Fire Department review and approve the plan for emergency vehicle access to the site?
 - Yes, they reviewed it and found no issue.
- Why was condition #36 changed?
 - Building Commissioner added that building code compliance including accessibility will be part of a third-party review of the plans.
- Members acknowledged that the threshold for denying a 40B project is high and discussed that it was likely that the project would proceed to Housing Appeals Committee regardless of the Board's vote of denial or conditional approval. The Board also discussed the example of a 40B case that was denied in Stoneham, which was ultimately built with the town still being involved after the Board's denial.
- The revised conditions provide appropriate safeguards and help maintain municipal oversight of key safety issues.
- Reducing the project's density could alleviate technical concerns, particularly related to the proposed stormwater management system.
- Members expressed differing opinions on if the proposed safety-based conditions are enough to feel that the project would not be detrimental.
- Some Members noted that the proposed conditions related to the stormwater management system were appropriate as they are addressing public safety concerns.
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Additional details on the Board's discussion, conditions of approval, and requested waivers can be found in the Decision.

The Board granted the request for a Comprehensive Permit, 3-2 with Benjamin Rosenberg, Daniel Gelormini and Christopher Coughlin in favor, and Bryan Thorp and Jeffery Ugino opposed, with conditions as were written in the recommended conditions from staff dated May 13, 2026.

The Board granted certain waivers and denied others , 5-0, as were written in the waiver recommendations from staff dated May 13, 2026.

Documents:

ZBA Application materials, case 25-014

Memo with recommended draft conditions from Staff dated May 13, 2026

OTHER BUSINESS

Meeting Minutes

The Board voted, 5-0, to approve the minutes from March 18, 2026, and April 8, 2026.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for June 10, 2026.

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 pm.