



City of Melrose

Appropriations & Oversight Committee

Monday, July 20, 2026, 7:00 PM
City Council Chamber, 1st Floor
562 Main Street, Melrose, MA 02176

AGENDA

NOTE:

To watch this meeting live visit mmtv3.org or local cable station MMTV (Channels 3, 15, 22 on Comcast or Channels 37, 38, 39 on Verizon)

Some Board and Commission meetings meet via zoom. Information on how to enable closed captioning for online commission meetings can be found by clicking [here](#).

I. CALL TO ORDER

Kimberly Vandiver	Vice Chair
Jason Chen	
Cal Finocchiaro	
Maya Jamaledine	
Manjula Karamcheti	
Elizabeth Kowal	
John Obremski	
Christopher Park	
Ryan Williams	
William Bradley Freeman	President, Ex Officio
Devin Romanul	Chair

II. MINUTES APPROVAL

A. Appropriations & Oversight Committee Meeting July 9, 2026 7:00 PM

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

When: Jul 20, 2026 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Topic: Appropriations & Oversight Meeting

Join from PC, Mac, iPad, or Android:

<https://cityofmelrose->

org.zoom.us/j/98110960996?pwd=npHsIYHSeQxLV1MmzhiaAH86iDhuZe.1

Passcode:096980

Webinar ID: 981 1096 0996

IV. ORDERS

- A. **(ID # 2026-1376):** Report on results of the Municipal Surplus Buildings Study for the Police Station and Ripley School Sites

V. ADJOURNMENT

The City of Melrose does not discriminate based on disability and is committed to hosting accessible meetings and events. Individuals with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication, written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures, in order to access the programs and activities of the City of Melrose or to attend meetings, should contact the City's ADA Coordinator, Polina Latta platta@cityofmelrose.org.



STUDY OF POLICE STATION + RIPLEY SCHOOL SITES

City of Melrose
07.20.2026 City Council Meeting

MUNICIPAL SURPLUS BUILDINGS STUDY

56 West Foster Street and 94 Lebanon Street

The goal of this study is to identify viable redevelopment opportunities and develop consensus of future use case(s) for 56 West Foster Street and 94 Lebanon Street based on community engagement and a market analysis completed by RKG. The study includes comprehensive documentation of programming scenarios to inform the future use and potential Request for Proposals for possible redevelopment at each parcel.

TEAM

CITY OF MELROSE

Lori Massa, Planning Director

Maya Noviski, Senior Planner

Adam Forrester, Assistant Planner

MASSDEVELOPMENT

Alejandro Lopez, Vice President, Planning and Predevelopment

Martin Luis Serrano, Assistant Program Manager

STUDIO LUZ ARCHITECTS

Hansy Better Barraza, Principal

Sophie Nahrman, Associate, Community Engagement Liaison

Leechen Zhu, Project Manager, Designer

RKG ASSOCIATES

Eric Halvorsen, Vice President, Principal

AGENDA

1. INTRODUCTION + SITE OVERVIEW

2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

3. PROPOSED SITE SCENARIOS

4. NEXT STEPS

1. Introduction

Context Overview

CONTEXT OVERVIEW



City of Melrose map diagram by Studio Luz Architects with information from Melrose Public GIS MapsOnline.

..... 0.25 mi. radius

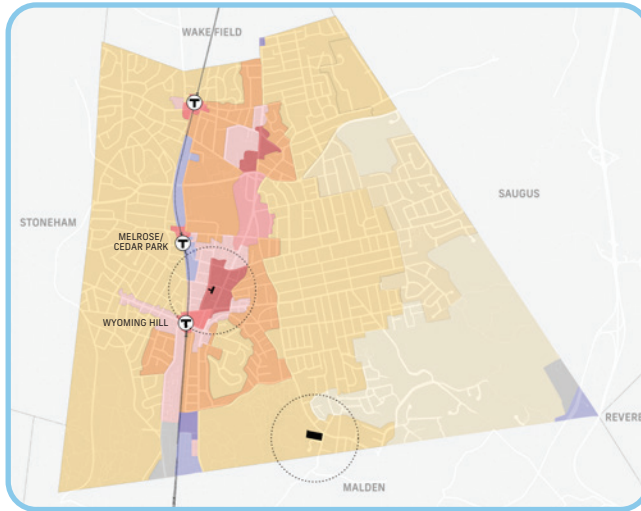


1. Introduction

Site Analysis

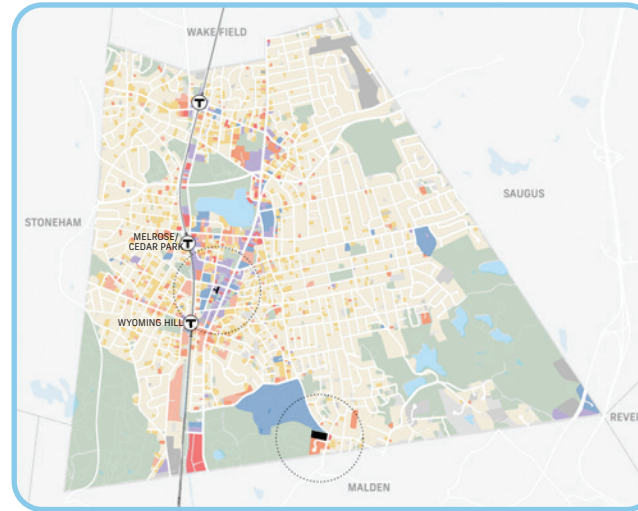
SITE ANALYSIS

Studio Luz analyzed the zoning, land uses, and market conditions of the area surrounding the two properties in order to make programming recommendations in concert with community feedback. These considerations ensure that the programming visions fit within the existing fabric of the neighborhood, meet the market needs, and align with the desires of the community.



ZONING

Melrose's zoning code is considered in this analysis in order to inform the selection of programming at both sites. While continued city use would be exempt from the zoning code, parcel dispersal to a developer would require the future developed use to align with zoning regulations.



LAND USE

Analyzing existing resources in the area surrounding both sites is important so that proposed programming fits within the social, economic and environmental fabric of the current neighborhoods.

Residential

→ Economic demand for 2000-2150 new housing units through 2050, based on projected population growth.

Office

→ Economic demand for no more than 27,000 SF of small professional and medical office space through 2035.

Retail

→ Current unmet economic demand for up to 123,000 SF of retail, particularly in smaller-format, neighborhood-serving concepts.

MARKET ANALYSIS

Market viable uses are considered to ensure that the visioning for the potential redevelopments supports the economic landscape of the City of Melrose.

City of Melrose zoning diagram by Studio Luz Architects with information from the 2017 Updated Melrose Forward Master Plan, p. 127 and the 2024 Melrose Zoning Ordinance, 235-4.1 Districts.

City of Melrose land use diagram by Studio Luz Architects with information from the 2017 Melrose Forward Master Plan, p. 124 and the Massachusetts Interactive Property Map displaying FY2025 Assessors information

Market analysis summary by RKG Associates

1. Introduction

Site Overview

SITE OVERVIEW



56 West Foster Street

LOT SIZE: 0.38 AC (16552 SF)

ZONING HEIGHT LIMIT: 50' or 4 stories

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Half a block from Main Street
- 7-min. walk from two Commuter Rail stations
- Existing parking space in nearby municipal lots

CHALLENGES:

- L-shaped lot with constrained widths
- Significant accessibility upgrades needed for reuse

Aerial views from Google Earth



94 Lebanon Street

LOT SIZE: 2.09 AC (91040 SF), which would remain the same with proposed redrawn parcel lines reflecting current uses

ZONING HEIGHT LIMIT: 35' or 2.5 stories

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Proximity and access to existing green space such as Pine Banks Park
- Wide corner lot with high visibility
- Existing tree cover on ~60% of the site

CHALLENGES:

- Sloped ledge terrain at the rear half of the site
- Significant upgrades needed for reuse
- Need for on-site parking

2. Public Engagement

Process Overview

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

1/29 SITE WALK

The project team walked both sites alongside Mayor Grigoraitis and representatives from the Melrose Chamber of Commerce, Wyoming Cemetery, and the Department of Public Works as a form of early stakeholder engagement.

3/4 DEPARTMENT HEADS MEETING

The project team joined the monthly City of Melrose Department Heads meeting to receive feedback regarding municipal needs and ownership models to consider for each site.

JULY SHARE-OUT

The results of the engagement process, market analysis, and development scenarios are shared via this presentation to the City Council and the City of Melrose project webpage.

3/4 SURVEY OPENS

Over 2 months, **221 responses** were collected. This was advertised through the City of Melrose website, the Mayor's e-newsletter, and flyers to abutters within 300' of each property. Responses from those who also attended workshops were subtracted from totals to avoid double-counting.

3/24-3/25 WORKSHOPS

30 participants attended the in-person workshop at the Melrose Public Library and **10 participants** joined the virtual workshop. Workshop attendees were asked 2 additional questions per site beyond those in the survey: What would you NOT like to see and which ownership model would you like to see?

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

56 WEST FOSTER STREET

Top workshop choices

In-person workshop: **Housing** and **Community Use**

Virtual Workshop: **Housing** and **Small Retail**

The market analysis presented at the workshops identified the recommended use as a mixed-use redevelopment with **residential units** above a ground floor with smaller, neighborhood-serving **commercial use**. There is minor potential for **professional office** use, as well as city interest in satellite **municipal offices**.

- 1 RESTAURANT / CAFE**
#1 Response from Survey + Workshops
- 2 COMMUNITY USE**
#2 Response from Survey + Workshops
- 3 PLAZA / PARK**
#3 Response from Survey + Workshops
- 4 SMALL RETAIL**
#4 Response from Survey + Workshops
- 5 HOUSING**
#5 Response from Survey + Workshops

94 LEBANON STREET

Top workshop choices

In-person workshop: **Housing** and **Park/Recreation**

Virtual workshop: **Park/Recreation** and **Community Use**

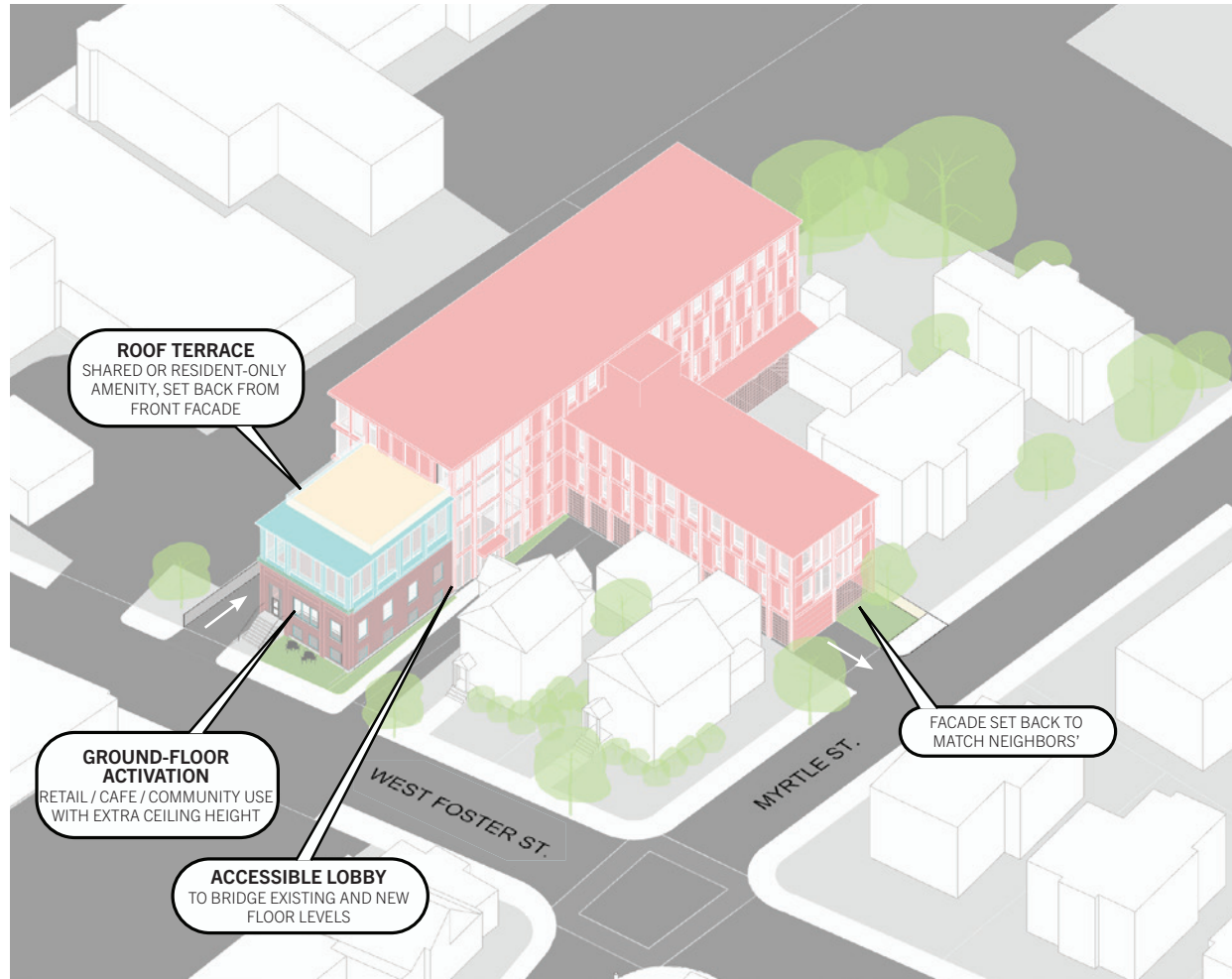
The market analysis presented at the in-person and virtual workshops identified the recommended use as **lower-density housing**, with minor potential for commercial use that functions as a regional destination.

- 1 PARK / RECREATION**
#1 Response from Survey + Workshops
- 2 COMMUNITY USE**
#2 Response from Survey + Workshops
- 3 HOUSING**
#3 Response from Survey + Workshops
- 4 RETSTAUANT / CAFE**
#4 Response from Survey + Workshops
- 5 SMALL RETAIL**
#5 Response from Survey + Workshops

3. Design Scenarios

56 West Foster Street

SCENARIO OVERVIEW



Proposed scenario diagram by Studio Luz Architects

56 West Foster Street

The proposed scenario envisions a mixed-use, adaptive reuse development in alignment with municipal and community needs, as well as market analysis recommendations. The existing facade is preserved at the West Foster Street frontage, creating a visual distinction from the residential addition at rear. With its high visibility and tall interior spaces, this reuse portion is suitable for public-facing uses such as a cafe, a small retail store, or a community arts organization. A one-story addition above, identified in blue, is envisioned to serve professional, healthcare, or municipal office uses.

The proposed 3-story height at both frontages aligns with existing context, preserving continuity in the pedestrian experience. The Myrtle Street facade is set back from the street to match that of its neighbors.

- RESIDENTIAL: 28,700 SF / 22 units (9x Studio/1-bed, 8x 2-bed, 5x 3-bed)
- OFFICE: 1,170 SF (10-person office)
- SHELL REUSE FOR RETAIL/CAFE/COMMUNITY USE: 2,340 SF
- OPEN SPACE: 790 SF

SCREENED + COVERED PARKING: 22 (6 compact)

FLOOR AREA RATIO: 2.0

3. Design Scenarios

56 West Foster Street

SCENARIO PERSPECTIVE



Main rendered view of proposed scenario by Studio Luz Architects, showing preservation of existing building entry and new accessible lobby to all levels

3. Design Scenarios

94 Lebanon Street

SCENARIO OVERVIEW



Proposed scenario diagram by Studio Luz Architects

94 Lebanon Street

The proposed scenario envisions a mixed-typology, low-height residential development that preserves and improves access to the site's forested trails with a new green area adjacent to the Wyoming Cemetery. Blasting is proposed to be only as needed for parking at rear. This approach minimizes site disturbance while balancing market feasibility with the community's desire for open space.

Gabled 2-bedroom townhomes (and a 3-bedroom corner unit) are proposed along Forest Street with 2-car garages at the rear, suitable for small families, couples, or those looking to downsize. For those desiring smaller 1-bed or studio units, also proposed is a low-rise apartment building along Lebanon Street with an integrated community room and direct access to the active green.

- RESIDENTIAL: 14,188 SF / 7 townhomes (6x 2-bed, 1x 3-bed)
8575 SF / 10 apartment units (all 1-bed)
- COMMUNITY ROOM: 850 SF
- OPEN SPACE: 18,595 SF, excluding wooded trails
- PARKING: 14 for townhomes (2 spaces per unit) + 18 for apartments (2 spaces per unit for 8 units, 1 space per unit for 2 units)
- AREA OF BLASTING: 3300 SF for new driveway + parking

3. Design Scenarios

94 Lebanon Street

SCENARIO PERSPECTIVE



Main rendered view of proposed scenario by Studio Luz Architects, showing gabled townhomes wrapping the Lebanon / Forest Sts. intersection and low-rise apartment building with community room in the background

4. Next Steps

Parcel Recommendations

Parcel Recommendations

Based on the market analysis and proposed design scenarios, both sites would be suitable for dispersal to a developer, although 94 Lebanon Street may be split into two parcels if the city prefers to retain ownership of the proposed recreational green space. The primary municipal benefits of dispersal would be the removal of assets requiring maintenance, the receipt of new sale proceeds, and the receipt of new ongoing property taxes. The most common method for implementing new programming at the site would be to issue an RFP to local developers. If the city elects this route, it is important that the city establishes strict criteria for the evaluation of each proposal prior to issuing the RFP to ensure that the proposal meets the city's vision for the redevelopment of the site. The city can also seek assistance for issuing the RFP by means of a consultant or an advisory committee. A consultant could be hired to help the city develop an RFP along with an advisory committee to help ensure that the RFP aligns with the needs of the city's vision for the site. Upon receiving proposals, an evaluation committee can also be appointed to aid in the review process.

At 56 West Foster Street, an driveway easement is recommended as shown in the proposed scenario to preserve garage access for the abutter at 70 West Foster Street. At 94 Lebanon Street, the Ripley School's parking lot currently occupies a corner of the abutting Wyoming Cemetery parcel; in return, a rear portion of the Ripley School parcel has been carved out for Wyoming Cemetery use as an additional outdoor seating area. A redrawing of parcel lines is recommended as shown in the proposed scenario to reflect these current use boundaries.

THANK YOU!