

**MELROSE BOARD OF APPEALS
MEETING MINUTES
Public Hearing
Wednesday, July 8, 2026
7:30 p.m.
Remote Meeting**

Present:

Bryan Thorp, Chair
David Roache
Daniel Gelormini
Raj Singh

Absent:

Chris Coughlin
Jeffery Ugino

Staff Present: Lori Massa, Director and City 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**26 014 – 645 Main Street (Continued case) –**

The appeal of Adam Principato for a Variance from §235-10.7.D.1 of the Zoning Ordinance for standing sign setback requirements to install a standing sign on the lot at 645 Main Street in Melrose on a lot shown on Assessor's Map D8 0 2-2.

Adam Principato, Applicant, appeared before the Board to present the updated plans. He provided details on the sign's dimensions and proposed location on the lot. He explained that the sign is approximately 41" by 20.5" and will be installed 1' set back from the front lot line. He also added that the Church submitted a letter in support of the project to the City. Planning Staff read the letter into the record.

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

Members were supportive of the updated plans and were pleased to receive the letter from the church that stated support for the project and that the sign is for the Applicant's business only.

Additional details on the Board's discussion can be found in the Decision.

The Board granted the Applicant's request for a Variance for standing sign setback requirements to install a standing sign, 4-0.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 26- 014
Support Letter from Church dated 6.29.26

26 013 – 11 Waverly Place (Continued Case) –

The appeal of Cambridge Lands, LLC for a Special Permit under §235-5.2 of the Zoning Ordinance to establish a multifamily use, and Variances from §235-6.2 for minimum lot area, and -11.1 for parking requirements to convert a two-family structure into four residential units on the lot at 11 Waverly Place in Melrose on a lot consisting of 6,891 sf and shown on Assessor's Map C5 0 11.

The Applicant submitted a written request to the Board to continue the case to the hearing on August 12th.

The Board voted 4-0, to continue the case to the meeting on Wednesday, August 12, 2026.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 26- 013
Request to continue letter dated 7.8.26

26 016 – 287 West Emerson Street –

The appeal of Jessica Drench for a Special Permit under §235-5.3.C of the Zoning Ordinance for accessory home occupation use in the basement of the single-family dwelling owned by Jessica Drench at 287 West Emerson Street in Melrose on a lot consisting of 9,400 sf and shown on Assessor's Map A9 0 28.

Jessica Drench, Applicant, and Robert Bell, Attorney, appeared before the Board to present the case. They explained that the request involves constructing a cooking area in the basement of the house to be used for Jessica's business, Mama Jean. The proposed space in the basement will be approximately 260 sf. They noted that the business does not have additional staff nor does it have 10 or more patrons a week.

The Board received over 35 letters of support for the proposal. Joel Nordberg, 18 Charles Street, Nandini Talwar, 31 Stevens Road, and Andrew and Mary Williams, 12 Charles Street, appeared to speak during the hearing. They voiced support for the Applicant's request. Mr. and Ms. Williams asked for clarification on what the impact of parking and traffic would be on the

neighborhood. Board Members explained the details of the request and clarified that there should not be a significant impact on the neighborhood.

Board Members were generally supportive of the request. They noted that the project has the support of abutters and should not have negative impact on the neighborhood. They added that the project meets the requirements for a special permit. Additional details on the Board's discussion can be found in the Decision.

The Board granted the Applicant's request for a Special Permit, 4-0.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 26- 016

26 017 – 3 East Foster Street (Request to continue to 8.12.26)–

The appeal of Diana de Fatima Paiva for DLuxe Dog Spa for a Variance from §235-10.7 of the Zoning Ordinance for the installation of a wall sign on the side of the building owned by KJB Investments, LLC at 3 East Foster Street in Melrose on a lot consisting of 2,039 sf and shown on Assessor's Map C7 0 133.

The Applicant submitted a written request to the Board to continue the case to the hearing on August 12th.

The Board voted 4-0, to continue the case to the meeting on Wednesday, August 12, 2026.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 26- 017
Request to continue letter dated 6.30.26

OTHER BUSINESS

Case #25-002- 201 Essex Street- Review Conditions of Approval

Joe Pride, Project Manager, appeared before the Board to provide an update on the project. He explained that the project modifications and updates included the following:

- The proposed bedroom mix of the residential units has changed. There are still 13 affordable units in the plans.
- They have been sourcing the various exterior materials and colors and the project team is looking for feedback from the Board.
- Mr. Pride, explained that he plans on creating a mockup for the Board to review. He wants to first order samples of materials for the Board to review before creating the mockup which will be reviewed on site.

Members reminded Mr. Pride that approval will be based on a review of a physical mockup that includes materials and colors. The plan is to have something available for review prior to the Board's next meeting in August. Members also reminded Mr. Pride that the number for 3-bedroom units is set by the 40B requirements and that the requested change in number should be checked for compliance.

The Board requested the following items for the next meeting:

- Updated residential unit plan that is compliant with 40B

Mr. Pride will let staff know when the material review will be ready.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for August 12, 2026.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.