

**MELROSE BOARD OF APPEALS
MEETING MINUTES
Public Hearing
Wednesday, June 24, 2026
7:30 p.m.
Remote Meeting**

Present:

Bryan Thorp, Chair
Jeffery Ugino
Daniel Gelormini
Chris Coughlin
Raj Singh

Absent:

David Roache

Staff Present: 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**25 029 – 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.

Brendan Kent, Applicant, appeared before the Board to present the case. He presented an overview of the updated plans that involved lowering the height of the fence near the driveway and along both streets of the corner lot to 4'. He also added that he would no longer pursue a variance to expand the driveway width and would withdraw that request.

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

Board Members were generally supportive of the updated plan to reduce the height of the fence to 4', as the existing height of 6' presented a safety issue. Members discussed how the majority of letters received from abutters were in support of the request. One Member noted that they still thought a 4' tall fence on a corner lot created a safety issue and they were not in support of this request. Members discussed placing conditions of approval on this project to assure the work would be finished by September 2026.

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

The Board conditionally granted the Applicant's request for a Variance for a fence exceeding three feet in height, 4-1.

The Board granted the Applicant's withdrawal of the request for driveway width regulations, 5-0.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 25- 029

26 008 – 6 Chester Street (Continued Case) –

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.

Mr. Suntareja, Applicant, 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 26- 008

Request to withdraw letter dated 5.14.26

26 010 – 120 Bay State Road –

The appeal of Isaac Westfield for a Special Permit from §235-6.2 & -12.5 of the Zoning Ordinance for construction a single-story addition in the nonconforming front and side yards on the single-family dwelling on the lot at 120 Bay State Road in Melrose on a lot consisting of 3,999 sf and shown on Assessor's Map E14 0 38.

Isaac and Stephanie Westfield, Applicants, and Jessica Bessette, Architect, 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 generally supportive of the request. They noted that the project was carefully designed to limit the potential impact on abutters and that it 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, 5-0.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 26- 010

26 012 – 40 Hancock Street –

The appeal of Ginger Lazarus for a Special Permit under §235-6.2 & -12.5 of the Zoning Ordinance to construct a deck with storage underneath and stairs in the nonconforming side and rear yards on the single-family dwelling on the lot at 40 Hancock Street in Melrose on a lot consisting of 3,997 sf and shown on Assessor's Map F3 0 100.

Ginger Lazarus, Applicant, and Anthony Macchi, Architect, 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 generally supportive of the request. They noted that the proposed project is an improvement over the existing conditions and that it 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, 5-0.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 26- 012

26 014 – 645 Main Street –

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 case. He explained that the request involves installing a standing sign on the lot for the business, Nirvana Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, that he owns. The business operates out of the basement of the First United Methodist Church, which is the property owner. He added that the standing sign will be installed at the front southwestern corner of the lot set back 1'.

The Board received one written public comment that opposed the project. The comment was read into the record by Planning Staff.

Board Members discussed their concerns with the proposal. They asked that the property owner, the First United Methodist Church, submit a letter which states support for the design and location of the proposed sign since the Church Representative that in attendance at the meeting was have a technical issue and the Board could not hear him. In addition, the Board also

requested that the Applicant update their plans to provide more information on the sign's dimensions and the exact location that it will be installed on the lot.

The Applicant requested to continue the case to the next hearing on July 8th to allow for time to update their plans and fulfill the Board's requests.

The Board granted the Applicant's request to continue the case, 5-0.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 26- 014

26 015 – 50 Lincoln Street

The appeal of Katy Finkenzeller for a Variance from §235-6.3.d.4 for dormer length requirement to add a full shed dormer onto rear of the single-family dwelling owned by Jeffry Bonica & Casey B. Judge at 50 Lincoln Street in Melrose on a lot consisting of 8,873 sf and shown on Assessor's Map E9 0 110.

Katy Finkenzeller, Applicant/Architect, and Jeffry P. Bonica & Casey B. Judge, Owners, appeared before the Board to present the case. They explained that the request involves adding a shed dormer on the back of the two-story, single-family home to create habitable living space within the existing finished attic.

The Board received five written public comments in support of the project. No one appeared to speak during the hearing.

Board Members were generally supportive of the project's design and had no issues with the request. 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- 015

OTHER BUSINESS

Time Extension request- Case #25-001- 540 Lynn Fells Parkway

Dr. Moira K. Casey, Applicant, appeared before the Board to request a time extension for the Variance approved for Case #25-001. She explained that due to a personal medical issue the project was not able to be completed within the one year period of the granted variance. The Board of Appeals voted to grant the request for a six-month time extension by unanimous vote.

Documents: Time Extension Request Application, case 25-001

Meeting Minutes

The Board voted, 5-0, to approve the minutes from April 8, 2026, and May 13, 2026.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for July 8, 2026.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.