

**MELROSE BOARD OF APPEALS
MEETING MINUTES
Public Hearing
Wednesday, May 14, 2025
7:30 p.m.
Remote Meeting**

Present:

David Roache
Bryan Thorp
Benjamin Rosenberg
Raj Singh

Absent: Chris Coughlin, Daniel Gelormini, 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 www.cityofmelrose.org/remote-meetings. 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: www.cityofmelrose.org/board-appeals.

CASES BEFORE THE BOARD

Due to only four members being present at this meeting, Lori Massa, Director and City Planner, & Chair Bryan Thorp explained to the Applicants that they have the option to request their case be continued to the hearing on June 11th, when more voting members will be present. The public in attendance was also informed of what that process would entail.

21 003 – 12-16 Essex Street- review of exterior building materials and colors related to condition of Comprehensive Permit approval.

Dana Lopez, Wakefield Associates Inc., appeared before the Board to present an update on the 12-16 Essex Street project. Mr. Lopez presented an update on the proposed exterior building material and color options for this project. The updated elevations incorporated the feedback from the Board at the previous meeting. The updated color is a cohesive palette of light and dark browns and grays. The Board commented that the colors were an improvement, however the

overall design needs to be updated with more details on how the materials come together and the trim material. The Board noted that the redesign is moving in the right direction, however they would like Mr. Lopez to return to present an updated overall design that includes the following:

- More detail on the surface of the Northwest Elevation. Which material will be recessed or bumped out. The Board would like more details on how this will look in context.
- More details on the materials used to separate the vertical from horizontal panels.
- Detail around the “faux windows” on the Northwest Elevation.
- More details on what will be used on the corners where panels meet.

Documents: Elevations May 6, 2025

25 001 – 538-540 Lynn Fells Parkway – The appeal of Dr. Moira K. Casey for a Variance from §235-5.3 of the Zoning Ordinance for a change in use from accessory professional office to a medical office and a Special Permit under §235-12.4 for nonconforming number of parking spaces and dimensions at 538-540 Lynn Fells Parkway in Melrose on a lot consisting of 9,895 sf and shown on Assessor’s Map D13 0 122.

Dr. Casey, Applicant, and Keith Loranger, Architect, appeared before the Board. Dr. Casey requested that the case be continued to the hearing on June 11th. By roll call the Board voted 4-0, to continue the case to June 11, 2025.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 25-001

25 003 – 15 Bartlett Street – The appeal of Susan and Scott Baranyi for a Special Permit under §235-12.5.4.b.i of the Zoning Ordinance for altering an existing structure within the nonconforming setback, to replace the flat roof over the garage to a gable roof on the single-family dwelling at 15 Bartlett Street in Melrose on a lot consisting of 7,802 sf and shown on Assessor’s Map B5 0 92.

Susan and Scott Baranyi, Applicants, appeared before the Board to present the case. They provided an overview of the project explaining that the request includes replacing the flat roof over the garage to a gable roof. They explained that the proposed project will keep the existing setback and improve the character of the house. The roof over the garage will be a gabled roof just like the roof of the main structure.

The Board received a public comment in support of the request before the hearing.

Board Members were supportive of the request. Members agreed that the proposal will be an aesthetic improvement to the house and will not negatively impact the neighborhood or abutters. The requested relief is minor and will not increase the footprint of the house into the nonconforming setback.

The Board, by the unanimous votes of Chair Bryan Thorp and Members David Roache, Benjamin Rosenberg, and Raj Singh in favor, granted the request, 4-0.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 25-003

25 004 – 18 Boardman Ave – The appeal of Janeka Doyle for a Special Permit under §235-12.5 of the Zoning Ordinance for altering an existing single- family dwelling within the nonconforming side yard to construct an addition at 18 Boardman Avenue in Melrose on a lot consisting of 7,745 sf and shown on Assessor’s Map D13 0 161.

Janeka and Jeffrey Doyle, Applicants, appeared before the Board to present the case. They provided an overview of the project explaining that the request includes a proposed addition that will expand the current mudroom and relocate an entrance from the side of the house to the back. The entrance will now face the deck, backyard, and driveway and not the abutter’s property. They added that this addition will provide a more accessible entrance and enhance the day-to-day use of the mudroom and deck. Also, they noted that the mudroom addition would mostly align with the existing structure and only project further into the setback by three inches.

The Board received a public comment in support of the proposal before the hearing.

Board Members were supportive of the request. Members agreed that the proposal will be an aesthetic improvement to the house and will not negatively impact the neighborhood or abutters. The requested relief is minor and will not increase the footprint of the house into the nonconforming setback in a significant way. One member noted that although the addition is visible from the street, its small and modest scale will not negatively impact the streetscape.

The Board, by the unanimous votes of Chair Bryan Thorp and Members David Roache, Benjamin Rosenberg, and Raj Singh in favor, granted the request, 4-0.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 25-004

25 005 – 17 Cottage Street – The appeal of SKA, Inc. for a Variance from §235-6.2 of the Zoning Ordinance for the side yard setback requirement to construct an addition on the single-family dwelling at 17 Cottage Street in Melrose owned by Teresa & Stephen Buono on a lot consisting of 9,108 sf and shown on Assessor’s Map B6 0 91.

Teresa and Stephen Buono, Applicants, and Michael Fields, Architect, appeared before the Board to present the case. Mr. and Mrs. Buono provided an overview of the project explaining that the request includes a proposed addition that will consist of a 600 sf attached garage. Mrs. Buono explained that the reason they are requesting relief for an attached garage is due to medical issues. They are aware that a detached garage located elsewhere on the property would be allowed by right. The attached garage would be on the same level as the living space and would be accessible for the homeowner that suffers from mobility issues. She also added that as she ages her medical condition will worsen and further limit her mobility.

Mike Fields, Architect, provided an overview of the plans for the proposed garage. The garage was designed to minimize the amount of impervious space and encroachment into the side yard setback. The location of the garage is parallel to a school parking lot and is past the footprint of the abutting home. He noted the design of the interior of the garage that will address the

accessibility issues of the Applicant. Also, the garage will fit two-cars to accommodate the Applicants two vehicles. He commented that the garage was designed to be accessible and accommodating to the Applicant's medical issues while also limiting the impact on the streetscape and abutters.

The Board received a public comment in support of the request from Donald & Marie Retalic, 9 Cottage Street Melrose, during the hearing. Planning Staff read the comment into the record.

Board Members were supportive of the request when considering the need for an attached garage due to the Applicant's medical issues; however, they had concerns about the size of the garage and its location. One Member noted that the garage could be placed farther back to limit the visible impact from the street. Members discussed how a detached garage would be allowed by right if placed in another location on the lot; however, it would not help address the accessibility issues that the Applicants are trying to address. One member noted that this proposal is unique as the attached garage does not significantly impact the abutters. The properties that abut the proposed garage are the backyard of a supportive neighbor and a school parking lot. If the attached garage were close to abutting dwellings, they would feel differently about the impact. Members were supportive of the design of the garage and that it matches the character and quality of the principal dwelling. Members agreed that the uniqueness of this lot limits the potential negative impact on other property owners.

The Board, by the unanimous votes of Chair Bryan Thorp and Members David Roache, Benjamin Rosenberg, and Raj Singh in favor, granted the request, 4-0.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 25-005

OTHER BUSINESS

Meeting Minutes

Mr. Thorp made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from April 9, 2025. Mr. Rosenberg seconded the motion. By roll call the Board voted, 4-0, to approve the minutes. Voting Members included Benjamin Rosenberg, David Roache, Bryan Thorp, and Raj Singh.

Next Meeting

The next meetings are scheduled for May 28 and June 11, 2025.
The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm