

MELROSE BOARD OF APPEALS
MEETING MINUTES
Public Hearing
Wednesday, November 13, 2019
7:45 p.m.
Aldermanic Chamber, Melrose City Hall, 562 Main Street

Present:

Curtis Dooling, II
Julianna Hanlon, *Associate*
Krista Lillis, *Associate*
Rita Mercado, *Chair*
David Roache

Absent:

Bryan Thorp

Staff Present: Lori Massa

The meeting was called to order at 7:50 pm.

CASES BEFORE THE BOARD

**CASE 19 025: The appeal of Jay Dunham of Metro Credit Union
138 Main Street and Sylvan Street**

As advertised, case 19-025, was to amend a Special Permit, Case 90-16, under Section 235-60.E of the Zoning Ordinance to reconfigure the parking lot at 138 Main Street, Melrose, MA, and for a Special Permit under Section 235-17, Parking in Excess of 4 Spaces, to extend the parking lot onto the abutting lot on Sylvan Street for a total of 17 spaces for the existing bank use. The request includes a Variance from Sections 235-41 for Parking Standards; parking will continue to extend into the front yard. The properties are on lots of land containing 10,022 & 3972 sf and shown on Assessor's Map C3 0 8-9 & C3 0 6-7.

The Board of Appeals opened the case. The Chair swore in the applicants and those choosing to speak at the hearing. Attorney Christopher Tolley, John Cavanaro, Engineer, and Robert Cashman, CEO, appeared to present the proposal. In 2011 Metro Credit Union merged with another bank and since then they have more employees and increased business. The site was permitted for five parking spaces and they are not aware of how the existing parking lot expanded from the five space approved in 1990 to the nine that are there today. They have five regular employees and limited parking for auditors, investors and customers. A chart was prepared to illustrate the deficit in the number of parking spaces and shows a need for two to nine spaces at various times during the day. Their employees are encouraged to park on the street. Metro Credit Union has the Sylvan Street lot under agreement. This lot is unbuildable and is not well maintained. It is half paved and contains an unused pool and shed. There are no curbs

currently; some have sunken into the ground. Bank customers may already be using the paved portion of the Sylvan Street lot for parking.

The proposal would create sidewalks and curbs and remove the swimming pool which is an eyesore. The proposal is to increase the number of spaces on the Main Street lot from the 5 originally approved to 8 and to expand the parking lot to construct 9 new spaces for a total of 17. The other variance requests related to the parking lot are listed on the first page of the plan set.

The proposal also needs Site Plan Approval from the Planning Board and the first hearing for that application was October 28, 2019. After discussion the Board continued the hearing to their meeting on November 25, 2019.

Board members had the following comments and questions. The Applicants' responses are below.

- Why are 17 spaces proposed when the parking deficiency appears to be two to nine spaces from the numbers submitted?
 - There are currently nine spaces in the lot so eight more would supply 17 spaces.
- The format of the parking demand data is based on number of bank transactions and assumptions of number of transactions per customer and amount of time at the bank which is very unusual. Traffic Engineers use parking standards or parking utilization studies to determine demand. A parking utilization study should be done to quantify the need. No tangible numbers were submitted.
- A lot of parking is proposed for a little building.
 - The bank has doubled its number of transactions since 2011. Many of the customers are National Grid employees and they make frequent visits during all times of day. It will be difficult to grow the business in this location without more parking. They submitted pictures of cars cueing to get into the lot.
- There is a lot of pavement in this area of the City and this proposal would exacerbate the problem.
 - It is a safety concern for employees and customers to park at a distance and walk to the bank.
- The proposal includes improvements to the site that would be good for the community.
- Are there projections to know if more customers will be banking online?
 - There is a strong need to have a local branch. Of the 210,000 members some will bank online and some will not. Having access to a bank to sign papers in person is needed. Some customers stay for 30 minutes and are not necessarily in and out. They have extended their hours and are open on Saturdays.
- This is a residential district and there are houses next door. This would create a lot of pavement and the ordinance only requires five spaces.
- One member said neighbors would want the cars off of the street and another said that street parking is available and should be utilized. Also, this area is close to the T.
 - Sylvan Street has limited parking hours and they are not sure if Main Street has limitations. Snow emergencies also limit street parking.

No one appeared to speak in support of or opposition to the application.

Ms. Mercado read the Planning Board's recommendation letter into the record.

The Board discussed if the condominium next door would have sufficient parking on their lot because they currently park on the Sylvan Street lot. It appears that they would have sufficient parking. Mr. Tolley showed the condominium plan that shows space for parking. In addition the proposal includes an easement for the condo owners to use a piece of the corner of the lot for parking.

Mr. Tolley requested that the Board continue the case to the next available hearing in order to conduct a parking utilization study.

The Board voted, 5-0, to grant the requested continuance to January 8, 2020.

Documents: ZBA Application 19-025

**CASE 19 029: The appeal of Jason Debble
73 Sheffield Road**

As advertised, case 19-029, was for a Variance from Sections 235-18 & -19 of the Zoning Ordinance for side yard setback to construct a two-story addition on the single-family house at 73 Sheffield Road, Melrose, MA, on a lot of land containing 10,674 sf and shown on Assessor's Map G10 0 77-78.

The Board of Appeals opened the case. The Chair swore in the applicants and those choosing to speak at the hearing. Jason Debble, Owner, and John McGuire, Contractor, appeared to present the proposal. One person appeared to speak in support of the application.

Information regarding the hearing and the Board's discussion regarding the proposal and findings are documented in the decision for the case.

The Board voted, 5-0, to approve the requested Variance for a four foot side yard.

Documents: ZBA Application 19-029

**CASE 19 030: The appeal of Mr. & Mrs. Ryan Fuller
24 Boardman Avenue**

As advertised, case 19-030, was for a Variance from Section 235-24.A of the Zoning Ordinance for front yard from Ells Avenue for a proposed accessory garage at 24 Boardman Avenue, Melrose, MA, on a lot of land containing 7,109 sf and shown on Assessor's Map D13 0 159.

The Board of Appeals opened the case. The Chair swore in the applicants and those choosing to speak at the hearing. Ryan Fuller, Applicant, and Jay Bradley, Architect appeared to present the proposal. One person appeared to speak in support of the application.

Information regarding the hearing and the Board's discussion regarding the proposal and findings are documented in the decision for the case.

The Board voted, 2-2, with Members, Curt B. Dooling and David W. Roache, in favor, Chair Rita C. Mercado and Member Julianna Hanlon, in opposition, and Member Krista Lillis recused, denying the requested Variance.

Documents: ZBA Application 19-030

**CASE 19 031: The appeal of Kristin and Tim Zubak
430 Swains Pond Avenue**

As advertised, case 19-031, was for a Variance from Sections 235-18 & -19 of the Zoning Ordinance for rear yard setback to construct a two-story addition on the single-family house at 430 Swains Pond Avenue, Melrose, MA, on a lot of land containing 6,185 sf and shown on Assessor's Map F6 0 103.

The Board of Appeals opened the case. The Chair swore in the applicants and those choosing to speak at the hearing. Kristin Zubak, Applicant and Owner, and Matthew Couture, Contractor, appeared to present the proposal. No one appeared to speak in support of or in opposition to the application.

Information regarding the hearing and the Board's discussion regarding the proposal and findings are documented in the decision for the case.

The Board voted, 4-0, with Mr. Roache recused, to approve the requested Variance.

Documents: ZBA Application 19-031

OTHER BUSINESS

Approval of meeting minutes from October 16, 2019

Mr. Dooling made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from October 16, 2019. Ms. Lillis seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. None were opposed.

The next meeting is set for December 11, 2019 in the Aldermanic Chamber.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 pm.