

MELROSE BOARD OF APPEALS
MEETING MINUTES
Public Hearing
Wednesday, February 24, 2021
7:30 p.m.
Remote Meeting

Present:

Rita Mercado, *Chair*
Megan Carriere, *Associate*
Curtis Dooling, II
Katherine Moore
David Roache
Bryan Thorp

Absent:

Julianna Hanlon, *Associate*

Staff Present: Denise Gaffey, Director & City Planner, Lori Massa, Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm.

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Melrose Zoning Board of Appeals was conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. 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

20 031 – 47 Orient Avenue

The appeal of Thomas & Elizabeth Hanover for Variances from §235-18 & -19 of the Zoning Ordinance for side yard setback for a deck on the single-family house at 47 Orient Ave, Melrose, MA, on a lot of land containing 6,100 sf and shown on Assessor's Map E9 0 42.

This case was advertised for the January 27, 2021 hearing and was continued to this hearing to give the applicants more time to work with their neighbors. Mr. and Mrs. Hanover appeared remotely to explain the case. Information regarding the hearing and the Board's discussion regarding the proposal and findings are documented in the decision for the case.

By roll call the Board voted, 5-0, with Curt Dooling recused, to grant the requested Variance.

21 003 – 12-16 Essex Street

The application of Carroll Essex LLC for a Comprehensive Permit pursuant to M.G.L. c.40B, s. 21 for an approx. 17,900 nsf, 4-story mixed-use building with approx. 1,600 sf of commercial space, 24 residential units, of which six will be affordable as is required and regulated under the law, and 10 parking spaces at 12-16 Essex Street, Melrose, MA, on a lot of land containing 5,777 sf and shown on Assessor's Map C7 0 72. Exemptions per statute are claimed for: Melrose Zoning Ordinance §235-18 & -19 for lot frontage/width, floor area ratio, and open space, §235-32 for off-street parking spaces & §235-16.1 site plan review; Charter and Administrative Code of the City of Melrose §131-3 Historic District Commission.

This is the second hearing for this case. The Applicant team including Attorney Robert Bell, Architect Timothy Johnson, Mark Carroll, John Carroll, and Scott Filleul of CarrollCo appeared remotely to present the case.

Mr. Johnson and Mr. Carroll explained the revisions to the plans for the building and site. They also responded to comments that the Board members had at the last meeting. The bicycle storage was moved from the basement to the garage. There will be a 2-tiered bike rack system with a top rack swivel system in place of one of the parking spaces. The stamped asphalt on the City sidewalk was removed. The cornices were redesigned and different colors for the northwest wall were presented. The building has a streamlined Victorian aesthetic. The HVAC screening was provided. There is no minimum number of ADA spaces with a 9 car parking lot. The site plan was update to respond to the Engineering Department's request for the water service line sizes. They provided a traffic study that includes an auto-turn analysis that shows that cars can maneuver in the parking garage. They put a note on the site plan to clarify that 20 Essex Street does not encroach on the lot. They provided a driveway agreement for trash and stormwater operations. The initial expense will be on the 12-16 Essex Street property for these improvements and the maintenance expenses going forward will be shared.

Board members discussed the following:

- The details of how the materials will be affixed to the building and what the joints will be like. The fasteners and reveals will impact the appearance and quality of the building. Members were particularly interested in the corner condition of the building and how the materials on the front bays and northwest elevation come together.
- They asked for elevations in color with cut sheets and an enlarged image of a portion of the proposed building to better understand the detailing. Also, they asked for pictures of the proposed fiber cement panels with aluminum reveals applied on existing buildings.
- They liked the revised bicycle parking plan. Mr. Carroll said that he will purchase electric bikes for the residents. He is not sure how many he will purchase initially but he will phase in more with demand.
- A member mentioned that they need to make sure that the backwater values can be serviced.
- They questioned whether the vehicle exiting sign needs to be included in the driveway agreement.
- They discussed if the vehicle exiting sign will have audio and if the volume will be adjustable.
- They asked about the screening for the condensers on the roof and if it would be at the edge of the roof. Heat pumps will be used and will be 2/3 the size of the original condensers proposed.
- They asked about if the roof could withstand the load of solar panels. Mr. Carroll said that he is not intending to install them. Members said that the building code likely requires that it built in a way that would be suitable for future solar panels.

- The driveway heater should only be on when needed. Mr. Carroll said that it will be an efficient heater and that they will ensure that it is only on when needed because his company is paying the utility bills.

The Board received three letters from the Melrose Planning Board, the Melrose Historic District Commission, and Karen Myers of 354 Upham Street. Finn McSweeney of 160 W Wyoming Avenue, spoke in support of the revised bicycle parking. He said that this development will have the most bicycle parking of any in the City.

Members asked Mr. Carroll to respond to the requests from the Historic District Commission and Historical Commission. He said that he had no problem dropping parts of the façade off to other who want to salvage them. The façade does contain lead paint. He also has no problem placing a plaque on the building to memorialize the first minority business owner in Melrose. He can take pictures of the building. Ms. Mercado said that she would appreciate the input of a Boston Chinatown neighborhood group to provide the context for why there was a Chinese laundry in Melrose. She said that this project, which provides for opportunity and diversity in Melrose, pays homages to the historical significance of the site.

Attorney Bell requested to continue the case to March 24, 2021. By roll call the Board voted, 5-0, to grant the requested continuance to March 24, 2021.

Documents: Application Materials, case 21-003
 Updated Architectural plans dated 2/22/21
 Updated Civil Plans dated 2/22/21
 Traffic Assessment dated 2/19/21
 Driveway Easement
 Elevations of building on Main Street
 Traffic Sign Sensor Location
 HVAC Cut Sheet
 Response to comments letter dated 2/20/21

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Dooling made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from January 27, 2021. Mr. Thorp seconded the motion. By roll call the Board voted, 5-0, to approve the minutes.

The next meeting is set for February 24, 2021.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.