

MELROSE BOARD OF APPEALS
MEETING MINUTES
Public Hearing
Wednesday, March 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

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

Mr. Johnson and Mr. Carroll explained the revisions to the plans for the building and site. The storefront was redesigned to harmonize with 532-534 Main Street's storefront. The glazing height is taller at 8 feet, the mullions were redesigned and the base is granite. Electric heat pumps will be used and the revised rooftop units and screen are shown on the roof plan. Mr. Johnson went through the cut sheet for the façade materials and discussed the fastener options. A picture of one material on the Hyatt Place in Portland, ME was provided as an example to show the seams and fasteners. The revised first floor plan shows the location of where the plaque memorializing the history of the site will go. A cut sheet for the bicycle rack was provided.

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 reveals in the northwest wall will be prominent if they are kept to the aluminum color. The pattern that they will make is not shown on the elevation it will be a competing pattern to the pattern of the colors on the panels. Additional, the shiny aluminum will not complement the panel colors shown on the plan.
 - Mr. Carroll said that he will paint the aluminum the same color as the panels and this was acceptable to the Board members.
- The color changes are a nice move to break down the scale of the wall. They will view the final colors during the review of the on-site mockup.
- There was discussion of the lap siding and the board and batten siding. The lap siding looks plain but it provides a field from which the bays can project and there is otherwise a lot going on with the building. The board and batten siding provides noticeable shadow lines from afar. Both were acceptable.
- On the front panels the Architect is only planning to paint the vertical trim reveals.
- They appreciated the changes to the storefront.
- Member preferred the slow wave sound for the audio for the pedestrian warning sign. Mr. Carroll said that the volume cannot be adjusted.
- The approval of the bay projections over the sidewalk can be handled by being a condition of the decision. Board members did not think that the comprehensive permit approval would cover this "off-site" approval and it would still need City Council approval if deemed to be required by the City Solicitor.
- They discussed why a Phase 2 was done in 2007 when no contamination was found. It was done because of the dry cleaners next door.
- Staff provided draft conditions and the Board reviewed them in detail and made some changes. Mr. Carroll found the conditions as amended to be acceptable.
- They discussed a condition about local preference for the affordable units and ultimately decided to include it.

Finn McSweeney of 160 W Wyoming Avenue, spoke during the hearing to request that there is a condition of approval to ensure that the bicycle parking is installed as is shown on the plans. No one spoke in opposition to the proposal.

The Board commended the Applicant for working with the Board and making changes to the proposal. They found that the public hearing process went smoothly and that this is a strong project that will be an asset to the community.

By roll call the Board voted, 5-0, to grant the Comprehensive Permit and the requested waivers from local regulations.

Documents: Application Materials, case 21-003
 Updated Architectural plans dated 3/23/21
 Exterior Material Cut Sheets
 Updated Civil Plans dated 3/23/21
 Sanitary Sewer Calculations
 Traffic Signal Sensor Audio
 Updated Construction Management Plan
 Communication regarding improvements and signatures of 534 Main St owner

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Thorp made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from February 24, 2021. Mr. Roache seconded the motion. By roll call the Board voted, 5-0, to approve the minutes.

The next meeting is set for April 14, 2021.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm.