

**MELROSE BOARD OF APPEALS  
MEETING MINUTES  
Public Meeting  
Wednesday, November 1, 2023  
7:30 p.m.  
Remote Meeting**

**Present:**

Rita Mercado  
Bryan Thorp  
Katie Moore  
Benjamin Rosenberg  
Megan Carriere

**Absent:**

Curtis B. Dooling, II  
Daniel Gelormini

**Staff Present:** Denise Gaffey, City Planner, Lori Massa, Senior Planner & Maya Noviski, Assistant Planner

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 pm.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting will be 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](http://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](http://www.cityofmelrose.org).

Application materials were posted to the City's website: [www.cityofmelrose.org/board-appeals](http://www.cityofmelrose.org/board-appeals).

**CASES BEFORE THE BOARD**

**23 003 – 28 Greenwood Street**

The application of Greenwood Development LLC for a Comprehensive Permit pursuant to M.G.L. c.40B, s. 21 to construct an approximately 11,923 sq. ft., 5-story building with 38 residential units and convert the existing 2.5 story building into two residential units with a 1,500 sq. ft. addition and additional half-story, and 40 parking spaces on three adjacent parcels of land at 0, 28, and 54 Greenwood Street, Melrose, MA with a lot area containing 39,780 sf and shown on Assessor's Maps B13 0 81, B13 0 82, and B13 0 83. Ten of the project's units will be affordable as is required and regulated under the law. See application for exemptions claimed.

The Board closed the public hearing for the case on October 18. They met to deliberate on the proposal and discuss the outstanding points of concern including the amount of parking and the location of the spaces, the blasting and difficulty of the site conditions, the monitoring of the rock face, the sound attenuation of the rooftop mechanical equipment, the size of the project, the stormwater design, the safety and logistics during construction, and the operations and management plan.

Members reviewed the regulations for Comprehensive Permits and the Board's role in determining whether the project is consistent with local needs. Board Members understood that they can condition an approval but if the Applicant appeals the decision and certain conditions are found to make the project financially infeasible, those conditions can be overturned. One Board Member commented that while there is a local need for housing, the complexity of this project and its impacts challenge the benefits of gaining a modest number of additional units.

The Board reviewed a set of draft conditions written by Planning Staff. Members had comments and suggestions for revisions for several of the conditions, which will be incorporated into the final version. Members supported holding a pre-construction meeting given the significant logistics required to manage the construction of the project. Members commented that trucks should not block traffic on Greenwood St. and construction workers should not be able to use the public parking as a staging area nor should they be able to park in the municipal lots or on Greenwood St. Board Members discussed the need to ensure that the blasting plan is as specific and thorough as possible to ensure safety and to reduce the disruption to abutters from the vibrations and noise to the extent possible. Members also confirmed that no other alteration was planned for the conservation land besides the removal of the shed.

Members agreed that blasting should not occur during commuting hours and that it should be limited to late morning and early afternoon. Members felt that abutters should be communicated with by the end of the workday when blasts can be expected the following day. Members supported eliminating the northern and central parking spaces and commented that the Board has a history of supporting projects with less than one parking space per residential unit. Members agreed that reducing the number of cars onsite will benefit the neighborhood and create the space on the site needed for solid waste storage and collection, delivery vehicles, rideshare, and sufficient bicycle parking. Members commented that the Applicant could landscape the front of the site and could redesign the southern lot to accommodate trash pickup, rideshare, and deliveries on the property. This would eliminate the need for the proposed cutout on Greenwood Street and the proposal to remove trees in the public way necessary for safe sight lines for vehicles using the surface parking spaces. Members were also supportive of eliminating the two parking spaces at the end of the drive aisle in the parking garage and relocating the solid waste storage room to that area.

Members discussed a potential condition that would reduce the size of the fifth floor by eliminating four of the units on that floor and relocating the remaining two units on the fifth floor to be less impactful to the residents on Clifton Park, but they did not think that the Board should dictate the layout. Members also clarified that no other enclosed spaces should be allowed on the fifth floor and supported relocating the mechanical equipment to the roof of the fourth floor. One Member suggested that the Board could also condition that the Applicant build a four-story

rather than a five-story building. Members discussed the proximity of the building to abutters on Clifton Park and the abutters' concerns over privacy and the noise impacts from the equipment. Members felt that the project is too dense for the site as proposed and acknowledge that the Applicant never clarified why they are proposing a development of this size and scope. Members agreed that incorporating this modest change will mitigate some of the concerns regarding the scale of the development, impact to the rear abutters, and reducing the number of units will also create a more equal ratio of parking spaces to units.

Members clarified that the long-term erosion and maintenance plan should have annual reports that are submitted to the City for review. Members also requested that a condition be added that prohibits the Applicant from crushing or processing rocks onsite.

Board Members reviewed the requested waivers. Members agreed that the requests for waivers that allow walls and fences over 7 ft. tall, nonconforming signs, and the project to proceed without obtaining other local permits besides the building permit, should be rejected. Members supported approving the waiver for front yard parking for the multifamily dwelling for the limited use of three parking spaces in the southern lot and for two driveways to be less than 30 ft. apart on one lot; however, the Board agreed that no other parking and loading standards should be waived. The Board supported rejecting the requests for waivers from the administrative code and the Melrose Comprehensive Permit Rules.

By roll call the Board voted, 5-0, to continue the deliberations to November 13, 2023.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Thorp made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from October 18, 2023. Ms. Moore seconded the motion. By roll call members voted, 5-0, to approve the minutes.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for November 8, 2023.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 pm.