

**MELROSE BOARD OF APPEALS
MEETING MINUTES
Public Hearing
Wednesday, November 12, 2025
7:30 p.m.
Remote Meeting**

Present:

Bryan Thorp, Chair
Daniel Gelormini
Jeffery Ugino
Raj Singh
Chris Coughlin

Absent: David Roache

Staff Present: 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 <https://www.cityofmelrose.org/195/Meetings-of-Boards-Commissions-Committee>. 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:
<https://www.cityofmelrose.org/170/Board-of-Appeals>.

CASES BEFORE THE BOARD

Case 25 017 – 59-61 Crystal Street (Continued Case)–

The appeal of 59-61 Crystal Street CBC, LLC for Variances from §235-6.2 of the Zoning Ordinance for lot area and maximum floor area ratio, §235-11.2 bicycle parking & §235-11.5.B for backing of vehicles onto the street, and a Special Permit under §235-6.2 & -12.5.E for increasing the building height within the existing nonconforming front, side & rear yard setbacks, lot depth, all to convert the two-family structure into three dwelling units at 59-61 Crystal Street in Melrose on a lot consisting of 6,403 sf and shown on Assessor's Map D10 0 6.

Gavin Hodgkins of 59-61 Crystal Street CBC, LLC, Applicant, Robert Bell, Attorney, Chuong Pham, Architect, and Jae Hyoung Kim, Architect, appeared before the Board to present the case. The project team presented updated plans that incorporated feedback they received from the Board at the first hearing on 9/24. The updated plans included a reduction in the overall size of

the building from a 4-story structure to a 3-story structure, a redesign of the top floor to a more conventional design, an updated floor layout indicating storage areas for the residential units and a bicycle storage area, and an updated parking layout.

Board Members had the following questions/comments for the Applicant and the rest of the development team. Answers are indicated underneath the question:

- The third floor size and height is not proportional to the other floors and it impacts the overall design. Would the Applicant be willing to make design changes to make the third floor more proportional?
 - Yes, they would.
- Are the abutting buildings' heights on the rendering accurate?
 - Yes, the heights of abutting buildings were checked after the first hearing.
- The location of this site is on the corner of a busy intersection. Is the applicant willing to install landscaping?
 - Yes

The Board did not receive any public comments, and no one appeared to speak during the hearing.

Board Members were generally supportive of approving the request with conditions attached. Members discussed conditions of approval including landscaping installed on the edge of the site at the corner of Melrose Street and Crystal Street and along Melrose Street, and also to reduce the volume of the third floor.

Additional details on the Board's discussion and conditions of approval can be found in the Decision.

Board Member Chris Coughlin was not present at the first hearing on 9/24 so there were four voting members for this case.

The Board granted the Applicant's request for a Variance, 4-0, and the Applicant's request for a Special Permit, 4-0, with conditions attached.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 25- 017
Updated Architectural Plans dated 11.05.25

Case 25 018 – 1114 Main Street (Continued Case)–

The appeal of Rangadoure Ramachandirane for a Special Permit under §235-12.5.D of the Zoning Ordinance to enclose an existing front porch with a nonconforming front yard on the single-family dwelling at 1114 Main Street in Melrose owned by Rangadoure Ramachandirane & Poongulali Rangadoure on a lot consisting of 4,866 sf and shown on Assessor's Map D14 0 12.

Rangadoure Ramachandirane, Applicant, submitted a letter to the Board to continue the case to the hearing on December 10, 2025. Planning Staff read the letter into the record. By roll call vote, the Board voted 5-0, to continue the case to December, 10, 2025.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 25- 018
Request for Continuance Letter dated 11.05.25

25 021 – 16 Whitwell Street –

The appeal of Todd Weaver for Variances from §235-6.2 of the Zoning Ordinance for front yard setback, §235-6.3.F for impervious surface requirements, & §235-11.5.c.2 for driveways being within 30 feet of each other, and a Special Permit under §235-6.2 & §235-12.5.a.3 for demolishing a structure and constructing a new conforming structure on a lot with nonconforming area, all to demolish an existing two-family dwelling and to construct a new two-family at 16 Whitwell Street in Melrose on a lot consisting of 7,815 sf and shown on Assessor's Map D4 0 38.

Todd Weaver, Applicant, and Jay Bradley, Architect, appeared before the Board to present the case. They provided an overview of the project explaining that the project involves demolishing the existing two-family structure and constructing a new two-family home in a new location on the lot. The existing driveway will be replaced by green space and two separate driveways will be installed in front of the proposed structure. Pervious pavers will be used for the walkway and driveway in front of the proposed structure.

Board Members had the following questions/comments for the Applicant and the rest of the development team. Answers are indicated underneath the question:

- Where is the front setback line? It is unclear on the plot plan. Does the lot blend into the street? How far into the street does the property line go?
 - Yes, the front lot line is in the street. Will need to recheck the survey and plot plan to get exact dimensions.
- Will the front yard need to be regraded?
 - Yes, it will be regraded.
- Will the existing driveway/parking area become green space?
 - Yes.
- Does the abutter have an easement for access to their driveway and garage?
 - Unsure of any easements. Will need to check records to see as 16 Whitwell and 23 Whitwell were once one parcel.

The Board received one written public comment prior to the hearing and one member of the public, Marissa Milbury, 11 Whitwell Street, appeared to speak during the hearing. Their comments included the following:

- Concerned with stormwater
- There are issues with correct surveying in this area.
- The retaining wall could be damaged by this proposal.
- This proposal will create privacy issues for abutters.

The Board's discussion focused on issues involving the property line and the street. It is unclear where exactly the front yard lot line is. Also, the Board wanted more clarity on any easements and abutters access to their driveway being limited by the proposed project.

The Board requested that the project plans be updated to include the following:

- Updated site plan showing a clearer understanding of the property line/street
- Updated renderings that include an overlay of abutting structures
- Open space and landscaping detail on the plans

The Applicant requested to continue the case to December 10, 2025. By roll call vote, the Board voted 5-0, to continue the case to December 10, 2025.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 25- 021

25 022 – 585 Lebanon Street –

The appeal of Melrose Wakefield Healthcare Corp. for a Variance from §235-6.2 of the Zoning Ordinance for rear yard setback to construct an addition on the back of the existing hospital at 585 Lebanon Street in Melrose owned by the Melrose Wakefield Hospital Association on a lot consisting of 193,088 sf and shown on Assessor's Map D9 0 19.

Patrick McAvoy, Attorney, Justin Mosca, Engineer, and Matthew O'Reilly, Director of Facilities and Construction, Melrose Wakefield Hospital, appeared before the Board to present the case. Attorney McAvoy provided an overview of the project which involves constructing a one-story structure on the back of the hospital. There is an existing trailer in this area that the hospital uses for MRI equipment and services. This addition would replace the trailer and serve as the new MRI service area of the hospital.

Justin Mosca, Engineer, presented an overview of site context and architectural plans. The proposed location of the addition is on the back of the hospital along Rowe Street. The MRI addition is 975 sf and will be setback 5' from the rear lot line.

Mathew O'Reilly, Director of Facilities and Construction, Melrose Wakefield Hospital, explained that the existing mechanical equipment in the existing MRI trailer emits more noise than what will be present in the proposed addition. The MRI equipment in addition will be fully enclosed. The building material will be brick, which will absorb sound better than the existing trailer and have less impact on abutters.

Members asked the project team about the noise level of the MRI machines and the potential impact on abutters. Mathew O'Reilly explained the impact would be less than the existing conditions. Currently, there is a mechanical hum noise emitting from the existing trailer. The addition would attenuate this noise, resulting in less impact on abutting properties. Members asked what the hours of operation would be for the MRI operations. MRIs are used in emergencies so the operation could be used 24 hours a day, although typically MRIs are scheduled and happen during regular business hours of the hospital.

Members asked where the mechanical systems for this addition will be installed and stored. The mechanical systems will be contained in the equipment room and in the MRI addition. There will be no MRI mechanical equipment outside of the building or on the roof of the addition.

The Board received several written comments prior to the meeting from abutters concerned about the potential noise impact of the mechanical equipment proposed for inside the addition.

Additional details on the Board's discussion and conditions of approval can be found in the Decision.

Board Members were generally supportive of approving the request. The proposal is an improvement over the existing conditions of the MRI trailer and the new location of the MRI equipment will generate less noise and potential impact on abutters.

The Board granted the Applicant's request for a Variance, 5-0.

Documents: ZBA Application materials, case 25- 022

OTHER BUSINESS

Review minor revision to case 25 019- 585 Lebanon Street

The Board reviewed the application for a minor revision to case 25-019. Vasu Patel, Project Manager, appeared to present the request, which involves removing the back lighting on the approved sign so that the sign will be only face lit. In addition, the letters will remain white during the day and at night will be illuminated blue as the ZBA conditioned the approval at the previous meeting.

The Board reviewed and approved the request for a minor revision. This approval updated the original decision of the Board of Appeal in that the approval is now for the new signage plans. The first condition of approval no longer applies as the revised plans include the color detail. The second condition of approval remains the same – signage shall not be illuminated between the hours of 11:00pm and 7:00am. The Board approved the request, 5-0.

Documents: ZBA Minor Revision Application materials, case 25- 022

Meeting Minutes

The Board voted, 5-0, to approve the minutes from August 20, 2025 and September 10, 2025. The Board voted, 4-0, to approve the minutes from September 24, 2025, with Chris Coughlin abstaining.

Next Meeting

The next meetings are scheduled for December 3, 2025 and December 10, 2025. The meeting adjourned at 9:35 pm.