

**MELROSE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Meeting and Public Hearing
Monday, June 3, 2019
6:15 PM
Cassidy Conference Room, City Hall, 562 Main Street**

PRESENT: Brad Hutchinson, Justine Sterling, Kevin Erb, Robin Peevey, Judith Sullivan, and Charlene Marinelli

ABSENT: Michael Coleman

Denise Gaffey, Director & City Planner, and Emma Schnur, Senior Planner, were present.

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 PM by Mr. Hutchinson.

In accordance with the Open Meeting Law, Mr. Hutchinson inquired whether anyone would be making a video or audio recording of the meeting. No one in attendance indicated that they would be making such a recording.

I. MINUTES

Ms. Marinelli MADE a MOTION to approve the minutes from April 23, 2019. Ms. Sullivan SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor. None were opposed.

II. APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS

Application for Certificate of Appropriateness: Jeffrey Jones, 638 Main Street (public hearing)

Jeffrey Jones was present to describe the replacement drive-up roof proposed for Melrose Bank (formerly Melrose Cooperative Bank) at 638 Main Street. The Applicant explained that the roof of the drive-up area was recently damaged by a truck. In addition to replacing the drive-up roof, Melrose Bank plans to move the standalone ATM, which is located on the outside lane under the roof, into the building.

According to the Applicant, the only difference between the previous roof and the proposed roof is that the new roof will have a shorter length since it does not need to accommodate the ATM. The existing slate shingles will be repurposed for the roof and white exterior siding and trim which match the existing materials will be utilized. Two metal poles wrapped in white trim support the roof. The height of the roof will remain at nine feet tall. The ATM will replace the drive-up window to the building.

Ms. Sterling MADE a MOTION to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the drive-up roof proposed for 638 Main Street as described in the application. Mr. Erb SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor. None were opposed.

Application for Certificate of Appropriateness: Austin Frakt and others, 647 Main Street (public hearing)

Building co-owners Kris Rodolico, Mike McCormack, and Frank Bochero, along with architect Janis Mamayek, were present to describe the ADA-accessible ramp proposed for the Follow Your Art – Community Art Center at 647 Main Street.

Ms. Rodolico stated that the ramp will start at the driveway to the right of the building and go up the front stairs. It will be constructed with a solid concrete base, either wood or composite posts and handrails, and metal grab rails. The concrete base will be veneered in stone. Members inquired why the ramp would not go in the back of the building. Ms. Mamayak explained that since there are issues with the grade, having the ramp in the proposed location will decrease the ramp size. The driveway tapers down considerably more at the back than in the front so a much longer ramp would be needed. She said that they had explored all the different ramp configurations and location options.

Ms. Sullivan asked if the owners had explored installing a lift instead of constructing a ramp. The state usually installs lifts on historic buildings. Ms. Rodolico said that they expect to install a lift maybe years down the line but it is much more expensive. There is also the timing factor in that a ramp can be installed right away. Ms. Mamayek said that the Architectural Access Board (AAB) also looks more favorably on ramps than lifts because of the community feel. A long-term plan is to connect to the second floor with an internal lift in five to ten years, potentially from the back porch.

Several members expressed reservations about the size of the ramp and its proposed location. There is a concern that the ramp will block views of the house since the ramp is so prominent and on such a narrow lot. Members inquired if the ramp could be pushed back from the sidewalk. Ms. Mamayek explained that this could be a challenge because if the ramp is pushed back, it would pinch the driveway. A small garage is at the back of the driveway, along with five parking spaces that are shared with the First United Methodist Church. Ms. Peevey felt that the ramp as proposed looks inviting, especially since ramps and other accommodations were not even considered in historic buildings.

Ms. Mamayek suggested that she could probably set the ramp back one or two feet. It will be important to see the landscaping and how it shields the ramp. She is also using the stone veneer on the concrete base to soften the look of the ramp. An option is to use the stone wall on the ramp as a planter, like at the neighboring church, and members liked this idea. The ramp's posts will be set in between the concrete and a balustrade will support the rails. There were no objections to trex going around the railing.

Members asked if it would be possible to do an elevated or sloped walkway instead of a ramp. Ms. Mamayek said that would be possible but would require much more length. The only option for this would be to have the walkway on the left side of the building with an entrance at the back. Ms. Mamayek noted that it is generally discouraged to require people with disabilities to use a different entrance than everyone else. Other people will also likely use the ramp, such as individuals with strollers.

It was requested that the architect provide elevations that show the view of the ramp from Main Street, including a comparison of the ramp height and an average person and any landscaping that is proposed to buffer the ramp from the sidewalk. Members also suggested that the building co-owners talk to the condo association about extending the ramp slightly into the driveway so it can be pushed back from the street.

Ms. Sullivan MADE a MOTION to continue the meeting until Monday, June 24, 2019 at 6:15 PM. Mr. Erb SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor. None were opposed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM.