MELROSE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Meeting and Public Hearing
Tuesday, October 27, 2020
7:00 PM
Remote

PRESENT: Brad Hutchinson, Kevin Erb, Justine Sterling, Liz Ryan, Michael Coleman, and Robin Peevey

ABSENT: None

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:12 PM by Ms. Gaffey.

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 limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Melrose Historic District Commission 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 was found on the City of Melrose's website. 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. An audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings was posted on the mmtv3.org website as soon as possible after the meeting. Meeting access information was found at the following link and the plans could be requested by emailing the Senior Planner: www.cityofmelrose.org/remote-meetings.

I. APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Nick & Don Stead, 543-547 Main Street (public hearing)

Nick and Don Stead, along with their architect David Jaquith, were present to describe the proposed elevations submitted for the building at 543-547 Main Street. These elevations explain what materials will be used and they also denote the existing things that will be remaining but repaired, such as the railings on the second floor and the cornice at the top of the building. It is to scale as requested. The building colors will all remain the same.

A member inquired if there would be new doors on the rear to which the Applicants responded yes. They wanted to keep the same Victorian look for the doors. They will be a fiberglass material that can be painted The existing doors at the front of the building will be restored.

Mr. Coleman commented that he is pleased with the elevations and that they are a good record of what the Applicants are proposing to do. He wants to avoid surprises when the work is done. He likes the hand-drawn plan submitted by the architect. The members appreciated the quick-turn around for coming back to the Historic District Commission with the proposed plans.

The Applicants explained that they will be adding a PVC board just below the sign band in the area where the awnings are currently affixed (they are being removed). They currently have a problem with sparrows roosting in this area so they are electing to board it up so the birds cannot enter.

Mr. Coleman MADE a MOTION to approve the façade improvements proposed for 543-547 Main Street as described in the application. Ms. Sterling SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor. None were opposed.

III. OTHER

Rear Signage and Façade Changes for 530 Main Street

David Rudloff was present to describe the rear signage and façade changes proposed for 530 Main Street. He explained that he wanted to show good pictures of the rear after it had been cleaned but the jersey barriers were not removed until the last minute. National Grid will be turning the power on late tonight. He added that Café Nero is planning to open at some point in January.

Mr. Rudloff walked through the variations between the approved permit drawings and what has been built. They decided that they did not want to use Pella clad windows and doors for the front of the building as they are not suitable for high retail use. They are instead going with the Kawneer system. He explained that the front face of the building is very high end.

On the south side of the building adjacent to CVS, they have elected to install a bronze metal panel on the exterior of the CMU elevator shaft. Their team considered brick masonry for this area but the owner of CVS was concerned that his structure would not handle the masonry well during installation. Also on the south side, the third floor parapeted roof deck has been converted to a fitness room. Mr. Coleman asked why they enclosed a space that was not supposed to be enclosed. Mr. Rudloff stated that the deck had no purpose other than to provide a space for a ductless condenser unit and they were concerned with waterproofing this area.

Most of the proposed changes are for the north side of the building. All four of the 2'x4' windows are being relocated to bedrooms because they were otherwise going to be located within the shower/bath area. All four 6'x2' windows will be removed because they fell on the wall location where beds are most likely to be located. There was a concern by the owner about privacy and that the windows would be eventually blocked by the development at 12-16 Essex Street. The "L" windows towards the rear of the third floor will need to be removed because the location was not coordinated with the structural plans. They decided to add a parapet where the guardrail would have been located on the second floor for both safety and privacy. Additionally, most the brick veneer proposed for this façade will be replaced with a metal panel as the owner was concerned about the high cost of masonry for an area that is likely to be hidden by abutting development.

The plans for the tenant signage at the rear were previously presented to the Historic District Commission. Another variation from the rear plans includes changing the door and transom on the third floor. According to Mr. Rudloff, Pella does not make a door that would fit the 4'x9' opening and their exterior door at 3'x8' would not align with the neighboring windows. Mr. Coleman mentioned that the horizontal drop at this door caught his eye and that the transom would have been better.

The group discussed the bump out on the second floor. Mr. Rudloff explained that this occurred because the architectural drawings were not coordinated with the structural drawings. The beam/framing on the second floor runs through the area designed to be open. Members requested that Bergmeyer spend additional time coming up with options to improve the look of this. A member inquired if there is a way to fake what was originally designed. The cornice will be painted in Black Beauty which should make it look better than the current white color.

Lastly, Mr. Rudloff explained the proposal trash and recycling. They will be adding rear access to the dumpster stall so tenants can open it from the back deck. This will be done via four sliding doors on a runner above an 18" knee wall and the dumpster will have a sloped SS metal roof. Twenty feet of wooden guardrail will be added in front of the two parking spaces at the rear.

The Commission agreed to discuss this case further after they have revised sketches from Bergmeyer. Ms. Gaffey also mentioned that all these changes will need to be approved by the Design Review Subcommittee.

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 PM.