

MELROSE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Meeting and Public Hearing
Tuesday, December 8, 2020
7:00 PM
Remote

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

ABSENT: None

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM by Mr. Hutchinson.

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. MINUTES

Mr. Coleman MADE a MOTION to approve the minutes from October 13, 2020 and October 27, 2020. Mr. Erb SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor. None were opposed.

II. OTHER

Façade Changes and Rear Signage for 530 Main Street

David Rudloff was present to describe the façade changes in the as-built conditions for 530 Main Street. This was the third appearance to review exterior changes that occurred in the field without prior HDC review and approval. Mr. Rudloff explained that the rear façade is the area that still needs more work, particularly in terms of the bump-out on the second floor. According to Mr. Rudloff, the beam would have needed to protrude into a bedroom because the architectural and structural designs were not coordinated. At the HDC's request, Bergmeyer reviewed the condition and put together three possible options for improving the aesthetics of the bump-out. Members most liked the option previously suggested by Ms. Sterling that involved extending the line of the aluminum down to align with the header of the opening. They agreed that this is the solution.

Another option provided involved using a panel to fill in and establish the line articulated in the original design. Members felt that this option looked weird and were not pleased with the idea of adding another architectural element/material. They were concerned with how it would look and work in reality. While it does not look so bad from far away, there are enough unknowns. A member pointed out that the bump-out already looks better now that the beam has been painted black.

Mr. Rudloff presented the proposed changes for the trash and recycling area. They have decided to utilize a standing seam metal roof to match the finishings on the building. The original dumpster design had a green roof. From the rear, people will see mahogany doors with a bronze roof. This will also be nice for tenants looking down from the building.

The wooden guardrail, which is located in an easement with the City, is expected to be installed by the end of the month. A member asked if it was necessary to install 20 feet of guardrail since it would appear to hamper pedestrian access to the back deck. The guardrail is needed to protect people since there is no curb stop. Since two parking spots were lost at the rear to make room for National Grid's transformer, a member inquired if the area could be restriped to gain another spot. Mr. Rudloff responded that they do not want to impede access to Waste Management to get the trash and recycling structure. The guardrail has been pushed back so it does not block the doors from opening.

Mr. Coleman MADE a MOTION to modify the existing Certificate of Appropriateness for 530 Main Street issued on February 10, 2017 to reflect the revisions described in the 530 Main Street Change Tracker submitted on December 8, 2020. Ms. Sterling SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor. None were opposed.

The group also briefly discussed the rear signage. The wall sign that was previously approved for Wakefield Co-Operative Bank at the rear of the building will not be possible because of changes to the rear elevation. It was placed where the sign for the residential entrance is supposed to be located and it was not clear to the Commission at the time that there was no entrance to the bank at the back.

The beam that was supposed to contain the rear signage for Café Nero is encased within the structure. As such, Mr. Rudloff presented a proposal that showed the retail tenant signage for both Café Nero and Wakefield Co-Operative Bank within the front fascia of the overhang. Members did not understand why there should still be a sign for the bank at the rear when there is not an entrance there. This would be very confusing to customers and is not allowed by zoning without a variance. Mr. Hutchinson said that things were happening in the wrong order and that the Building Commissioner should first make a determination about the sign. Mr. Rudloff responded that he was not expecting a vote on the sign tonight, he just wanted to present that they are thinking about other options.

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 PM.