

MELROSE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Meeting and Public Hearing
Tuesday, January 4, 2022
7:00 PM
Remote

PRESENT: Michael Coleman, Richard Curl, Brad Hutchinson, Justine Sterling, Lindsay Toghill, Liz Ryan

ABSENT: Kevin Erb

Denise Gaffey, Director & City Planner, and Lori Massa, Senior Planner, were present.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Mr. Hutchinson.

An Act Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency signed by Governor Baker on June 16, 2021, 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

Melrose YMCA to install new vinyl windows (excluding the storefront systems) at 497 Main Street (Continued Public Hearing)

Kathleen Walsh, Katelyn Papadopoulos and Brandon Lamarre from the YMCA, Chuck Holden, Chair of the Board of Directors, and Bob Mansour, Contractor, appeared to present the proposal.

In response to the Commission's request to provide more information on other options for window restoration or replacement to be able to compare these options with the vinyl replacement windows proposed, Ms. Walsh presented a written statement from Pierce Construction that included the cost of \$225,000 and difficulties with lead removal, nine-month to a year timeframe for completion, and limited energy values to restore the windows in the building. She said that they also contacted a company M.G. Hall that had similar comments about the project. Additionally, the Applicants provided pictures of the existing windows. They said that the cost of window restoration and the long timeframe for the work, which would limit the use of the interior space for programing, would be a hardship for them.

Members asked what the cost of the proposed vinyl window replacement is and the estimated time of completion. The response was \$120,000 and six-weeks. They asked if lead abatement was included in this price. Mr. Mansour said that lead abatement would not be needed with the window replacement. Members disagreed because the wood would still be disturbed when installing insulation and the new windows. Mr. Mansour said that foam or fiberglass insulation would be used and the interior of the casing would not need to be removed to insulate the windows.

Members said that the two companies that the Applicants contacted do not specialize in window restoration. Also, they did not provide a detailed quote for the restoration of the windows nor a quote for a replacement wood window. One members said that with 68 windows the estimate would be \$3,300 per window, which is not out of place for this type of work. A wood replacement window may be around the same cost with a shorter installation time. It may take time to get the product but they could account for that delay.

The Commission discussed again at this meeting how the YMCA building is a significant building in the District that has historic and architectural value.

They discussed how the proposed vinyl windows would cover the exterior wood window casing hiding this detail of the building. Ms. Papadopoulos said that they would not replace the first floor windows in the alley because that would disturb the mural that was recently painted on the building. One member said that since the windows are set so far back in the openings it will help to hide the vinyl. Members pointed out that the proposed windows would have a different appearance than the existing windows because of the material and its texture but also because the window components would have different dimensions than the existing windows. They asked if some of the windows that are most visible could be restored. The Applicants said that this would not be possible because most of the windows on the building face Main Street and they do not want to restore all of those windows.

The Commission expressed concern that the proposed vinyl windows would not be of an appropriate quality and character for such a prominent building.

No one appeared to speak during the public hearing portion of the meeting.

Mr. Curl MADE a MOTION to vote on the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the vinyl replacement windows as proposed. Mr. Coleman SECONDED the MOTION. By roll call, all members that are able to vote on the application voted in opposition to granting the Certificate.

They discussed if a Certificate of Hardship could apply to this application considering the Applicant is a not-for-profit, there is a significant difference in cost of the vinyl replacement windows versus the window refurbishment project, and there would be an increased time of disruption of their indoor space for programing with the restoration project.

Mr. Coleman MADE a MOTION to issue a Certificate of Hardship to allow the vinyl replacement windows as proposed. Mr. Hutchinson SECONDED the MOTION. By roll call, Mr. Hutchinson, Mr. Coleman, and Ms. Toghill voted in favor, Mr. Curl and Ms. Sterling voted in opposition, and Ms. Ryan abstained having missed the first session of the public hearing. As four affirmative votes are needed for an approval, the Certificate was denied.

The members that voted in opposition of the Certificate of Hardship found that the Applicant failed to demonstrate that other options were explored fully and therefore it was unknown if the costs and time of installation would be a hardship. It was noted that the quote from Pierce Construction arrived just hours before tonight's hearing allowing very little time for review and it did not provide adequate information. Furthermore, the Applicant did not present a quote from a company that specializes in window restoration or provide information about other window replacement options besides the vinyl window that they originally proposed.

Documents: Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness
Pictures of the existing windows
Stanek Windows Proposal and Specifications dated 11/15/2021
Statement from Pierce Construction

Glenn Crowell to replace roof shingles, brackets, 3 windows, gutters and deteriorated trim at 500-504 Main Street (Continued Public Hearing)

Glenn Crowell, contractor, and Eileen Lyle, Trustee of the property, appeared to present the proposal. At the last meeting the HDC approved the Certificate of Appropriateness except for the material for the sides of the roof. They asked Mr. Crowell to get more information on the cost of replacing just the sides of the mansard roof with slate.

Mr. Crowell provided a proposal for installing slate on the four sides of the building and a quote for installing DaVinci Synthetic Slate. At the meeting he said that neither option will work. He has installed the synthetic slate on the roof where slate has fallen off and the product has curled. He does not recommend using it. The cost of installing slate is too expensive.

The members asked questions to try to compare the quotes because the staging and police detail costs were not in both. Mr. Crowell said that the staging would need to be up for longer with the slate because it takes a longer time to install and the staging needs to be secure to hold the heavy weight of the material. The police detail cost also differs because the project would take a longer time with slate. There is a \$6,000 difference between the slate and synthetic slate quotes but the cost of using these materials is much greater than using asphalt. The total cost for slate on four sides of the roof would be \$84,000, whereas, it would cost \$12,000 with asphalt. Members asked again if the existing slate could be reused and Mr. Crowell said that it cannot.

Ms. Lyle said that they cannot afford to install slate on the sides of the roof. They maintain the appearance of the building and need to replace the roof. She spoke with two other contractors who said that it is not viable to use slate. Since the Greenwood Building on the block has asphalt

shingles on the mansard roof she felt that this building should be able to as well. Her building is less visible than that building.

The timing of when the Greenwood Building's slate shingles were replaced with asphalt was not found with the City's digitized records but it may have been done in the 1980s or before the district was created.

Members discussed if this case could be considered for a Certificate of Hardship but failed to see a rational for this as any property owner in the district could claim a financial hardship because one material is more expensive than another.

A member pointed out that there are only eight buildings in the district left with slate roofs. Also, it was noted by a member that since the last meeting he has been observed that the top portion of the roof is more visible from the street than previously thought so he feels the HDC made a significant compromise to allow the asphalt material on that portion. The asphalt shingles do not have the same appearance as slate.

No one appeared to speak during the public hearing portion of the meeting.

Mr. Curl MADE a MOTION to vote on the portion of the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed GAF Slateline Designer Lifetime Shingle in antique gray to be installed on the four sides of the mansard roof. Mr. Coleman SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in opposition. None were in favor. Ms. Ryan abstained having missed the first session of the public hearing.

The Commission did not find asphalt shingles to be appropriate for the sides of the mansard roof in place of the slate shingles. They noted that all sides of the roof are visible to the public and the mansard roof is an important historic and architectural element of the building. The existing slate material on the mansard roof is a prominent feature and its preservation is important to the quality of the historic district.

Documents: Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness
Quote dated December 30, 2021
Pictures of the synthetic and real slate

Mr. Curl MADE a MOTION to adjourn. Ms. Sterling SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor. None were opposed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.