

MELROSE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, November 14, 2023
7:00 PM
Cassidy Conference Room
City Hall, 562 Main Street

PRESENT: Michael Coleman, Richard Curl, Kevin Erb, Lindsay Toghill & Robert Tullis

ABSENT: None

Lori Massa, Senior Planner, was present.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Mr. Coleman, Acting Chair.

I. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Curl made a motion to approve the October 10, 2023 meeting minutes. Ms. Toghill seconded the motion. All voted in favor. None were opposed.

II. Update on the City Hall generator project

At the October 10, 2023 meeting the Commission discussed a requested change to the protection for the City Hall generator; for which the HDC issued a certificate of appropriateness in 2021. Instead of metal bollards there was a possibility of using granite pieces or boulders in front of the generator for protection. The generator was installed after the October meeting.

Jim Troup, Assistant Director DPW, appeared at the meeting to discuss the details of the proposed change to the generator protection. He reviewed the memo that he provided to the Commission explaining the reason for the requested change from bollards to stones. There is a duct bank approximately 3' below the surface that houses the primary power service to City Hall that created a challenge locating the bollards where they were shown on the plan. Three options were shown to replace the bollards with granite blocks, a guardrail or naturally-shaped stones. For the granite blocks they would try to match the color, texture, and straight edges of the granite base of City Hall as the HDC had previously requested.

Members discussed all of the options and had varying opinions on if the more formal or natural stones would be more appropriate. Members thought that a wood guardrail would bring more attention to the generator and it would not be as strong as the other options. They also considered how plantings would work with the options. Landscaping will be installed in the spring. They discussed shifting the curbline to create more space in front of the generator or bolting bollards to the concrete to make them work. Having an artist paint the generator to transform it into a fun art piece was another idea.

Mr. Curl researched the standards for bollards and provided information to the Commission. The required depth of bollards relates to the speed and distance of the vehicle that they are protecting against. It seemed possible to locate the bollards away from the duct bank and their depth would not need to be great considering the slow speed of the traffic in the alley.

The majority of members agreed that the bollards are the least obtrusive way to protect the generator. As originally approved they would be green to blend in with the grass and other plants that will be installed. They asked Mr. Troup to contact the consultant to reconsider using the bollards and shifting them so that they do not interfere with the duct bank.

Additionally, they requested that the brand labels on the alley side of the equipment are removed. There was also a comment that the hood of the generator is oversized and should be replaced with a smaller hood or removed if possible.

Documents: DPW Memo re: Emergency Generator Project Update

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM.