

MELROSE HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES FOR MONDAY, MAY 8th, 2023 @ 7PM

This meeting of the Melrose Historical Commission was conducted via in-person participation in the Cassidy Room of City Hall, Melrose

CALL TO ORDER

This regular meeting of the Melrose Historical Commission was called to order by new Chair Kimberly Marolda at 7:04pm. Members present in addition to Chair Marolda were Vice Chair Tom Champoux, Secretary Kate Roberts, Joe Hunt, and Shane Egan. General members of the public present were former MHC member Jim Bennett, community concern presenter Megan McDonough, and the MHC's two high school interns. Absent from the meeting was MHC member George Bibilos.

ORDERS OF BUSINESS

The first order of business was to approve the previous meeting's minutes from April 3rd, 2023, which were universally approved by the Commission.

Second order of business was to open the forum for comments from the public, of which there was one from Megan McDonough, who was present to advocate against the Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational High School (Northeast Metro Tech or NEMT) Building Project on the Saugus-Wakefield border in Wakefield. McDonough revisited the desire for an archeological review of the NEMT construction site (see notes from March 6th, 2023, meeting for reference), stating that she has similarly appealed directly to the Wakefield Historical Commission without success.

Chair Marolda noted that there is not much more that the Melrose Historical Commission can do if the Commission within the site's jurisdiction were unable to push forward such a review, but that we would write a letter of advocacy. However, that would be the end of our involvement.

DISCUSSION***I. Research Your Home Night Planning***

- a. This event has not been in effect since pre-pandemic.
- b. Vice Chair Champoux stated that Temple Beth Shalom has agreed to host, to be held on Wednesday, May 10th, 2023, at 7pm.
 - i. Temple has appropriate presentation technology to highlight demos on how to use available resources and conduct online searches, in addition to Wi-Fi, large

presentation screens with Bluetooth / casting connectivity, outlets, ample tables and chairs, and space for each participant to spread out their research.

- c. Egan reviewed the items that are permissible for borrowing from the local history section of the Public Library, in addition to items we can list as further resources after the event from both the Library and City Hall. Egan will continue to gather materials for use at the event.
 - i. Former Commission member Bennett has previously mentioned that many items have been digitized since the last event, and that the homeancestry.com account is available for use via the Public Library. Fire Insurance Maps are also available online via the Library of Congress.
 - ii. Vice Chair Champoux has previously mentioned that census records online are good resources, in addition to potential resources via the Registry of Deeds and MACRIS to assist with homeowner history and architectural development details.
- d. Vice Chair Champoux and Egan reviewed the PowerPoint presentation which will serve as introduction at the event, which will also be circulated to all attendees to use as reference.
 - i. Agenda for evening will begin with a brief introduction and general overview of how to best utilize any available resources, to be visualized through the PowerPoint, with the remainder of the evening opened for independent work. Lecture-style presentations should be avoided, and the Commission is encouraged to brainstorm ideas as to how to make the event more immersive for attendees.
 - ii. The presentation will not be a comprehensive list of resources but is meant to serve only as a jumping off point.
- e. There will also be a donation box present at these events for attendees to consider.
- f. All attendees (22 total houses) signed up ahead of time via the MHC e-mail with the address intended for research, Egan was then able to pre-research each location as a courtesy to each participant. Attendees have been requested to bring their own laptops to use for research at the event.
- g. Chair Marolda, Vice Chair Champoux, Secretary Roberts, and Egan volunteered to host the event.

II. High School Internship Program

- a. Egan had previously drafted a proposal to connect with the Melrose High School to establish a photography internship, which could be utilized by the Commission to update our archives with interior / exterior photos of historically significant buildings. The High School principal has included the program on the list of approved intern projects.
- b. Egan introduced the two assigned interns, Lex and Riley, who presented samples of their photography work on the archive update.

III. Public Comment Policy

- a. Egan presented a draft version, which had been provided by the City Solicitor (attachment), with Chair Marolda walking the group through each bullet point.
- b. Member of the public Jim Bennett suggested to remove the limitations of 15 minutes per public speaker, with the verbiage instead stating that “it will be up to the Chair to ensure all public commentary is wrapped up in a timely manner.”
- c. It was also suggested to remove bullet point #5 (“all speakers are encouraged to present their remarks in a respectful manner”) as we cannot regulate how the public would present themselves.
- d. Chair Marolda will update the document and will call for a vote at June meeting for approval of the policy.

IV. Open Meeting Laws

- a. Chair Marolda presented the Massachusetts Open Meeting Laws for review (<http://www.dmlp.org/legal-guide/open-meetings-laws-massachusetts> and <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/frequently-asked-questions-about-the-open-meeting-law#:~:text=The%20Open%20Meeting%20Law%20defines,order%2C%20or%20other%20authorizing%20provision>) to educate new members on the rules and regulations of Commission discussions and quorum votes.
- b. Chair Marolda will draft a document detailing pertinent information for reference, to be placed in MHC document archives.

V. Vacated Seat

- a. There is one vacant seat on the Commission (three-year term) due to former Chair Kate Monea's term completion (Monea chose not to renew her term).
 - i. Former Chair Kate Monea chose not to renew her term.
- b. Chair Marolda and Vice Chair Champoux have been reviewing applicants that have been sent for consideration.
 - i. Vice Chair Champoux stated that it is the Commission's responsibility to make a suggestion as to whom we would like to promote, but the Mayor makes the final decision on who to put in front of the voting party of City Council.
 - ii. Chair Marolda proposed an Executive Session immediately following the June Commission meetings to discuss candidates and finalize recommendations to the Mayor. Chair Marolda and Vice Chair Champoux will determine the top three candidates prior to said Executive Session and will have completed Zoom interviews with each.

NEXT MEETING

All future meetings have been scheduled to take place in the Cassidy Room of City Hall, the first Monday of every month at 7pm (ongoing room reservation has been arranged). Next meeting will be Monday, June 5th, at 7pm.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Marolda at 8:21pm.