

**MELROSE PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Regular Meeting
Monday, August 26, 2024
7:00 PM
Cassidy Conference Room, 562 Main Street, Melrose**

PRESENT: Greg Sampson, Tim Bailey, Beth Delahaij, Carla Morelli, Michael Aveni, Anne DeSouza Ward, Paul King & Jack Welch

ABSENT: Brian Gregory

STAFF PRESENT: Denise Gaffey, Director & City Planner, Lori Massa, Senior Planner, & Maya Noviski, Assistant Planner

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Planning Board Regular Meeting, July 22, 2024

Mr. Aveni made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Mr. Welch seconded the motion. All voted in favor. None were opposed.

Design Review Subcommittee Meeting, July 22, 2024

Mr. Welch made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Ms. Morelli seconded the motion. All voted in favor. None were opposed.

Joint Public Hearing with City Council, August 19, 2024

Ms. DeSouza Ward suggested amending the minutes to correct an error on the first page. Ms. DeSouza Ward made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as amended. Mr. Welch seconded the motion. All voted in favor, except for Ms. Morelli and Mr. Aveni who abstained because they did not attend the hearing. None were opposed.

ZONING RECODIFICATION AMENDMENT

The Planning Board discussed the comments and questions posed by the City Councilors at the Joint Public Hearing around topics such as changes to the regulations and impacts to properties; sign regulations; nonconforming structures and lots; applicability of the State's New Affordable Homes Act; dormers; mixed-use commercial parking requirements; zoning fines; case sharing between Boards; expansion of the Site Plan Review threshold; green roofs; stakeholder selection; and timeline for public comment. Members also discussed removing the word "generally" from the definition of Retail Food Establishment and updating the regulation that requires a property owner to receive a special permit to expand a parking lot by one space but did not propose changes related to these items.

Lori Massa, Senior Planner, explained that the Building Commissioner recommended removing Section 235-57 of the current Zoning Ordinance and 235-3.2.1.d of the proposed ordinance that regulates permit time limits for a building permit because this language is in the Massachusetts State Building Code and our regulations are more restrictive than the State's, which is not allowed. The Building Commissioner also recommended adding language to establish a standard for calculating a parcel's average finished grade and Members suggested measuring the grade at 6 ft. intervals around the perimeter of the building.

Planning Board Members recommended the following updates to the recodified zoning ordinance:

- Updating the proposed diagram included with the dormer regulations to portray a roof that does not have an overhang at the gable end to show a housing typology that is typical in Melrose.
- Changing the “-“ to a “x” in the Use Table to indicate when a use is not allowed.
- Removing Section 235-3.2.1.d Permit Time Limits
- Clarifying Section 235-6.3.4 to establish a standard for calculating a parcel's average finished grade
- Other small wordsmithing edits to improve clarity

Mr. Sampson made a motion to accept the recommended changes to the recodified zoning ordinance and send a report detailing the Planning Board's findings to City Council. Ms. DeSouza Ward seconded the motion. All voted in favor. None were opposed.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Gaffey informed Members that the Board of Appeals' approval of the Comprehensive Permit at 164 Essex St. in July 2024 made the City eligible to apply for certification of the City's Housing Production Plan that comes with a one-year of safe harbor from the requirement of approving Comprehensive Permit Applications and the State approved the request. This certification is effective until July 9, 2025.

Ms. Massa reminded Members that there will be a training with Jonathan Silverstein of Blatman, Bobrowski, Haverty & Silverstein, LLC, one of the City's consultants for the zoning recodification project, on zoning case topics and the recodified zoning ordinance on September 4, 2024.

The next regular Planning Board meeting is scheduled for September 23, 2024.

The meeting adjourned at 8 PM.