

MELROSE PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Regular Meeting
Monday, October 28, 2024
7:00 PM
Cassidy Conference Room, 562 Main Street, Melrose

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

ABSENT: Tim Bailey

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

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Planning Board Regular Meeting, August 26, 2024

Ms. DeSouza Ward made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Mr. Welch seconded the motion. All voted in favor except for Paul King who was not present during the time of the vote. None were opposed.

Design Review Subcommittee Meeting, September 16, 2024

Ms. Morelli made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Mr. Aveni seconded the motion. All voted in favor except for Paul King who was not present during the time of the vote. None were opposed.

MINOR MODIFICATION TO SITE PLAN APPROVAL

Case 23-005, 521-529 Franklin Street

Robert Johnson, Applicant, Erik Zachrison, Architect, Robert Bell, Attorney, and Ryan Chess, Project Manager, appeared before the Board. Attorney Bell explained that Mr. Johnson purchased the property from Matt Roman, who originally permitted the project, but has made some design changes in response to the feedback given by the Planning Board during the public hearings for the project. Mr. Zachrison noted that the updated design includes fiber cement paneling with different trims and panels. He explained that the color scheme has not yet been decided. Board Members agreed that the design presented a modern take on gothic style that was more compatible with Corinthian Hall. It was confirmed that the number of units and parking spaces are not changing.

Mr. Johnson noted that an emergency generator was added onsite for the elevator and the generator will run for 15 minutes a month, but it can be set to run during the day, so it is not disruptive to abutters. He also confirmed that the proposed transformer location was approved by National Grid. One Board Member suggested that Mr. Johnson review the proposed location of

the emergency generator with the Melrose Fire Department to ensure that the placement is acceptable.

Board Members wondered about the 15-minute parking space on the property off Greenwood Street. Mr. Johnson noted that he is keeping the space, and it will be paved. One Member suggested replacing the proposed plantings at the front of the building with permeable pavers that are flush with the sidewalk so a truck can go right up against the building. One Member noted that there should be a continuous sidewalk across the driveway.

Members wondered if the square footage of the building has changed. Mr. Johnson explained that the floor plates are smaller to make space for the transformer but the top floor is larger so the net square footage is 150 sf. larger.

Members agreed that the changes were positive and de minimis.

Ms. Morelli made a motion to approve the plans as a minor modification. Mr. Aveni seconded the motion. All voted in favor. None were opposed.

Documents: Revised architectural plan set submitted October 18, 2024

PLANNING BOARD RULES AND REGULATIONS

Lori Massa, Director & City Planner, reviewed a draft of the newly created Planning Board Rules and Regulations. She explained that the document provides the Board with more autonomy to update certain application procedures that were previously embedded in the old zoning code and required a zoning amendment to alter. The Rules and Regulations also include information about meeting logistics and reference Bicycle Parking Design Guidelines and Sustainable Design Guidelines for Members to consider when reviewing cases. These guidelines are available on the City's website for the public, as well. She noted that Planning Staff are also in the process of updating the special permit, site plan review, and subdivision application forms.

Members agreed to review the draft document and provide comments before the next hearing.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Massa informed Members that the City Council voted to approve the Recodified Zoning Ordinance on October 21, 2024, as proposed.

The next regular Planning Board meeting is scheduled for November 18, 2024.

The meeting adjourned at 8:13 PM.