



City of Medford

HISTORICAL COMMISSION

City Hall – Room 308
85 George P. Hassett Drive
Medford, Massachusetts 02155

Medford Historical Commission Annual Report 2017

Membership:

Ryan D. Hayward, Chair (Term Ex. 12/1/2019)
Doug Carr, Vice Chair and Secretary (Term Ex. 12/1/2019)
Benjamin Johnson, Commissioner (Term Ex. 12/1/2018)
Richard T. Northrup, Esq., Commissioner (Term Ex. 12/1/2020)
Abigail Salerno, Commissioner (Term Ex. 12/1/2020)
Jennifer Keenan, Commissioner (Term Ex. 12/1/2018)
Edward Wiest, Commissioner (Term Ex. 12/1/2019)

Daniel J. Menezes, Commissioner (Term Ex. 12/1/2018 deceased)

Meetings:

Second Monday of every month, except as noted below, 7PM, Room 201, Medford City Hall.

Meeting Dates: January 9, February 20, March 13, April 10, May 8, June 12, July 10, August 14, September 11, October 16, November 13, December 11.

Contact:

Email: HistoricalCommission@Medford-MA.gov

Activities of the Commission:

- Worked with the purchaser-developers of various properties to preserve historically important buildings and structures about the City with irregular degrees of success. See the demolition delay section below for more specifics on each individual project.
- Worked with the City Council to complete the revisions to the demolition delay ordinance begun in 2016. The most significant changes extend the demolition delay from six (6) to eighteen (18) months and expands the properties subject to demolition day from structures constructed prior to

1900 to any constructed seventy-five (75) or more years ago.

- Maintained a regular online presence by keeping our website up to date with the latest agendas, meeting minutes and blog postings. We will continue to refresh this on a monthly basis.
- Filled all the Commission's vacant seat and opened 2018 with a full board.
- Filled the Commission's seat on the Community Preservation Committee with Commissioner Doug Carr.
- Continued to work with MassDOT on the Cradock Bridge project. The Commission inquired about the status of granite blocks from the original bridge that were not incorporated into the new design, per the original plans. MassDOT plans on using these blocks as planters, since installing in the now completed portion of the bridge would not be possible.
- John Anderson of the Medford Historical Society (MHS) updated the Commission on the status of the sale of the Peter Tufts House. The MHS had been unable to sell the property and was proposing the addition of a driveway in an attempt to make the property more marketable. The Commission was requested to provide a letter stating that the Commission has no jurisdiction over a proposed new driveway. The Commission declined to provide such a letter, since no plans were provided, but does plan to comment on the driveway as part of our purview on historic properties.
- Commission sent a letter to the Massachusetts Historic Commission questioning its determination that the seventy five foot (75') cell phone towers located at 63 Tyler Avenue and 59 Charnwood Avenue had no impact on nearby historical properties. The Massachusetts Historic Commission rescinded its determination due to the objections of the Commission and other impacted communities. The project was ultimately placed on hold.
- Commission obtained historical photos and architectural plans for the Medford Public Library made available for sale through eBay.
- Provided a letter of support, as requested by the owner of 57 Logan Avenue, for the creation of a turret sloped roof on a truncated existing building.
- Record books were discovered in the basement of City Hall. These books contained data on all buildings, owners, architects from 1895-1925.
- Commission created template letters to be sent to new Medford homeowners with homes older than seventy-five (75) years and to real estate agents listing homes older than seventy-five (75) years informing them of the historic nature of the home and the obligations of the demolition delay ordinance.
- In pursuance of CPA projects, the Commission was requested to provide letters of historic status, and did provide such letters, for the following projects:
 - Medford Historical Society's collection;
 - Condon Shell

o Gillis Center

- The Commission applied for a survey and planning grant to survey the Wellington neighborhood. We are waiting to hear back from the Massachusetts Historical Commission on the results.

New Inventory Forms:

The Commission added the following properties to the historical inventory as part of individual projects, including the demolition delay:

- 15/15A Cotting Street
- 213 Park Street
- 18 Walnut Street
- 87 Medford Street
- 244-250 Central Avenue
- 71 Dexter Street
- 231 Park Street

Summary of forms added under the East Medford Phase II Survey and Planning Grant project:

- 177 historic resources were documented. 39 individual MHC form B were prepared and the remaining buildings were covered under three MHC form A.

Site Plan Review:

The Office of Community Development solicited, and the Commission provided, comments on the following requests for site plan review:

- 87 Medford Street
- Peter Tufts House driveway
- 244 Central Avenue
- 61 Locust Street
- 7 Canal Street

Community and Section 106 Project Reviews:

The Massachusetts Historical Commission and other local organizations solicited, and the Commission provided, comments of the following projects:

- MBTA Signals
- Woods Memorial Panel
- MBTA cell towers located at 63 Tyler Ave and 59 Charnwood Ave
- MBTA train control antennas

Demolition Delay:

The following properties reviewed and actions:

- 17 Everett, 4-6 Court Street, 236 Salem Street, 240-244 Salem Street – At a meeting held on February 20, 2017, the Commission voted to accept the application for demolition after Grace Lehrbach of EVB Design, on behalf of the owner, presented the new building design. At the following meeting held on March 13, 2017, the Commission voted to find 17 Everett Street and 4-6 Court Street historically significant. On April 10, 2017 at the Commission’s regular meeting, the Commission rejected motions to find 17 Everett Street and 4-6 Court Street preferably preserved. Proponent of the demolition made an offer to allow the Commission to document the property as part of the demolition and would consider trying to sell the carriage house located at 17 Everett Street. All of the properties have yet to be demolished.
- 15/15A Cotting Street –At the meeting held on March 13, 2017, the Commission reviewed and approved an application for demolition. At the following meeting on April 10, 2017, the Commission voted to find the property preferably preserved. On May 8, 2017, at its regular meeting, the Commission voted to find 15/15A Cotting Street preferably preserved and a six (6) month demolition delay was imposed. During the delay, the Commission proposed that the delay would be lifted if the massing in the front of the building was preserved and if the front architectural door surround was preserved. Commissioner Doug Card reached out to the owner and architect, but did not receive a response. After several months without a response from the owner, the Commission proposed lifting the demolition delay if the existing brackets were re-used in the new design.
- 18 Walnut Street –At the Commission meeting held on April 10, 2017, the Commission voted to accept a demolition application for this property, subject to confirmation of owner’s approval of the application within 15 days of the vote. At the following meeting, held on May 8, 2017, the Commission voted to find 18 Walnut Street historically significant. On June 12, 2017, after numerous public comments, the Commission voted to find 18 Walnut Street preferably preserved and imposed a six (6) month demolition delay. During the delay, the Commission proposed a new concept to maintain the existing house and build a new house on the remainder of the property. Additionally the Commission would have design review over both houses. The developer agreed to these conditions and executed a memorandum of understanding.
- 87 Medford Street –On May 8, 2017, the Commission voted to accept an application for demolition of 87 Medford Street. The Commission rejected a motion to find the property historically significant at a meeting held on June 12, 2017.
- 244-250 Central Avenue – The Commission received a demolition application and voted to accept the application on July 10, 2017. At the following meeting held on August 14, 2017 a vote to find the property at 244-250 Central Avenue historically significant failed. The owners, however, indicated an interest in incorporating the history of the A&P store formerly located on the property as well as the history of the Murphy family, potentially through the use of a historical marker.
- 71 Dexter Street – At the meeting held on August 14, 2017, the Commission voted to accept a demolition application for 71 Dexter Street. The Commission failed to find the property

historically significant at the regular meeting held on September 11, 2017.

Goals for 2018

- Find a suitable candidate to fill a part-time support position to aid the Commission.
- Complete applications for CPA funded projects.
- Publish the results of the neighborhood surveys and the survey plans for the public to have access. This should also link to the MACRIS database at the Massachusetts Historical Commission.
- Request additional funding for the following fiscal year from the Mayor's office beyond the additional grant funding.

Respectfully submitted,



Ryan D. Hayward
Commission Chairman

March 12, 2018