



City of Medford

HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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

Medford Historical Commission Annual Report 2018

Membership:

Ryan D. Hayward, Chair (Term Ex. 12/1/2019)
Abigail Salerno, Vice Chair (Term Ex. 12/1/2020)
Jennifer Keenan, Vice Chair (Term Ex. 12/1/2021)
Doug Carr, Secretary (Term Ex. 12/1/2019)
Benjamin Johnson, Commissioner (Term Ex. 12/1/2021)
Richard T. Northrup, Esq., Commissioner (Term Ex. 12/1/2020)
Edward Wiest, Commissioner (Term Ex. 12/1/2019)

Meetings:

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

Meeting Dates: January 8, February 12, March 19, April 9, April 23, May 14, June 11, July 9, July 31, August 20, September 17, October 15, November 14, December 10

Contact:

Email: HistoricalCommission@Medford-MA.gov

Activities of the Commission:

- Worked with owners, purchasers and developers on various properties reviewed under the demolition delay ordinance. This is the first full year where we reviewed buildings 75 years or older and imposed an 18 month delay. One property had a demolition delay imposed. One illegal demolition occurred without a permit and the board imposed the mandatory two year delay. We are working on improving our review process for the Building Department and general public. This has resulted in quicker turnaround time for non-significant structures (such as garages). See the demolition delay section below for specifics on each individual project.
 - A sub-committee was established to pre-screen the applications for outbuildings, garages

and other small, inconsequential, buildings. These are buildings of limited importance. The goal is to eliminate the burden of full board review unless believed necessary. This allows quicker signoff on demo permits. The two applications we received were turned around in less than a week after receipt.

- 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. Information within these pages is regularly distributed across the City's website and other local news sources (Medford Transcript, Medford News, Social Media, etc.).
- Maintained a full board throughout 2018. Commissioners expect to maintain their seats throughout 2019.
- Doug Carr served as the Commission's appointment to the Community Preservation Committee. He provided regular updates as to progress, number of applications, funding, and more. The Commission provided him with direction when questions arose, such as our priorities in the Community Preservation Plan.
- We partnered with several community organizations to provide feedback on various community based projects:
 - John Anderson of the Medford Historical Society and Museum (MHSM) updated the Commission on the progress with the Peter Tufts House. MHSM has been unable to sell the property and proposed building a driveway. He provided the Commission with a design which the board was receptive of. The project proceeded shortly thereafter and the building has since been sold.
 - Carissa Demore of Historic New England updated the Commission regarding revisions forthcoming to the Preservation Restriction at the Peter Tufts House. She noted the new restriction strengthens the existing reviewable materials and will clarify the review process. The Commission supported these revisions and provided a letter to City Council.
 - Roberta Cameron asked the Commission for information regarding the City's ownership of Wrights Pond. The Commission reviewed deeds and land transfers and provided this information for the CPC committee to review.
 - Dee Morris has asked the Historical Commission to partner with the Cemetery Trustees in a future CPC application which will rehabilitate the WWI memorial at Oak Grove. The Commission believes this to be an important community landmark worthy of our attention. We will be beginning with a press release to raise awareness about the location'
- We participated in a roundtable discussion regarding the presence and future of the Triangle Trade WPA art project located within the Medford Post Office. We continue to provide feedback to the community regarding ongoing discussions about the mural.
- In pursuance of CPA projects, the Commission submitted two applications to the CPC committee

which have been approved and funded:

- Thomas Brooks Park and Old Slave Wall Master Plan
 - Oak Grove Historic Landscape Rehabilitation
- The Commission applied for and received a survey and planning grant to survey the Wellington neighborhood. We were one of seven communities this year (a low number) and were approved because of our Certified Local Government status.

New Inventory Forms:

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

- Gillis Field
- 15 Maple Park Avenue
- 58 Logan Avenue
- 109 Forest Street
- 149 Forest Street
- 155 Forest Street
- 177-179 College Avenue
- 595 Broadway
- 527 Boston Avenue
- 646 Boston Avenue
- 77 Cotting Street
- 368-374 Main Street
- 137 Damon Road
- 509-511 Main Street
- Thomas Brooks Park
- Slave Wall
- Oak Grove Cemetery – Rock Pasture (original section)

Summary of forms added under the Medford Square South 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:

- 61 Locus Street
- Medford Police Station

Community and Section 106 Project Reviews:

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

- Peter Tufts House Driveway and Preservation Restriction Support with Historic New England
- Complete Streets and Brooks School/High Street Improvements
- Community Resilience Workshop
- Lawrence Memorial Hospital Development
- Wrights Pond Ownership History

Demolition Delay:

The following properties reviewed and actions:

- 44-46 Logan Avenue – Demolition of an 1889-1898 carriage house was completed without a permit. The Commission reviewed the demolition under its noncompliance clause of the Demolition Delay bylaw. The building was found **Significant** at the April 9, 2018 meeting and invoked a 2 year stay of all permits on the property. A letter was sent to the Building Commissioner, Paul Mochi, and cc'd to John Bavuso.
- 58 Logan Avenue – The owner of this early 20th century dwelling wished to demolish the structure for the construction of a new house. The building was found **Significant** at a special meeting on April 23. It was found to be **not Preferably Preserved** at the May 14 meeting. The Commission signed off on the demolition, which occurred roughly one year after signoff.
- 178-179 College Avenue – Tufts University submitted an application to demolish the two buildings on their campus for new construction. 177 College Avenue was constructed after 1950 and was not applicable for review. 179 College Avenue was built in 1929 but was found **not Significant** per the bylaw and the owners were allowed to move forward with their project.
- 527 Boston Avenue – Tufts University submitted an application for the demolition of a one story garage fronting Boston Avenue. The site had an interesting history told through documents and recorded on an MHC form B. The building was deemed **not Significant** and the project moved forward with permitting.
- 77 Cotting Street – The owners wished to demolish the existing residence for a new prefabricated structure. This was a mid-nineteenth century dwelling house similar to others on the streetscape. The building was found **Significant** at its July 31 meeting but **not Preferably Preserved** at the August 20 meeting. A signoff letter was issued and the building has yet to be demolished.
- 368-374 Main Street – The current owners sale of the building hinged on plans of the purchaser to secure approval for redevelopment. The Commission found the building, an interesting example of Art Deco Architecture to be **Significant and Preferably Preserved** and thus invoking the 18 month delay of permits. The applicant withdrew their application before the next meeting and the owners resolved to keep their business (a restaurant) open for the time being.

- 137 Damon Road – A residential house, the owners wished to build a larger dwelling for themselves in this remote location of the Lawrence Estates. The building was found **Significant** but **not Preferably Preserved**. The project is currently being delayed in land court.
- 51 Fulton Street Garage – The Commission received an application to demolish the garage at 51 Fulton Street. The building was determined **not Significant** at our July 9 meeting. Several board members questioned the intent for the main house and requested a review of partial demolition. The building owner secured a permit without such review and the house was ultimately demolished down to one wall. A new two family residence now occupies the entire parcel. **As a result of this project, the Commission revised its procedures to prevent this type of circumvention of process.**
- 595 Broadway – Spanning the line between Medford and Somerville, the demolition of this nineteenth century house was reviewed by the Commission. The project was found to be **not significant** at the October 15 meeting and the applicant was allowed to proceed with permitting processes.
- 509 Main Street – Located just south of Medford Square, this unassuming dwelling and garage had ties to the early 20th century development of South Medford. After reviewing the MHC form, the Commissioners determined the building was **not Significant** and did not rise to the level necessary for the next step of review. The building is presently being prepared for demolition.
- 67 Magoun Avenue – A large and ambitious carriage house came before the board for review. The building relates to the adjacent Medford Hospital building, a private institution that was constructed in an elaborate Queen Anne Victorian dwelling. It is presently being used as a multi-family dwelling house. The building was found **Significant and Preferably Preserved** and is currently under demolition delay.

Goals for 2019

- Request additional funding in FY 2020 for a part time staff person to aid the Commission. At the proposed salary, this would require a \$20,800 increase. We will discuss this with the Mayor's office in advance of hearings in May/June. We will then assist in finding a suitable candidate once the position has been created.
- Provide more presence within the community by attending various local events. These include, but are not limited to: Tufts Community Day, Medford Day, Mystic River Festival, Circle in the Square, Medford Farmers Market, etc. Commissioners will make a list of all the events happening in 2019 and prioritize 2-4 events to attend.
- Improve connectivity between local community, applicants and city boards/departments. We will begin by making business cards available with our general email and mailing address. We will then reach out to all City boards to discuss future collaboration. We have prioritized the Community Development, ZBA and Cemetery Trustees organizations. We will also improve our line of communication between the Building Department and OCD. We also acknowledge we have a new Clerk and will need to meet with him to discuss working together to preserve City records.

- Complete applications for additional CPC funded projects. We will investigate our options starting in spring, 2019.
- 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.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer M Keenan" with a decorative flourish at the end.

Jennifer Keenan
Commission Chair

July 1, 2019