



City of Medford

HISTORICAL COMMISSION
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

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

August 12, 2019 Medford Historical Commission Hearing Minutes

Medford City Hall – Howard F. Halden Hall Memorial Auditorium (City Council Chambers) - Meeting called to order at 7:13pm.

Members present: Ryan Hayward, Doug Carr, Jennifer Keenan, Ben Johnson, Edward Wiest, Abigail Salerno. Absent: Peter Miller.

109 Forest Street – Determination if Preferably Preserved. Jen K. explained 3-step demo review process. **Motion** to find 109 Forest Street **Preferably Preserved**. All commissioners noted building's architectural qualities; consensus that the building is significant in both the individual building and its impact on the neighborhood. An early and well-preserved representative examples of Colonial architecture, setting the table for the future development of the Lawrence Estates.

Proponents: David Johnson, Steve Singer (attorney from Wakefield). Detailed description of process from developers' perspective. Asked for one variance to subdivide the property into 2 properties, which was rejected. Proponent presented a board of photos and that there are 15 other properties in Medford that proponent argued were similar in style and quality to 109 Forest Street and that therefore this was not unique.

Public comments (limited to Form B only, not the proposed development): broad general support for Preferably Preserved by 23 attendees who spoke:

Public Comments:

- Lynn Freitas 26 Stearns Ave – wants developer to sell this great property to someone who would save the building.
- Rick Orlando, 13 Winfred Way – concerned that 18 month demo delay doesn't have any teeth. Challenged the characterization of Demo Delay as having any real impact since developers can wait it out.
- Jean Nuzzo, 35 Paris Street – thinks there were opportunities to have a better development early in the process, before the new house was added behind 109 Forest Street.
- Tom Callahan – 22 Ashcroft Road – 36 years in Medford. Doesn't want to lose that house. No reason to demolish it. Its loss diminishes Medford. It is at prominent place in Medford

- Leslie Aiwerioghene, 9 Woodland Ave – Wants a Historic District, great houses in Medford.
- John Costas, 56 Haines Street – Question about creating a historic district at this location – the logistics and timing.
- Ken Krause, 50 Mystic Street – Supports saving house. Recounted process when developer went before ZBA. The fifteen similar properties the proponent is actually an argument in favor of saving the property.
- Susan Morrissey, 6 Keith Road – community trying to catch up with developers. More regulation from Medford is needed.
- John Cyr – 40 Cedar Road – supports saving the property.
- Lynette Bloom, 10 Oak Bluff – walks Medford all the time. Loves Medford history. We need to keep this building to remind us of our history.
- Frank Capone, 10 Water Street – echoes previous comments. Heritage of house is deep in Medford.
- Breanna Lungo-Kearn, 19 Richard Street – Asks for 18 month demo delay to be invoked. Medford is waking up, we will protect historic properties in Medford.
- Luke Preisner, 140 Forest Street – lives down the street. 109 was a SF home on a large lot, now another 2 houses. Large negative impact on neighborhood.
- Mike Silvia, 146 Forest Street – this project is starting to turn the tide on developers.
- Wes Andreason, 79 Fountain Street – change in scale and quality by developers.
- Jen Valentine, West Medford – grew up in Medford, lived all around country and feels strongly that the character of the neighborhood is important, greed less.
- Andrew Castanetti, 23 Cushing Street – longtime Medford resident. Medford does a poor job of maintaining its important buildings.
- Brook Carziali, 30 Summer Street – recent developments are poor quality and hurting the character of Medford. Wants the building preserved.
- Greg Bailiss, 85 Roosevelt Road. Financial incentives for the developer make the development tough to beat vs. saving the building.
- Erin Rumley, 216 Grove Street – Grew up right around the block from this house, there is no right to pack as many houses on a lot as possible. Support demo delay.
- Petitioner final comments: Thank everyone for their comments. Respects everyone's comments. Clients still do not want to demo the house. Three houses on property proposed on the property was and is the plan – 2 new duplexes and 109 Forest. If we had gotten the ZBA variance, this would not be taking place tonight. We are hoping to find a way to meet our project needs without knocking the house down. We will work with MHC to try our best efforts to this house is not compromised.
- Erin DiBenedetto, 21 Dearborn Street – Question: Variance denied, are the proponents appealing the ruling? Proponent: yes, we are appealing the variance denial. The appeal process is just beginning.
- Rick Orlando, 13 Winfred Way – with respect to appealing the ZBA denial, I take exception to the characterization of denial, which is to protect neighborhoods. Please stop blaming the ZBA for not granting the variance. Proponent respectfully disagreed.
- 7 letters received via email in support of Preferably Preserved (not read for time constraints, but will be entered into the public record. There were no public comments or letters in support of the proponents.

Jen Keenan, in response to a question about the next steps: If Demo Delay is enacted, it goes into effect tonight for 18 months. Packet of options that we ask the developer to review. #1 option on the list is to save and rehab the property. Property owner needs to look at alternatives in good faith. MHC will not lift Demo Delay until all options have been explored.

Ryan Hayward noted that the Medford Historic District Commission is reviewing the possibility of the creation of a Historic District for the entire length of Forest Street along with the neighbors. This is a separate effort from this Board. If a Historic District were enacted, it would pull Demo Delay from this Board to the Medford HDC and all demo requests regarding 109 Forest Street would go thru Medford HDC.

Abigail Salerno: MACCRIS background info discussed, not necessarily a reflection of whether the property is significant (work in progress).

Approved, 5-0. Motion passes. 18 month demo delay imposed on the property.

541 Winthrop Street – Package received. MHC to write letter by 8/15/19. Letter to request more information.

Site Plan Review – 40B at 4000 Mystic Valley Parkway. Submitted by Mill Creek Developer.

Demo Delay Update

- **421 High Street.** Question about documentation and requested minor design comments. Waiting on walk-through of the property.
- **16 Foster Court** – Letter received with proponent options and request to appear at the September meeting.

Update on CPA Projects – Oak Grove Cemetery (RFQ sent) & Thomas Brooks Park (contract received).

Prescott Street – City of Medford has not engaged in process.

Fall Community Events – Discussion of events and materials.

Minutes – July 2019 minutes reviewed. **Motion** to accept Minutes. **Approved, 5-0.**

Stoneham – 120' Monopole proposed near intersection of Route 93 and 28 in the Middlesex Fells; D. Carr wrote draft letter objecting to project.

Motion to adjourn at 9:12pm. **Approved, 5-0.** Notes by D. Carr.

Next meeting: Monday, September 9th, 2019, **7:00pm**, Medford City Hall, Room 201.