



City of Medford

HISTORICAL COMMISSION
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

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

Medford Historical Commission Annual Report 2019

Membership:

Jennifer Keenan, Chair (Term Ex. 12/1/2021)
Ryan D. Hayward, Vice Chair (Term Ex. 12/1/2019)
Doug Carr, Secretary (Term Ex. 12/1/2019)
Abigail Salerno, Commissioner (Term Ex. 12/1/2020)
Benjamin Johnson, Commissioner (Term Ex. 12/1/2021)
Peter Miller, 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 14, February 11, March 11, April 8, May 13, June 10, July 8, August 12, September 9, September 16, October 21, November 19, December 9

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 second year where we have reviewed buildings 75 years or older and imposed an 18 month delay. One illegal demolition occurred without a permit and the board imposed the mandatory two year delay. A number of buildings had the delay invoked. See the demolition delay section below for specifics on each individual project.
 - We continue to work with the Building Department and general public in order to improve the application process. Our garage subcommittee turned around several applications for demolition in short order.
- 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 2019. Commissioners expect to maintain their seats throughout 2020.
- 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:
 - Chevalier Theater – The Commission reviewed the restoration of the exterior windows prior to a CPC application by the Chevalier Theater Commission. Fred Soule, preservation architect from McKinley Kalsow, summarized the approach. Windows to be maintained and preserved wherever possible. The Commission supported this application.
 - 43 High Street (the Isaac Hall House) – Plan to use the building as a Mosque. Nichole Mossalam, proponent asked for Commission support in restoration work. The Commission supported a request for to the CPC committee for preservation funding to the exterior.
 - Patriots Day brainstorming request to add more 18th century appeal in-between the event the Salem Street Burial Ground and when Paul Revere at the Gaffey Funeral Home. The Commissioners offered several ideas for activities during the weekend. Doug Carr offered to bring those to the City for consideration.
 - John McConnell – Joseph Morris Wells @ Oak Grove Grave/potential CPA submission. Wells was a senior architect for McKim Meade & White; headstone design by Augustus Saint-Gaudens. The Commission supported this application with a letter of support to the CPC.
 - 16 Foster Court – Having heard nothing from the owner, the Commission requested the Medford Historic District Commission create a single-property district covering the Haskell-Cutter House. The Commission sent a letter to the HDC who accepted charge to create the district.
 - Grace Church door restoration: Proponent: Linda Foote, 24 Franklin Street Medford. Applied for CPA funding for the project. Proponent showed pictures of the doors. The Commission wrote a letter of support for the project.
- In pursuance of CPA projects, the Commission submitted four applications to the CPC committee, two of 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 Winter Hill neighborhood. We were one of a handful of communities this year and were approved because of our Certified Local Government status. No non-CLG communities were approved.

New Inventory Forms:

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

- 7 Lauriat Place
- 50 Pleasant Street
- 23 Bower Street
- 43-47 Mystic Avenue
- 16 Foster Court
- 421 High Street
- 104 Winchester Street
- 17 Florence Avenue
- 20-22 Prescott Avenue
- 96-102 Winchester Street
- 23 South Street
- 42 4th Street
- 109 Forest Street

The Commission funded addition survey work in the Medford Square South neighborhood to supplement the 177 historic resources documented during the last project. The following additional items were added:

- 55 historic resources were documented. 13 individual MHC form B were prepared and the remaining buildings were covered under 1 MHC form A.

Site Plan Review:

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

- Medford Public Library
- 30-36 Salem Street
- Lawrence Memorial Hospital
- 970 Fellsway

- 4000 Mystic Valley Parkway

Community and Section 106 Project Reviews:

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

- Mass DoT: High Street improvements between Marm Simonds Historic District and the Brooks School.
- 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:

- 67 Magoun Street – The owner of the property wished to demolish a carriage house and build a single-family house on the property. The building was found **Preferably Preserved** at the January 14, 2019 meeting and thus invoked the 18 month demolition delay. A letter was sent to the Building Commissioner, Paul Mochi, and cc'd to John Bavuso.
- 16 Foster Court -The owner of the property wished to demolish the house and build a larger apartment building. The building was constructed between 1804-1813 and is associated with a Revolutionary soldier and the Medford ship building industry. The building was found **Significant and Preferably Preserved** and an 18 month demolition day was invoked.
- 104 Winchester Street - The owner of the property wished to demolish the house for future unknown use. The building constructed circa 1854 and is a good example of an Italianate end house. The building was found **Significant and Preferably Preserved** and an 18 month demolition day was invoked.
- 421 High Street-The owner of the property wished to demolish the building and erect an four story apartment complex in its place. The building was constructed in the late 19th century. The building was found **Significant and Preferably Preserved** and an 18 month demolition day was invoked.
- 7 Lauriat Place – The owner of the property wished to demolish the building and replace it with a taller structure. The building holds an extremely significant place in Medford's rare gold-beating industry. The building was found **Significant and Preferably Preserved** and an 18 month demolition day was invoked.
- 45-47 Mystic – The owner of the property wished to demolish the building and replace with a parking lot. The Commissioners were generally not impressed with the character of

the house given how common the design is in Medford. Commissioners found the building **Not Significant** and did not rise to the level necessary for the next step of review. The building was torn down after Medford Fire Department conducted training on the structure.

- 23 Bower Street – The owner of the property wished to demolish the carriage house in the back of the property and replace it with a one family. Owner already renovated the existing house on the structure. The building was found **Significant and Preferably Preserved** contingent on the building being documented by a consultant. The structure was demolished after documentation was received.
- 20-22 Prescott – The owner of the property emailed the MHC to ask about demolition. Property was demolished without a demolition permit and the structure is 75 years or older. Commissioners determined the building to be **Significant**. MHC letter sent to Building Dept. Response letter from Paul Mochi, rejecting the MHC letter. Building Dept. did not follow procedures notifying the MHC of a demolition greater than 25% of the building. MHC to reject Mochi’s letter and call out the Building Dept.’s not following procedures and refusing to incorporate MHC’s standards into their Demo Forms, which remain inaccurate.
- 109 Forest Street – Owner of property originally wanted to demolish side porch to build a third structure on the lot, which had been subdivided. Owner did not get variance from ZBA to build intended structure. Owner applied to demolish entire building in order to comply with zoning. The building was found to be **Significant and Preferably Preserved** invoking the 18 month demolition delay.
- 96-102 Winchester – Owner of property wished to demolish a long row of garages and outbuildings. Originally, party of the milk industry in Medford. Commissioners found the buildings **Not Significant** and did not rise to the level necessary for the next step of review.
- 42 4th Street – Owner of property wished to demolish building and construct new building. Commissioners found the building **Not Significant** and did not rise to the level necessary for the next step of review.

Goals for 2020

- 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 2020 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, 2020.
- 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, 2020