



City of Medford

HISTORICAL COMMISSION
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

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

December 14, 2020 Medford Historical Commission Minutes

Meeting held via Zoom - Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm.

Digital Meeting statement read by J. Keenan, Chair, at beginning of meeting.

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

Determination of Preferably Preserved Status:

- 120 Jerome Street - Owner, Michael Cohen of 902 Chestnut Street, Newton, MA, was present at the meeting. J. Keenan reiterated meaning of determination of significance, process, and definition of preferably preserved building. It was moved and seconded that 120 Jerome St be found preferably preserved. Commissioner comments were heard including statements about the importance the subject property's contribution to the neighborhood context within the historic Smith Estate area and the Afro-American community. Michael Cohen raised his concerns about the state of the existing building and its viability for its use as a residence. Chris Bader, Chair of the Historic District Commission, raised questions about the relevance of structural integrity and extreme levels of alteration. The commission addressed these questions citing that structural integrity is within the province of the Building Department and that, in many cases, exterior alterations are considered by the Historical Commission in making determinations. Jess Farrell of 27 Martin Street asked about what the proposed post-demolition build-out will be for the subject property. J. Keenan stated that the proposed project would typically be discussed after the determination of preferably preserved status. **Motion:** to find preferably preserved. **Approved:** 5-0. **Motion:** to create subcommittee to liaise with the owner for the next steps of the demolition delay process. **Approved:** 4-1. Subcommittee to be comprised of R. Hayward, D. Carr and P. Miller.

Receive Demolition Application:

- 403 Riverside Avenue – Total demolition of single family dwelling in order to combine the property with a portion of the adjacent vacant lot for possible new development. Kathleen Desmond, owner's attorney mentioned the building's non-conforming use within the industrial zone. George Bergeron, a relative of the owner, (RBB Realty Trust, Robert Bodoin, Trustee), spoke about the condition of the house which he described as "dilapidated" and invited the commission members to a

possible future site visit. Demo application reviewed. **Motion:** to accept demolition application. **Approved:** 5-0.

Determinations of Significance:

- 15 Hadley Place – Owner, Frank Capone, was present at the meeting and wishes to raze the existing 3-story residence in order to construct a multi-dwelling residential structure. R. Hayward outlined significance determination criteria. Form B was emailed to the owner during the meeting and then reviewed. The existing building's merits were discussed including the building's size and fitness as a dwelling, 1896 building permit, Queen Anne style, likely architect and builder, and association with the East Medford ship building neighborhood. **Motion:** to find significant under criteria a. and b. **Approved:** 5-0.
- 73-75 South Street – Owner, Kelly Morrissey, wishes to completely demolish the 3-family residence in order to build a new 3-family dwelling. Clarification of ownership chain and property address on the Form B was discussed by owner's attorney Kathleen Desmond. Owner's architect Jacob Levine spoke about the condition of the existing building and his aspirations for the new design. Sharon Guzik, of 10 Manning Street, voiced concern about the denigration of the character of South Street by recent development and expressed concern about whether a new 3-family house would fit in. Form B was reviewed by the commission. **Motion:** to find significant. **Approved:** 5-0.

Update on 30-36 Salem Street: Owner/developer, Paul Connelly, was present at the meeting and thanked the commissioners Carr and Miller for their input on the design of the renovation and addition. Note, this process was initiated by the Community Development Board which requested that the Historical Commission provide design review for the redevelopment of this prominent historic building. D. Carr voiced the commission's approval for the process and the resulting design which should help to add vitality to Medford Square. **Motion:** to approve the design and waive the demolition delay process. **Approved:** 4-0 with one abstention.

Update on 202 Middlesex Avenue: J. Keenan informed the commission that, having previously withdrawn and then re-instated the demolition application prior to this meeting, the applicant has recently decided not to purchase the property. Hence, no action to be taken by the commission as the application is, once again, withdrawn.

Update on Permit Review Sub-committee: on-going, no update.

Demo Delay Updates: 43 Pleasant Street is the sole property now under demolition delay, No new communication has been received by MHC from the owners of 43 Pleasant Street since the meeting on November 9, 2020.

Update on CPA Projects: Oak Grove trees: No update, as A. Salerno needed to leave the meeting. **Thomas Brooks Park:** The Community Preservation Committee has informally and unanimously approved the grant for Phase 1 of the project. Next step is approval vote by the city council.

Survey Project Update: Winter Hill area survey work to commence December 15, 2020.

Local Historic District Updates:

- Discussion was held regarding what is priority after Forest Street LHD. R. Hayward noted that the city council does not appear to be in favor of “reactionary LHD projects”. Forest Street LHD application has been approved by Massachusetts Historical Commission. Next steps to be community survey and public hearing.
- Chris Bader voiced concern about the HDC budget reductions and necessity of spending the current allotment. Historical Commission expenditures for LHDs to be forwarded to HDC for reimbursement.
- Chris Bader raised the idea of hiring a consultant, with money allocated and approved by the city council, to devise a comprehensive city-wide plan for the creation of future LHD’s such as Medford Square, South Street, etc. R. Hayward raised the alternative idea of a smaller amount from the city council coupled with a planning grant.
- It was noted that 21 Touro Avenue is not yet an official Local Historic District since the city by-law needs to be amended and approved by city council vote.

Meeting Dates for 2021: Denis MacDougall has begun scheduling the 2021 Zoom meeting dates. Dates to be reviewed and approved at the January 2021 meeting.

Commission Officers and Sub-committees for 2021: To be reviewed and at the January 2021 meeting.

End of Year Reimbursements:

- R. Hayward **Motion:** to expend \$800 for MHC Memberships for Brooks Estate, Royall House, etc. **Approved:** 4-0.
- R. Hayward **Motion:** to expend \$408 (to be split 50/50 with HDC) for SurveyMonkey. **Approved:** 3-0 with one abstention.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Motion: to approve Nov. 9 MHC meeting Minutes. **Approved:** 4-0.

Motion: To adjourn at 9:34 pm. **Approved:** 4-0.

Next Meeting: January 11, 2021 via Zoom. Start time 7:00 pm. Denis MacDougall to coordinate HDC and MHC Zoom.