



City of Somerville
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

18 JULY 2023 MEETING MINUTES

This meeting was conducted via remote participation on GoToWebinar.

NAME	TITLE	STATUS	ARRIVED
Eric Parkes	Chair	<i>Absent</i>	
Robin Kelly	Vice Chair	<i>Present</i>	
Ryan Falvey	Member	<i>Present</i>	
Dick Bauer	Member	<i>Absent</i>	
Denis (DJ) Chagnon	Alt. Member	<i>Present</i>	
Colin Curzi	Member	<i>Present</i>	

City staff present: Wendy Sczechowicz (Planning, Preservation, & Zoning); Sarah White (Planning, Preservation, & Zoning)

The meeting was called to order at 6:47pm and adjourned at 8:28pm.

PUBLIC HEARING: Alterations to Local Historic District Property (LHD)
HPC.ALT 2023.20 – 192 Central Street
(continued from 20 June 2023)

The applicant team has requested a continuance to the 1 August 2023 meeting.

Following a motion by Member Falvey, seconded by Member Chagnon, the Commission voted (4-0), to continue this matter to 1 August 2023.

RESULT:

CONTINUED

PUBLIC HEARING: Alterations to Local Historic District Property (LHD)
HPC.ALT 2023.21 – 59 Cross Street
(continued from 20 June 2023)

Due to technical issues, the Commission tabled this item to later in the evening.

PUBLIC HEARING: Alterations to Local Historic District Property (LHD)
HPC.ALT 2023.20 – 77 Perkins Street

The applicant team explained that the proposal is for work to be done through New England Window Works. The existing windows are all good candidates for replacements with 6-over-6, true divided light, all-wood windows. A majority of the windows are not original to the house.

Vice Chair Kelly opened public testimony.

Ron Cavallo (70 Victoria Street) - voiced his support for this application. He asked for the Commission's understanding and leniency on this item.

Vice Chair Kelly closed public testimony.

There was discussion regarding any original windows on the property. Staff stated that all ten windows requested to be replaced are not original to the property. Additional windows on the property that are outside of the public view may be original. The Commission agreed that the applicant team was seeking a proper solution to the issue at hand. There is a benefit that the storm windows may be removed as part of this project.

Following a motion by Member Chagnon, seconded by Member Falvey, the Commission voted (4-0), to approve the request for alteration with the recommended guidelines in the Staff Report.

Recommended guidelines:

- Replacement windows are 6-over-6, true-divided light windows.
- Replacement windows do not present a warped or mirrored reflection.
- Replacement windows shall not be tinted.

RESULT:

APPROVED WITH RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES

PUBLIC HEARING: Alterations to Local Historic District Property (LHD)

HPC.ALT 2023.21 – 59 Cross Street

(continued from 20 June 2023)

The Commission retook this item. The applicant team explained that a test pit has been dug to confirm the existing foundation material, which is shale. An ARPA grant will allow for placement of an elevator and two accessible restrooms in the building. The ARPA work must take priority, with the work to be completed by the end of June 2024. Electricity, sewer, and water will need to be run to the restrooms. Receiving Certificates of Appropriateness for the project will allow for building permits to be sought. Some alternates for the FY22 work include work on the tower. The FY23 work was negotiated with the CPA to do work on the gutters. New copper gutters will be installed on the north and south side in the same footprint as the existing gutters.

Vice Chair Kelly opened public testimony.

Ron Cavallo (70 Victoria Street) - voiced his support for the applicant team. He is in favor of any projects that improve the City.

Vice Chair Kelly closed public testimony.

Following a motion by Member Chagnon, seconded by Member Curzi, the Commission voted (4-0), to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed renovations, subject to the recommended conditions as laid out in the Staff Report, including that the applicant/owner files the Certificate with the Inspectional Services Department; that the Certificate be valid for one year; that the shed dormer and the hoist way have a brick exterior; that the materials of the shed dormer shall be visually consistent with other materials used on the roofing as subject to the needs of construction; and that the interior of the glass on the windows that are being blocked out by the elevator hoist way not be painted, but that the PMU wall of the hoist way be painted a dark color to help conceal the condition there.

RESULT:

APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS

PUBLIC HEARING: Determination of Preferably Preserved (Step 2)

HPC.DMO 2023.10 – 25 Warwick Street

The applicant team explained that the design for the renovation and addition is proposed to minimally change the green space and look of the house as it exists. The proposal is to convert the existing 1 ¾ story house to a 2-story house, while adding space to the second floor over the additions that have been made over the years. The left walls are proposed to be moved 2' to the left, and the back wall is proposed to be moved 3' out to match an existing bump out in the kitchen. Moving the walls will hopefully allow the structure to better bear the new load of the building. The roof will also need to be moved for these changes.

Vice Chair Kelly opened public testimony.

Carrie Endries (54 Warwick Street) - voiced her support for this project.

James Nardella (15 Warwick Street) - voiced his support for this project. The proposal will not impact the architectural, political, or social heritage of Somerville. This home will remain one of the more modest units in the neighborhood.

Matthew Rice (35 Warwick Street) - voiced his support for this project. The applicants have been consistent with the look of the house from the street.

Vice Chair Kelly closed public testimony.

Following a motion by Member Chagnon, seconded by Member Falvey, the Commission voted (4-0), to find the structure at 25 Warwick Street not Preferably Preserved, subject to the condition that the proposed renovated building be largely consistent with and of a scale no greater than the renderings submitted as part of the application; and that the important features, such as the bay window and front gable, be retained to the extent permissible by zoning.

RESULT:

**NOT PREFERABLY PRESERVED WITH
CONDITIONS**

PUBLIC HEARING: Determination of Preferably Preserved (Step 2) HPC.DMO 2023.11 – 246 Broadway

The applicant team explained that this is a vacant two-family house. The applicant believes the structure is not a candidate for being Preferably Preserved because there is no historical association with historical persons or events or the broad history of the City or the community. There have also been numerous alterations to the structure over time, as outlined in the Staff Report. The massing and shape of the building have changed over time. While there are not yet specific plans, the applicant team is considering a building of seven units, with four stories, and a commercial use ground floor. The existing structure is in an unsafe condition, according to a structural engineer's report. Redevelopment of the site would be in the best interest of the City by providing additional dwelling units, including a required number of affordable dwelling units, and ground floor commercial space. The existing building is non-conforming to current zoning. Finding this property not Preferably Preserved would not be detrimental to the City and will allow the property to be brought into conformity with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance and the SomerVision 2040 Plan.

Vice Chair Kelly opened public testimony.

Dimitra Murphy (104 Pearl Street) - voiced her support for the project.

Ron Cavallo (70 Victoria Street) - stated that the zoning was changed specifically to allow for development in the City. This is a generic structure, and it would be a greater good to allow for more units.

It was noted that the Commission received one written comment in favor of preserving the structure.

Vice Chair Kelly closed public testimony.

The Commission discussed this structure being not Preferably Preserved. It was noted that it could instead be preferably used for something larger.

Following a motion by Member Chagnon, seconded by Member Curzi, the Commission voted (0-4) to determine the property Preferably Preserved.

Following a motion by Member Chagnon, seconded by Member Curzi, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to adopt the following findings:

HPC Findings:

- Demolition of the structure at 246 Broadway would not be detrimental to the architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the City.
- This is not an outstanding representative of any architectural style or of the other conditions of the structure.

RESULT:

NOT PREFERABLY PRESERVED WITH CONDITIONS

OTHER BUSINESS: Rules of Policy & Procedure

Staff and the Commission discussed the Rules of Policy & Procedure document. There was discussion regarding alternate members sitting in to vote for absent Commissioners. Staff stated that those questions would be broached with legal counsel before the Commission's next meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS: Meeting Minutes

Following a motion by Member Falvey, seconded by Member Chagnon, the Commission voted (4-0), to approve the 2 May 2023 meeting minutes.

Following a motion by Member Chagnon, seconded by Member Falvey, the Commission voted (4-0), to approve the 20 June 2023 meeting minutes.

OTHER BUSINESS: CPC Update

There was no update at this time, as the Chair was not present.

NOTICE: These minutes constitute a summary of the votes and key discussions at this meeting. To review a full recording, please contact the Planning, Preservation & Zoning Division at planning@somervillema.gov.