



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS**  
**MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**  
**KATJANA BALLANTYNE**  
**MAYOR**

GEORGE J. PROAKIS, AICP  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION*

*Eric Parkes, Chair*  
*Robin Kelly, Vice-Chair*  
*Ryan Falvey*  
*Denis (DJ) Chagnon (Alt.)*

*Adam J. Wylie (Alt.), Secretary*  
*Dick Bauer*  
*Alan Bingham*

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

6:45 p.m. on **Tuesday, February 15, 2022**

The **Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)** will hold a public meeting and public hearings on **Tuesday, February 15, 2022** at 6:45pm on the following applications, in accordance with the Historic Districts Act, Chapter 40C of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, and/or the City of Somerville Code of Ordinances, Pt. II, Chap. 7, Sections 7-16 – 7-28.

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission will be conducted via remote participation. A recording of these proceedings can be accessed at any time using the registration link at the top of this agenda.

Meeting called to order at 6:53 p.m. by Chair Parkes

Members present: Eric Parkes (Chair), Robin Kelly (Vice Chair), Dick Bauer, Ryan Falvey

Staff present: Wendy Sczechowicz, Sarah White

Others present: Anne Vigorito, Richard Fraiman, Diane Lim, Jordan Smith, Michael Kuritnik, Nerijus Bubnelis, Albert Rex, Elan Sassoon, John Topalis, Evan Stellman

**I. Advisory Review (CPA-HP funding projects)**

**1. 181 Broadway**

HPC advisory review of draft Preservation Restriction.

**HPC Action:** The Commission voted (4-0) to **accept** the preservation restrictions on 181



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Broadway.

Roll call vote: Ryan Falvey: yes; Robin Kelly: yes; Dick Bauer: yes; Eric Parkes: yes

## **II. Alterations to Local Historic District (LHD) Properties**

### **1. HPC.ALT 2021.54 – 49-55 DAVIS SQUARE**

Applicant: Somerville Theatre

Owner: B.F. Somerville Properties, LLC

*Installation of a sign (Applicant requests to Withdraw this portion of the application)*

*Retroactive Commission approval for window installation*

- Attorney Anne Vigorito explained that they have installed windows on the second floor and would also like to install identical windows on the third floor
- Architect Diane Lim added that the brick mold detailing has been left in place, as the windows were installed from the inside and the windows are metal clad
- Public comment:
  - Ron Cavallo (70 Victoria St)– questioned if the proposed windows are consistent with the existing windows in the building; Diane Lim answered that they kept the existing window openings and brick mold detailing; Staff stated that public comment is not a question-and-answer period. Mr. Carvalho continued his comment by stating that it would appear that the windows are consistent, and he supports what they are proposing to do.
- Closed public comment
- Vice Chair Kelly is okay retroactively approving the windows that were installed because they are metal clad windows, installed from the inside, and the brick mold detailing wasn't disturbed
- Mr. Falvey agreed
- Mr. Bauer and Chair Parkes asked about the arched windows; Ms. Lim stated that they left that portion of the window due to the condition of the exterior wall
- The Commission agreed that the windows are an improvement over what was previously there

**HPC Action:** The Commission voted (4-0) to **approve** the withdrawal of the sign application.

Roll call vote: Ryan Falvey: yes; Robin Kelly: yes; Dick Bauer: yes; Eric Parkes: yes

**HPC Action:** The Commission voted (4-0) to **approve** the retroactive window replacement.

Roll call vote: Ryan Falvey: yes; Robin Kelly: yes; Dick Bauer: yes; Eric Parkes: yes

**HPC Action:** The Commission voted (4-0) to **approve** the future window installation on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor that match the newly installed windows on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor in manufacturer, finish, etc.

Roll call vote: Ryan Falvey: yes; Robin Kelly: yes; Dick Bauer: yes; Eric Parkes: yes



### **III. Determinations of Historic Significance (STEP 1 IN THE DEMOLITION REVIEW PROCESS)**

#### **1. HPC.DMO 2022.01 – 51 Broadway**

Applicant: Ben Rogan

Owner: CDA Realty, LLC

*Demolish principal structure*

- Attorney Jordan Smith was in attendance for this case
- No public comment
- Ms. Szczehowicz gave a quick overview of the Staff Report
- Chair Parkes noted that the building stands alone, retains its form, and the alterations consist of vinyl siding and new windows
- Vice Chair Kelly stated that the structure is supported by the building next door and the form and massing clearly remain, even if the detailing is no longer there
- Mr. Bauer agreed; he added that together with the buildings next door it provides a historic streetscape and with the research of the people that used to live there, that also adds to the historic value of the building
- Chair Parkes noted that the neighboring buildings share the same roofline which adds historic significance

**HPC Action:** The Commission voted (4-0) to declare the structure **historically significant**.

Roll call vote: Ryan Falvey: yes; Robin Kelly: yes; Dick Bauer: yes; Eric Parkes: yes

#### **Findings:**

- Section B of report – historical and architectural significance
- The building is part of a larger streetscape, particularly its immediate neighbors
- Formally intact representation of its building type
- Retains original form and massing

**HPC Action:** The Commission voted (4-0) to adopt the above findings.

Roll call vote: Ryan Falvey: yes; Robin Kelly: yes; Dick Bauer: yes; Eric Parkes: yes

#### **2. HPC.DMO 2022.02 – 53 Broadway**

Applicant: Ben Rogan

Owner: CDA Realty, LLC

*Demolish principal structure*

- Attorney Jordan Smith was in attendance for this case
- Chair Parkes noted that this proposal is to remove one half of a duplex and leave the other half intact
- No public comment
- Chair Parkes had concerns with removing half of a duplex and views that portion of the structure significant due to the fact removing half would possibly damage the other half
- Mr. Bauer stated that it seems odd that they want to remove half of this structure, as they are proposing to demo three buildings surrounding the one they plan to leave



- Mr. Smith noted that they are only proposing to demo buildings that they currently own
- Vice Chair Kelly stated that this property holds the same historic characteristics that 51 Broadway does – retains its original form and massing even though some of its detailing is missing. She stated that as originally built and as it stands now, it is part of a duplex and to remove it would be to destroy the original intent of the building
- Mr. Bauer and Mr. Falvey agreed
- Chair Parkes stated that they must look at the building as a cohesive whole and it contributes to the historic streetscape

**HPC Action:** The Commission voted (4-0) to declare the structure **historically significant**.

Roll call vote: Ryan Falvey: yes; Robin Kelly: yes; Dick Bauer: yes; Eric Parkes: yes

**Findings:**

- Section B of report – historical and architectural significance
- The building is part of a larger streetscape, particularly its immediate neighbors
- Formally intact representation of its building type
- Retains original form, massing, and fenestration
- It is vital to the historic integrity of the overall structure, which includes 55 Broadway, and its removal would do grievous harm to the structure's historical significance

**HPC Action:** The Commission voted (4-0) to adopt the above findings.

Roll call vote: Ryan Falvey: yes; Robin Kelly: yes; Dick Bauer: yes; Eric Parkes: yes

**3. HPC.DMO 2022.03 – 11 Benedict Avenue**

Applicant: Ben Rogan

Owner: Christopher & Loren Galvin

*Demolish principal structure*

- Attorney Jordan Smith was in attendance for this case
- No public comment
- Ms. Sczechowicz noted that this structure has had an addition added in the front and a lean-to added in the rear, otherwise it has mostly retained its original form and massing
- Vice Chair Kelly stated that even though it has had some updates over the years, it still very clearly reads as a 19<sup>th</sup> century structure and is a sibling to the structure across the street with similar components such as the first story bay, roof line, overall form, and is part of a group of similar homes on Benedict Ave
- Mr. Bauer agreed and noted that it contributes to the streetscape
- Mr. Falvey agreed
- Chair Parkes noted that it does have its original massing, dormers, fenestration, and does have historical significance due to its place in the streetscape

**HPC Action:** The Commission voted (4-0) to declare the structure **historically significant**.

Roll call vote: Ryan Falvey: yes; Robin Kelly: yes; Dick Bauer: yes; Eric Parkes: yes



**Findings:**

- Section B of report – historical and architectural significance
- The building is part of a larger streetscape
- Retains original form and massing

**HPC Action:** The Commission voted (4-0) to adopt the above findings.

Roll call vote: Ryan Falvey: yes; Robin Kelly: yes; Dick Bauer: yes; Eric Parkes: yes

#### **IV. Determinations of Preferably Preserved (STEP 2 IN THE DEMOLITION REVIEW PROCESS)**

**1. HPC.DMO 2021.32 – 17 Allen Street**

Applicant: 13-17 Allen Street, LLC

Owner: Saul A. Rivera

Demolish principal structure

- Attorney Anne Vigorito gave an overview of the project and the process they have been through
- Historic Advisor Albert Rex discussed the findings of their research
- Public comment:
  - Ron Cavallo (70 Victoria St)– he feels that this structure has zero architectural merit and zero original detail, the owner of this building is a city employee of 27 years and feels that has significance, he noted that the owner has economic issues and was surprised that those issues were not part of the decision making, he feels that this property would greatly benefit from development and does not feel that it should be declared preferably preserved
- Closed public comment
- Vice Chair Kelly stated that the HPC cannot consider the owner's current financial status when reviewing the cases and that this property does contribute to the overall streetscape
- Chair Parkes echoed what Vice Chair Kelly said regarding not being able to take into consideration the owner's financial situation
- Mr. Bauer agreed
- Chair Parkes noted that some of Somerville's earliest buildings were mid-19<sup>th</sup> century workers housing and on this street there are 4 in a row; this stretch of land is one of the few areas in the City where these houses remain
- Mr. Falvey agreed
- Attorney Anne Vigorito noted that other buildings on Allen St are set to be demolished soon, so she asked for clarification as to why this one would be declared to be preferably preserved; Chair Parkes stated that each case is different and there are several outcomes that could occur

**HPC Action:** The Commission voted (4-0) to declare the structure **preferably preserved**.

Roll call vote: Ryan Falvey: yes; Robin Kelly: yes; Dick Bauer: yes; Eric Parkes: yes

**Findings:**

- Section B of report – historical and architectural significance
- The building is part of a larger streetscape
- Representation of 19<sup>th</sup> century worker housing
- Connection to early workers of Union Square; meat packing, brick making, etc
- Retains original form and massing

**HPC Action:** The Commission voted (4-0) to adopt the above findings.

Roll call vote: Ryan Falvey: yes; Dick Bauer: yes; Robin Kelly: yes; Eric Parkes: yes

2. **HPC.DMO 2021.24 – 1252 BROADWAY**

Applicant: Annette Thomas

Owner: 1252 Broadway Somerville, LLC

Demolish principal structure

- Attorney Anne Vigorito gave an overview of the project and team
- No public comment
- Elan Sassoon stated that this team obtained the building from another developer; they were not aware that they had to go to the HPC, as they received permits from ISD – so he feels there was miscommunication from the city
- Mr. Bauer stated that there was an obvious misunderstanding on the city's part, but that does not relieve the applicant from all responsibility as they are aware of the process and what is expected of them
- Vice Chair Kelly felt it was important to establish what happened and how to make sure it does not occur again as this is a loss for the city; she noted that if the HPC was reviewing this case prior to it being demolished they would have likely determined it to be preferably preserved
- Ms. Sczechowicz reminded the HPC that there is an option to declare the structure preferably preserved with conditions, as they are struggling with how to move forward considering the building has already been demolished
- Even Stellman shared their plans to preserve the front façade and some original design features
- The HPC member discussed which path forward would make the most sense – declaring it preferably preserved or not preferably preserved with conditions

**HPC Action:** The Commission voted (4-0) to declare the structure **preferably preserved**.

Roll call vote: Ryan Falvey: yes; Robin Kelly: yes; Dick Bauer: yes; Eric Parkes: yes

Findings:

- Section B of report – historical and architectural significance
- As it previously existed, retained its original Gothic detailing
- Retained original form and massing

**HPC Action:** The Commission voted (4-0) to adopt the above findings.

Roll call vote: Ryan Falvey: yes; Robin Kelly: yes; Dick Bauer: yes; Eric Parkes: yes

## V. Other Business

- Minutes 12/14, 01/25
  - Ms. Sczechowicz did not receive the finalized minutes prior to the meeting.
- CPC update
  - No update, as Mr. Bingham is not in attendance

## VI. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn and roll call vote.

**HPC Action:** The Commission voted (4-0) to **adjourn** the meeting.

Roll call vote: Ryan Falvey: yes; Robin Kelly: yes; Dick Bauer: yes; Eric Parkes: yes

*Please see cases at <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/historic-preservation/hpc-cases> . As cases may be continued to a later date, please check the agenda (posted 48 hours in advance of the meeting) on the City website or email [historic@somervillema.gov](mailto:historic@somervillema.gov) to inquire if specific cases will be heard. Continued cases will not be re-advertised. Interested persons may provide spoken remarks to the Historic Preservation Commission at the virtual public hearing or via e-mail to [historic@somervillema.gov](mailto:historic@somervillema.gov) . All written comments must be received by NOON, one week prior to the date of the HPC meeting.*