



City of Somerville  
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
City Hall 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

**2 APRIL 2024 MEETING MINUTES**

This meeting was conducted via remote participation on Zoom.

NAME	TITLE	STATUS	ARRIVED
Eric Parkes	Chair	<i>Present</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>	
Denise Price	Member	<i>Absent</i>	
Dan Coughlin	Member	<i>Present</i>	

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:49pm and adjourned at 7:32pm.

**PUBLIC HEARING: Determinations of Historic Significance  
(Step 1 in the Demolition Review Process)  
HP24-000010 – 36 Munroe Street**

The applicant team explained that the property was purchased in 2018. The property suffered significant damage from a fire caused by lightning in August 2020. The property was internally gutted in 2021 to control mold growth. The high cost of renovation has been considered and it is believed that rebuilding the entire structure would be better overall at this time.

Chair Parkes opened public testimony.

Ron Cavallo (70 Victoria Street) – stated that the Board has a capacity to look at hardship issues and he believes this qualifies as one. The building has little architectural merit and it would be a benefit to the city to demolish it at this time. It is difficult to bring a structure that has been compromised in this way up to the current Energy Code. It is unrealistic for the city to believe it will be at 55% net zero by 2030, but replacing this structure would help to work toward that.

Seeing no additional comments, Chair Parkes closed public testimony.

The Commission stated that there does not seem to be much architectural significance left to this building but the consideration for significance includes the architecture of a building and if it is associated with notable people, places, or events. This is the former residence of a Somerville School Committee person, and then a State Senator for some time. There was discussion regarding whether this association could speak to its Historical Significance.

The Commission discussed that the building had been altered many times over the years. All the current materials have been replaced with more modern materials, such as vinyl siding and windows.

The Commission noted that hardship considerations have rigorous guidelines. This application was not presented as a hardship case and so will not be considered in that way at this time.

The applicant team stated that there is interest in finding out what the property originally looked like and to reconstruct the building in a way that honors its legacy.

Following a motion by Vice Chair Kelly, seconded by Member Chagnon, the Commission voted (1-4), with Member Chagnon in favor, to find the property Historically Significant.

HPC Findings:

- Lack of historic integrity due to modifications to the form, massing, and exterior envelope
- Lack of relation to the streetscape pattern

Following a motion by Vice Chair Kelly, seconded by Member Coughlin, the Commission voted (4-0-1), with Member Chagnon abstaining, to adopt the findings as outlined.

<b>RESULT:</b>
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<b>NOT HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT</b>
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### **OTHER BUSINESS: Meeting Minutes**

Following a motion by Vice Chair Kelly, seconded by Member Falvey, the Commission voted unanimously (5-0), to approve the 19 March 2024 meeting minutes, as presented.

### **OTHER BUSINESS: CPC Update**

The Commission discussed the CPC update. The CPC held a public hearing last week to consider how to get the word out about CPA funding. The goal is to find ways to broaden the pool of applicants for these funds. A list of nonprofit groups in the City that are in buildings which could use the funding for building-related issues will be considered.

*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 [historic@somervillema.gov](mailto:historic@somervillema.gov).*