



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

20 MAY 2025 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>Absent</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>Present</i>	
Dan Coughlin	Member	<i>Absent</i>	

City staff present: Madison Anthony (Planning, Preservation, & Zoning); Lexie Payne (Planning, Preservation, & Zoning)

The meeting was called to order at 6:49pm and adjourned at 7:24pm.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS – DETERMINATIONS OF PREFERABLY PRESERVED
(STEP 2 IN THE DEMOLITION REVIEW PROCESS)
HP24-000122 – 128 Central Street**

The applicant team explained this property is a single-family house in the NR zoning district on a fairly large lot. They seek to demolish the house, split the lot into two lots, and build a three-unit structure on each lot for a total of six units. This would increase the density in the City, meeting the purposes of both the Somerville Zoning Ordinance (SZO) and the SomerVision 2040 Plan. In reviewing the criteria for Preferably Preserved and the demolition review ordinance, this property has no association with any important persons or events, or association with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social history of the City or the State. It is not historically or architecturally significant terms of period, style, method of building construction, or associations. The applicant team stated that demolition of the single-family structure would not be detrimental to the City in any way and would allow for this property to be used in a manner consistent with the goals of the SZO and the SomerVision 2040 Plan to create much needed additional housing. The structure is not unique in any way and is similar in style to other homes in the neighborhood and Citywide. The Staff Memo mentioned other structures nearby, such as a triple decker to the right of this property and a long duplex building on the left. This area has a hodgepodge mix of building types. Alterations have been made to the house, such as a change in the footprint. Having only one unit on a lot of this size is not the highest and best use of the site for the City's purposes. At the 1 April 2025 hearing regarding Historic Significance, a number of Commissioners indicated that, while the structure may be significant, it may not be considered Preferably Preserved due to the mishmash of building types on the street.

Chair Parkes opened public testimony. Seeing no comments, Chair Parkes closed public testimony.

Some Commissioners stated that this is one of the oldest properties in this part of Central Street and is relatively intact. However, it is also a very common building type in the City and is not especially well preserved. There was never a consistent mass of this type of housing along the street and the building is not part of a pattern along the street. This is a front gable-facing house, of which there are many. Other Commissioners noted that the house is nicely symmetrical, and the porch is well intact. This building adds to others along the street. This house could be

restored or altered to achieve the three units being sought. The applicant team explained that zoning requirements may not allow the house to be preserved in order to be further utilized.

Following a motion by Member Chagnon, seconded by Member Price, the Commission voted (1-3), with Members Falvey and Chagnon, and Chair Parkes against, to find the property at 128 Central Street Preferably Preserved.

Following a motion by Member Chagnon, seconded by Member Price, the Commission voted (3-1), with Member Price against, to adopt the following Findings:

- The structure is not importantly associated with a historic person or time period.
- The structure does not contribute to the streetscape pattern.
- The structure does not represent its style well enough to be preserved.

RESULT:

NOT PREFERABLY PRESERVED

OTHER BUSINESS: HPC Elections

Following a motion by Member Chagnon, seconded by Member Falvey, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0), to reelect the current office holders; Eric Parkes as Chair, Robin Kelly as Vice Chair, and DJ Chagnon as Secretary.

OTHER BUSINESS: CPC Update

There was no update at this time.

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.