



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

2 SEPTEMBER 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>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>Present</i>	
Dan Coughlin	Member	<i>Absent</i>	

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:49pm and adjourned at 7:46pm.

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)
HP25-000044 – 8 Bolton Street

Member Price recused herself from this item.

Staff stated that the zoning and design for this proposal were reviewed, and an MOA was drafted and agreed upon.

The applicant team explained that they previously conceded the Historical Significance of the existing structure at 8 Bolton Street, and it was subsequently deemed Preferably Preserved. The MOA process began on 18 June 2025. Through the process, the cornices, or column brackets, on the posts on the front balconies and porches of the triple deckers, have been styled to match the existing cornices on the front porch of the existing structure. A fascia accent has been added, utilizing some of the dentil molding across the front and sides of the triple deckers, as well as detailed period window trim, as seen throughout the neighborhood. Booth Bay Blue has been chosen as the primary color, and Light Mist for the trim. This will be complemented nicely by brick-colored pavers in the central driveway, and brick veneer across the foundations. In between the primary structures and along the sidewalk, there will be a space for a 24"x30" elevated metal plaque commemorating the Union Glass Company and its significance to the neighborhood. In addition to these on-site measures, the City's archives will be enriched with professional photos of the interior and exterior. The applicant team has created scaled CAD drawings, including layouts and elevations, along with additional renderings from Bolton Street showing the curb appeal created.

The Commission did not express any concerns with the proposed MOA.

Following a motion by Vice Chair Kelly, seconded by Member Chagnon, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the MOA.

RESULT:

APPROVED

**PUBLIC HEARINGS – DETERMINATIONS OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE
(STEP 1 IN THE DEMOLITION REVIEW PROCESS)
HP25-000061 – 29 Lowell Street**

The applicant team explained that the garage at this property was already determined not to be Historically Significant and will be demolished. The house itself is currently a two-family, detached house in the Neighborhood Resident (NR) zoning district. Across the street there is a large multiplex with six units, and there is a triple decker at 36 Lowell Street. At 37 Lowell Street, there are three attached row houses with three units, and at 39-45 Lowell, there are four attached row houses with four units. The styles and sizes in this area vary greatly. The building at 29 Lowell Street has been altered, most notably with a large enclosed front porch facing the street. There are no historical or architectural details of the building visible from the street level. The applicant stated that there are, according to the Staff Memo, no significant people, events, or history regarding this house, and it is not historic or architecturally significant. The house is not associated with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social history of the City, and is not part of a group of similar structures nearby and the building does not fit with the building types around it. This would be a good location to construct a building with more units.

Chair Parkes opened public testimony.

Andy Grosser (22 Belmont Street) – asked what will be built on this property. A large building being constructed on this site will have a heavy impact on those around it.

Seeing no additional comments, Chair Parkes closed public testimony.

The Commission explained that they are only reviewing if the building is Historically Significant or not at this time. The applicant team stated that there are not exact plans yet for this site, but zoning does allow for certain things.

The Commission agreed that, while the original massing of the structure remains, there is not much left of the original detailing of the house. This is not a particularly noteworthy structure architecturally and it does not fit into a rhythm of the streetscape.

Following a motion by Vice Chair Kelly, seconded by Member Chagnon, the Commission voted unanimously (0-5) to find the property Historically Significant.

Following a motion by Member Chagnon, seconded by Vice Chair Kelly, the Commission voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the following findings:

- The property is not importantly associated with an architectural style or a period.
- The property does not retain its original form or detailing.
- The property does not contribute significantly to the streetscape.

RESULT:

NOT HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT

**PUBLIC HEARINGS – DETERMINATIONS OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE
(STEP 1 IN THE DEMOLITION REVIEW PROCESS)
HP25-000063 – 15 Oak Street**

The Commission noted that it would hear and discuss this item concurrently with the next item for 17 Oak Street.

The applicant team explained 15 and 17 Oak Street, is one property with one residential structure on it, with one deed and common ownership. The applicant seeks to demolish the entire structure at 15 and 17 Oak Street, with the goal of erecting new structures with more dwelling units. This is one four-family structure, with two units per

side. The City calls it a semi-detached house building type. Nearby, at 11 Oak Street, there is a multiplex building type with five units, and to the right of that, there is a single-family ranch cottage. Across the street, there is a tall, two-family detached house at 14 Oak Street. 9-19 Bolton Street contains two row houses built in the 1980s, with six units. The structure at 15 and 17 Oak Street does not face the street; it has no front door facing the street, which is unlike the buildings around it. It also does not have a front-end gable, like the houses on either side of it. The structure has been altered, including a large two-story 1960s-era rear addition with a sloped roof. The side facing the street has a faux-stone finish, with concrete steps on either side and iron railings. The structure includes a concrete foundation and replacement windows. It was once two units, but it now has four. The applicant teams stated that the structure is not associated with any broad architectural, cultural, political, or economic or social history of the City. It is not part of a similar group of similar structures. It is in a good location for redevelopment of more units.

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

The Commission stated that this structure feels more tied to its location due to the neighboring architectural details, such as the street-facing gables and double windows. The main structure and form still exist and are in harmony with a number of other buildings in the immediate vicinity. Some of the existing faux stone could be removed and the building restored. This neighborhood is unique in its own way and should be kept as is. The front portion of the house could be preserved to keep the street presence while still meeting the applicant's development goals. This is an unusual house, as it has two sides entries.

Following a motion by Member Chagnon, seconded by Vice Chair Kelly, the Commission voted unanimously (5-0) to find the property Historically Significant.

Following a motion by Vice Chair Kelly, seconded by Member Price, the Commission voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the following findings:

- The property retains the important aspects of its original form.
- The property has a distinct arrangement in its two side entrances.
- The property retains an intriguing massing at the front.
- The property echoes the buildings surrounding it and gives it importance and prominence in the streetscape.

RESULT:	HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT
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**PUBLIC HEARINGS – DETERMINATIONS OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE
(STEP 1 IN THE DEMOLITION REVIEW PROCESS)
HP25-000064 – 17 Oak Street**

This item was discussed concurrently with the previous agenda item for 15 Oak Street.

Following a motion by Vice Chair Kelly, seconded by Member Chagnon, the Commission voted unanimously (5-0) to find the property Historically Significant.

Following a motion by Vice Chair Kelly, seconded by Member Price, the Commission voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the following findings:

- The property retains the important aspects of its original form.
- The property has a distinct arrangement in its two side entrances.
- The property retains an intriguing massing at the front.
- The property echoes the buildings surrounding it and gives it importance and prominence in the streetscape.

RESULT:	HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT
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OTHER BUSINESS: Meeting Minutes

Following a motion by Member Chagnon, seconded by Vice Chair Kelly, the Commission voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the 19 August 2025 meeting minutes.

OTHER BUSINESS: CPC Update

The CPC has hired a Historic Preservation consultant to help with the details regarding how to treat historic preservation project funding through the CPC.

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.