



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

21 APRIL 2026 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>Absent</i>	
Denise Price	Member	<i>Present</i>	

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:56pm and adjourned at 8:04pm.

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)
HP26-000006 – 58 Main Street

The applicant team explained that this is an existing 2 ¾ story building with a mansard roof. There are dormers with a double roof style, a gable, and brackets. There are also an existing porch and a one-story bay window which has been altered over the years with different materials and styles. The Fremont Street elevation has a rear addition and porches. The main changes made to the plan are to the mansard roof, including adding a top tier instead of having a flat roof, to be more traditional in style. There is also a proposal to alter the side roof walls, to look more like the drawing as they were built slightly more vertical. The dormers are proposed to be enhanced with intricate roof details, trim, and brackets. Additional detailing has been added throughout, including brackets under the eaves of the mansard roof, and a different porch detailing and style on both the Main Street and Fremont Street sides, including columns, brackets, and the roof type. The revised plans also show different window trims which are more elaborate in profile. Trims have been added under the smaller windows to bring them into scale with the full-size windows. Lastly, the footprint has been changed slightly by adding a one-story bay to the Main Street façade to enhance it while being reminiscent of the former one-story bay.

The applicant team explained that this work is being proposed based on substantial rot and deterioration in the roof found once construction was underway. The existing side view of the building had a mismatch of unorganized window styles, which are being replaced with 2-over-1 windows. The inside of the building will hold three dwelling units, in a mix of family-style units. Each unit will have outdoor space in the form of a deck. There will also be a yard with landscaping. In terms of a color palette, there will be cobblestone lap siding, and smooth textures, with an arctic white trim. The color of the asphalt shingles has yet to be decided but will be a darker gray color.

The Commission agreed that the small detail changes proposed will improve the project.

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

RESULT:

APPROVED

**PUBLIC HEARINGS – ALTERATIONS TO LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT (LHD) PROPERTIES
HP25-000114 – 141-143 Walnut Street**

The applicant team explained that this is a large lot in a Local Historic District (LHD) that contains an Italianate mansard structure which is being rehabilitated with some restoration pieces. The existing building sits well back from the lot line in the front; it has a generous front porch, a side wing, and an ell on the rear, which is a couple of stories. There is an existing garage at the back of the site, and this application revolves around requesting to demolish the garage. This would allow for a lot split. The existing garage is constructed of standard, non-reinforced, concrete form blocks and cement shingles. The rear view has 2-over-2 windows, which are proposed to be mimicked on the new structure. The building has a shed dormer with awning windows that may be replacements. The side of the garage which faces the neighbor is tight up against the fence. Splitting the lot would not remove either lot from the LHD. The lot split has been discussed with Staff and an attorney.

Staff noted that the lot split will also need to be approved by the Commission. The vote for tonight is only for the request to demolish the existing garage.

The Commission asked why the applicant has chosen to break out this part of the project from the rest of it. The Commission asked if the garage will be demolished either way, or if the rest of the project is contingent on demolition of the structure. The applicant team explained that the intent is a lot split and then, at the appropriate time, to demolish the building. The applicant will then go through the official process, including submitting formal plans before Commission. The intent is to stay in harmony, from an architectural streetscape standpoint. The concept plans were submitted for the structure, if the garage is demolished.

The Commission noted that second structures are typically treated as more of an outbuilding. But, as the proposal is for a lot split, this would technically become its own principal building.

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

The Commission noted that the existing garage exists as an accessory dwelling. The proportions of it are subordinate to the main structure. This would obviously change if the garage were demolished and another three-story, substantial structure were built on the site. There was discussion that there does not seem to be any reason for this specific garage building to be kept, but the nature and scale of it give something intrinsic to the overall lot and the prominence of the primary building.

Some Commissioners expressed concern regarding the demolition of this structure which could be placeholder for a different type of structure, and that this will lead to a large, three-unit structure being smooshed onto a lot in an LHD. Other Commissioners noted that the question at hand is whether the garage structure should be demolished or not, and not necessarily what may replace it in the future.

Most Commissioners noted that they did not see the merits of preserving the garage structure as it is.

The applicant team explained that the plan for the front structure includes fully resorting it with all of its existing details.

Following a motion by Vice Chair Kelly, seconded by Member Falvey, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the demolition of the garage structure.

RESULT:

APPROVED

OTHER BUSINESS: CPC Update

The Commission stated that the annual CPC public hearing will be held tomorrow night, 22 April 2026, during which public comment will be solicited regarding which projects should be funded.

OTHER BUSINESS: Meeting Minutes

Following a motion Member Falvey, seconded by Member Price, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0), to approve the 7 April 2026 meeting minutes, as amended.

NOTICE: These minutes constitute a summary of the votes and key discussions at this meeting. A recording of these proceedings can be found online here: [Agendas, Minutes, & More](#).