



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

5 MAY 2026 MEETING MINUTES

This meeting was conducted via remote participation on Zoom.

NAME	TITLE	STATUS	ARRIVED
Eric Parkes	Chair	<i>Absent</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>	

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:50pm and adjourned at 7:10pm.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS – DETERMINATIONS OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE
(STEP 1 IN THE DEMOLITION REVIEW PROCESS)
HP26-000015 – 54 Highland Avenue**

The applicant team explained that the intention is to demolish the existing building in order to construct additional units. The building is 75 years old, and this area is actively evolving. On Highland Avenue, there are several large residential buildings. This is a single-family house surrounded by multi-family housing. The applicant team noted that this property feels out of place. The request is to find the property Not Preferably Preserved.

Vice Chair Kelly opened public testimony. Seeing no comments, Vice Chair Kelly closed public testimony.

The Commission agreed that this area of Highland Avenue is shifting and changing. However, this single-family home speaks to the historic era that it was built in and should be maintained. The home could potentially be moved over on the lot to allow for additional units. This is not a typical house style for Somerville, but it retains most of its form and massing. There are not many Colonial Revival homes in this neighborhood, and it seems to speak to the pattern of development. The house is eye-catching and it would be nice to retain at least some of the existing design. It is lower than the buildings around it, allowing the southern light to come through. It is a wooden building surrounded by masonry buildings and clearly of its time period. The builder chose to keep a petite/modest scale, which is also intriguing. The structure contributes to the diversity of the area and the eras that the City has seen.

Following a motion by Member Chagnon, seconded by Member Price, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to find the property at 54 Highland Avenue Historically Significant.

Following a motion by Member Chagnon, seconded by Member Falvey, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the following findings:

- The structure has an unusual, architectural style for the City as a whole, but particularly for the neighborhood
- The structure retains much of its original form and massing and a fair amount of detailing
- The structure speaks to the overall pattern of development, especially during the interwar period within the City

RESULT:	HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT
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OTHER BUSINESS: CPC Update

No updates at this time.

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.](#)