

**RECEIVED  
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BELMONT, MA**

DATE: March 15, 2024  
TIME: 9:39 AM

**Belmont Historic District Commission  
MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, February 29, 2024  
Meeting Held Remotely via Zoom

**Staff Present:** Delia Ferguson

**Commission Members Present:**

- Carl Solander, Co-Chair
- Carol Moyles, Co-Chair
- Matt Schonewald
- Jacqueline Appel
- Drew Nealon
- Michael Chesson
- Komal Mahajan

**Community Members Present:**

William Turville, Diane Miller, Sheetal Kumar, Elizabeth Kenrick, Ruth Bennett, Marie-alix Dubois,  
Vincent Stanton, John Beaty

**1. 7:03 PM Meeting Called to Order**

Carl Solander, Co-Chair, presiding; Michael Chesson, Minutes

**2. New Public Hearings**

- a.** Case 24-01: 543 Pleasant Street, revised package. Diane Miller representing the owners presented proposal and explained the big rear window. M. Schonewald said the house was across the street from his own and he approved of the changes. C. Solander moved to approve the renovations with changes to the wall to be presented separately for approval. M. Schonewald seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
- b.** Case 24-02: 504 Concord Avenue. Elizabeth Kenrick, the designer, explained the delays on the project, with completion expected in 2024. She asked for a year's extension. C. Solander moved to extend the certificate of appropriateness for another year, M, Schonewald seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**3. New Discussion**

- a.** James Monroe Hale House; 529 Pleasant Street—New Garage Project Proposal  
Informal review with Marie alix-Dubois. Discussion of standards for approval by the Zoning Board. A more detailed topographical plan is needed with contour lines. C. Solander suggested checking with the Zoning Board to avoid a waste of time and money.

**b.** C. Solander asked V. Stanton, Community Path Project Committee, for its status. Mr. Stanton said that Mass DOT will hold a public meeting at the Beech Street Center, March 7, at 7:00 PM, and invited HDC members to attend and comment. He gave some details. The project is at the 25% design stage of phase one, a significant milestone.

**c.** Discussion of MBTA Zoning Potential Impact on Historic Districts and Properties. Ten residents of the Pleasant Street Historic District have commented on a proposal to upzone Leonard Street, allowing four-story buildings at the rear of their property. Recent talks have focused on upzoning the east side of Leonard Street, with the west side limited to three stories, or no upzoning at all.

J. . Beaty, Historic District resident, said that only the former fire station on Leonard Street, now a restaurant, was historic. Several buildings on Moore Street and Alexander Avenue are in the district. The definition of a basement or a first story is an issue. D. Nealon, HDC member of the MBTA Communities Advisory Committee, said the current focus is on upzoning the Claflin Street parking lot and the east side of Leonard Street. Two of the four rezoning plans have been dropped. Still discussed are two others that distribute rezoning across the town, and one from Select Board Chair Epstein that does the same.

#### **4. Approval of Minutes**

**a.** Draft of 12.12.23 Minutes to do to D. Nealon for edits and changes. M. Schonewald moved to approve as amended. C. Moyles seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **5. Continued Discussion**

**a.** HDC Membership

J. Beaty has submitted his application for HDC appointment to the Select Board. Jeffrey North, Belmont Citizens Forum, has asked for an article about HDC activities that could also help the recruitment of new members. M. Chesson said he would retire from the HDC at the end of his current term, June 30.

**b.** CPC Update: J. Appel will report at the next meeting.

**c.** Plymouth Congregational Church

W. Turville, church architect, sent a package to C. Ryan, Town Planner, for the March 12 meeting, and discussion of a Certificate of Appropriateness.

**d.** Design Guidelines Discussion\

C. Moyles said three members are studying the guidelines.

**e.** Demolition Delay Properties Update

C. Solander said there were two: Red Top, 90 Somerset Street, is one of three Belmont houses on the National Register. The listing gives it no protection at all. It is just outside the Historic District. It is on the demolition delay list. The owner is thinking of selling. He could sign a protective covenant, or a deed restriction on the future owner that would protect the interior as well, as has been done with some houses on Nantucket. M. Chesson contacted the two realtors working for the owner and gave them contact information for the president of the Belmont Historical Society.

The other property is 10 Juniper Road, headquarters for Mass Audubon Habitat, the main building, now used as a library. The new director wants to make changes to the historic landscape designed by Olmsted, and perhaps has already done so. Former HDC chair L. Meier said the design is (or was) very significant. HDC could take a position or try to work with Habitat. Discussion by C. Solander, M. Schonewald, and C. Moyles. J. Beaty said the Historical Society has a photograph of the original building.

**6. General Housekeeping:**

- Introduction and welcome for Delia Ferguson, Planning and Building, new HDC staff.
- The next meeting is Tuesday, March 12, 2024. Minutes assigned to K. Mahajan.

M. Schonewald moved to adjourn, seconded by D. Nealon.

**Meeting Adjourned at 9:07 PM**

Respectfully submitted by Michael Chesson

DRAFT