

# Belmont Historic District Commission

## MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 10, 2023  
Meeting Held Remotely via Zoom

**Staff Present:** Gabriel Distler

### **Commission Members Present:**

Carol Moyles, Co-Chair  
Carl Solander, Co-Chair  
Michael Chesson  
Jacqueline Appel  
Drew Nealon  
Stefan Ahlblad  
Meg Reilly  
Mary Perry

Absent: Nushin Yazdi

**Community Members Present:** None

### **1. 7:06 PM Meeting Called to Order**

C. Moyles and C. Solander presiding

### **2. New Public Hearing**

Case 23-01: 490 Pleasant Street— Railing Replacement.

C. Moyles stated the railing project is at the back of the building and not visible from the street. A motion for a Certificate of Non-Applicability was passed unanimously.

### **3. Approval of Minutes**

C. Solander called for approval of the draft minutes of 11-15-22. They were amended and by motion were approved unanimously.

C. Solander called for approval of the draft minutes of 12-13-22. C. Moyles, M. Chesson suggested edits. They were amended and by motion were approved unanimously.

**RECEIVED  
TOWN CLERK  
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: February 15, 2023  
TIME: 9:51 AM

## 4. Continued Discussion

### A. HDC Membership Discussion

- G. Distler encouraged commission members to reach out to those they know who might be interested in joining the HDC. He suggested an architect, someone with experience in historic preservation, or a resident living in the historic district could be additions to the commission.
- C. Solander offered to put G. Distler in touch with the Boston Society of Architects, while C. Moyles offered to put G. Distler in touch with the Boston Society of Landscape Architects. S. Ahlblad suggested a historian could be a helpful addition. M. Chesson offered to ask the local historical society to solicit its membership about joining HDC.

### B. Town Owned Historic Assets

- J. Appel submitted a draft proposal for an RFP to obtain sources of funding for the CPC projects. C. Solander suggested the proposal be reviewed and discussed at the next HDC meeting to establish goals to continue repairing HD buildings.
- C. Moyles suggested that both David Blazon, Director of Facilities, and Matthew Haskell, Budget Analyst Town Administrators Office also review the proposal.

### C. Work Plan

#### i. HDC Potential Funding Streams

- C. Moyles suggested the HDC look for additional funding streams. C. Solander said the Mass. Historical Commission is holding several workshops and seminars on how to write a grant to obtain state funding.

#### ii. 2023 Work Plan Review

- C. Solander indicated the potential CPA projects will be the McLean Barn. He hopes to visit the site in late February or early March. Lights, cameras and motion detectors have been installed. It will be a challenging project to determine how it will be used and its renovation will be costly.

#### iii. HDC webpage Update-Gabe Stefan

- C. Solander encouraged all commission members to review and provide edits to the website. M. Chesson stated the goal is to make it as easy as possible for people to make submissions, and to know what is needed for an application to be approved.

- M. Reilly offered to review the site and guidelines offered by other towns, such as Brookline and Newton, to help sharpen Belmont's guidelines.
- As a preliminary, J. Appel asked what is the overall objective of the website.
- S. Ahlblad offered four purposes: (1) the site should provide clear information for town residents who want specific information about making renovations; (2) it should provide information to new residents who wish to learn about the town; (3) it should provide information about the purpose of the HDC for those who might wish to join; and, (4) it should provide a FAQ section to make it easier to find information.
- Action Item – J. Appel and S. Ahlblad will meet with the town webmaster in February.
- Additional discussion was made about District Maps. C. Solander indicated that historic districts can be filed under different categories. As a result, it can be difficult to determine the outline of an historic district. M. Chesson offered that Elizabeth Gibson of the historical society does all the work for historic houses.

iv. MBTA Community Zoning Update

- D. Nealon and G. Distler stated that Belmont is required to create a zoning district, or zoning districts, that allow for the development of multi-family housing by-right. At least 50 percent of this zoning district must be located within a half mile of one of Belmont's two MBTA Commuter Rail Stations.

v. Housing Production

- C. Solander stated the Belmont Housing Trust, in conjunction with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, is to update the Town's Housing Production Plan, which will outline how the Town plans to ensure that 10 percent of housing units are affordable, as required under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40B. The updated Housing Production Plan must be completed by the Spring of 2023, when the 2018 Housing Production Plan expires.

## **5. General Housekeeping**

- G. Distler stated the Community Development Administrative Office is seriously understaffed. It is the hope that two positions will be filled soon.
- M. Chesson stated the Homer House needs substantial repairs. The Belmont Women's Club is interested in pursuing a joint agreement with the Belmont Historic Society to preserve the house.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Perry