

TOWN OF HINGHAM

Historic Districts Commission



MEETING MINUTES

DATE: May 21, 2026

PLACE: Remote Meeting via Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair, Daniel Clark, Justin Aborn, Joshua Blevins, Catherine Daley, Eric Smoczynski

ALTERNATE MEMBERS PRESENT: Mary Anne Donaldson

ALSO PRESENT: Heidi Gaul, Historic Preservation Administrator

MEMBERS ABSENT: Carol Pyles

Call to Order: Chair Dan Clark called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. He stated the following:

This meeting is being held remotely as an alternate means of public access pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023 and all other applicable laws temporarily amending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law. You are hereby advised that this meeting and all communications during this meeting may be recorded by the Town of Hingham in accordance with the Open Meeting Law. If any participant wishes to record this meeting, please notify the chair at the start of the meeting in accordance with M.G.L. c. 30A, § 20(f) so that the chair may inform all other participants of said recording.

REVIEWS AND HEARINGS

Chair Dan Clark announced that the voting members for the full agenda would be Commissioners Aborn, Blevins, Smoczynski, Daley, and himself. He also asked if there were any conflicts with the members. There were none.

1. Amanda Cease 86 Leavitt Street

Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to enlarge footprint of garage to create three bays with an ADU above at 86 Leavitt Street located in the Hingham Center Historic District (Phase II)

Chair Clark shared his screen while the applicant, Ms. Amanda Cease, described the project. She described her proposal to expand an existing 1950s garage and to construct a 900 sq. ft. accessory dwelling unit (ADU) above it for use by a family member. The existing house will remain unchanged. The garage footprint would be modestly expanded and a second story with dormers would be added. The structure is set significantly back and at a lower elevation, minimizing visibility from the street and ensuring it remains subordinate in height to the primary residence. Materials, including roofing, siding, and windows, are proposed to match the existing home. The applicant noted minimal site disturbance and ongoing coordination with an engineer and wetland specialist.

Chair Clark stated that he believed this submission is more conceptual and not a complete application suitable for approval and would not be adequate to get a building permit. He said that additional documentation would be required, including full elevations, detailed floor plans, material specifications, and a more precise plot plan.

Commissioner Daley had concerns about the roof pitch, dormer proportions, and overall height. She suggested refinement for better balance. Commissioner Smoczynski mentioned inconsistencies in the drawings and Commissioner Donaldson asked questions about the roofing materials. Ms. Cease confirmed that all materials will match those of the house.

The Commission agreed there were no major concerns but emphasized the need for a more complete and detailed submission. The application was continued to a future meeting to allow the applicant to revise and resubmit with additional information.

2. Hingham Congregational Church, 378 Main Street

Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace siding and one window at 378 Main Street in the Hingham Center Historic District (Phase I)

Mr. Bruce Shorey, Chair of the Board of Trustees for the Church, presented a proposal for modifications to the entrance vestibule on Pleasant Street. He explained that the vestibule on Pleasant Street is presently clad in white-painted clapboards. He proposed replacing this clapboard siding with a white Everlast composite material that would not require painting, in an effort to replicate the existing appearance while reducing long-term maintenance. In addition, the proposal included replacing a north-facing window on the vestibule with a Marvin aluminum-clad window designed to closely match the existing historic window. The door would remain unchanged.

Commissioners Daley, Smoczynski, and Blevins expressed concerns about the proposed Everlast siding, noting that the sample appeared to have a noticeable sheen and a synthetic, plastic-like quality that did not feel appropriate for such a prominent and historically significant building, particularly given the vestibule's visibility from the sidewalk. Members commented that unpainted composite materials can appear less authentic than painted alternatives and raised questions about how corners and trim would be detailed. Several suggested that alternative materials be explored, including other composite products previously approved by the Commission (TrueExterior) that may offer a more natural appearance. The possibility of reviewing additional samples, visiting installed examples, or obtaining more detailed specifications was also discussed.

With regard to the window replacement, the members generally agreed that the proposed design was appropriate in appearance; however, concerns were raised about the use of aluminum cladding, which would differ from the existing painted wood windows on the building. Members recommended considering an all-wood window option to better maintain consistency with the historic materials.

Mr. Shorey acknowledged the feedback and agreed to conduct further research into alternative siding options, provide additional information on trim and corner details, and revisit the window specifications. The Commission decided to continue the application to a future meeting to allow for submission of revised materials and additional detail.

3. Nathan and Lindsay McCurran, 21 Cottage Street

Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct an attached garage, to make changes to the

roofline, and to replace windows at 21 Cottage Street in the Lincoln Historic District Extension (Phase III) Chair Dan Clark introduced the application for 21 Cottage Street, noting that he and Commissioners Smoczynski, Aborn, and Donaldson conducted a site visit. Due to the home's significant setback from Cottage Street and limited visibility from public ways, including partial views from the Bathing Beach, the Commission reviewed the siting and visibility of the proposed attached garage and additions in context.

Mr. and Mrs. McCurran presented their plans to construct an attached garage, modify the roofline, add a front porch, and replace windows, emphasizing an intent to align materials, fixtures, and overall design with Historic District guidelines. The proposal included re-grading the driveway to accommodate the garage, extending the house over the current sunroom/garage area, and orienting garage doors away from the street. They also presented preliminary material selections, including composite siding, window configurations, and lighting.

Commissioner Daley and Commissioner Blevins both noted that the application lacked sufficient detail typically required for review, including trim specifications, window alignment, and construction details. Commissioner Aborn requested side-by-side existing and proposed elevations, particularly for the water-facing façade, to better understand changes. Joshua Blevins also requested a full plot plan and additional material cut sheets.

Commissioner Smoczynski indicated minimal concern about the rear due to limited visibility. However, Commissioner Daley raised concerns that the dormers appear overly large and positioned too close to the roof ridge and edges, recommending they be lowered and set back in accordance with Commission guidelines. Heidi Gaul noted she had previously flagged these guideline considerations to the applicant's architect.

Commissioner Donaldson expressed concern that she felt the proposed garage overwhelmed the house and detracted from its original proportions. Commissioner Blevins similarly noted that the proposed garage is substantial in scale and deeper than the existing structure. Members suggested exploring alternative configurations, including angling the garage or otherwise reducing its visual impact.

Commissioner Smoczynski commented that the addition, combined with the new porch, diminishes the visibility of the original house form, though he acknowledged the proposal is generally appropriate given the building's era and setback. Commissioner Daley emphasized the importance of preserving the identity of the 1949 post-war house, recommending clearer differentiation between old and new through adjustments to rooflines, corner boards, and overall massing hierarchy.

Commissioner Daley also had reservations about the proposed Everlast composite siding, citing concerns about long-term durability and appearance, and suggested exploring alternative materials. Commissioner Smoczynski indicated more flexibility on materials given the home's age and setback but noted color selection would be important. Administrator Gaul encouraged the applicant to consult with the Zoning Board regarding alternative garage configurations.

Overall, the Commission found the proposal thoughtfully considered but identified significant concerns related to massing, scale, and level of detail. Chair Clark summarized that the Commission is seeking more detailed plans, including existing vs. proposed comparisons, further exploration of roofline adjustments, and reconsideration of garage massing. The application was continued to a future meeting to allow the applicant to revise plans and provide additional information.

4. Tyler Beath, 188 South Street

Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to change the previously approved siding at 188 South Street located in the Lincoln Historic District Extension (Phase II)

Due to a last-minute conflict, Mr. Beath could not attend, therefore Chair Clark continued this application to the June meeting.

5. David and Kiely Rogan, 2 South Lane

Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to increase the roof height on an existing addition to accommodate an interior remodel and to replace windows at 2 South Lane located in the Lincoln Historic District Extension (Phase I)

Kiely Rogan presented the application on behalf of herself, her husband Dave Rogan, and designer Josh Knapper, explaining that the submission was intentionally detailed to provide historical context due to the home's age, unusual orientation to South Street, and the visibility of all proposed work. She said they were very sensitive to the home's historic character, informed in part by records from the previous owner, and clarified terminology regarding the "front" and "rear" of the house, emphasizing that all proposed work is on the rear façade visible from South Street.

The proposal was organized into two components: (1) modifications to a non-original rear (circa 1900) kitchen addition, including a modest increase in the shed roof height to improve interior functionality, and (2) window replacements in both the rear addition and an original portion of the house where existing windows are not historic. She explained that first-floor windows in the rear would be replaced and resized to remain proportionate to the increased wall height, noting the existing asymmetry and lack of historic consistency in current windows. She emphasized flexibility in window design and indicated willingness to revise based on Commission feedback.

Commissioner Daley expressed appreciation for the side-by-side elevations and recommended lowering the window placement slightly to provide more space between the windows and the shed roof for better proportion. She advised against the proposed central picture window flanked by smaller units, noting that this configuration is not historically appropriate for a house of this age. She instead supported a more traditional grouping of three evenly proportioned double-hung windows. She also suggested retaining the smaller existing side windows, citing their asymmetry as contributing to the home's character, and requested that any future shutter work should include detailed specifications.

Commissioner Aborn noted appreciation for the existing "quirkiness" of the windows and did not raise additional concerns.

Commissioner Smoczynski expressed strong appreciation for the thoroughness of the application and supported the proposed roof height increase, stating it maintained the home's character while improving functionality. He was comfortable with the massing and generally supportive of the window changes, though he suggested that adopting the alternative three-window configuration might better address concerns. He also acknowledged the challenge of the rear façade being highly visible and indicated flexibility in reviewing such conditions.

Commissioner Blevins agreed with prior comments, stating he had no concerns with raising the roof. While acknowledging that a three-part window with a central picture window is not typical for a historic home,

he felt the existing conditions mitigated this concern. He ultimately expressed no objection to the proposal but supported reviewing window specifications and noted the alternative configuration could be appropriate.

Chair Clark asked for clarification that the chimney would remain and expressed some hesitation about approving a design without a clearly illustrated alternative. After Commissioner Smoczynski displayed an alternate three-window configuration, he indicated comfort proceeding with that option and recommended structuring approval to include submission of a revised elevation for administrative review.

Ms. Rogan reiterated that she and her husband were not committed to the proposed window design and were willing to adopt the three-window alternative to facilitate approval.

MOTION by Commissioner Smoczynski to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the property at 2 South Lane, located in the Lincoln Historic District Extension (Phase I) to allow for the increase in roof height of an existing addition to accommodate an interior remodel, and for the replacement of windows.

The approval is contingent upon the following conditions:

The work shall be carried out in a manner consistent with the application dated April 30, 2026, with the modification of the rear window elevation to reflect the alternate design described in the application narrative (i.e., a grouping of three traditionally proportioned windows). A revised elevation reflecting this change shall be submitted to Administrator Gaul for review and approval prior to issuance of the certificate.

SECOND by Commissioner Blevins

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Aborn – Aye
Blevins – Aye
Smoczynski – Aye
Daley - Aye
Clark – Aye

6. Chris and Natalie Watson, 38 Fearing Road

Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to remove a broken fence and install a new fence at 38 Fearing Road located in the Lincoln Historic District Extension (Phase III)

Chair Dan Clark displayed the application materials and existing conditions, and applicant Chris Watson presented the proposal to remove a deteriorated wooden post-and-beam fence and install a new cedar fence along the rear and partial side property lines, including a gate near the driveway. He clarified that the work pertains only to the fence, noting prior approved work on the house has already been completed.

Commission members generally found the proposal straightforward but raised concerns regarding the height, placement, and design consistency of the fence. Several members expressed that a six-foot fence felt excessive, particularly along the front portion of the property, and recommended reducing the front to four feet. There was also consensus that the fence should be set back further from the front corner of the house to better preserve the visibility and architectural prominence of the structure.

Additional discussion focused on the fence design, with members encouraging a more unified and contextually appropriate style rather than mixing different lattice and solid panel treatments. While opinions varied on specific stylistic details, there was general agreement that consistency and a more transparent or softened appearance would be preferable.

Mr. Watson was receptive to feedback and agreed to revise the proposal to (1) set the fence back to the rear corner of the projecting portion of the house, (2) reduce the height of the front to four feet, and (3) pursue a more unified fence design. The Commission indicated that, with these modifications, the proposal would be considered appropriate.

MOTION by Commissioner Aborn to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the removal of an existing broken fence and installation of a new fence at 38 Faring Road, located in the Lincoln Historic District Extension (Phase III).

The Certificate is conditioned upon the following:

The work shall be completed in a manner consistent with the plans and materials specifications dated March 7, 2026, as amended during the meeting to reflect that:

- The portion of the fence along Faring Road shall terminate further back on the building and shall not exceed four (4) feet in height;
- The fence shall begin at the 24-foot mark from the rear right corner of the building, as shown on the proposed fence layout presented at the meeting; and
- The final fence style shall be selected at the discretion of the applicant from the options presented in the application.

SECONDED by Commissioner Daley, with the amendment incorporated.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Aborn – Aye
Daley - Aye
Smoczynski – Aye
Blevins – Aye
Clark – Aye

Chair Clark asked the applicant to update the application and give it to Administrator Gaul for the record.

OTHER BUSINESS

Administrator Gaul reported on Historical Commission items:

Certificates of Non-Applicability

- 1006 Main Street: Demolish and infill existing Inground pool.
- 380 Main Street: Replace asphalt roof in kind.
- 597 Main Street: Replace cedar roof and some wood clapboards in kind.
- 173 Main Street: Remove concrete pad between house and garage; install wood deck boards (not

visible from street).

- 133 Main Street: Replace cedar roof in kind.
- 20 Middle Street: Replace cedar roof with asphalt roof

Demolition Delays / Demolition Reviews (Historical Commission)

- 40 Hersey Street: Demolish detached garage; proposed new two-story attached garage.
- 143 Summer Street: Demolish existing garage and arcade connector; replace with larger garage with ADU and new two-story connection.
- 33 Lafayette Street: Demolish small mudroom; construct addition connecting to detached garage.
- 129 Kilby Street: Remove and rebuild garage roof with increased pitch and added overhang for storage

Commissioner Blevins asked if demolition delays ever need to come before the HDC. Administrator Gaul explained that demolition review applies to properties outside historic districts and begins with a determination of historical significance by the Historical Commission. If a structure is deemed not significant (e.g., 129 Kilby Street garage), the applicant may proceed directly to permitting. If a property is deemed significant (e.g., 143 Summer Street), the applicant must return with detailed demolition plans for further review. She said that while the Commission does not regulate design, it provides advisory feedback to encourage compatibility with the existing structure and streetscape. If a demolition plan is denied, a six-month delay is imposed to allow alternatives such as redesign or relocation. Commissioners discussed the process, noting appreciation for preservation efforts such as retaining elements of character. Administrator Gaul noted that most applicants are generally receptive to feedback and often revise plans accordingly.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Dan Clark introduced the March 19, 2026 meeting minutes, noting they had not been approved previously due to lack of quorum from attending members. With sufficient members present, Justin Aborn reported he had reviewed the minutes and found no discrepancies, and Joshua Blevins expressed agreement.

MOTION by Commissioner Aborn to approve the March 19, 2026 minutes as presented

SECONDED by Commissioner Blevins

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Daley - Aye
Blevins – Aye
Smoczynski – Aye
Aborn – Aye

Motion passes

MOTION by Commissioner Aborn to approve the April 16, 2026 minutes as presented

SECONDED by Commissioner Daley

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Aborn – Aye
Blevins – Aye
Clark – Aye

Motion passes

ANNOUNCEMENT

Chair Dan Clark announced that the next meeting will be his final meeting and will include an election for a new Chair and Vice Chair. He noted he will confirm his departure with the Select Board and raised questions about how vacancies and alternates will be filled. Administrator Gaul shared that the Historic Commission is also trying to recruit new members and that Select Board interviews for new appointments are underway, but no new applicants have yet to be identified. Several members agreed to help recruit candidates, and Administrator Gaul will follow up with potential contacts and the Select Board to clarify appointments and fill open seats.

ADJOURN

MOTION TO ADJOURN by Commissioner Aborn

SECONDED by Commissioner Daley

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Blevins – Aye
Smoczynski – Aye
Daley - Aye
Aborn – Aye
Clark - Aye

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM

Respectfully submitted by Robin Gorfine, Recording Clerk