



future of downtown, and that the Master Plan recommends removing the Tall Building Overlay District on Rantoul Street. The Commission and Mayor Cahill review existing dimensional standards on Cabot Street and Rantoul Street, and review the historic context for both downtown streets. Pearl states that the City should have higher standards for preserving historic buildings versus demolition and new construction, and notes the past confusion around Special Permit criteria and how they can be applied to receive approval for new buildings. Mayor Cahill states that the City is receiving guidance from urban design experts to create improved design standards and policies around downtown design.

Finch says that the southern end of Cabot Street is a concern for the Commission, noting the proposal to demolish the historic building next to Ward's Florist – which is in the Fish Flake Hill National Register Historic District, but not in the local historic district – and the concern is that the parcels will be consolidated and developed into a large-scale building complex. Finch cites concern that a developer will purchase the parcels and build to the fullest extent of zoning allowance, not only demolishing a historically significant building but also constructing a building that does not fit the historic context of the neighborhood. The Commission and Hutchings review the requirements of the City's Demolition Delay Ordinance, and how those requirements can only delay a demolition permit for up to one year, but cannot halt a demolition permit to protect a historic building.

Mayor Cahill and the Commission have a brief discussion on the purpose of having historic homes and neighborhoods recognized and designated as local historic districts, and how it can lead to neighborhood revitalization. Commission members highlight how designation can be beneficial to the local area by encouraging the improvement to homes and buildings, maintaining property values; adding value to the city as a source of tourism and pride; and preserving interest and upkeep of neighborhoods.

Mason notes that there are members of the public present who may want to ask questions on this topic while the Mayor is present.

### **Comments/Questions from the Public**

- a. Fay Salt, Beverly resident (66 Haskell St.)

Ms. Salt comments on the property at 47 Cabot Street and discusses the benefit of protecting it and other properties through extending the Fish Flake Hill local historic district. She states she believes that maintaining the quality and historic significance of the buildings on Cabot Street to prevent it from becoming like Rantoul Street should be a priority for the HDC.

There being no other comments, the conversation is picked up again by Finch, who reviews design and context for new buildings and consistency with local scale. Methods to protect historic buildings continue to be discussed, and Hutchings reviews how the Commission, as well as the Community Preservation Committee, has considered a potential small preservation fund that would be managed through the CPC, which could fund qualifying small historic preservation projects to assist property owners in managing the additional cost of historically appropriate design and materials. Mayor Cahill asks if the Commission has considered funding small historic preservation projects through a revolving loan fund. Wendy points out that the city of Cambridge

has combined historic home preservation and affordable housing grant funding, and has established something similar to a revolving loan fund.

Finch recognizes Ward 4 City Councilor Scott Houseman, who speaks about preserving the character of the city and historic preservation as a community value. He thanks the Commission for its efforts toward this as well.

Finch reviews public education as a historic preservation priority. He refers to a small town in Maine, and how they share information about the history of homes by posting comprehensive information on the homes as “outdoor museums.” Councilor Houseman says that he noticed in Philadelphia how historic homes and buildings have QR codes that the public can scan for more information about the historic building.

Mayor Cahill asks how the City can best highlight the community’s history. Several Commission members identify Historic Beverly as a resource, and review different buildings and areas of the city. Mayor Cahill highlights the ICC building on Rantoul Street and how the building has been an important place for immigrants.

Mayor Cahill asks the Commission how CPC funding for historic preservation projects might most appropriately be used in the coming years. LaMont states that extending the Center Business District on Cabot Street, for which the City would need to hire a consultant, should be a priority. Hutchings asks whether the City should also prioritize the designation of local cemeteries on the National Register, so the City can then seek funding for the physical restoration of all of the eligible cemeteries through grants. Pearl suggests that the City encourage the creation of Friend’s groups to these cemeteries, pointing out that the Ancient Cemetery is in dire need of a Friend’s group. She highlights other efforts, such as the local designation of the Greenergy Solar Field as a historically significant location. The Mayor recommends the Commission reach out to the undersecretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs, who is a resident of Beverly, for this project.

Mayor Cahill leaves the meeting and the members continue with the other agenda items.

**2. Application for Certificate of Non-Applicability #21-01 – 26 Front Street – Raymond P. Freeman-Lynde – repair and in-kind replacement of select window frames and sills, select clapboards on the front façade, trim in various locations, fascia, and shingles on the west facade.**

Mr. Freeman-Lynde opens the discussion reviewing the status of the shingles on the west façade. He states they had to be replaced, and he started doing so he knew there were clapboards underneath. He notes that trying to save the clapboards did not work, and that it was determined they’re beyond repair. He states the new clapboards will be in-kind replacements, as will all improvements to the building.

Three historic photographs of the building, provided by Historic Beverly, are shared for review.

Finch states that the clapboards do obviously need to be replaced. Mr. Lynde says that the replacements will be cedar shingles and they will be stained rather than painted. Finch says that their area of concern is the window sills and making sure that they remain historically

appropriate. Mr. Lynde says that the plan is to replace them in kind. Finch and Mr. Lynde discuss technical aspects of the materials and window and trim replacements.

Pearl clarifies that the discussion is focused on verifying that the replacements are going to be in-kind replacements; Mr. Lynde confirms that yes, in-kind replacement is the intention for the project. He states that he knowingly bought a home in a historic district and recognizes that improvements must be historically appropriate. Finch recognizes Dan Finn, 16 Front Street, who comments on historically appropriate materials that he has previously used.

Committee members feel that they should make a motion on whether to approve the certificate of non-applicability (for in-kind replacement). Members confirm that because the application is for a Certificate of Non-Applicability rather than a Certificate of Appropriateness, there is no need to hold a public hearing. Hutchings states that in some cases Certificates of Non-Applicability can be reviewed administratively, but because the application has many components Hutchings and Finch determined that the Commission should review it in public meeting.

**Pearl:** Moves to approve the Certificate of Non-Applicability to repair and make in-kind replacements to certain architectural features at 26 Front Street, as described in the application. Mason seconds. The motion passes (4-0).

**3. Approval of minutes (as available)**

There being no minutes to approve, the Commission moves on.

**4. New/Other Business**

**a. Other discussion or action items related to Commission business, if any**

LaMont asks how the Commission will move forward with regard to helping implement actions from the city's Master Plan. Hutchings clarifies that the Commission can determine how much or little they may support or comment on proposed actions. Pearl asks where the Commission is with design guidelines for Fish Flake Hill, mentioning that it would be good for the Commission to have their own design guidelines completed before addressing other projects proposed in the city's Master Plan.

**b. The property at 47 Cabot Street**

LaMont asks for an update on the Ward's Florist property at 47 Cabot Street, and states the Ward 2 Civic Association is concerned with what's happening with the property. LaMont states the Civic Association hopes that the owner will reconsider demolishing the historic building and replacing it with a parking lot. LaMont notes the Civic Association offered participate in a mediation and try to find a middle ground and resolution. Mason noted that one suggestion was to demolish the non-historic addition to the building and retain the historic original house. Hutchings suggests the Commission invite the Wards back for another conversation on whether a different outcome might be found. She states that it would be the responsibility of the Commission to contact the Wards and invite them back, but notes that the Wards are also free to decline.

Pearl asks Hutchings if she would ask the City Solicitor and the state historical commission whether a demolition permit for a particular property could be halted entirely

if a local historic district were to be expanded to include that particular property during the demolition delay period. Hutchings agrees, and states she believes that would be the case. Hutchings clarifies that the next meeting, the Wards should be invited to discuss the demolition delay, and states that the special committee meeting for expanding the historic district would be a separate discussion. Finch recognizes Fay Salt, who asks if the public is allowed to help commissions with research and/or other tasks for which commission members require or could use assistance. Hutchings recommends they table this topic in detail in the next meeting. Finch suggests that Hutchings seek information from the Massachusetts Historical Commission about the process for establishing local historic districts.

**c. High priority actions in the Historic Preservation Plan**

Hutchings suggests that the commission review high-priority actions on the Historic Preservation Plan at the next meeting.

**5. Adjournment**

**LaMont:** Motions to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 pm. Mason seconds the motion. The motion passes (4-0).