

TOWN OF BELMONT
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
January 27, 2026

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BELMONT, MA

DATE: February 25, 2026
TIME: 8:40 AM

Present Members: Online: Henry Ogilby, Carl Solander, Chair, Drew Nealon, Jackie Appel, John Beaty, Yael Getz Schoen

Absent Members: Matt Schonewald

Town Staff: Conor McCormack, Planning Manager

Location: Virtual, via Zoom

Agenda: 2026-01-27 – HDC Meeting Agenda STAMPED.pdf

- 1) **Meeting called to order:** Mr. Solander called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm. Quorum was established.
- 2) **New Public Hearings**
 - a) **HDC-26-01 – 19 Moore Street (Homer Building) Exterior Restoration**
 - i) Documents reviewed: HDC-26-01 Application Form STAMPED 1.7.26.pdf, 19 Moore St SPG Mtg Presentation 1.27.26.pdf, 19 Moore St Homer Bldg Review Plan SPG 2026_01_05.pdf
 - ii) Marta Kabalin, Project Manager, Facilities, Town of Belmont and Doug Manley and Meghan Rodenhiser, Spencer Preservation Group, Architects were in attendance for this case.
 - iii) Mr. Manley said that he had performed an evaluation of Town Hall, the School Administration building, and the Homer Building (Town Hall Annex) in 2023. Some maintenance is urgent and should be performed by 2028.
 - iv) Mr. Manley discussed the eaveline and up of the Homer Building. Mr. Manley said that the eaveline is discolored, has mildew, and the brackets are slowly dropping as they are not fastened. It is believed that there has been water infiltration. Repairs and the water issue need to be addressed. Mr. Manley said that the snow rails needed to be removed and reinstalled in a higher location. Mr. Manley said that the snow pads are too short and are slipping out. Replacement of the snow pads is not included in the scope of work or its budget. Mr. Manley added that the gutter on east side of the building needs replacement. In addition, there are missing brackets. Mr. Manley said that the north stairs and masonry repairs are outside of the current budget and that the soffit repair would include painting.
 - v) Ms. Rodenhiser said that working on the roof and its eaves is the priority to maintain the character of the building.
 - vi) Ms. Kabalin said that HDC approval is needed for the scope of work. After this, the process includes obtaining a public bid with the intention to make repairs this summer.
 - vii) It was confirmed that no new materials would be introduced to the building. Materials will include slate, copper, and mahogany. Ms. Rodenhiser said that five to ten percent of the slates will need to be replaced with a good match. Mr. Solander requested samples for review.
 - viii) Mr. Beaty commented that the soffits are visual, not structural. The brackets will be reattached using timber lock fasteners which are hidden.
 - ix) Ms. Rodenhiser said that relocating the snow rails is one of the most expensive aspects of the scope of work. Mr. Beaty suggested not having cars park beneath this area so that the Town of Belmont could spare this expense. Ms. Rodenhiser said that the work is needed to prevent further deterioration. Mr. Solander said that this work relates to life safety issue, not just the cars parked beneath. Ms. Rodenhiser said that the investment in copper gutters also needs to be protected. Ms. Appel agreed that life safety is a priority and that the Town also needs to avoid the risk of liability.
 - x) **MOTION to approve the project as presented including the roofing work, work on the soffits and brackets, selected gutter replacement and potentially also the, budget permitting, work on the ventilation towers and additional woodwork on the roof with the stipulation that a member of the HDC have final approval on any replacement slates and materials that might need to be brought on by Mr. Solander. SECONDED by Mr. Nealon. With all in favor, with the exception of Mr. Beaty, this motion then passed 5-1-0.**

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b) HDC-26-02 – Community Path – Concord Ave Bridge

- i) Documents reviewed: Sample Material Cut Sheets.pdf, HDC-26-02 Application Form STAMPED 1.7.26.pdf, Belmont Community Path Ph 1 1--% Plans.pdf, Belmont Community Path HDC Application Package.pdf, Belmont Community Path 100% Plans REDUCED 1.8.26.pdf
- ii) Matt Soltys, Project Manager, and Jason Sogul, Director of Transportation, both of Nitsch Engineering, Sean Sanger and Abby Gerrick, both of Copley Wolff Design Group, and Holly Muson, Belmont Community Path Group were in attendance for this case.
- iii) Mr. Soltys said that the design is being finished and MADOT has been contacted on permitting and cultural resources.
- iv) At this time, the presentation was shared online. Details are contained therein and salient points of discussion were noted.
- v) It was said that the Community Path will run between Brighton and Clark Streets and that there will be a new pedestrian underpass to connecting to Belmont Center. The path will be 12' wide and shared use. There will be signaling for bicycles. The application with MADOT was filed in December, 2025. The bridge design will be completed in Spring, 2026 and built in June/July, 2026. Section 106 clearance has been received from the State, and Federal Highway has deemed the changes de minimus. Construction is planned for the 2027-2029 timeframe.
- vi) At this time, a rendering of improvements to Belmont Station and Concord Avenue was shared online. ADA access will be coordinated with the MBTA. There will be an overlook area with seating and paving.
- vii) Mr. Sanger said that the existing fence detail would be mimicked and that the walking areas would be twice as wide for pedestrians.
- viii) Images of benches were shared online. Mr. Ogilby said that the bridge is an iconic, important focal point to Belmont Center and that he is not supportive of the modern benches whose images were shared.
- ix) Mr. Solander inquired what specifically the HDC is being asked to approve. Mr. Soltys said that he is seeking a cultural clearance recommendation to work with Town of Belmont.
- x) At this time, an image was shared online depicting the landscaping buffer. It was said that there is no plan to alter the bridge or its rails. Pavers will be used to create a terrace for bicycle storage. There will be four bike racks, and a seating area and new fencing will match existing fencing.
- xi) There are no immediate plans for signage although there is an idea for a memorial. There will be plantings on the bridge.
- xii) Vincent Stanton said that Carol Moyles had been an important voice on this project and that he echoes Mr. Ogilby's comments. Mr. Stanton added that historically sensitive fencing is needed.
- xiii) Mr. Soltys said that the proposed project would stay away from the train tracks and that asphalt will be used for the bike path.
- xiv) Mr. Solander said that the HDC needs to see the colors and dimensions of materials. Mr. Sanger requested that this be managed as a condition of approval.
- xv) Mr. Solander inquired about the appearance of the bike racks. Mr. Soltys said that they would be stainless and is open to painting them black, yet this would require maintenance.
- xvi) The proposed project does not include the walking tunnel.
- xvii) Mr. Beaty said that it is hard to relate to the drawings without characterization of appearance and additional visual context. Mr. Sanger said that he is trying to be intentional with patterning and directionality. Mr. Solander asked HDC members to focus on the bridge and consider a vote for a Certificate of Appropriateness or continue the hearing until the next meeting and ask for additional images.
- xviii) **MOTION to approve the elements shown on this plan subject to final review and approval by a subcommittee that the HDC will designate of three people or less to review the final elements that are submitted, our approval would be of the fencing that is shown on these drawings, of the asphalt and stone dust curb as shown on these drawings, benches subject to final approval by HDC, bicycle racks subject to final approval by the HDC and pavers subject to final approval by the HDC by Mr. Solander. SECONDED by Ms. Getz Schoen. With all in favor, this motion then passed.**

3) Continued Public Hearings

- a) None

4) Approval of Minutes

- a) Approval of Draft 12/16/25 Minutes (Michelle/Carl)
 - i) Documents Reviewed: HDC Meeting Minutes.12.16.2025_for-approval.docx

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- ii) Mr. Solander said that he had reviewed and edited these minutes.
- iii) **MOTION to approve the minutes as written and presented Mr. Beaty. SECONDED by Mr. Ogilby. With all in favor, with the exception of Ms. Getz Schoen who abstained, this motion then passed 5-0-1.**

5) Continued Discussion

- a) HDC Design Guidelines
 - i) List Serv – No update
 - ii) CPA Administrative Funds
 - (i) Ms. Appel said that she had not had any success and that it may be worthwhile to seek administrative funds from the CPC.
 - (ii) Mr. Solander asked Mr. McCormack to confirm that the HDC has \$10K.
- b) HDC Application Process Document Update
 - i) Documents reviewed: Flow Chart Round 2.pptx, Application Submission Criteria.xlsx
 - ii) Mr. McCormack agreed to draft the flowchart.
 - iii) Ms. Getz Schoen said that she would send Town of Salem guidelines.
 - iv) Mr. Solander, Ms. Getz Schoen, and Mr. McCormack agreed to meet to make progress in this area.
- c) HDC Budget & Application Fees
 - i) Mr. McCormack agreed to discuss this with Mr. Ryan.
 - ii) Mr. Solander suggested a permitting fee of \$100.
 - iii) Mr. McCormack said that fee schedules are under the purview of the Select Board.
- d) Communications with District Residents (John)
 - i) Document reviewed: DRAFT HDC Letter to Residents – J Beaty.docx
 - ii) Mr. Solander said that the HDC's focus is on homeowners in the historic district and that expanding to all historic homes is a project. Ms. Getz Schoen said that the information needed is contained in the excel file created previously or the Assessor's database.
 - iii) Mr. Beaty suggested creating a newsletter with a topic of the quarter to create dialogue and build community.
 - iv) Mr. Ogilby added that the Belmont Historic Society (BHS) has a plaque program. Mr. Ogilby agreed to ask Mr. Hughes, Director, BHS, to come speak at an upcoming HDC meeting.
 - v) It was agreed to gather as much data as possible and refine communications to each constituency.
- e) Membership Update and Chair for 2026
 - i) Facebook/Instagram – Call for New Members
 - (i) Mr. McCormack said that he had made a posting.
 - (ii) One member of the HDC should come from the Boston Society of Landscape Architects.
 - (iii) It was agreed to ask Ms. O'Brien, Town Clerk to include this in her outreach for volunteers.
 - (iv) Ms. Getz Schoen agreed to post this to the Belmont Parents Group.
 - (v) Mr. Solander said that he seeks a lawyer as a member.
 - ii) Vice Chair for 2026
 - (i) Mr. Solander asked members to consider this.
- f) Repairs of Town-owned buildings
 - i) Document reviewed: BCA_Benton Library Roof_Site Report 12.8-15.25.pdf
 - ii) Mr. Solander said that the report for the Benton Library had been distributed.
 - iii) Mr. Solander shared an image of a curved railing that he approved for Town Hall which was a slight alteration and improvement to the version approved by the HDC at a prior meeting.
- g) Belmont Center Design Guidelines & Zoning
 - i) Mr. Ogilby said that Town Meeting is March 4th and that a simple majority will be required for this vote.
- h) 27 Wellington Lane Update
 - i) Mr. Solander said that he had received a communication from a contractor who plans to re-side the house with cedar siding. The specific finish will need to be approved.
 - ii) MHC/MAPC Training Opportunities (Jackie) – no update
- i) Work Plan Review and Update
 - i) Document reviewed: Updated 250821 Belmont HDC Work Plan JA CS V2.xlsx
 - ii) Mr Solander said that the McLean Barn is used for temporary storage for hiking equipment.
 - iii) Mr. Solander said that there is no other current use, funding is needed and that there is a Preservation agreement to comply with.

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- 6) **Adjournment**
 - a) **MOTION to adjourn at 9:31 pm by Ms. Appel. SECONDED by Mr. Ogilby. With all in favor, the meeting was then promptly adjourned.**

The next meeting of the HDC is **February 24, 2026**.