

Minutes of the Cambridge Historical Commission

May 7, 2026 – Meeting conducted online via Zoom Webinar (853 3960 9074) - 6:00 P.M.

Present: Chandra Harrington, Chair; Liz Lyster, Vice Chair; Gavin Kleespies, Paula Paris, Kyle Sheffield, Members; Michael Rogove and Scott Kyle, Alternate Members

Absent: Joseph Ferrara, Yuting Zhang, Members; Florrie Darwin, Alternate Member

Staff present: Charles Sullivan, Executive Director; Sarah Burks, Preservation Planner

Public present: See attached list.

This meeting was held online with remote participation pursuant to Ch. 2 of the Acts of 2023. The public was able to participate online via the Zoom webinar platform.

With a quorum present, Chair Harrington called the meeting to order at 6:08 P.M. She designated both alternates present to vote on all matters. The chair reviewed online meeting instructions and public hearing procedures, noting that public questions and comments would be combined and limited to two minutes. She dispensed with the consent agenda procedure.

Public Hearings: Landmark Designation Proceedings

Case L-150: 9 Wyman Road, by petition of 30+ registered voters. Consider request to initiate a landmark designation study.

Mr. Sullivan shared slides and described the petition received on April 13 by more than 30 verified Cambridge voters. He summarized his memorandum about the property, the context of the petition and development proposal for the property, and the criteria for landmark eligibility as provided in the enabling ordinance. The house is a 1927 dwelling built by Duguid & Martin, a partnership active in Cambridge in the 1920s. The house exhibits late medieval American characteristics including, multiple gables, shingle siding, but did not represent a specific architectural style. He noted that the first resident owners included Harriet Boyd Hawes and Charles Hawes, both significant early 20th century figures. Harriet Boyd Hawes was an archaeologist known for excavations in Crete and a pioneering woman in the field. Her husband, Charles Hawes, was an anthropologist known for expedition work in Siberia and co-authorship of archaeological publications. Mr. Sullivan read the landmark criteria from the ordinance and explained that the ordinance purpose statement sets the expectation that there be a balance of historic preservation with other city priorities such as housing, sustainability, and equity.

Liza Oliver introduced herself as the lead petitioner, a resident of 4 Wyman Road, and a faculty member of Wellesley College. She requested a continuance of the hearing because new legal counsel

had been retained the previous day. She had provided supplementary information to the petition's supporting materials on May 4, and senior leadership of Wellesley and Smith colleges were preparing supporting statements.

Taylor Lee of Lawson & Weitzen introduced herself as the attorney representing several of the petitioners. She reiterated the request for a one-month continuance, stating that her office had only just been formally retained and needed time to review materials and advise the petitioners.

Catherine O'Rourke of Wellesley College spoke in support of a continuance and shared her opinion that the property appeared eligible for National Register listing due to its architecture, streetscape context, and Harriet Hawes' historical significance. The house contributed to a "distinctive character" and merited further study.

The chair asked if there was anyone else wishing to comment on the requested continuance.

Patrick Barrett introduced himself as an attorney representing D&D Homes, the company that planned to develop the property. He opposed delaying the hearing and urged the Commission to deny the request to initiate a landmark study. He argued that the petition was filed to attempt to block a multifamily residential development, not out of longstanding preservation concerns; a continuance would jeopardize his clients' financing arrangements and potentially kill the housing project.

Commissioners asked questions of fact.

- Mr. Rogove confirmed timing of continuance requests and new legal representation.
- Ms. Paris asked if the petition applied only to 9 Wyman Road, not the entire street.
- Liz Lister questioned if additional research would meaningfully change the Commission's deliberations.

Commissioners acknowledged frustration among residents but reiterated the Commission's duty to evaluate only preservation criteria.

Mr. Sullivan advised against a continuance, stating that staff had conducted sufficient research.

Ms. Lyster moved to deny the continuance and proceed with the hearing. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rogove and passed 6-0 in a rollcall vote. (Lyster, Paris, Sheffield, Harrington, Kyle, Rogove).

Ms. Oliver presented her case for landmark study of the property. She provided an extensive historical account of Harriet Boyd Hawes, including her archaeological breakthroughs in Crete; her role as a wartime nurse in Greco-Turkish War (1897), Spanish American War (1898), and World War I; her con-

tributions to women's education at Wellesley College; her political activism in Cambridge, including participation in shoemaker strikes (1933); and an international incident and arrest in Europe for criticizing Hitler while searching for her missing daughter.

Oliver stated that 9 Wyman Road was Hawes' longest residence during her intellectual life. The home's role in her personal and academic career warranted preservation under Criterion 1. The streetscape context and early subdivision planning reflected intentional preservation of trees and open space, adding architectural significance under Criterion 2. Demolition would contribute to erasure of a marginalized historical figure.

Kathryn O'Rourke, an architectural historian and professor of art history at Wellesley College, provided additional architectural context for 9 Wyman Road. She noted that the siting of the house contributes meaningfully to the street's distinctive character and loss of the house would significantly alter the neighborhood's historical continuity.

Ms. Harrington asked if the owner's representative had any comment.

Mr. Barrett made a statement against landmark designation. He said the petition was being used as an attempt to block development. The staff memo and the opinion of outside experts did not support initiating a landmark study. He emphasized the proposed 56-unit building includes affordable units and argued that delaying or denying the project would harm Cambridge's housing goals.

Oliver briefly replied, stating that landmark petitions historically arose in response to demolition threats and that such use was valid rather than abusive. She criticized Barrett's characterization of the proposed building as "for families," noting most units were studios or one-bedrooms. The Chair asked both sides to avoid a direct back-and-forth.

Ms. Harrington called for questions of fact from the Commissioners.

Mr. Rogove asked when the petitioners first became aware of Hawes' history and what prompted the petition. Oliver explained she supported upzoning, but the scale of the proposed project prompted her to research the property—leading to her discovery of Hawes association with the house. Mr. Rogove asked whether the petition represented the broader neighborhood; Oliver said it reflected the views of petitioners and neighbors.

Ms. Paris asked whether a demolition delay case had been heard previously. Mr. Sullivan said he had determined in 2025 that 9 Wyman was not significant for the purposes of demolition review. Ms. Paris also asked about timing of the building permit and demolition permit requests. Sullivan reported that a demolition permit application had appeared in the permitting system the previous Monday.

Ms. Lyster asked Mr. Sullivan whether information learned since last year would change his demolition significance determination. Mr. Sullivan replied in the negative. Ms. Lyster asked DND Homes whether alternative commemorative methods could be used (i.e., plaque, naming). Mr. Barrett said ownership was willing to pursue commemorative recognition inside the building.

Mr. Sheffield asked the petitioners if they had discussed their concerns with the developer. Oliver said outreach had been limited due to legal representation, but the neighborhood was familiar with the proposed plans.

Ms. Harrington called for questions of fact and comments by members of the public in attendance. She noted two-minute time limit.

Michael Yogman of 14 Wyman Road supported a landmark study. He opposed the proposed redevelopment; described the project as “monstrous,” not family-friendly, and disruptive to neighborhood character. He emphasized that Wyman Road’s historical context should be valued.

Joe Adiletta of 68 Walker Street supported the petition. He stated that the development would bring great profits. He urged the Commission to protect the historical context.

Jacinda Barbehenn of 67 Sparks Street opposed the petition. She said landmarking was being used to block new housing. She supported more housing to help local businesses and community vitality. She favored plaque recognition instead of preserving the house.

James Zall of 203 Pemberton Street opposed the petition. He noted Cambridge has many historically notable residents and preserving all such homes was impractical. The city needed more housing.

Marilee Meyer of 10 Dana Street supported the petition. She expressed concern about maximizing density without consideration for the surrounding contextual consideration.

Jessica Sheehan of Plymouth Street opposed the petition. The multifamily zoning was intentionally adopted to allow taller, denser buildings citywide; the project aligned with Council’s intent.

Colin Flavin of 6 Wyman Road supported the petition, which would provide more time for study.

David Halperin of 14 Valentine Street opposed the petition. He said the end of single-family zoning allowed apartment buildings in formerly low-density areas; he suggested commemorating Hawes through other means.

Phyllis Simpkins of 249 Huron Avenue supported the petition. She said the project’s scale was disproportionate for the neighborhood and raised concerns about traffic and quality-of-life impacts.

Max Kaplan of 45 Yerxa Road opposed the petition. He said many people of significance had lived in Cambridge and the landmarking process should not be used to block housing allowed by zoning.

Marie Saccoccio of 55 Otis Street supported the petition. She said staff had not sufficiently discussed Hawes' accomplishments. She encouraged the Commission to initiate a study.

Dana Bullister of 21 Brookline Street opposed the petition. She said landmarking should not contribute to exclusion; she argued that Hawes would not have supported blocking housing opportunity.

Daniel Cohn of 5 Wyman Road supported the petition. The Commission should focus solely on historical significance, not zoning pressure. The petition provided enough evidence to support the study.

Heather Hoffman of 213 Hurley Street supported the petition. She urged the Commission to stay focused on historic preservation—not housing policy or zoning.

Ilan Levy of 148 Spring Street supported the petition. He discussed the negative impacts of zoning changes on neighborhoods and community cohesion; he cautioned against allowing maximized density without contextual sensitivity.

Justin Saif of 72 Thorndike Street opposed the petition. The new units would benefit residents and graduate students desperate for housing. The petition was submitted for an improper purpose.

Brendan Hickey of 54 Concord Street opposed the petition. He cited *Meehan v. Somerville*, arguing courts have rejected landmarking petitions used to block density. He warned that approving a landmark study for 9 Wyman would be overturned in court.

Doug Kelleher of Epsilon Associates, a consultant hired by 9 Wyman's owner, said the submission relied heavily on identification of 9 Wyman as an example of Storybook architecture, an argument that was not well supported. He recommended commemoration of Hawes but not landmark designation.

Ms. Harrington closed the public comment period, and the Commissioners discussed the matter.

[Mr. Sheffield left the meeting].

Mr. Kyle said he could understand the neighborhood's concerns, but the petition seemed to be a reaction to broader zoning changes.

Ms. Lyster emphasized that the Commission's role was to determine landmark eligibility, not to evaluate the development project. She said Hawes as a historical figure was fascinating, but Cambridge could not landmark every building associated with notable people. Recognition of Hawes with a plaque or other means would be worthwhile. She did not support initiating a landmark study.

[Mr. Kleespies joined the meeting].

Mr. Rogove noted that the Historical Commission was now the only avenue for public comment and objections to development proposals. Public commemoration of Hawes was a good idea.

Ms. Harrington urged the developer to consider mitigating the project's impact and maintaining communication with neighbors but noted the suggestion was outside the landmark designation process.

Ms. Lyster moved to deny the petition to initiate a landmark study for 9 Wyman Road. Mr. Kyle seconded the motion, which passed 5-0. (Lyster, Paris, Harrington, Kyle, Rogove)

Public Hearings: Demolition Review

Case D-1818: 78 Otis St., by 78 Otis St. Realty Trust. Partial demolition of 3-decker (1860). East Cambridge NR District.

Mr. Sullivan introduced the application for partial demolition at 78 Otis Street. Located in the East Cambridge National Register District, the building was automatically significant under the ordinance. He summarized the staff report on the building's architecture and history. Although now a three-story building, it originated as two stories with a Mansard roof. A full third story was added in the 1930s, replacing the Mansard. The entrance surround is an original feature. He described the neighborhood context, with several nearby mid-19th-century Greek Revival homes. He explained the steps of the demolition review hearing and then invited the applicants to present.

Architect Evan Stellman of Khalsa Design Inc. presented on behalf of the applicant. He described the proposed construction, which would extend the building leftward and upward, creating eleven units. The front façade would be re clad with cementitious siding, PVC trim, new cornice, and 2-over-2 windows. Multiple step-backs were included at the top levels to respond to neighborhood scale. He showed renderings and shadow studies. He indicated that decks and balconies were included but could be reduced based on ISD updated guidance about private open space.

Ms. Harrington called for questions of fact from the Commission.

Ms. Lyster asked how demolition was defined; staff clarified ISD's guidance that demolition permits are required for demolition or substantial demolition which could include removal of $\geq 50\%$ of walls, roof, foundation, or volume. Ms. Lyster also asked about the top-floor step back. Mr. Stellman answered it would be stepped back about 8 feet.

Ms. Paris requested clarity on what portions would be removed. Mr. Stellman confirmed demolition exceeds 50% but retains major structural elements.

Mr. Kyle asked about materials—trim, siding, and cladding. He supported a brick veneer over new concrete foundation to maintain street consistency. Applicant agreed. Mr. Kyle also asked about windows; Mr. Stellman said the applicant was open to clad wood products.

Ms. Harrington called for questions of fact and comments by members of the public.

Ms. Saccoccio said she was concerned about blocking windows of the Strazulo house next door. She noted fragile historic brick details on the other neighboring building. She described the proximity to historic sites such as Quality Row, St. Francis of Assisi church, and the East Cambridge Savings Bank.

Ms. Meyer asked if the design maxed out to the minimum setbacks. She questioned use of lattice-patterned design elements and encouraged further study of the design details.

Rick Fiorentino and Justin Hufnagel of 80 Otis Street expressed concerns about asbestos, construction impacts, blocked views, and parking.

Mr. Saif supported the application. He said the existing building is aesthetically weak, and the new design fits well. He encouraged communication with the abutters about construction concerns.

Francis Welch of 75 Otis Street opposed the project's density. He worried about winter shadow impacts, driveway parking intrusion, and loss of historic neighborhood character.

Mr. Levy of 148 Spring Street criticized Cambridge's push to maximize density without regard to people. He said there needed to be more conversation about how to make neighborhoods better.

Jules Kobeck of 69 Gore Street said he was concerned about overcrowding and impacts of building height and proximity.

Mr. Hickey supported the application. He said the existing building was an eyesore and asked how the project would meet passive house requirements with double-hung windows. Mr. Stellman said the project did not need to meet passive house standards.

Ms. Harrington closed the public comment period.

Ms. Lyster commented the front façade appeared "busy" and asked for greater contextual sensitivity. She encouraged removing some balconies if they were not required for every unit.

Mr. Kleespies said the project was approvable but urged the developers to build more sensitively rather than "maxing out" to the zoning allowances. He supported removing side balconies.

Mr. Kyle praised the design quality of the building's stepped massing and updated façade.

Ms. Paris moved to find the building not preferably preserved in the context of the proposed replacement and with the condition that construction details such as materials, siding, garage door, etc. be delegated to staff approval. Mr. Kyle seconded the motion, which passed 6-0 in a roll call vote. (Lyster, Paris, Kleespies, Harrington, Kyle, Rogove)

Case D-819: 114 Auburn St., by George Nearhous. Partial demolition of house (1844).

Mr. Sullivan showed slides of the property, located in the Salem-Auburn Streets National Register District, making it automatically significant. The house was built in 1844, replacing an earlier house that was moved to the rear of the lot. The proposal included partial demolition of portions at the rear and expanding upward.

Mr. Stellman described the proposed design, which would have a rear addition extending leftward, creating a total of six units. The roofline would be raised from about 27.5 feet to 32.5 feet and dormers added. A garage would pass through to an open parking area at the rear. The building would be clad with shingles and cementitious siding.

Ron Buck of Marsh Builders commented on siding materials.

Mr. Kleespies asked about the unit count and suggested cedar shingles to maintain context.

Mr. Kyle supported natural materials like cedar shingles on the street side and suggested removing the garage door for visual openness into the rear yard. The applicant agreed to consider that idea.

Ms. Harrington called for questions of fact and comments by members of the public.

Kimberly Mancino of 120 Auburn Street appreciated that the design wasn't maxed out and provided off-street parking. She expressed concerns about construction impacts to neighboring foundations and trees. She emphasized her concerns about drainage and structural impacts to rubble foundations.

Joe Roy-Mayhew of 104 Auburn St. raised concerns about height and loss of historic character.

Susie Clark of 75 Brookline Street complimented the design as better than others. She expressed concern about loss of open space and potential for flooding.

Lauren Jacoby of 120 Auburn Street noted a letter she submitted signed by 46 neighbors. She supported retaining the street-facing character, preserving the katsura tree and removing the garage door.

Mr. Levy said there was a different approach used in this proposal. He questioned the push for housing at the same time that jobs were disappearing.

Ms. Harrington closed the public comment period and the Commission opened deliberations. Commissioners praised the project as sensitive to the existing building and surroundings. There was a strong consensus around use of cedar shingles, tree preservation, and opening the garage.

Mr. Kleespies moved to find the building not preferably preserved in the context of the proposal and on the condition that approval of construction details be delegated to the staff. Ms. Paris seconded the motion, which passed 6-0 in a roll call vote. (Lyster, Paris, Kleespies, Harrington, Kyle, Rogove)

Public Meeting: Determination of Procedure: Alteration to Designated Property

Case 4954 (Amendment): 2 Garden St., by Garden Lodge LLC. Install 2 wall signs and 1 pole-mounted blade sign.

Mr. Sullivan explained this was a determination of procedure for signage at the newly completed Cambridge Common House. The request included three signs: one over the former front door, one at the new lobby entrance, and a freestanding sign near the sidewalk.

David Swanson displayed renderings of the proposed signs and described the materials, high-density urethane panels with gold lettering and black background. A steel post would support the freestanding blade sign. He explained lighting locations and placement logic.

Commissioners Lyster, Paris and Kyle agreed that three signs were excessive, objecting to the large sign over the original front door. Concern was shared that it made the building appear too commercial for the historic district. Support was shared for the freestanding blade sign and the wall sign over the new entrance.

Ms. Lyster moved to approve the freestanding sign and lobby entrance sign but to deny the sign over original front door. Mr. Kyle seconded the motion, which passed 6-0 in a roll call vote. (Lyster, Paris, Kleespies, Harrington, Kyle, Rogove)

Minutes

The Commission considered the draft minutes of the April 9, 2026, meeting, noting that the date was incorrect on the front page. Ms. Harrington moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Mr. Rogove seconded the motion which passed 6-0 in a roll call vote. (Lyster, Paris, Kleespies, Harrington, Kyle, Rogove)

Preservation Grants

Case IPG 26-10: 50 Quincy St., by Church of the New Jerusalem. Replace the annex roof and repair chapel roof.

Mr. Sullivan presented a matching grant request of \$128,300 for roof replacement and flashing repairs on the historic chapel complex. The total project cost was \$256,600.

Ms. Lyster moved to approve the grant, to be matched by the church. Ms. Paris seconded the motion which passed 6-0 in a roll call vote. (Lyster, Paris, Kleespies, Harrington, Kyle, Rogove)

Director's Report

Mr. Sullivan reported on the recent Boards & Commissions celebration event held at the Multicultural Arts Center at which Mr. Rogove won the scavenger-hunt contest, earning a lunch with the City Manager.

With all business concluded, Mr. Kleespies moved to adjourn. Ms. Lyster seconded and the motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote. The meeting adjourned at 10:44 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah L. Burks

Sarah L. Burks, Preservation Planner

Note: This draft was generated with the assistance of Microsoft Co-Pilot Generative AI and reviewed and edited by CHC staff for accuracy and form.

Members of the Public Present on May 7, 2026

Evan Stellman	KDI Architects
Larissa Azevedo	North America Development
Liza Oliver	4 Wyman Rd
George Nearhos	114 Auburn St
Douglas Kelleher	Epsilon Associates, Maynard
Tonya Loveday Merrem	Epsilon Associates, Maynard
David Swanson	2 Garden St
Patrick Barrett	J B Realty LLC for 9 Wyman Rd owners
Taylor Lee	Lawson-Weitzen law firm
Ryan Wittig	2 Garden St
Joshua Resnick	4 Wyman Rd
Matt Moore	2 Garden St
Ron Buck	Marsh Builders
Zack Ciampa	Ciampa Group
Kathryn O'Rourke	Wellesley College
Petra Hesse	361 Harvard St #8
Lacey McCafferty	16 Kirkland Rd
Rick Fiorantino and	
Justin Hufnagel	80 Otis St
Jay Rosenberg	10 Wyman Rd.
Sarah Gillespie	80 Otis St.
Lev McCarthy	344 Broadway
Ted Fairchild	Cambridge
Jay Hotaling	541 Green St.
Joe Roy-Mayhew	104 Auburn St
Michael Yogman	14 Wyman Rd
James Smithmeyer	108-110 Auburn St
Yune Kunes	5 Wyman Rd
Colin Flavin	6 Wyman Rd
Jules Kobek	69R Gore St
Max Kaplan	45 Yerxa Rd #305
Ender Saricay	155 Middlesex Tpk
Elizabeth Gilmore	47 Reservoir St
Marie Saccoccio	55 Otis St
Douglas Kelleher	Epsilon Associates, Maynard
Helen Kobek	69R Gore St
Daniel Cohn	5 Wyman Rd
Jennifer Markell	10 Wyman Rd
Deborah Gevalt	55 Reservoir St
Judith Bowman	62 Buckingham St
Dana Bullister	21 Brookline St, #105
Marilee Meyer	10 Dana St, 404
Jana Odette	176 Larch Rd
Matt Moore	

Francis Welch	75 Otis St
Maryrose McGowan	239 Huron Ave
Ilan Levy	148 Spring St
John Hawkinson	—
Kimberly Mancino	120A Auburn St
Sarah Maxwell	7 Salem St
Daniel Anderson	1972 Mass Ave
Janis Puibello	69 Brookline St
Mina Reddy	103 Auburn St
Jacinda Barbehenn	67 Sparks St, #2
Lauren Jacobi	120 Auburn St, Unit B
Joe Adiletta	68 Walker St
Suzie Clark	75 Brookline St
Kathryn ORourke	106 Central St. Wellesley, MA 02481
Cathie Zusy	202 Hamilton St.
James Zall	203 Pemberton St
Lorenzo Lopez	
Donna Roy	106 Auburn St
Teresa Cardosi	7 Woodrow Wilson Ct
Louise Rice	104 Auburn St
Karen Greenleaf	1 Royal Ave, ?
Ozan Dokmecioglu	6 Burnham Rd, Lexington, MA 02420
Annette LaMond	7 Riedesel Ave
Matt Tierney	153 Appleton St
Linda Club	23 Highland St
David Hattis	393 Broadway
G Ro	154 Raymond St
Justin Saif	East Cambridge
David Halperin	14 Valentine St., Unit 3
Yassien Youssef	Lexington
Phyllis Simpkins	249 Huron Ave
Dan Sterner	43 Reservoir St
Jessica Sheehan	Plymouth St
Cindia Khemer	11 Greenbrier Dr
Heather Hoffman	213 Hurley St
Gueve Ataie	14 Abyrim
Sean Kelly	1654 Massachusetts Ave
Kate Kennedy	258 Wentworth Ave
Brendan Hickey	54 Concord Ave
Lauren Jacobi	120 Auburn St
Richard Deitch	120 Auburn St
Joe Roy-Mayhew	104 Auburn St

Note: See <https://www.cambridgema.gov/historic/permitsApplications/projectplansandstaffreports> for a link to the Zoom meeting recording.