

## **Minutes of the Cambridge Historical Commission**

July 10, 2025 – Meeting conducted online via Zoom Webinar (831 0191 1336) - 6:00 P.M.

Present: Chandra Harrington, *Chair*; Joseph Ferrara, Liz Lyster, Gavin Kleespies, Paula Paris, Kyle Sheffield, *Members*; Florrie Darwin, Scott Kyle, Michael Rogove, *Alternates*

Absent: none

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 6:03 P.M. She recognized the service of two outgoing members: Dr. Jo Solet and Susannah Tobin. She said she would miss their steady commitment to the commission and the city in their role on the Commission. She introduced the former alternates who had been reappointed as members, Paula Paris, Kyle Sheffield and Gavin Kleespies, and then introduced the new alternates, Florrie Darwin, Scott Kyle and Michael Rogove. She explained the online meeting instructions and public hearing procedures. She dispensed with the consent agenda and noted that public comments would be limited to three minutes. The hearing on **Case 5307, 15 Mt. Auburn Street** had been postponed until August 7, with written consent of the applicant.

### Election of Vice Chair

The first item of business was to elect a new Vice Chair to replace Susannah Tobin. Ms. Harrington suggested Ms. Lyster for the role. Ms. Paris moved to nominate Ms. Lyster for Vice Chair. Mr. Sheffield seconded the motion. The motion passed in a roll call vote of 7-0. (Ferrara, Lyster, Zhang, Kleespies, Paris, Sheffield, Harrington) The Chair asked if there were any further nominations. None were made, and Ms. Paris's motion to elect Ms. Lyster as Vice Chair was seconded by Mr. Sheffield. The motion passed 7-0 in a roll call vote. (Ferrara, Lyster, Zhang, Kleespies, Paris, Sheffield, Harrington)

### Public Hearings: Alterations to Designated Properties

**Case 5314: 1 Brattle Sq., by BCSP 9 OBS Property LLC o/b/o DISH Wireless.** Install telecom antennas on penthouse roof in two concealment structure.

Mr. Sullivan shared his screen and displayed photos of One Brattle Square in the Harvard Square Conservation District, which had been constructed in 1991. He noted the location of several existing antennas on the side walls of the penthouse, explaining that the technology changed frequently and antennas are replaced with new equipment every few years. The proposed location on the upper rooftop would be different from other installations on the building.

Corey Milan, representing the communications company DISH Wireless, shared his screen and displayed the existing photos and simulations of the proposed conditions with the new rooftop structures. He said the reason for the rooftop location was because of technical requirements of the equipment. If the lateral distance between antennas was less than 40' there would be too much interference.

Mr. Ferrara asked if that interference would be continuous or intermittent. Elijah Luutu, an engineer for DISH, said the interference would be continuous.

Ms. Paris asked if these antennas would be replacing existing antennas. Corey answered that DISH was a new tenant and these antennas would be in addition to anything already on the building owned by other providers like T-Mobile.

Mr. Kleespies said it would not be very intrusive but asked if the staff was concerned about precedent. Mr. Sullivan answered that every application was considered on its own merits, so he was not concerned about setting a precedent for future applications. He agreed that the visual impact of this proposed installation would be minimal.

Ms. Darwin asked if the antennas could be placed on another façade to meet the 40' required distance. Mr. Luutu said the antennas needed to point in specific directions and a wall-mounted location was not found that would meet the requirements.

Ms. Burks asked if the concealment structures around the antennas were round or square and if could they be shorter than ten feet above the roof deck. Mr. Milan said they would be round and the antennas would extend the full height of the concealment structure.

Mr. Sullivan recommended a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation, as proposed, to be valid as long as the equipment remained functional, with the condition that the antennas be removed after that point and that the concealment structure be painted to match the color of the penthouse walls.

Mr. Kyle asked if any of the wiring, cables, etc. would be visible on the outside of the building. Mr. Milan answered that it would not.

Mr. Ferrara moved to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness as framed by Mr. Sullivan and subject to review of construction details by staff. Ms. Lyster seconded the motion, which passed 7-0 in a roll call vote. (Ferrara, Lyster, Zhang, Kleespies, Paris, Sheffield, Harrington)

#### Preservation Restriction (Easement)

#### **Consider a preservation restriction from Fox Club Holdings, LLC to Charitable Friends of Digamma Building, Inc. for the Fox Club building at 44 JFK St.**

Mr. Sullivan showed slides of the Fox Club building, constructed in 1906 and designed by architect Guy Lowell, including the interior spaces that would be protected under the terms of the preservation restriction. He described the Harvard finals clubs and gave other examples of Guy Lowell's architectural work. The benefit to the public would be to protect these significant interior spaces in case the building was sold and was no longer cared for by the club. The exterior of the building was already protected by a façade preservation restriction held by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) as well as by the Harvard Square Conservation District.

Mr. Sullivan told Ms. Harrington that the graduate board of the Fox Club had initiated the restriction. He said the statute (MGL Ch. 184) assigned administration of such restrictions to the MHC,

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which had already approved it. He would prefer that the holder of the restriction be an unaffiliated third party, but the non-profit corporation could seek an outside opinion about the appropriateness of any changes to protected interior features and the staff of the Cambridge Historical Commission (CHC) would keep an eye on permit activity.

Mr. Rogove asked if the restriction would prevent changes such as the elevator and stair addition approved by CHC in 2023. Mr. Sullivan said the restriction would not pre-empt the CHC review of alterations visible from a public way. Mr. Kleespies asked what would happen if the Fox Club ceased to exist. Mr. Sullivan said the restriction would be binding on future owners.

Ms. Harrington asked for questions or comments from members of the public.

Marilee Meyer of 10 Dana Street said it was an interesting case. She appreciated the thematic interior and noted that houses and clubs tend to lose significant features and design cohesiveness over time so it would be a good thing to protect the interiors. The building was one of the few buildings abutting Winthrop Park that had remained stable and largely unchanged.

Ms. Harrington closed the public comment period

Mr. Kleespies moved to endorse the preservation restriction and recommend its approval by the City Council. Ms. Zhang seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0 in a roll call vote. (Ferrara, Lyster, Zhang, Kleespies, Paris, Sheffield, Harrington)

#### Director's Report

Mr. Sullivan reported on the appointment of new commissioners to the CHC and Avon Hill and Half Crown-Marsh neighborhood conservation districts. It had been an arduous process due to the number of expired terms and the many board appointments that the City Manager's office is responsible for.

Ms. Paris asked about the reduction in the department's budget. Mr. Sullivan explained that the operating budget was stable and that benefits had been moved to another part of the city budget. Mr. Rogove asked about the portraits in storage. Mr. Sullivan explained that the current Mayor had wanted the space for temporary exhibits.

The Commission discussed meeting in person again or hybrid at least a few times a year.

#### Background of Preservation in Cambridge

Mr. Sullivan shared his screen and gave a summary of the development history of the city, early preservation examples, and the evolution of regulatory tools for historic preservation purposes.

Mr. Sheffield moved to adjourn. Ms. Paris seconded, and the motion passed 7-0 in a roll call vote. (Ferrara, Lyster, Zhang, Kleespies, Paris, Sheffield, Harrington) The meeting adjourned at 8:14 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah L. Burks, Preservation Planner

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**Members of the Public Present on July 10, 2025**

John Hawkinson	Cambridge
Marilee Meyer	10 Dana St.
Corey Milan	for DISH Wireless
Elijah Luutu	DISH Wireless
Suzanne Blier	5 Fuller Pl
Amy Medford	46 Prince St.
Betty Saccocchio	55 Otis St.
Douglas Lee	29 Mt. Auburn St.
Matthew Glidden	34 Harvey St., #2

Note: City is Cambridge, unless otherwise indicated.

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