



CITY OF WATERTOWN

Historical Commission

Parker School

124 Watertown St.

WATERTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS 02472

Elise Loukas, Chair
Marilynne K. Roach, Member
Joseph Panto, Member
Matthew Walter, Member
Richard Glenn, Member
Jamie Gordon, Member
Andrew Thompson, Member

Minutes: Thursday, January 8, 2026, Zoom only meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Historical Commission Members Present: Elise Loukas, Marilynne Roach, Joseph Panto, Richard Glenn, Jamie Gordon, Andrew Thompson

Member(s) Absent: Matthew Walter

Public Present: Haigaz Markarian, Owner/Applicant, Alexandra Peterson, Architect, Lisa Paul, Jocelyn Tager

Staff Present: Erika Oliver Jerram, Director of Community Design, Susan C. Jenness, Administrative Specialist

Loukas opened the meeting accordingly.

1. **Call to Order**

2. **Roll Call**

3. **Acceptance of Minutes-**

- A. **Review and acceptance of Minutes from November 13, 2025, Historical Commission Hybrid Meeting-** Commissioners reviewed the minutes from the November 13, 2025, meeting and voted on them.

Motion- Roach made a motion to accept the minutes from the November 13, 2025, Historical Commission meeting. Panto seconded the motion.

Roll Call- All Commissioners agreed with the motion made by Roach to accept the minutes from November 13, 2025, Historical Commission meeting.

4. Public Hearing

- a. To determine if the house at **22 Stoneleigh Circle.** is preferably preserved and if a demolition delay will be imposed. Haigaz Markarian, Owner/Representative, Alexandra Peterson, Architect

Markarian started the presentation and explained he has lived in Watertown for the last 30 years. He purchased the home from the Smerlas family who had owned it for many years prior. The house was reported in poor condition. The application for the project is for a building permit for demo of the garage, and to take the roof off the house and renovate the interior so it is updated for their family's needs. The plans are to have four bedrooms at the top level with addition of an elevator for elders of the family to get up to the top level.

Alexandra Peterson, the architect, did an extensive review of the project and explained that they have taken measures to fit the façade of the new plans in with the neighborhood. They propose to move the front door over while the whole rest of the design is in conformance with zoning requirements. Markarian emphasized it was important to him that the changes they needed as a growing family also fit into the neighborhood in the correct way. He also stated he wanted to make all the changes at once to avoid having to go back and do more work later.

Commissioner inquiries

Roach confirmed this was a 1 ½ story Colonial Revival with 2 gables that have windows. Glenn inquired about cladding, and Markarian responded they are looking at Hardy board. Panto confirmed that the first floor would remain in the demolition. Gordon asked if they could put the windows back in after they added the new dormer and they can. Gordon confirmed they could find the house preferably preserved but not find the garage preferably preserved.

Public Comments

Lisa Paul who lived behind them wanted to know if they could preserve the front of the house, so it worked with the rest of the neighborhood. They explained that they and some of the other neighbors have made significant changes to their homes without making an impact on the neighborhood where the houses are otherwise cohesive and the flow has continuity.

Jocelyn Tager from Robbins Rd. spoke and said the house is unique and has character. She pointed out she drives by this house several times a week. She wanted to walk

through the house just to see it but she loves her own house a lot.

Loukas explained that if a delay was imposed, that would give the applicants time to work with the city to find ways to preserve the exterior of the house but still get the updates they needed for their family. Gordon pointed out she thought they needed to be consistent with the other project they just reviewed on adjacent Stoneleigh Road so that the decisions are consistent.

Panto felt the commissioners should all go out and look at the neighborhood. He did not feel this new structure was going to fit into the neighborhood at all. Loukas said that she felt what they were proposing was not giving them a solution that worked. Glenn said they were adding significant living space to the house, but they did a good job trying to fit the house in with the neighborhood as most of the new construction is in the back. Thompson said he felt disappointed that they were changing the character of the existing structure so much and explained how he has had to become adaptable when renovating due to owning an old home himself. Gordon said that moving the door and removing the windows in the dormer was not in keeping with the character of the house. She felt like there had to be something they could do to keep the character and help the family get what they want. Roach said she thought there was some way to give them the necessary change the family needs without changing it so much from the outside. Field confirmed for the chair that they could find the house preferably preserved but not the garage in a motion.

Motion- Gordon made a motion that the house at 22 Stoneleigh Circle was preferably preserved but the garage was not. Panto seconded the motion.

Roll Call- Glenn was against the motion while the remaining members were for the motion.

A discussion was held about the length of a potential delay among commission members.

Motion- Gordon made a motion that an 18-month delay be imposed on the house at 22 Stoneleigh Circle. Roach seconded the motion.

Roll Call- Glen was against the delay. The rest of the members were for the motion made by Gordon.

5. CPC Update- Walter was not present and left no announcements to report.

6. Agent Report

Field delivered an update on the statistics of new ordinance; Since the new ordinance took effect, 72 applications were forwarded for preliminary review. 65% of those applications

ended at the preliminary review. Panto thanked Field for the research. Glenn said he felt the results of amendment to the ordinance seemed to be very successful and thanked Field as well.

Motion- Panto made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Glenn seconded the motion.

Roll Call- all members agreed with the motion made by Panto.