



**LEGISLATION AND PRESERVATION TOOLS SUBCOMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

Boston City Hall Boston, MA, 02201  
Held virtually via Zoom

**JULY 9, 2024**

**Commissioners Present:** *Amanda Zettel, Jean-Luc Pierite, Rebecca Tomasovic, Cyerrah Walker, Lynn Smiledge, Lydia Lowe, Alison Frazee*

**Commissioners Absent:** *Michael Creasey, Brian Swett, Senator Mike Rush, Chelsea Blanchard, Kenzie Bok, Collector-Treasurer*

**Staff Present:** *Genesis Pimentel, Commemoration Commission Manager*

Public: Alison Pultinas, Frank O'Brien

Press: Alison Pultinas

A full recording of the meeting is available on [boston.gov/commemoration-commission](https://boston.gov/commemoration-commission)

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**SESSION BEGINS - 2:00 PM**

**I. WELCOME**

- a. Commemoration Commission Manager Genesis Pimentel welcomed attendees.

**II. ORDER OF BUSINESS**

- a. Meeting minutes were approved by present members.
- b. Genesis Pimentel discussed that the ordinance required a 6 month report filed to the Clerk with updates on the progress being made by the Commission. She reported that she met with the new Chief Climate Officer, and he recommended writing up a document that focused on a vision, fundamental questions, challenges, and other necessary information on how best to support the Commission.

**III. ARTICLE 80 DISCUSSION DEBRIEF**

- a. Commissioner Lynn Smiledge stated that her impression on the Article 80 discussion was about how preservation could be incorporated into Article 85 and/or Article 80, but she wanted to know how fleshed out that conversation was and if it was deemed feasible.



- b. Genesis Pimentel responded that in the last meeting, Commissioner Chelsea Blanchard asked if Article 80 would be an appropriate phase to begin to talk about historical significance and what the procedure for that would be. The Planning Department representatives responded that the revised process is supposed to think about and include historic preservation much earlier. However, they added that this process is still being worked on.
- c. Chair Alison Frazee stated that she read the minutes and has seen similar presentations given by the Planning Department on Article 80, and that it is critical that the entire process is infused with historic preservation considerations. She stressed that Article 85 is the only preservation tool the City has outside of landmarking, but whether a building is saved is much more than whether it meets preset historic thresholds. She expressed that there are environmental reasons to reuse a building, affordability reasons, and community vibrancy reasons. She also stated that the public should have information about what happens to building materials when it is demolished.
- d. Commission Smiledge asked for information on who is overseeing the CATs, but there is no definitive understanding on who is responsible.
- e. Chair Lydia Lowe expressed concern about the Article 80 Modernization ideas not being fleshed out. She expressed that there needs to be a very transparent process, that historic preservation is integrated into the thinking. She explained that there is an important connection between anti-displacement policy and historic preservation.
- f. [\[Public Comment A\]](#)
- g. Chair Frazee asked if it would be helpful for this subcommittee to send the Article 80 groups bulleted feedback or suggestions to have in writing their recommendations.
- h. Commissioner Amanda Zettel noted that she had been part of many IAGs in the past where there are a lot of meetings but no sense of effectiveness, so part of the conversation is how to ensure these CATs are a different structure than IAGs.
- i. Chair Frazee stated that breaking down the information process would be most effective since as it stands, by the time a project gets to Article 85, they've already done drawings, studies, and more. She continued by saying that if there is a desire to see people reuse buildings, they would need feedback before beginning any intensive work on their proposals. If it is broken down into smaller pieces, then it might be easier for the CAT to give feedback on digestible parts of a project.

#### IV. 6 MONTH REPORT DISCUSSION



- a. Genesis Pimentel discussed that the ordinance required a 6 month report filed to the Clerk with updates on the progress being made by the Commission. She reported that she met with the new Chief Climate Officer, and he recommended writing up a document that focused on a vision, fundamental questions, challenges, and other necessary information on how best to support the Commission.
- b. The Commissioners commented that it is important to include the goals they've discussed, their concerns around Article 85 and Article 80. They discussed longer-term goals which include the historic resources survey, adjustments to align funds from the Community Preservation Trust, and to identify other policy changes. They discussed wanting to talk to that team as Parks and Recreation has a big voice and good organization in terms of getting CPA funding.
- c. Commissioner Smiledge and Chair Frazee discussed how older buildings are more successful when converting and reusing them for housing. Chair Frazee discussed that Legacy Fund is a granting body that has considered contributing to the Office to Housing conversion efforts with an emphasis on retaining historic fabrics.
- d. Chair Frazee added that the Additional Dwelling Unit program is also a place where preservation can be highlighted. She added that there is a necessity to branch to get economic studies or surveys funded.
- e. [\[Public Comment B\]](#)
- f. Chair Frazee replied that there is potentially not enough advocacy happening inside the City, so this group should advocate more and look for outside resources to fund necessary projects. She asked Pimentel if there would be a budget.
- g. Pimentel stated that she hoped so but did not think there would be any funding for LPT goals for FY25.
- h. Chair Frazee stated that she wanted the subcommittee to be more proactive about asking for and finding funding. She reiterated how crucial economic studies would be to show how historic preservation increases jobs, affordability, arts, and nightlife. She explained how CPA admin funding works with the hopes of hiring a consultant with the funding, and she flagged that as a certified local government, Boston would have to work with Massachusetts Historical Commission which has its own process and rules.
- i. Genesis Pimentel discussed the departure of the director of Historic Preservation, and how the cabinet is working to fill the role and create other support roles.



- j. Commissioner Jean-Luc Pierite asked what the intersections between this subcommittee, the larger Commission, and the Reparations Task Force are because this conversation has made him think about how the value that reuse and preservation create are retained by communities.

## V. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. Frank O'Brien commented that the Planning Department should release a draft plan for comment because that way historic preservation would be prioritized in this iterative process.
- b. Frank O'Brien commented that the City should have a line item and budget for historic preservation. He added that with the new Director of Historic Preservation, Murray Miller, on board, there should be incentive to give historic preservation money for pilot programs.
  - i. O'Brien was informed that Murray Miller no longer works for the City and that this would have to be a discussion for the FY26 budget.
- c. O'Brien discussed how people get attached to properties in terms of the urban fabric and neighborhood identity, and what he found is that the City did not have money or documentation. He noted that CPA does pick 1-2 building assessments to fund. He added that if there was a fund available for 6-8 property evaluations through CPA and discretionary funding within OHP together with philanthropic sources like Legacy Fund would be the way to start.
  - i. Chair Frazee agreed, stating that a project that compares what would happen with a developer versus with preservation efforts could begin to track what open space was preserved, what did not go into landfills, and even go backwards and do this with existing projects.

## VI. ADJOURNMENT - 3:00 PM

- a. Chair Pierite motioned to adjourn.