

# CITY OF FRAMINGHAM

## FRAMINGHAM HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

150 CONCORD STREET ▫ MEMORIAL BUILDING ▫ ROOM B-2

FRAMINGHAM, MA 01702-8325

T: 508.532.5455

May 6, 2020

Framingham Planning Board  
150 Concord Street  
Framingham, MA 01701

RE: Proposed Changes to the Historic Re-Use Bylaw

Dear Planning Board Members,

The Historic District Commission is following with interest the discussions around changing or repealing the City's Historic Re-Use Bylaw (City of Framingham Zoning Bylaws Section V.B). We believe this bylaw is an important historic preservation tool for Framingham, but also see that some improvements could be made. At our May 5, 2020 meeting, we discussed the bylaw and potential changes at length. We voted to support two potential changes.

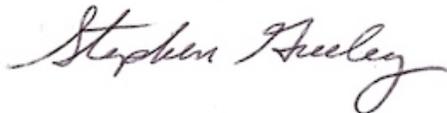
The first would require a formal review and recommendation from the Historical Commission on any project proposed under the Historic Re-Use Bylaw. This would build on the Historical Commission's purview of determining "significance" of an historic building (earlier in the process), and would allow review of a potential project in regard to its relationship to the historic structure. This would have a number of advantages:

- It would make the Historical Commission's role in a proposed project more consistent, involving it in the process for "activating potential use of" and "implementing" the Historic Re-Use Bylaw. This also would be similar to the role of the Historic District Commission, where we review all aspects of proposed projects in the city's historic districts.
- It would support the Planning Board by bringing additional historic preservation expertise into to the process of review and approval.

The second potential change we voted to support would add a requirement that no new construction be greater than 50% of an existing building's footprint, and that projects must comply with the dimensional regulations of the underlying zoning. We believe this will encourage projects that are more in keeping with the scale of existing structures while protecting neighboring properties.

We hope you will consider these proposed changes to the bylaw, and we ask to be included in any further discussions about the bylaw.

Sincerely,



Stephen Greeley, Chair  
Framingham Historic District Commission

cc: City Council, Historical Commission, Planning & Community Development Division