



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
STRATEGIC PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE, MAYOR

STAFF

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DAWN PEREIRA, *ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT*
FREDERICK J. LUND, *SENIOR DRAFTSMAN*

Case #: ZBA 2008-70
Date: December 23, 2008
Recommendation: Conditional Approval

PLANNING STAFF REPORT

Site: 68-70 Glenwood Road

Applicant Name: Don Schuerman

Applicant Address: 70 Glenwood Road

Property Owner Name: same

Agent Name: Alan Factor

Agent Address: 4 Cobb Lane, Foxboro, MA 02035

Alderman: O'Donovan

Legal Notice: Applicant & Owner: Don Schuerman seeks a special permit (SZO §4.4.1) to alter a nonconforming dwelling by adding a dormer to the right side.

Zoning District/Ward: RB / 5

Zoning Approval Sought: Special Permit (SZO §4.4.1)

Date of Application: December 22, 2008

Date(s) of Public Meeting / Hearing: Planning Board: January 15, 2008 / ZBA: January 21, 2008

Date of Decision: N/A

Vote: N/A

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Subject Property: The subject property is a two-family dwelling on a 2240 square foot lot. The structure is 2 ½ stories and has vinyl siding that is in poor shape. It is approximately six feet away from the house adjacent to it.

2. Proposal: The proposal is to construct a small shed dormer on the right side of the house to add headroom for an existing staircase. The dormer would be eight feet in length and set back eight feet from the front of the house. The pitch of the dormer would be steep and setback approximately 3 feet from the roof ridge. Two windows on the dormer would extend down through the eave.



68- 70 Glenwood Road: Front and Aerial (white arrow)



3. Nature of Application: The structure is currently nonconforming with respect to several dimensional requirements, including minimum lot size, lot area per dwelling unit, ground coverage, landscaped area, floor area ratio (FAR), front, side and rear yard setback, and street frontage.

The proposed dormer would affect nonconforming aspects of the structure. The nonconforming side yard is 4 feet deep and the minimum in this district is 6.5 feet. The nonconforming FAR is 1.16 and the proposed FAR would be 1.22; the maximum is 1.0. These existing nonconformities requires the Applicant to obtain special permits under §4.4.1 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance (SZO).

4. Surrounding Neighborhood: The surrounding neighborhood is comprised of one-, two-, and three-family homes.

5. Impacts of Proposal: The design of the shed dormer does not significantly alter the roofline of the house as described in the findings. The adjacent house is approximately six feet away and has a dormer that would be in close proximity to the proposed dormer. Due to the fact that the proposed dormer windows will face a staircase, staff does not anticipate privacy concerns. The siding of the dormer is shown as clapboard on the plans; however, the material is not specified. The vinyl siding on

the house is in poor condition and matching its green color may be challenging. The siding of the dormer may not be attractive if the house is not re-sided.

6. Green Building Practices: None.

7. Comments:

Ward Alderman: Has been contacted but has not yet provided comments.

II. FINDINGS FOR SPECIAL PERMIT (SZO §4.4.1):

In order to grant a special permit, the SPGA must make certain findings and determinations as outlined in §5.1.4 of the SZO. This section of the report goes through §5.1.4 in detail.

1. Information Supplied: The Staff finds that the information provided by the Applicant conforms to the requirements of §5.1.2 of the SZO and allows for a comprehensive analysis of the project with respect to the required Special Permits.

2. Compliance with Standards: The Applicant must comply "with such criteria or standards as may be set forth in this Ordinance which refer to the granting of the requested special permit."

In considering a special permit under §4.4 of the SZO, Staff find that the alterations proposed, as conditioned, would not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing structure. Removing the eave at the dormer location and having the front wall of the dormer flush with the main wall underneath is not ideal; however, the design of the shed dormer does not significantly alter the roofline of the house because it is setback approximately 3 feet from the roof ridge, it is small and it has a steep pitch. Additionally the window area accounts for a large portion of the dormer wall area, which improves the look of dormers. The dormer windows will face a staircase and therefore no privacy issues are anticipated.

3. Consistency with Purposes: The Applicant has to ensure that the project "is consistent with (1) the general purposes of this Ordinance as set forth in Article 1, and (2) the purposes, provisions, and specific objectives applicable to the requested special permit which may be set forth elsewhere in this Ordinance, such as, but not limited to, those purposes at the beginning of the various Articles."

The proposal is consistent with the general purposes of the Ordinance as set forth under §1.2, which includes, but is not limited to providing adequate light and air and the purpose of the district, which is, "[t]o establish and preserve quiet neighborhoods of one- and two-family homes, free from other uses except those which are both compatible with and convenient to the residents of such districts."

4. Site and Area Compatibility: The Applicant has to ensure that the project "(i)s designed in a manner that is compatible with the characteristics of the built and unbuilt surrounding area, including land uses."

The design of the dormer is compatible with the built surrounding area. Details are in Finding 2.

III. RECOMMENDATION

Special Permit under §4.4.1

Based on the above findings and subject to the following conditions, the Planning Staff recommends **CONDITIONAL APPROVAL** of the requested **SPECIAL PERMIT**.

#	Condition	Timeframe for Compliance	Verified (initial)	Notes								
1	Approval is for the construction of a 8’ shed dormer. This approval is based upon the following application materials and the plans submitted by the Applicant:	BP/CO	Plng.									
	<table><tr><th>Date (Stamp Date)</th><th>Submission</th></tr><tr><td>Dec 22, 2008</td><td>Initial application submitted to the City Clerk’s Office</td></tr><tr><td>July 16, 2008 (Dec 23, 2008)</td><td>Plans submitted to OSPCD (Roof/ Site Plan, Floor Plan, Section “B”)</td></tr><tr><td>July 16, 2008 (Jan 6, 2008)</td><td>Plans submitted to OSPCD (front elevation)</td></tr></table>				Date (Stamp Date)	Submission	Dec 22, 2008	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk’s Office	July 16, 2008 (Dec 23, 2008)	Plans submitted to OSPCD (Roof/ Site Plan, Floor Plan, Section “B”)	July 16, 2008 (Jan 6, 2008)	Plans submitted to OSPCD (front elevation)
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Any changes to the approved elevations that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive ZBA approval.												
2	The Applicant shall re-side the house so that the dormer siding is the same material and color as the structure or clad the dormer with a contrasting material and color that is appropriate. The Applicant shall submit the material selection for Planning Staff approval.	BP/CO	Plng.									
3	The Applicant shall contact Planning Staff at least five working days in advance of a request for a final sign-off on the building permit to ensure the proposal was constructed in accordance with the plans and information submitted and the conditions attached to this approval.	Final sign off	Plng.									

