



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

STAFF

MONICA LAMBOY, *ACTING PLANNING DIRECTOR*
CHRISTOPHER DI IORIO, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*
LORI MASSA, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*
DAWN PEREIRA, *ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT*
FREDERICK J. LUND, *SENIOR DRAFTSMAN*

Case #: ZBA 2009-28
Date: July 16, 2009
Recommendation: Conditional Approval

PLANNING STAFF REPORT

Site: 10 Hersey Street

Applicant Name: Ruchika Madan & Michael Pappaconstine

Applicant Address: 10 Hersey Street, Somerville, MA

Property Owner Name: Ruchika Madan

Alderman: Tom Taylor – Ward 3

Legal Notice: The Applicant seeks a special permit under §4.4.1 to expand a nonconforming single-family residential structure by adding a two-story addition, approximately 230 square feet, to the rear of the house within the required side yard setback.

Zoning District/Ward: Residence A/ 3

Zoning Approval Sought: Special Permit under SZO §4.4.1

Date of Application: June 23, 2009

Date(s) of Meetings/Public Hearing: PB: July 16, 2009 / ZBA: August 5, 2009

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Subject Property: The existing single-family house is approximately 1,500sf, constructed circa 1900. The house is two and a half stories including an attic level, approximately 35 feet in height, with two existing bedrooms. The house is located on a deeded 8,283sf lot which is made up of two adjoining parcels, Map Block Lot 51-A-13 and 52-A-14.

Proposal: The Applicant is proposing to construct a two-story addition to the rear of the house, increasing the usable living space by approximately 230 square feet. The addition would expand the basement, add a roof over the staircase to the basement, replace an enclosed porch with a bathroom on the first floor, and expand two bedrooms and add bathroom on the second floor. The rear portion of the addition would have a gable roof that matches the pitch of the existing front portion. Also, the new clapboard will match the existing siding materials and the new portion of the roof will use shingles that match the existing roof.



Birds eye view of 10 Hersey Street



Front view



Rear view

3. Nature of Application: The structure is currently nonconforming with respect to several dimensional requirements, including lot area, front and side yard setbacks. The proposal increases the structure's encroachment on the nonconforming side yard setback, which is 1.8 feet; the minimum side yard setback is 8 feet. This existing nonconformity requires the Applicant to obtain a special permit under §4.4.1 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance (SZO).

4. Surrounding Neighborhood: The surrounding neighborhood consists predominately of two-family homes with a few three-family residential structures immediately northeast of the subject property.

5. Impacts of Proposal: The proposal would extend the rear of the house by six feet and increase the building foot print by 113 sf, reducing the existing landscaping by less than 2 percent. The Applicant would remove the existing enclosed rear porch and replace it with a new first floor bathroom. The mass of the structure would increase in the rear of the property; however, the rear yard setback would remain conforming.

6. Green Building Practices: None.

7. Comments:

Fire Prevention: Has been contacted but has not yet provided 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 finds that the alterations proposed would not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing structure. The proposal would not create any new nonconforming dimensions nor encroach further than the existing structure into the nonconforming side setback.

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 for and maintain the uniquely integrated structure of uses in the City. The proposal is also consistent with the purpose of the Residence A district as a single-family dwelling.

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.”

Staff finds that the project is designed to be compatible with the existing house and surrounding area. The rear portion of the structure would have a gable roof that would match the pitch of the front portion of the structure. The new windows in the front on the house and along the north-west side of the house would match the style, size, and scale of the existing windows to provide visual consistency. The clapboard will match the existing siding materials and the new portion of the roof will use shingles that match the existing roof.

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 to construct a two-story addition to the rear of the house, increasing the usable living space by 230± sf to a nonconforming single-family dwelling. This approval is based upon the following application materials and the plans submitted by the Applicant:	CO/Building Permit	Plng.							
	<table><tr><th>Date</th><th>Submission</th></tr><tr><td>June 23, 2009</td><td>Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office</td></tr><tr><td>July 8, 2008</td><td>Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (7/09/09)</td></tr></table>				Date	Submission	June 23, 2009	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office	July 8, 2008	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (7/09/09)
	Date				Submission					
	June 23, 2009				Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office					
July 8, 2008	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (7/09/09)									
Any changes to the approved site plan or elevations that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive ZBA approval.										
2	The Applicant shall ensure that the windows offer visual continuity and that the new windows match existing windows in style and size.	CO/Building Permit	Plng.							
3	The Applicant shall ensure the materials selected for the new siding and roof match the existing materials.	CO/Building Permit	Plng.							
4	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.							
5	The Applicant or Owner shall meet the Fire Prevention Bureau's requirements.	CO	FP							

