



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE, MAYOR

MEMBERS

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DANIELLE FILLIS
ELAINE SEVERINO (ALT.)
JOSH SAFDIE (ALT.)

Case #: ZBA #2009-18
Site: 65 Lowden Avenue
Date of Decision: August 5, 2009
Decision: *Petition Approved with Conditions*
Date Filed with City Clerk: August 11, 2009

ZBA DECISION

Applicant Name:	Steven Saltman
Applicant Address:	65 Lowden Avenue, Somerville, MA 02144
Property Owner Name:	Steven Saltman
Property Owner Address:	65 Lowden Avenue, Somerville, MA 02144
Agent Name:	N/A

Legal Notice: Applicant & Owner Steven Saltman seeks a special permit under §4.4.1 in order to alter a non-conforming garage by constructing a deck on the roof and a stairway leading to the deck. RA zone. Ward 6.

<u>Zoning District/Ward:</u>	RA zone/Ward 6
<u>Zoning Approval Sought:</u>	§4.4.1
<u>Date of Application:</u>	June 2, 2009
<u>Date(s) of Public Hearing:</u>	7/15 & 8/5/09
<u>Date of Decision:</u>	August 5, 2009
<u>Vote:</u>	5-0

Appeal #ZBA 2009-18 was opened before the Zoning Board of Appeals at Somerville City Hall on July 15, 2009. Notice of the Public Hearing was given to persons affected and was published and posted, all as required by M.G.L. c. 40A, sec. 11 and the Somerville Zoning Ordinance. After two hearings of deliberation, the Zoning Board of Appeals took a vote.

DESCRIPTION:

The Applicant is seeking a special permit under SZO §4.4.1 to construct a wood 20' by 20' deck above the existing 20' by 20' garage. The proposal includes an exterior stairway which leads from the rear yard up to the deck. The highest section of the deck is proposed to be 15' in height.

FINDINGS FOR SPECIAL PERMIT (SZO §):

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 Board 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."

The Applicant requires a special permit under §4.4.1 of the SZO. Under §4.4.1, "the SPGA, as a condition of granting a special permit under this Section must find that such extension, enlargement, renovation or alteration is not substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing nonconforming structure."

The Board finds that the Applicant's proposal would not be substantially more detrimental to the surrounding neighborhood than the existing structure, as required under §4.4.1 of the SZO. The Board finds that any negative impacts associated with the appearance and/or privacy of the neighbors to be minimal. The deck would be located above an existing garage where there is currently a hip roof. The Board finds that the increased outdoor area would be beneficial to the three families living in the dwelling.

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 Board finds that the proposal **is consistent** with the purposes set forth in Article 1 of the Zoning Ordinance, and with, to the extent possible for a lawful pre-existing nonconforming structure, those purposes established for the Residence A (RA) zoning district in which the property is located, namely "(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 Board finds that the proposal **is compatible** with the site and area. The deck would not be visually intrusive to the surrounding neighborhood.

DECISION:

Present and sitting were Members Orsola Susan Fontano, Richard Rossetti, Danielle Fillis, Elaine Severino and Josh Safdie with Herbert Foster and Scott Darling absent. Upon making the above findings, Richard Rossetti made a motion to approve the request for a special permit. Danielle Fillis seconded the motion. Wherefore the Zoning Board of Appeals voted **5-0** to **APPROVE** the request. In addition the following conditions were attached:

#	Condition	Timeframe for Compliance	Verified (initial)	Notes						
1	<p>Approval is for the construction of a 20 foot by 20 foot deck above a rear yard garage and an stairway to the deck on the exterior structure. This approval is based upon the following application materials and the plans submitted by the Applicant and/or the Agent:</p> <table><tr><th>Date(OSPCD stamp)</th><th>Submission</th></tr><tr><td>(6/2/09)</td><td>Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office</td></tr><tr><td>5/3/09 (6/15/09)</td><td>Plans and elevations A1-A6</td></tr></table> <p>Any changes to the approved site plan or elevations that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive ZBA approval.</p>	Date(OSPCD stamp)	Submission	(6/2/09)	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office	5/3/09 (6/15/09)	Plans and elevations A1-A6	Building Permit	Plng.	
Date(OSPCD stamp)	Submission									
(6/2/09)	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office									
5/3/09 (6/15/09)	Plans and elevations A1-A6									
2	The deck shall not be connected to the primary residence; access to the deck shall only be from the yard area or from within the garage structure itself unless approved by SPGA	Cont.	ISD							
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.	CO	Plng. / ISD							

Attest, by the Zoning Board of Appeals:

Orsola Susan Fontano, *Acting Chairman*
Richard Rossetti, *Acting Clerk*
Danielle Fillis
Elaine Severino (Alt.)
Josh Safdie (Alt.)

Attest, by the Administrative Assistant:

Dawn M. Pereira

Copies of this decision are filed in the Somerville City Clerk's office.
Copies of all plans referred to in this decision and a detailed record of the
SPGA proceedings are filed in the Somerville Planning Dept.

CLERK'S CERTIFICATE

Any appeal of this decision must be filed within twenty days after the date this notice is filed in the Office of the City Clerk, and must be filed in accordance with M.G.L. c. 40A, sec. 17 and SZO sec. 3.2.10.

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 40 A, sec. 11, no variance shall take effect until a copy of the decision bearing the certification of the City Clerk that twenty days have elapsed after the decision has been filed in the Office of the City Clerk and no appeal has been filed, or that if such appeal has been filed, that it has been dismissed or denied, is recorded in the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds and indexed in the grantor index under the name of the owner of record or is recorded and noted on the owner's certificate of title.

Also in accordance with M.G.L. c. 40 A, sec. 11, a special permit shall not take effect until a copy of the decision bearing the certification of the City Clerk that twenty days have elapsed after the decision has been filed in the Office of the City Clerk and either that no appeal has been filed or the appeal has been filed within such time, is recorded in the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds and indexed in the grantor index under the name of the owner of record or is recorded and noted on the owner's certificate of title. The person exercising rights under a duly appealed Special Permit does so at risk that a court will reverse the permit and that any construction performed under the permit may be ordered undone.

The owner or applicant shall pay the fee for recording or registering. Furthermore, a permit from the Division of Inspectional Services shall be required in order to proceed with any project favorably decided upon by this decision, and upon request, the Applicant shall present evidence to the Building Official that this decision is properly recorded.

This is a true and correct copy of the decision filed on _____ in the Office of the City Clerk, and twenty days have elapsed, and

FOR VARIANCE(S) WITHIN

_____ there have been no appeals filed in the Office of the City Clerk, or
_____ any appeals that were filed have been finally dismissed or denied.

FOR SPECIAL PERMIT(S) WITHIN

_____ there have been no appeals filed in the Office of the City Clerk, or
_____ there has been an appeal filed.

Signed _____ City Clerk Date _____