



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

PLANNING DIVISION

TO: Zoning Board of Appeals
FROM: Lori Massa, Planner
DATE: October 2, 2009
SUBJECT: 22 Benedict St Plans

Dr. Ding, the owner of 22 Benedict St, has worked with the Powderhouse Community Design group to create new plans for the proposed addition to his house. The details of the project that have changed have affected the following sections of the Planning Board report dated May 7, 2009. The plans have not changed substantially since the Planning Board's review. Planning Staff recommend conditional approval of the revised plans.

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Proposal: The proposal is to construct a 19'-10" by 12'-8" addition in the rear of the dwelling. The space would be used as an enclosed porch. Underneath the porch would be a crawl space used for storage. There would be a small access door to the space as shown on the rear elevation. The regular sized door on the rear elevation would lead to stairs to access the basement. Since there would be an internal element or "box" to create headroom for the stairs leading to the basement, the sash in the window above the door would be fixed to prevent someone from getting on top of the box and falling out of the window. The opening in the concrete block garage that is currently covered with plywood would be filled in with a suitable finish material. The color would be a complimentary tone to the house as it would be difficult to match its blue vinyl color. The Applicant has previously submitted drawings that were difficult to read and contained errors, and Staff had recommended Denial. The revised plans address the following concerns related to those plans. There is a three-foot space between the addition and the existing garage, which would provide access to the side yard and allow maintenance of the structures. Also, the window on the right side of the addition would be relocated so that the addition would not be covering a portion of it.

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 Board finds that the information provided by the Applicant conforms to the requirements of §5.1.2 of the SZO and allows for an analysis of the dimensions and orientation of



the project with respect to the required Special Permit.

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, the Boards finds that the alterations proposed would not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing structure. The existing porch is poorly sided and has not weathered well, so its replacement would be an improvement to the structure.

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 conserving the value of land and buildings. The proposal is consistent with the purpose of the district as the porch would be part of the existing residential use.

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 size and orientation of the addition is compatible with the built surrounding area. The redesigned addition is compatible with the design of the house and does not appear "tacked-on". The addition would have trim and windows that are the same as those on the house and the color would be complimentary to the color of the house. Trying to match the faded blue vinyl siding would be difficult. The design allows for access to the side yard. The plans also show the relocation of an existing window on the house so that it would not be blocked by the addition and filling in the opening in the garage, which is currently covered with plywood.

Conditions

#	Condition	Timeframe for Compliance	Verified (initial)	Notes				
1	Approval is for a 12'-8"x19'-10" rear porch addition, replacing an existing porch. This approval is based upon the following plans submitted by the Applicant:	BP/CO	Plng.					
	<table><tr><th>Date (Stamp Date)</th><th>Submission</th></tr><tr><td>Sept 30, 2009 (Oct 2, 2009)</td><td>Revised plans submitted to OSPCD</td></tr></table>				Date (Stamp Date)	Submission	Sept 30, 2009 (Oct 2, 2009)	Revised plans submitted to OSPCD
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Any changes to the approved plans that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive ZBA approval.								
2	The applicant shall meet all requirements for fire prevention.	CO	FP					
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 has been completed in accordance with the plans and information submitted and the conditions attached to this approval.	Final sign off	Plng.					

