



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

**STAFF**

MADELEINE MASTERS, *PLANNING DIRECTOR*  
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LORI MASSA, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*  
DAWN PEREIRA, *ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT*  
FREDERICK J. LUND, *SENIOR DRAFTSMAN*

**Case #:** ZBA 2008-27  
**Site:** 25 Moore Street  
**Date:** July 17, 2008  
**Recommendation:** Conditional Approval

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**PLANNING STAFF REPORT**

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**Applicant Name:** James O'Keefe & Melanie Campbell  
**Applicant Address:** 25 Moore Street, Somerville MA 02144  
**Property Owner Name:** same  
**Agent Name:** Edrick vanBeuzekom, AIA  
**Agent Address:** EvB Design 25 Medford St #21, Somerville MA 02143  
**Alderman:** Trane

Legal Notice: Applicants seek a special permit under SZO §4.4.1 to alter a dimensionally nonconforming dwelling by constructing a two-story addition in the rear of the structure that is approximately 18 feet by 19 feet.

Zoning District/Ward: Residence B / 7  
Zoning Approval Sought: Special Permit under SZO §4.4.1  
Date of Application: June 20, 2008  
Date(s) of Public Hearing: ZBA: July 23, 2008  
Date of Decision: N/A  
Vote: N/A

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**I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

1. Subject Property: The property is a one-family wood-framed dwelling, which is two-stories and has a shallow pitched roof, which appears almost flat. The structure was built in approximately 1900. The existing house is 19.6 feet by 28.6 feet. On the first floor there is a living room, dining room and kitchen and on the second floor there are 2 bedrooms and one bathroom. The parcel is narrow with 25 feet of street frontage and an area of 2223 square feet.

2. Proposal: The proposal is to add a two-story addition measuring 19.5 feet wide by 18.5 feet deep to the rear of the existing two-story house. The addition would be for additional living space, a larger

kitchen, a half bath, a mudroom, and a bedroom. The entire house would be re-sided with fiber cement. The Applicant will be providing new elevations with corrections in window locations in order to correct some inconsistencies between submitted floor plans and elevations. The new drawings will also show more windows or trim detail to the right side of the house to break up the blank wall shown on the current plans. There will be a drainage system on the roof including where the new and old roofs meet. There would be either a dry well or rain barrel to catch the runoff.



25 Moore Street – Front and Rear Yard

3. Nature of Application: The property is currently nonconforming in terms of lot size, lot frontage and front and side yard setbacks. Because the alteration of the structure would impact the nonconforming side yards, a special permit is required under §4.4.1 (alteration of a nonconforming structure).

4. Surrounding Neighborhood: The scale of the proposal is comparable to the majority of surrounding structures.

5. Impacts on Abutting Properties: The proposed addition will have minimal impact on the surrounding area. Shadows from the addition would mainly fall on the neighboring driveway. There would still be a landscaped back yard measuring 25 feet wide by 36 feet deep.

6. Green Building Practices: The Applicant has listed the following as green building measures:

- Integrated team design and project management process
- FSC certified lumber
- Solar hot water system
- Possible solar photovoltaic panels to supplement electrical system
- Spray foam insulation –R-21 in walls, R-38 in roof
- Water conserving plumbing fixtures
- Natural daylighting and cross ventilation of living spaces
- Energy efficient lighting – LED lights, compact fluorescents
- Low-VOC or VOC-free paints (Benjamin Moore or Sherwin Williams)
- Managed waste stream/recycling during construction
- Fiber cement siding and trim
- Composite decking with more than 50% post-consumer recycled content
- Various other sustainable, healthy products will be used for interior finishes

7. Comments:

Fire Prevention: "The proposal for this location will require that the fire alarm detection system be brought up to date with current codes regarding smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, etc."

Historic Preservation: There will be no adverse effects on any of the historic fabric of the city with this proposal.

## **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." Staff find that, to the extent possible for a nonconforming structure, the proposal would comply with the standards of the SZO, not creating any new nonconforming, nor encroaching further on either nonconforming 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." Staff find that the proposal is consistent with the purposes of the SZO, including "to conserve the value of land and buildings", and that the use of the structure as a single-family dwelling would remain consistent with the purposes of the RB district.
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 existing structure does not exhibit a strong design character that would be negatively impacted by the more contemporary design of the addition. Its modest scale, considering the diminutive size of the existing structure, and its placement in the rear limit its visibility from the street. Nevertheless, although it is different, the design is sufficiently restrained that, where visible, Staff find that it would not be incompatible with surrounding structures.

## **III. RECOMMENDATION**

### **Special Permit under §4.4.1**

Based on the above findings, the Planning Staff recommends **CONDITIONAL APPROVAL** of the requested **SPECIAL PERMIT**.

Staff finds that this application complies with the requirements for granting a special permit as set forth under §5.1.4 and that the alterations proposed would not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing structure.

Although the Planning Staff is recommending approval of the requested Special Permit, the following conditions should be added to the permits:

#	Condition	Timeframe for Compliance	Verified (initial)	Notes								
1	Approval is for alterations as shown in the approved plans, including construction of a two-story rear addition measuring approximately 18’ x 19’. This approval is based upon the following application materials and the plans submitted by the Applicant and/or its contractor:		Plng.									
	<table><tr><th>Date</th><th>Submission</th></tr><tr><td>June 30, 2008</td><td>Initial application submitted to the City Clerk’s Office</td></tr><tr><td>TBD</td><td>Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (new elevations with corrections in window locations, more windows or trim detail on the right side of the house)</td></tr><tr><td>TBD</td><td>Drainage Details</td></tr></table>				Date	Submission	June 30, 2008	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk’s Office	TBD	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (new elevations with corrections in window locations, more windows or trim detail on the right side of the house)	TBD	Drainage Details
	Date				Submission							
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TBD	Drainage Details											
Any changes to the approved site plan or elevations that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive ZBA approval.												
2	The fire alarm detection system shall be brought up to date with current codes regarding smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, etc.	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 was constructed in accordance with the plans and information submitted and the conditions attached to this approval.	Final sign off	Plng.									

