



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

MICHAEL F. GLAVIN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING DIVISION STAFF

GEORGE PROAKIS, *DIRECTOR OF PLANNING*
SARAH LEWIS, *SENIOR PLANNER*
SARAH WHITE, *CITY PLANNER/PRESERVATION PLANNER*
DAWN PEREIRA, *ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT*

Case #: ZBA 2016-101

Date: October 5, 2016

Recommendation: Conditional Approval

PLANNING STAFF REPORT

Site: 21 Bow Street

Applicant Name: Eddie Giron

Applicant Address: 50 Woodfall Road, Belmont, MA
02478

Owner Name: Musician Realty Trust

Owner Address: 50 Woodfall Road, Belmont, MA 02478

Alderman: Matthew McLaughlin

Legal Notice: Applicant, Eddie Giron, and Owner, Musician Realty Trust, seek a Special Permit under SZO §4.4.1 to replace three storefront windows. NB Zone, Ward 3.



Dates of Public Hearings: October 5, 2016

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. **Subject Property:** The subject property is a 3,588 square foot, single-story commercial structure in the NB district.
2. **Proposal:** The Applicant proposes to replace the existing windows on the three storefronts with an accordion-style nano-wall window. The wall structure will be updated in order to accommodate the proposed new loads and conditions. While not part of the special permit, entry doors shall be widened for ADA access as per code.
3. **Green Building Practices:** None listed.
4. **Comments:** Alderman McLaughlin has been apprised of this project.

Ward Alderman: Alderman McLaughlin has been apprised of this project.

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 §4.4.1 of the SZO. This section of the report goes through §4.4.1 in detail.

1. Information Supplied:

Staff finds that the information provided by the Applicant conforms to the requirements of §4.4.1 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."*

Section 4.4.1 states that "[l]awfully existing nonconforming structures other than one- and two-family dwellings may be enlarged, extended, renovated or altered only by special permit authorized by the SPGA in accordance with the procedures of Article 5. The SPGA must find that such extension, enlargement, renovation or alteration is not substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing nonconforming building. In making the finding that the enlargement, extension, renovation or alteration will not be substantially more detrimental, the SPGA may consider, without limitation, impacts upon the following: traffic volumes, traffic congestion, adequacy of municipal water supply and sewer capacity, noise, odor, scale, on-street parking, shading, visual effects and neighborhood character."

In considering a special permit under §4.4.1 of the SZO, Staff finds that the alterations proposed would not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing structure. The proposed alterations will allow for a more storefront-like appearance to this commercial building, provide more natural light into the interior spaces of each business unit and provide for a better pedestrian experience.

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 to these larger windows to the existing storefronts is consistent with the purposes of the NB district which is to "...establish and preserve areas for small-scale retail stores, services and offices which are located in close proximity to residential areas and which do not have undesirable impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods."

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."*

In considering a special permit under §4.4.1 of the SZO, Staff finds that the alterations proposed would not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing structure. The replacement of the existing, small windows with the proposed accordion windows will provide a consistent look to these small-scale commercial units. As noted earlier in this report, the proposed alterations will allow for a

more storefront-like appearance to this commercial building, provide more natural light into the interior spaces of each business unit and provide for a better pedestrian experience Staff finds that there will be little to no impact on the surrounding neighborhood as a consequence of these proposed changes.

7. Housing Impact: *Will not create adverse impacts on the stock of existing affordable housing.*

The proposal will not add to the existing stock of affordable housing.

III. RECOMMENDATION

Special Permit under §4.4.1

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

The recommendation is based upon a technical analysis by Planning Staff of the application material based upon the required findings of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, and is based only upon information submitted prior to the public hearing. This report may be revised or updated with new recommendations, findings and/or conditions based upon additional information provided to the Planning Staff during the public hearing process.

#	Condition	Timeframe for Compliance	Verified (initial)	Notes				
1	Approval is for the removal of existing windows and installation of three accordion-style windows on three separate storefront units.	BP/CO	ISD/Plng.					
	<table><tr><th>Date (Stamp Date)</th><th>Submission</th></tr><tr><td>August 22, 2016</td><td>Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office</td></tr></table>				Date (Stamp Date)	Submission	August 22, 2016	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office
	Date (Stamp Date)				Submission			
August 22, 2016	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office							
Any changes to the approved site plan or elevations that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive SPGA approval. Whether or not a change is <i>de minimis</i> in nature must be determined by the Planning Office.								
Design								
2	Planning Staff or the Zoning Review Planner shall review and approve the proposed windows, including color, BEFORE they are installed in their proposed locations at 21 Bow Street.	CO	Planning Staff / ISD					
3	The proposed windows shall not use reflective or mirrored glass.	CO	Planning Staff / ISD					
4	The window placement shall be exactly as rendered on the application set dated August 22, 2016. Any changes to the proposed location or to the proposed style of windows shall first be reviewed by Planning Staff for approval or remittance to the ZBA.	CO	Planning Staff / ISD					
5	Any brick or brick facing that is removed in order to accommodate the new windows and/or ADA-compliant doors shall be replaced to match the existing brick exactly.	CO	Planning Staff / ISD					
Construction Impacts								

6	The Applicant shall, at his expense, replace any existing equipment (including, but not limited to street sign poles, signs, traffic signal poles, traffic signal equipment, wheel chair ramps, granite curbing, etc) and the entire sidewalk immediately abutting the subject property if damaged as a result of construction activity. All new sidewalks and driveways must be constructed to DPW standard.	CO	DPW	
7	All construction materials and equipment must be stored onsite. If occupancy of the street layout is required, such occupancy must be in conformance with the requirements of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and the prior approval of the Traffic and Parking Department must be obtained.	During Construction	T&P	
Public Safety				
8	The Applicant or Owner shall meet the Fire Prevention Bureau's requirements.	CO	FP	
Final Sign-Off				
9	The Applicant shall contact Planning Staff at least five working days in advance of a request for a final inspection by Inspectional Services 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.	