



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
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Case #: ZBA 2014-117

Date: December 31, 2014

Recommendation: Conditional Approval

PLANNING STAFF REPORT

Site: 11 Landers Street

Applicant & Owner Name: John Murphy and John Berrigan

Applicant & Owner Address: 69 Columbus Avenue Somerville, MA 02144

Alderman: Maryann Heuston

Legal Notice: Applicant and Owners, John Murphy and John Berrigan, seek a Special Permit per SZO §4.4.1 to alter a nonconforming structure to extend a dormer, modify a rear addition, and add rear decks. RB Zone. Ward 2.

Dates of Public Hearing: Zoning Board of Appeals – January 7, 2014

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Subject Property: The subject property is a 3-family home on a 4,006 square foot lot. The property is in some disrepair including a poor rear addition and messy site conditions. In anticipation of a larger renovation, the property received approval for a curb cut in the fall of 2014 and applied for interior demolition shortly thereafter.

2. Proposal: The proposal is to modify the exterior of the home in several ways. The first is to extend an existing dormer on the right side of the house. The dormer extension will be built in conjunction with the rear addition. The existing rear addition is only on the second floor and is proposed to be rebuilt on all three floors. There will also be new rear decks and egress stairs built on the rear of the home next to the addition. This will create some outdoor amenity space for Units 1 & 3.



3. Green Building Practices: There are many green building practices being used on the project including repurposed lumber, restoring the original exterior cladding, low VOC coatings, efficient heating systems, and other innovative materials sourcing solutions.

4. Comments:

Fire Prevention: Fire Prevention has been contacted and has no comments at this time.

Ward Alderman: Alderman Heuston has been contacted and has no comments at this time.

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."*

Per SZO §4.4.1, lawfully existing nonconforming structures other than one- and two-family dwellings may be enlarged, extended, renovated or altered only by special permit. The dormer, rear addition, and egress stairs all require a special permit.

In considering a special permit under §4.4 of the SZO, Staff find that the alterations proposed would not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing 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, but is not limited to promoting the health, safety, and welfare of the inhabitants of the City of Somerville; to preserve the historical and architectural resources of the City; and to encourage housing for persons of all income levels.

The proposal is consistent with the purpose of the district, which is, "To establish and preserve medium density neighborhoods of one-, two- and three-family homes, free from other uses except those which are both compatible with and convenient to the residents of such districts."

No parking relief is needed for the application. The existing parking requirement is five spaces. The renovation requires 6 parking spaces and a driveway is being added to the site.

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."*

Landers Street is a short street accessed off of School Street. There is a mix of single-, two, and three-family homes in the area. The property is a short distance from the businesses on Somerville Avenue and Osgood Park.

There are little to no impacts of the proposed project except those customary to residential uses. The renovations will improve the appearance of the rear of the home and several site improvements will be made.

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

It can be assumed that the condition of the property made these units affordable but the proposed renovations will increase the quantity of family sized units in Somerville.

8. SomerVision Plan: *Complies with the applicable goals, policies and actions of the SomerVision plan, including the following, as appropriate: Preserve and enhance the character of Somerville's neighborhoods, transform key opportunity areas, preserve and expand an integrated, balanced mix of safe, affordable and environmentally sound rental and homeownership units for households of all sizes and types from diverse social and economic groups; and, make Somerville a regional employment center with a mix of diverse and high-quality jobs. The areas in the SomerVision map that are designated as enhance and transform should most significantly contribute towards the SomerVision goals that are outlined in the table below. The areas marked as conserve are not expected to greatly increase the figures in the table since these areas are not intended for large scale change.*

The proposal will not drastically contribute to the SomerVision target numbers but will provide contextual renovation and development in a residential zone as called for in the SomerVision plan.

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 a Special Permit to extend a dormer, alter and expand a rear addition, and add exterior egress stairs. This approval is based upon the following application materials and the plans submitted by the Applicant:	BP/CO	ISD/ Plng.									
	<table><tr><th>Date (Stamp Date)</th><th>Submission</th></tr><tr><td>December 2, 2014</td><td>Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office</td></tr><tr><td>(December 30, 2014)</td><td>Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (G-001 Cover, EX-0001 Existing Plans, A-100 Proposed Plan, A-101 Proposed Plan, A-201 Proposed Elevations)</td></tr><tr><td>(December 2, 2014)</td><td>Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (Landscape Plan)</td></tr></table>				Date (Stamp Date)	Submission	December 2, 2014	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office	(December 30, 2014)	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (G-001 Cover, EX-0001 Existing Plans, A-100 Proposed Plan, A-101 Proposed Plan, A-201 Proposed Elevations)	(December 2, 2014)	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (Landscape Plan)
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Any changes to the approved plan or elevations that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive SPGA approval.												
Pre-Construction												
2	The Applicant will be required to demonstrate that the updated project plans meet the current City of Somerville stormwater policy. Utility, grading, and drainage plans/reports must be submitted to the Engineering Department for review and approval.	BP	Eng.									
Construction Impacts												
3	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									
4	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									
Site												
5	Landscaping should be installed and maintained in compliance with the American Nurserymen's Association Standards.	Perpetual	Plng. / ISD									
Miscellaneous												
6	The Applicant, its successors and/or assigns, shall be responsible for maintenance of both the building and all on-site amenities, including landscaping, fencing, lighting, parking areas and storm water systems, ensuring they are clean, well kept and in good and safe working order.	Cont.	ISD									

Public Safety				
7	The Applicant or Owner shall meet the Fire Prevention Bureau's requirements.	CO	FP	
Final Sign-Off				
8	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.	

