



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
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Case #: ZBA 2016-99
Date: September 29th, 2016
Recommendation: Conditional Approval

PLANNING STAFF REPORT

Site: 65 Newbury Street, #2

Applicant Name: Shoshana Gourdin & John Wedoff
Applicant Address: 65 Newbury Street, #2, Somerville, MA 02144
Owner Name: Shoshana Gourdin & John Wedoff
Owner Address: 65 Newbury Street, #2, Somerville, MA 02144
Agent Name: n/a
Agent Address: n/a
Alderman: Katjana Ballantyne

Legal Notice: (Case # **ZBA 2016-99**) Applicant/Owners, Shoshana Gourdin & John Wedoff, seek a Special Permit under SZO §5.5 and §8.6.5.c to approve an addition to the rear of the upper unit of a 2-family residential building. RB Zone. Ward 7.

Dates of Public Hearing: October 5th, 2016

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Subject Property:

65 Newbury Street is a 3,909 square foot lot in an RB zone with an existing two-family residential structure. An asphalt driveway covers the left side (south) of the property leading to an accessory garage structure at the rear of the property. The front of the primary structure is a 2-1/2 story gable facing the street with a dormer (on the south side of the roof) creating a partial third floor. The rear of the principal structure is 2-story with a hipped roof.

2. Proposal:

The proposal is an addition to the upper unit of the two-family residence, at the rear of the house, to create a second bedroom. The owner occupant of the first floor unit is in support of the project.



3. Green Building Practices:
Not applicable.

4. Comments:

Fire Prevention: None at this time.
Traffic & Parking: None at this time.
Wiring Inspection: None at this time.
Lights and Lines: None at this time.
Engineering: None at this time.
Historic Preservation: Not applicable.
Ward Alderman: None at this time.

II. FINDINGS FOR SPECIAL PERMIT (SZO §5.1):

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."*

Nature of Application: **6.1.2. RB – Residence District**

This alteration to a nonconforming structure requires the Applicant to obtain special permits under §4.4.1 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance (SZO). The structure is currently nonconforming with respect to the following use / dimensional requirements:

Lot Area: the current size is 3,909 square feet which is under the required minimum of 7,500 s.f.

Closely related to the lot size is the non-conforming Street Frontage of 40' as opposed to the minimum 50' required in the RB zone.

Landscape and Pervious Area: the current percentage is 12.4% for both categories, the proposal does not change the coverage, but the requirement is 25% and 35% maximum respectively.

Yards: the existing Front Yard is 4'-5" instead of the required 15'. The Side Yards are one foot on the right side while the left side yard is 14'-10" and the requirements state a minimum of 8' one side and 17' but this project does not impact the yard dimensions.

Section 4.4.1 states that "[l]awfully existing one-and two-family dwellings which are only used as residences, which are nonconforming with respect to dimensional requirements, may be enlarged, extended, renovated or altered by special permit granted by the SPGA in accordance with the procedures of Article 5."

In considering a special permit under §4.4 or 4.5 of the SZO, Staff find the proposed renovation and alteration is not substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing nonconforming building. The building will not additionally impact traffic volumes or congestion, the adequacy of municipal water supply and sewer capacity, noise, odor, scale, on-street parking, shading, visual effects or neighborhood character.

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 promote the health, safety, and welfare of the inhabitants of the City of Somerville; to secure safety from fire, panic and other dangers; to provide adequate light and air; to prevent the overcrowding of land; to avoid undue concentration of population; to conserve the value of land and buildings; to protect and promote a housing stock that can accommodate the diverse household sizes and life stages of Somerville residents at all income levels, paying particular attention to providing housing affordable to individuals and families with low and moderate incomes; and to preserve and increase the amenities of the municipality.

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.”

In considering a special permit under §9.13 of the SZO the SPGA may grant such a special permit only when consistent with the purposes set forth in Section 9.1.

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.”*

Surrounding Neighborhood: Newbury Street is a residential street to the south of Teele Square. The subject property is approximately 1,000 feet from Teele Square at the intersection of Broadway and Holland Street. The properties surrounding the project, on Newbury and the parallel streets, are all similar in size and setback to the applicant’s property.

Impacts of Proposal (Design and Compatibility): As many of the neighboring structures are similar to the subject property, many have added dormers, decks, and third story additions. The proposal is designed to be appropriate in scale, massing, and materials to the house and the neighborhood.

5. Adverse environmental impacts: *The proposed use, structure or activity will not constitute an adverse impact on the surrounding area resulting from: 1) excessive noise, level of illumination, glare, dust, smoke, or vibration which are higher than levels now experienced from uses permitted in the surrounding area; 2) emission of noxious or hazardous materials or substances; 3) pollution of water ways or ground water; or 4) transmission of signals that interfere with radio or television reception.*

Impacts of Proposal (Environmental): There are no adverse environmental impacts associated with this project.

6. Vehicular and pedestrian circulation: *The circulation patterns for motor vehicles and pedestrians which would result from the use or structure will not result in conditions that create traffic congestion or the potential for traffic accidents on the site or in the surrounding area.*

Impacts of Proposal (Circulation): There are no increases in pedestrian or vehicular circulation impacts associated with this project.

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

Impacts of Proposal (Housing): There are no changes in the stock of existing affordable housing associated with this project.

8. **SomerVision Plan:** *Complies with the applicable goals, policies and actions of the SomerVision plan.*

Impacts of Proposal (SomerVision): There are no impacts to the goals, policies, or actions of the SomerVision plan associated with this project.

III. RECOMMENDATION

Special Permit under §5.1

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 third story rear addition of a second bedroom. This approval is based upon the following application materials and the plans submitted by the Applicant:	BP/CO	ISD/Pln g.							
	<table><tr><th>Date (Stamp Date)</th><th>Submission</th></tr><tr><td>August 17, 2016</td><td>Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office</td></tr><tr><td>September 28, 2016</td><td>Modified plans submitted to OSPCD</td></tr></table>				Date (Stamp Date)	Submission	August 17, 2016	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office	September 28, 2016	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD
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Any changes to the approved elevations that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive SPGA approval.										
Pre-Construction										
2	The Applicant shall develop a demolition plan in consultation with the City of Somerville Inspectional Services Division. Full compliance with proper demolition procedures shall be required, including timely advance notification to abutters of demolition date and timing, good rodent control measures (i.e. rodent baiting), minimization of dust, noise, odor, and debris outfall, and sensitivity to existing landscaping on adjacent sites.	Demolition Permitting	ISD							
Construction Impacts										

3	The applicant shall post the name and phone number of the general contractor at the site entrance where it is visible to people passing by.	During Construction	Plng.	
4	Approval is subject to the Applicant's and/or successor's right, title and interest in the property.	Cont.	Plng.	Deed submitted & application formed signed
5	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				
6	The Applicant or Owner shall meet the Fire Prevention Bureau's requirements.	CO	FP	
Final Sign-Off				
7	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.	