



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
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Case #: ZBA 2015-05

Date: February 26, 2015

Recommendation: Conditional Approval

PLANNING STAFF REPORT

Site: 29 Warwick Street

Applicant & Owner Name: April Dovholuk

Applicant & Owner Address: 29 Warwick Street Somerville, MA 02145

Agent Name: David Supple

Agent Address: 103 Terrace Street Boston, MA 02120

Alderman: Mark Niedergang

Legal Notice: Applicant and Owner, April Dovholuk, seeks a Special Permit to change a cottage into a 2 ½ story structure with dormers/cross gables. RB Zone. Ward 1.

Dates of Public Hearing: Zoning Board of Appeals – March 4, 2015

*This case was advertised as Ward 1, that is incorrect, this address is in Ward 5.

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Subject Property: The subject property is a 3,049 square foot with a cottage single family building. This side of Warwick Street backs up onto the community path.
2. Proposal: The proposal is to change the type from cottage or 1 ½ story structure to a 2 ½ story structure with dormers. This will allow an increase in bedroom count from two bedroom to four.
3. Green Building Practices: Based on the results of a infrared scan of the home, air sealing will be done around the first story rim joist, close cell foam will be used in the new roof, the walls and existing basement walls will be insulated. Existing high efficiency HVAC system ducting will be sealed and retained to heat and cool the home. All lumber will be FSC certified and all light fixtures will be LED.



4. Comments:

Fire Prevention: Smoke detectors will be required.

Wiring Inspection: The service location to the house will not be acceptable based on the proposed plans. Coordinate relocation with electrician.

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

II. FINDINGS FOR SPECIAL PERMIT:

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."*

Alterations to nonconforming structures require a special permit. The increased height and dormers on the left sideyard need relief.

Under the proposed code, the dormers and building type are by-right.

In considering a special permit under 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 encourage the most appropriate use of land throughout 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."

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 surrounding neighborhood is a mix of residential building types including cottages and houses. The property has direct adjacency to the bike path which leads to Davis Square and, in the future, the North Point neighborhood in Cambridge.

There are little to no impacts of the proposal. The building type will match those existing on the street.

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

This project will not affect existing affordable housing.

6. 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.*

This project does not directly contribute to the metrics in SomerVision but does allow a homeowner to modify their home in a modest way that blends in with the existing context of the street.

III. RECOMMENDATION

Special Permit

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 change in building type from a cottage to a house with dormers. 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>January 5, 2015</td><td>Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office</td></tr><tr><td>February 23, 2015</td><td>Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (Mortgage Inspection Plan, Existing 1 & 2 FP, Demo Plan, Proposed First FP, Proposed Second FP, Proposed Third FP, Proposed Elev, Proposed Elev, Proposed Elev)</td></tr></table>				Date (Stamp Date)	Submission	January 5, 2015	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office	February 23, 2015	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (Mortgage Inspection Plan, Existing 1 & 2 FP, Demo Plan, Proposed First FP, Proposed Second FP, Proposed Third FP, Proposed Elev, Proposed Elev, Proposed Elev)
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Any changes to the approved site plan or elevations that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive SPGA approval.										
Construction Impacts										
2	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							
3	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							
Design										
4	Any new siding on the main body of the house shall match the existing siding.	CO	Plng.							
5	Siding on the dormers shall match or be complimentary to the siding on the main body of the house.	CO	Plng.							
Site										
6	Applicant shall work with electrician and ISD to relocate the building service.	Installation of Utilities	Wiring Inspector							
Miscellaneous										
7	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							
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.	
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