



City of Somerville

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

TO: Zoning Board of Appeals
FROM: OSPCD Staff
SUBJECT: 8-8a Melvin Street, ZP25-000047, ZP25-000048, ZP25-000049
POSTED: August 14, 2025

RECOMMENDATION: No change

This memo is supplemental to the PPZ Staff Memo dated July 10, 2025, found [here](#). Since the original Staff Memo was posted, three new narratives (one per original item of relief), all dated August 6, 2025, were submitted. The original Staff Memo can be found [here](#).

BACKGROUND

The hearing for the case was opened and heard at the July 16, 2025 ZBA meeting, but was continued by the Board to give the applicant an opportunity to present an alternative plan that required less relief.

ANALYSIS

The revised proposal has changed the dimensions of the proposed dormer. This has resulted in the following updates to the requested relief:

- Relief from SZO Section 3.1.13.I.ii.c. is no longer needed. The new total dormer width is compliant. It now measures 19'5", where it was previously 22'4".
- The dormer face width was reduced from 16' to 13'1". The maximum allowed dormer face width with the revised dimensions would be 11'. Relief from SZO 3.1.13.I.i.a is still required.
- The dormer separation was increased from 1'11" to 4'10". The allowed minimum allowed dormer separation with the revised dimensions would be 6'6½". Relief from SZO 3.1.13.I.i.c. is still required.

A comparison between the original as-built dimensions and revised dimensions, along with the zoning requirements for the revised dormer, are displayed in the table below:

SZO Article	As-Built Requirement (based on original dimensions)	As-Built Dimensions	Revised Requirement (based on revised dimensions)	Revised Dimensions	Type of Relief Needed for revised dimensions
3.1.13.I.ii.c (maximum total dormer width)	21'10 ½" (43'9" / 2)	22'4"	21'10 ½" (43'9" / 2)	19'5"	Relief no longer required

3.1.13.I.i.a (maximum dormer face width)	12' (Window(s) width +36 in) (9' of window width is proposed as built)	16' (9' of window width and 7' of wall width)	11' (8' of window width is now proposed)	13'1" (8' of window width and 5'1" wall width)	Hardship Variance
3.1.13.I.i.c (minimum dormer separation)	8'0" (50% of new 16' shed dormer)	1'11"	6'6½" (50% of 13'1' shed dormer)	4'10"	Hardship Variance

CONSIDERATIONS & FINDINGS

Considerations and findings for permits ZP25-000048 (dormer face width) and ZP25-000049 (dormer separation) remain the same. Permit ZP25-000047 (total dormer width) no longer requires relief and, therefore, no longer requires any considerations and findings.

PERMIT CONDITIONS

PERMIT CONDITIONS (ZP25-000048, Dormer Face Width)

Should the Board approve the required Hardship Variance regarding dormer face width, PPZ Staff recommends the following conditions:

Validity

1. This Decision must be recorded with the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds.
2. The relief granted in this decision is valid only for the currently proposed 8' of window width and 5'1" of wall width, resulting in 13'1 of dormer face width. Any increase in the non-conforming dormer face width will require additional relief.

Public Record

3. A digital copy of the recorded Decision stamped by the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds must be submitted to the Planning, Preservation, & Zoning Division for the public record.

PERMIT CONDITIONS (ZP25-000049, Dormer Separation Standards)

Should the Board approve the required Hardship Variance regarding dormer separation standards, PPZ Staff recommends the following conditions:

Validity

1. This Decision must be recorded with the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds.
2. The relief granted in this decision is valid only for the currently proposed dormer separation of 4'10". Any increase in the non-conformity of the dormer separation will require additional relief.

Public Record

3. A digital copy of the recorded Decision stamped by the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds must be submitted to the Planning, Preservation, & Zoning Division for the public record.