

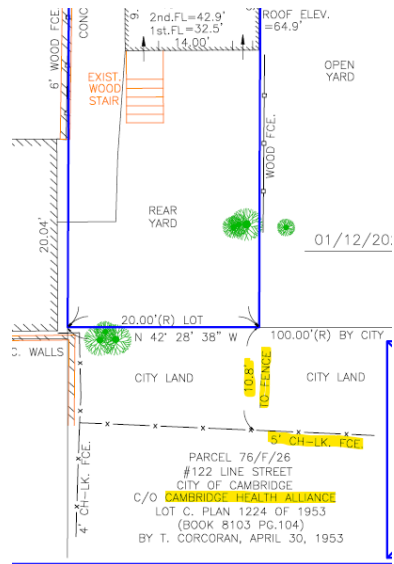
36 Beacon – Rear Egress Stair New Construction

- Zoning Information
 - Urban Residential (UR), Ward 2
 - Rowhouse built 1886
 - LHD Overlay
 - Parcel ID: 76-F-10
- Existing Use:
 - Table 9.1.1 Use Category UR, Residential Housing, Permitted
 - Future Use: No Change in Use
- Property is an existing masonry/brick R-2 three story residential building with 4 legal units per Certificate of Inspections dated 2007, 2012

See next page for Narrative

Project Narrative

- Property gained new Ownership as of 11/14/2019 with an outstanding Code Violation issued by Inspector Waldron to former owner on 07/2017 for non-compliant rear egress, requiring a rear exterior egress stair to be built
- Initial historical application was approved by Somerville HPC in early 2020, but not furthered by owner due to COVID shutdowns and interest rate shocks. Zoning approval was not advanced.
- Owner re-applied on 05/21/2025 for **building ISD approval** (B25-000794), **zoning approval** (ZP25-000075), and **historical approval** (HP25-000070), with updated filings 07/15/2025 per discussions with respective departments
 - **Zoning approval** is required for two hardships: ~12ft relief from rear 20ft setback requirement (ZP25-000075) and relief from extension of current non-conforming lot coverage from ~70% to ~75% coverage (ZP25-000084). The initial single filing (ZP25-000075) was split into two independent filings on 08/22/2025 as recommended by the zoning department.
- **Three hardship criteria:**
 1. **Unique lot/building shape:** This is a unique, historic row house with a uniquely small lot size (20ft wide in total). As such - and unlike most newer multifamily buildings in Somerville which reside on larger lots – this property was not constructed with the setbacks nor lot size to accommodate a rear egress stair as is common to the vast majority of properties in Somerville
 2. **Hardship caused by unique lot/building shape:** ISD has required previous ownership to correct rear egress non-conformance as of a 2017 report. The current ownership has performed careful architectural review by two independent licensed architects and determined the only building-code-compliant solution requires an exterior egress stair be constructed which will unavoidably overlap with the 20ft zoning setback. Constructing will greatly improve the safety of the property and is required by ISD to improve egress conditions.
 3. **How the relief does not cause substantial detriment to the public good nor nullify/substantially derogate from intent and purpose of zoning ordinance in general:** The proposed stair will be entirely hidden from public view and will not impact abutters' view lines, daylight, or activities. It is in line with zoning intent in being appropriately sized (only two stories, not three) and steps back down towards the rear property line. The lot also backs onto a ~10ft 'no man's land' owned by the City of Cambridge but maintained by the Property in question, and then a ~160ft City of Cambridge CHA hospital parking lot. Future abutting construction is highly unlikely due to existing CHA hospital parking lot. See survey and photo screenshots below.



- **Historical approval** (HP25-000070) is required due to owner-requested-changes deviating from the initially approved plan in 2020: having vinyl balusters and posts rather than wood. Note: committee approved Trex vinyl decking in initial approval in 2020, and noted that stair is not visible from Somerville public way, but instead minorly visible from Line St (Cambridge public way) across a 160ft hospital parking lot and multiple trees. See photos below.



