



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
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SARAH LEWIS, *SENIOR PLANNER*
SARAH WHITE, *PLANNER/PRESERVATION PLANNER*
ALEX MELLO, *PLANNER*
DAWN PEREIRA, *ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT*

Case #: ZBA 2018-37
Date: April 18, 2018
Recommendation: Conditional approval

PLANNING STAFF REPORT

Site: 26 Glendale Avenue

Applicant Name: Matthew Patrick
Applicant Address: 82 Yorktown Street, Somerville, MA 02144
Owner Name: Joseph L. Cyr and Patricia M. Cyr
Owner Address: 26A Glendale Avenue, Somerville, MA 02144
Agent Name: Adam Dash, Esq.
Agent Address: 48 Grove Street, Suite 304, Somerville, MA 02144
Alderman: Katjana Ballantyne

Legal Notice: Applicant, Matthew Patrick, and Owners, Joseph L. Cyr and Patricia M. Cyr, seek a Special Permit under SZO §4.4.1 to alter a nonconforming structure by constructing a dormer and finishing a portion of the basement. RB Zone. Ward 7.

Dates of Public Hearing: Zoning Board of Appeals – April 18, 2018

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Subject Property: The subject property is comprised of one 3,475 square foot parcel that contains a two-family 2.5 story dwelling.
2. Proposal: The proposal is to construct a gable dormer on the right side of the ridge and to finish a portion of the basement.
3. Green Building Practices: The application states that the project will comply with the stretch energy code.
4. Comments:



Ward Alderman: Alderman Ballantyne has been informed of the proposed and has expressed her support of the project to Planning Staff.

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."*

The structure is currently nonconforming with respect to the following dimensional requirements: lot area, lot area per dwelling unit, landscaped area, pervious area, floor area ratio (FAR), front, left, right, and rear yard setbacks, and street frontage.

The proposal will impact the following nonconforming dimensions: right side yard setback and FAR. The current right side yard setback dimension is 0 feet and the proposal to construct a dormer will maintain that distance. The requirement in the district is 8 feet. The current FAR is 1.01 and the proposal to finish a portion of the basement with 250 net square feet will bring the FAR to 1.11. The requirement in the district is 1. This alteration to a nonconforming structure requires the Applicant to obtain special permits under §4.4.1 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance (SZO).

Section 4.4.1 states that “[I]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.”

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 provide for and maintain the uniquely integrated structure of uses in the City; to protect health; 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 encourage the most appropriate use of land throughout the City; and to preserve and increase the amenities of the municipality.

The proposal is consistent with the purpose of the RB 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."*

Surrounding Neighborhood: Glendale Avenue is a residential street off of Cameron Avenue that has mostly single- and two-family dwellings.

Impacts of Proposal (Design and Compatibility): The proposed gable dormer will be design to be compatible with the existing gable roof and the surrounding neighborhood. There are many houses in close proximity that have similar style dormers.

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

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.

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 the construction of a dormer and finishing a portion of the basement. This approval is based upon the following application materials and the plans submitted by the Applicant: | BP/CO | ISD/Plng. | | | | | | | |
| | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date (Stamp Date)</th> <th>Submission</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>March 15, 2018</td> <td>Initial application submitted to the City Clerk’s Office</td> </tr> <tr> <td>March 15, 2018</td> <td>Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (A1.00, A1.01, and A1.02)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | | | Date (Stamp Date) | Submission | March 15, 2018 | Initial application submitted to the City Clerk’s Office | March 15, 2018 | Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (A1.00, A1.01, and A1.02) |
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| Any changes to the approved elevations that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive SPGA approval. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pre-Construction | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---------------------|----------------|--|
| 2 | If required by the Engineering Department, the proposed basement finished floor elevation shall not be less than is 1 foot above the Seasonal High Ground Water elevation. If necessary, the seasonal high ground water elevation shall be determined by a Massachusetts certified soil evaluator and stated on a signed soil test pit log. | BP | Eng. | |
| 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 | The Applicant shall at their 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 | |
| 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 | |
| Design | | | | |
| 6 | Applicant shall provide final material samples for siding, trim, and windows to Planning Staff for review and approval prior to the issuance of a building permit. | BP | Plng. | |
| Site | | | | |
| 7 | Landscaping shall be installed and maintained in compliance with the American Nurserymen's Association Standards; | Perpetual | Plng. / ISD | |
| Miscellaneous | | | | |
| 8 | Granting of the applied for use or alteration does not include the provision for short term rental uses, such as AirBnB, VRBO, or the like. Separate approvals are needed for the aforementioned uses. | Ongoing | ISD / Plng. | |
| 9 | 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 | | | | |
| 10 | The Applicant or Owner shall meet the Fire Prevention Bureau's requirements. | CO | FP | |
| 11 | To the extent possible, all exterior lighting must be confined to the subject property, cast light downward and must not intrude, interfere or spill onto neighboring properties. | CO | Plng. | |
| Final Sign-Off | | | | |
| 12 | 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. | |

