



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS**  
**MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**  
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DAWN PEREIRA, *ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT*

**Case #:** ZBA 2018-09

**Date:** February 14, 2018

**Recommendation:** Conditional Approval

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**PLANNING STAFF REPORT**

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**Site:** 94 Moreland Street

**Applicant / Owner Name:** Jonathan Scamman and Kelly Best

**Applicant / Owner Address:** 94 Moreland Street, Somerville, MA 02145

**Alderman:** Jesse Clingan

Legal Notice: Applicants / Owners, Jonathan Scamman and Kelly Best, seek a Special Permit under §4.4.1 to alter a nonconforming structure by constructing a second story rear addition in the rear above an existing one story portion of the structure. RA Zone. Ward 4.

Dates of Public Hearing: Zoning Board of Appeals – February 14, 2018

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**I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

1. Subject Property: The subject property contains one parcel of 3,617 square feet of land area. A two-bedroom single family, 1.5 story, cottage style bungalow structure and a small shed in the rear are situated on the parcel.

2. Proposal: The proposal is to construct an addition in the rear above the existing one-story portion of the building that is currently within the required left side yard setback. The dwelling will remain a single family and have three bedrooms.

3. Green Building Practices: The application does not list any green building practices.



4. Comments:

*Ward Alderman:* Alderman Clingan has been informed of this proposal and has yet to comment as of the publication of this report.

**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, left side yard setback, right side yard setback, and street frontage.

The proposal will impact the nonconforming left side yard setback dimension of 2.2 feet by creating an upward extension of the existing one story portion of the building. The proposed addition will be tapered one foot from the edge of the existing first story so that the edge of the wall is 3.2 feet from the left property line. 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 “[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 of the SZO, Staff finds that the alterations proposed would not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing structure. The proposal has been designed with setbacks that minimally impact the neighbors and the requirements for lot area per dwelling unit, ground coverage, landscape area, pervious area, floor area ratio (FAR), building height, front yard setback, and rear yard setback will continue to be conforming to the requirements of the SZO.

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 lessen congestion in the streets; 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 adequately protect the natural environment; 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 RA district, which is, “to establish and preserve quiet neighborhoods of one- and two-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*: The subject property is located on Moreland Street on the block between East Albion Street and Meacham Street. There is a particular stretch of cottage bungalow style homes that the subject site is a part of.

*Impacts of Proposal (Design and Compatibility)*: The proposed addition will be in the rear of the dwelling and will not be visible to much from the public way. The houses are close enough together on this stretch of Moreland Street that there is a small view shed from Moreland Street where this addition is viewable from. The applicant is proposing to replace the existing vinyl siding on the whole house with new vinyl siding. Staff recommends a condition that the siding be replaced with a more high quality material such as cementitious siding, which has durability and aesthetics benefits compared to vinyl.

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 and 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.

### 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
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1	<p>Approval is for the construction of a rear addition. This approval is based upon the following application materials and the plans submitted by the Applicant:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="248 306 889 699"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="248 306 565 342">Date (Stamp Date)</th> <th data-bbox="565 306 889 342">Submission</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="248 342 565 443">January 11, 2018</td> <td data-bbox="565 342 889 443">Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="248 443 565 596">January 11, 2018</td> <td data-bbox="565 443 889 596">Plans submitted to OSPCD (C, A1.1, A2.1, A2.2, A3.1, A4.1, A5.1, A6.1, D1.1, D1.2, EX.1, EX.2, and EX.3)</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="248 596 565 699">January 5, 2018</td> <td data-bbox="565 596 889 699">Certified Plot Plan</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Any changes to the approved plans that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive SPGA approval.</p>	Date (Stamp Date)	Submission	January 11, 2018	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office	January 11, 2018	Plans submitted to OSPCD (C, A1.1, A2.1, A2.2, A3.1, A4.1, A5.1, A6.1, D1.1, D1.2, EX.1, EX.2, and EX.3)	January 5, 2018	Certified Plot Plan	BP/CO	ISD/Plng.	
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<b>Construction Impacts</b>												
2	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.									
3	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									
4	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									
<b>Design</b>												
5	Applicant shall provide final material samples for siding, trim, windows, and doors to Planning Staff for review and approval prior to the issuance of a building permit. No new vinyl siding shall be used. Any new siding shall be cementitious or another material deemed appropriate by Planning Staff.	BP	Plng.									
<b>Miscellaneous</b>												
6	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.									
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									
<b>Public Safety</b>												

8	The Applicant or Owner shall meet the Fire Prevention Bureau's requirements.	CO	FP	
9	Per Somerville fire safety regulations, grills, barbecues, chimineas and the like are NOT permitted on decks or porches.	Perpetual	FP/ISD	
10	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.	
<b>Final Sign-Off</b>				
11	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.	

