



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

MICHAEL F. GLAVIN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING DIVISION STAFF

GEORGE PROAKIS, *DIRECTOR OF PLANNING*
SARAH LEWIS, *SENIOR PLANNER*
SARAH WHITE, *CITY PLANNER/PRESERVATION PLANNER*
DAWN PEREIRA, *ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT*

Case #: ZBA 2016-104

Date: October 5, 2016

Recommendation: Conditional Approval

PLANNING STAFF REPORT

Site: 88-90 Electric Avenue

Applicant Name: Paul Reinert & William McDermott

Applicant Address: 88-90 Electric Avenue,
Somerville, MA 02144

Owner Name: Paul Reinert & William McDermott

Owner Address: 88-90 Electric Avenue, Somerville,
MA 02144

Alderman: Katiana Ballantyne



Legal Notice: Applicants and Owners, Paul Reinert & William McDermott, seek a Special Permit under §4.4.1 of the SZO to construct a dormer. RA Zone. Ward 7.

Dates of Public Hearings: October 5, 2016

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Subject Property: The subject property is a 3,665 square-foot residential structure in the RA zone. The assessor lists the property as a legally-existing 3-family conversion, however, the property currently contains only two units according to the applicants' submission. The property rests on a 4,356 square-foot lot.

2. Proposal: The applicant proposes to add a doghouse style dormer to the left elevation in order to provide code-required head height in the bathroom. The dormer addition will increase the size of the structure by 77.06 square feet. The proposed dormer will be less than 50% of the length of the roof plane to which it is being attached.

Although the Applicants' plans also show that the existing garage is to be rebuilt in the same location, to

the same dimensions. No relief is triggered with this re-build because this accessory structure is being re-built to the exact same dimensions in the same location.

3. Green Building Practices: None listed.

4. Comments:

Ward Alderman: Alderman Ballantyne has been apprised of this project.

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 §4.4.1 of the SZO. This section of the report goes through §4.4.1 in detail.

1. Information Supplied:

Staff finds that the information provided by the Applicant conforms to the requirements of §4.4.1 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."*

Section 4.4.1 states that "[l]awfully existing nonconforming structures other than one- and two-family dwellings may be enlarged, extended, renovated or altered only by special permit authorized by the SPGA in accordance with the procedures of Article 5. The SPGA must find that such extension, enlargement, renovation or alteration is not substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing nonconforming building. In making the finding that the enlargement, extension, renovation or alteration will not be substantially more detrimental, the SPGA may consider, without limitation, impacts upon the following: traffic volumes, traffic congestion, adequacy of municipal water supply and sewer capacity, noise, odor, scale, on-street parking, shading, visual effects and neighborhood character."

In considering a special permit under §4.4.1 of the SZO, Staff finds that the alterations proposed would not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing structure. The proposed dormer will allow for code-compliant head-height in the bathroom. The proposed dormer style is in keeping with the existing dormer located on the opposite side of this same story of the building. The proposed dormer is less than 50% of the length of the roof plane to which it is being attached.

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 to these larger windows to the existing storefronts is consistent with the purposes of the NB 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 unbuild surrounding area, including land uses."*

In considering a special permit under §4.4.1 of the SZO, Staff finds that the proposed new dormer blends very well with the existing house and is in keeping with the style, massing and design of the structure to which it is being attached. Electric Avenue is comprised of mostly one- and two-family residential structures built around the same time period, with many of these homes being in the same style as 88-90. Staff finds that the addition of this dormer will have little to no impact on the surrounding neighborhood and is compatible with both the structure to which it is being added and to the general area.

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

The proposal will not add to the existing stock of affordable housing.

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 addition of a dog shed-style dormer on the left elevation of the structure. | BP/CO | ISD/PIng. | | | | | | | |
| | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date (Stamp Date)</th> <th>Submission</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>August 30, 2016</td> <td>Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office</td> </tr> <tr> <td>September 30, 2016</td> <td>Full plan package received by OSPCD.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | | | Date (Stamp Date) | Submission | August 30, 2016 | Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office | September 30, 2016 | Full plan package received by OSPCD. |
| | Date (Stamp Date) | | | | Submission | | | | | |
| August 30, 2016 | Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office | | | | | | | | | |
| September 30, 2016 | Full plan package received by OSPCD. | | | | | | | | | |
| <p style="color: red;">Any changes to the approved site plan or elevations that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive SPGA approval. Whether or not a change is <i>de minimis</i> in nature must be determined by the Planning Office.</p> | | | | | | | | | | |
| Design | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Planning Staff or the Zoning Review Planner shall review and approve ALL materials to be used on the dormer, including windows. | CO | Planning Staff / ISD | | | | | | | |
| 3 | The proposed window shall not use reflective or mirrored glass. | CO | Planning Staff / ISD | | | | | | | |
| Construction Impacts | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---------------------|-------|--|
| 4 | 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 | |
| 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 | |
| Public Safety | | | | |
| 6 | The Applicant or Owner shall meet the Fire Prevention Bureau's requirements. | CO | FP | |
| Final Sign-Off | | | | |
| 7 | 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. | |