



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, *PLANNER/PRESERVATION PLANNER*
ALEX MELLO, *PLANNER*
DAWN PEREIRA, *ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT*

Case #: ZBA 2017-60

Date: June 30, 2017

Recommendation: Conditional Approval

PLANNING STAFF REPORT

Site: 9 Pearson Road

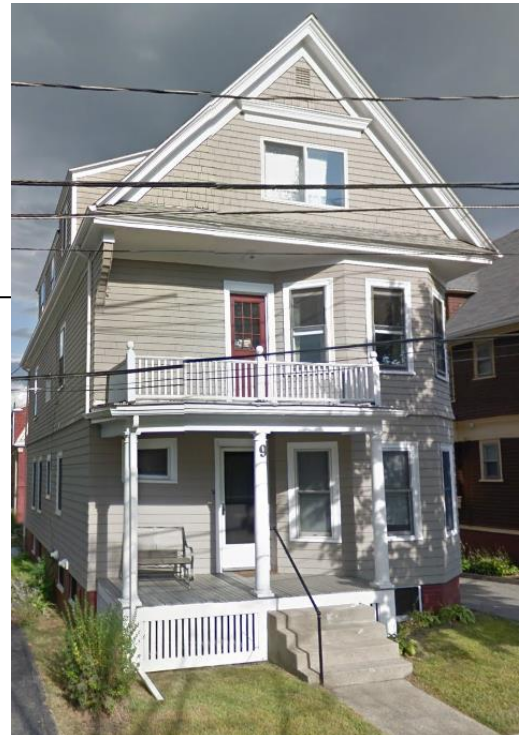
Applicants / Owners Name: Robert J. Hoey and Jacalyn Anne Crowe
Applicants / Owners Address: 9 Pearson Road, Somerville, MA 02144
Alderman: Lance Davis

Legal Notice: Applicants / Owners, Robert J. Hoey and Jacalyn Anne Crowe, seek a Special Permit under Section 4.4.1 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance (SZO) to alter a nonconforming three-family dwelling by constructing a three-story open porch on the rear of the structure. RA Zone. Ward 6.

Dates of Public Hearing: Zoning Board of Appeals –
July 12, 2017

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Subject Property: The locus is comprised of one parcel of 3,780 square feet with a three-family dwelling structure.
2. Proposal: The proposal is to replace the existing two-story rear porch with a slightly larger three-story rear porch with stairs down to the ground. The proposed stairs will provide a second means of egress for each unit.
3. Green Building Practices: None listed in the application.



4. Comments:

Ward Alderman: Alderman Davis 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, lot area per dwelling unit, pervious area, floor area ratio (FAR), front yard setback, left side yard setback, street frontage, and the number of parking spaces.

The proposal will impact the nonconforming dimensions of pervious area. The current dimension is 29%, the proposal is to decrease it to 27%, and the requirement in the district is 35%. Information provided by the Applicants/Owners indicates that the net increase in the footprint of the porch increases by 72 square feet; reducing the pervious area from 29% to 27%. 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 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 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 ground coverage, landscaped area, rear yard setback, and building height will continue to be conforming to the requirements of the SZO. The stairs will project into the rear setback, which is allowed because Section 8.6.14 and 8.6.6 of the SZO allows steps down from the first story to project into a required yard setback up to on fourth (1/4) of the required setback.

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 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 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: Pearson Road is comprised of two- and three-family dwellings.

Impacts of Proposal (Design and Compatibility): The proposal will not have an impact on the design of the structure as viewable from the public way. The proposed material for the decking and railings will be AZEK, which has a good appearance, is durable, and requires little maintenance overtime.

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

6. 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 three-story rear porch. 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>June 7, 2017</td> <td>Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May 16, 2017</td> <td>Plans submitted to OSPCD (A100, A101, A102, A103, A104, and A105)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May 30, 2017</td> <td>Plan of land located at 9 Pearson Road, Somerville, MA</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Date (Stamp Date)	Submission	June 7, 2017	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office	May 16, 2017	Plans submitted to OSPCD (A100, A101, A102, A103, A104, and A105)	May 30, 2017	Plan of land located at 9 Pearson Road, Somerville, MA
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Any changes to the approved elevations that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive SPGA approval.												
Construction Impacts												
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									
Design												
5	Applicant shall provide final material samples for decking and railings to Planning Staff for review and approval prior to the issuance of a building permit.	BP	Plng.									
Site												
6	Landscaping shall be installed and maintained in compliance with the American Nurserymen's Association Standards;	Perpetual	Plng. / ISD									
Miscellaneous												
7	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.	Perpetual	Plng. / ISD									

8	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				
9	The Applicant or Owner shall meet the Fire Prevention Bureau's requirements.	CO	FP	
Final Sign-Off				
10	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.	

