



TOWN OF ARLINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING and
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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MEMORANDUM

To: Zoning Board of Appeals
From: Marisa Lau, Senior Planner, Dept. of Planning and Community Development
Date: 9/27/2022
RE: Docket 3715 – 39 Woodside Lane; Special Permit under Zoning Bylaw 5.4.2.B(6) Districts and Uses (Large Additions)

The applicant, AC General Contracting, seeks a Special Permit in accordance with Section 5.4.2.B(6) Districts and Uses (Large Additions) of the Zoning Bylaw. The applicant seeks to construct a two-story addition in the front and side yards of a single-family home for additional living space. The addition would increase the total square footage from 1,780 SF to 4,145 SF (+2,365 SF or a 133% increase over the existing structure). Under the proposal the lot coverage would increase from 11.5% to 26.8% (+15.3%).

The existing structure is in the R1 Zoning District and is nonconforming with the Zoning Bylaw's rear yard and usable open space requirements. A nonconforming detached garage located in the front and right side yard of the property will remain. The proposed addition would extend the building footprint 13.1 feet into the front yard, 3.2 feet into the left side yard, and 21.8 feet into the right side yard. The addition would not increase any nonconformities of the existing structure.

The application states the proposal would increase the gross floor area of the attic to 769 SF (+431 SF). Per the definition of a half story in Section 2 (Definitions) of the Zoning Bylaw, "less than one half of the floor area measured from the underside of the roof framing to the finished floor below has a clear height of 7 feet 0 inches or more." It is unclear based on the materials submitted by the applicant whether a half story is proposed and if so, whether the dimensions of the finished floor area would comply with this definition.

The following is an application of the Special Permit criteria (Zoning Bylaw Section 3.3.3):

Criterion #1: Requested Use

The requested use is permitted through a Special Permit in the R1 zoning district.

Criterion #2: Public Convenience/Welfare

This proposal would provide additional living space. The Board can find that this condition is met.

Criterion #3: Undue Traffic Congestion/Impairment of Public Safety

There would not be an increase in traffic congestion or an impairment of public safety. The Board can find that this condition is met.

Criterion #4: Undue Burden on Municipal Systems

There would not be an undue burden on municipal systems. The Board can find that this condition is met.

Criterion #5: Special regulations

This proposal would not result in the need for special regulations.

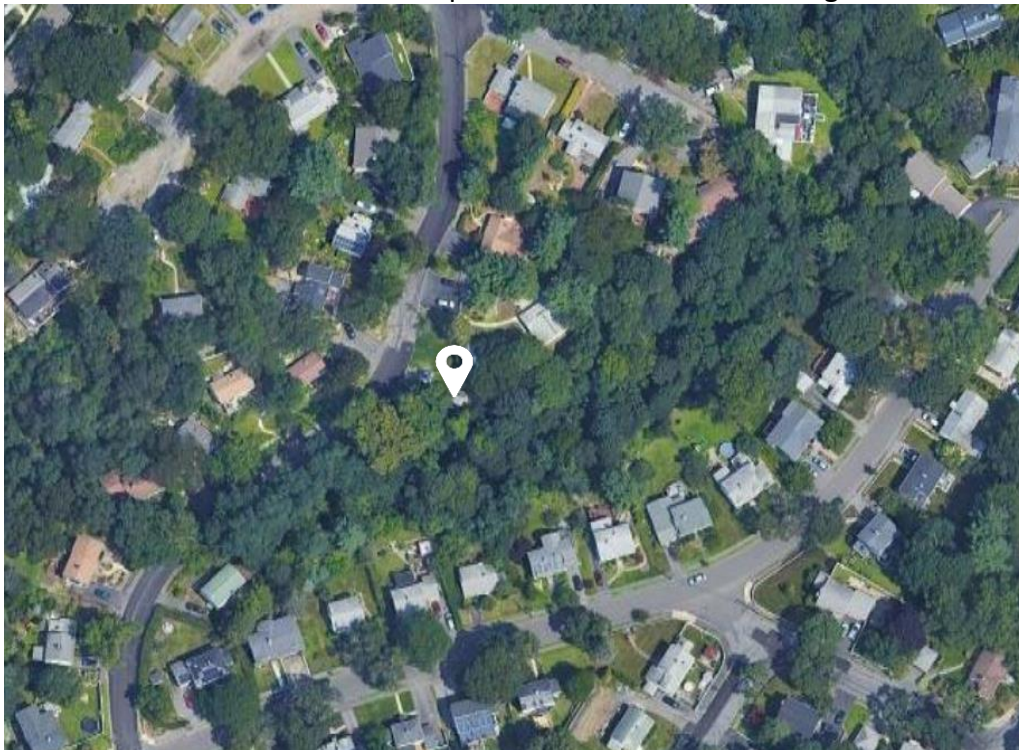
Criterion #6: Integrity/Character of District; Detrimental to Health, Morals, Welfare

Homes in the vicinity of the property include a range of architectural styles, typically Colonial/Ranch styles and smaller typologies like Capes. The addition is designed to complement the scale of the existing structure as well as the style of adjacent homes in the neighborhood. Although the proposal does not interrupt the existing streetscape pattern, the applicant is encouraged to explore the potential to adjust the exterior composition of the front façade including window placement.¹ Overall, this proposal would not detrimentally impact the neighborhood character of the district or adjoining districts, nor will it be detrimental to the health, morals, or welfare of the neighbors of the property.

Criterion #7: Detrimental Excess in Particular Use

There would not be any detrimental excesses.

Below are aerial and street-based photos of the current building:



¹ Residential Design Guidelines, Principles A-1, A-2, B-1, B-2, B-3 and C-1
<https://www.arlingtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument?id=54518>



Summary of Analysis:

If the proposal is compliant with the definition of a half story, the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) maintains that this proposal is consistent with the Special Permit criteria in Section 3.3.3, A through G, of the Zoning Bylaw.

Recommendation:

DPCD recommends that the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) requests that the applicant provide attic floor plans to clarify dimensions of the finished floor area and side elevations.

Related Dockets:

- #3709: 49 Valentine Rd – Applicant sought a special permit to create a large addition of 882 square feet to their single family home for additional living space. Approved 8/30/22.
- #3699: 68 Brantwood Rd – Applicant sought a special permit to create a large addition of 2,028 square feet to their single-family home citing a desire to update and modernize their childhood home for their family. Approved 6/14/22.
- #3688: 44 Edmund Rd – Applicant sought a special permit to create a large addition of 776 square feet to their single-family home citing a desire to make it more comfortable for a growing family. Approved 5/24/22.
- #3686: 238 Park Ave – Applicant sought a special permit to create a large addition of 809 square feet to their single-family home for additional living space and to replace an existing detached garage with a larger structure. Approved 1/25/22.