



TOWN OF ARLINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING and
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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MEMORANDUM

To: Zoning Board of Appeals
From: Claire Ricker, Director, Department of Planning and Community Development
Marisa Lau, Senior Planner
Date: 10/21/2022
RE: Docket 3718 – 24 Langley Rd; Special Permit under Zoning Bylaw Section 5.3.9(A)
Projections into Minimum Yards

The applicants, Lindsey and Herb Sweeney, seek a Special Permit in accordance with Section 5.3.9 (A) Projections into Minimum Yards. The applicant seeks to construct a covered rear porch along the entire rear façade of a single-family home located on a corner lot. The renovations also include demolition of a deck and covered entry to be replaced with a two-story addition. The proposed porch is approximately 200 square feet, which exceeds the maximum 25 square foot projection into a minimum yard allowable by right in the Zoning Bylaw. The purpose of the project is to create a convenient outdoor gathering place and secondary entrance to the dwelling.

The structure is in the R-1 Zoning District and is nonconforming with the Zoning Bylaw's usable open space requirements. The proposed porch would project forward approximately 9 feet from the rear façade, decreasing the rear yard setback from 22.3 feet to 13.7 feet (change of +/- 8.6 feet).

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 in the R-1 Zoning District through the granting of a special permit.

Criterion #2: Public Convenience/Welfare

This proposal would improve the convenience and safety of the owner's secondary entrance to their home.

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

There would not be an increase in traffic congestion or an impairment of public safety.

Criterion #4: Undue Burden on Municipal Systems

There would not be an undue burden on municipal systems.

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

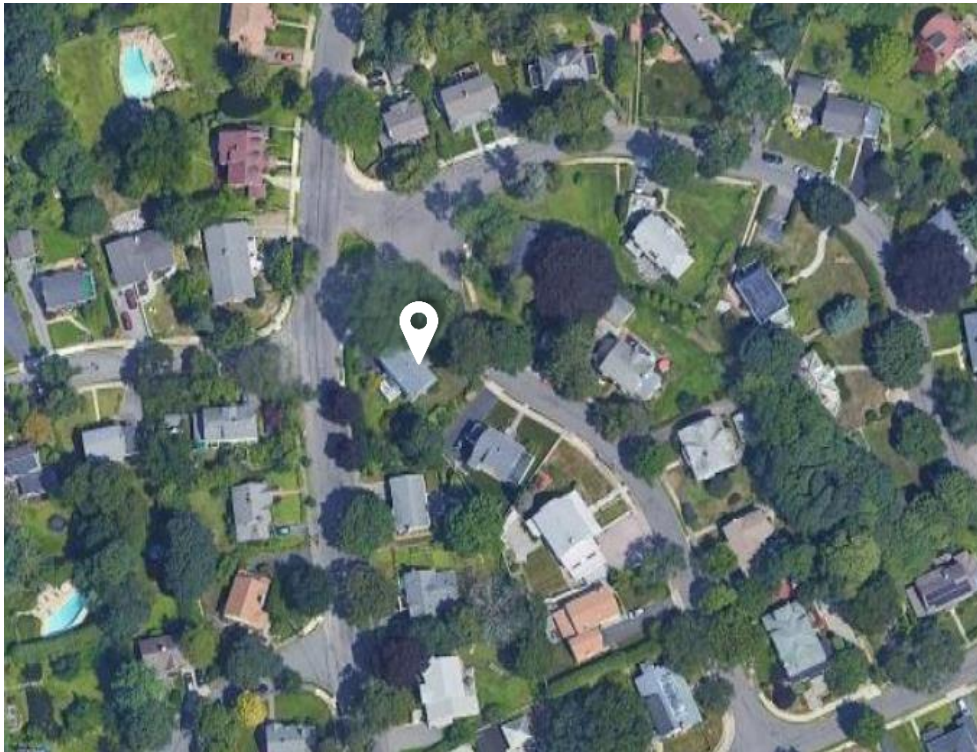
While the proposed porch exceeds the maximum square footage allowable by right, covered or enclosed entries are a common feature of structures in the surrounding neighborhood, including on Langley Road and Falmouth Road. Two nearby homes across the street from the property have usable front or side porches that span the full width or depth of the structure, similar to the proposal.

Consistent with the Residential Design Guidelines, the proposed design will introduce human-scaled architectural variation to the overall streetscape and add visual interest to the structure.¹ Furthermore, the porch addition helps break apart the primary massing and reduce the overall appearance of height.² While the porch matches the style and level of detailing of the existing house, the applicant may consider proposing windows on the north elevation of the two-story addition for consistency. 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

This proposal would not cause any detrimental excesses.

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



¹ Principle B-1 (pg. 26) and C-1 (pg. 34), Residential Design Guidelines, available at <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/54518/637472609831970000>

² Principle B-2 (pg. 31) and B-3 (pg. 33), Residential Design Guidelines



Summary of Analysis:

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.

Related Dockets:

- #3711: 101 Robbins Road – Applicant sought a special permit to construct a covered front porch. Approved on 8/30/22.
- #3701: 79 Ronald Road – Applicant sought a special permit to construct an enclosed mudroom and covered front porch. Approved on 7/12/22.
- #3696: 82 Grandview Road – Applicant sought a special permit to construct a covered front porch. Approved on 6/28/22.