



TOWN OF ARLINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING and
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

TOWN HALL, 730 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE
ARLINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02476
TELEPHONE 781-316-3090

MEMORANDUM

To: Zoning Board of Appeals
From: Claire Ricker, Director, Department of Planning and Community Development
Marisa Lau, Senior Planner
Date: 10/25/2022
RE: Docket 3703 – 1-3 Edith St; Special Permit under Zoning Bylaw 8.1.3(B) Nonconforming Single-Family or Two-Family Dwellings

The applicants, John Foster and Spencer Reinke, seek a Special Permit in accordance with Section 8.1.3.B - Nonconforming Single-Family or Two-Family Dwellings of the Zoning Bylaw. The applicants seek to construct a half story addition with a walk-out deck for a two-family home. The proposal would add 653 square feet of living area to the attic. The total square footage of the structure would increase from 3,754 SF to 4,407 SF (+653 SF) under the proposal.

The structure is on a corner lot in the R2 Zoning District and is nonconforming with the Zoning Bylaw's lot size; front and left side yard; and usable open space requirements. The applicant is not increasing the footprint of the existing structure. The addition would not increase any of the nonconformities of the existing structure.

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 R2 zoning district.

Criterion #2: Public Convenience/Welfare

The existing two-family use will not change. This proposal would provide additional living space.

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

Homes in the vicinity of the property are primarily two-family structures, several of which have large dormers in a variety of styles. Covered and enclosed porches on the front and rear of dwellings are prevalent throughout the neighborhood.

Consistent with the Residential Design Guidelines, the addition is compatible with the style of the existing structure and adjacent homes in the neighborhood.¹ While the proposal will increase the structure's massing, the addition is set back from Edith Street and partially shielded by the proposed deck. The applicant is encouraged to explore modern styles and materials for the deck railing that would better complement the contemporary design of the upper story facade. Overall, the 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 B-1 (pg. 26) and C-1 (pg. 36).
<https://www.arlingtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument?id=54518>



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.

Recommendations:

DPCD recommends that the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) requests that the applicant provide proposed floor plans and side elevations for the addition.

Related Dockets:

- #3716: 70-72 Oxford St – Applicant sought a special permit to construct an addition of two shed dormers on a nonconforming lot in the R2 Zoning District. Approved 10/18/2022.
- #3710: 33 Varnum St – Applicant sought a special permit to construct an addition of two shed dormers on a nonconforming lot in the R2 Zoning District. Approved 8/30/2022.
- #3706: 13-15 Adams St – Applicant sought a special permit to construct a dormer addition on a nonconforming lot in the R2 Zoning District. Approved 8/9/2022.
- #3700: 38-40 Newport St – Applicant sought a special permit to construct an addition of two shed dormers on a nonconforming lot in the R2 Zoning District. Approved 7/12/2022.