

EXPLANATORY REMARKS:

Our home was built in 1890 and exists on a very small, oddly-shaped lot (3,084 sq. ft.) giving us few options for expansion. I would guess that it is one of the smallest lots in Newton and our home is rather small compared to most Newton homes. We love being in Newton and wish to remain and continue to grow old here. We have lived here for just over 30 years and raised our two daughters in this home. Now that our daughters are young adults and have begun their lives separate from us, we are in a position to do something with our home to update it and expand it a bit and alleviate some flaws that we have lived with over the years.

The one full bathroom in the house can only be accessed through the master bedroom which as you can imagine is not ideal. In addition, we do not have a dining room. The only room on the first floor that could function as one is an 8-foot wide first-floor addition at the rear of the house that existed when we bought it and is too narrow to use as a dining room. As such, we set up a dining table in our living room when we have guests for a more formal dinner.

Due to the small width of our lot, there is virtually no room for expansion to the sides. I believe that what makes most sense is to remove that one-story addition in the rear and re-build it a little wider, out as far as the existing stairs and landing. The rear door with stairs and landing will be moved around to the side where we will re-design the bulkhead and entrance to the cellar. We would like to construct a second floor above this wider addition. The first floor would become a long-awaited dining room and the floor above would become a master bedroom with a master bath. We could then redesign the second floor to make the existing full bath a common bathroom off a hallway. Expanding that rear wall out only to where the existing stairs are will make a negligible difference in our back yard space.

We would also like to replace the existing concrete front landing with a covered front porch expand the first-floor half-bath into some of that space to add a shower which addresses another goal of this project: to plan for a time when getting upstairs may pose to much of a difficulty. New windows, new siding, new roof and finally landscaping will be included in the upgrade of our home which will serve to enhance the appearance and value of not only our home but those of the immediate neighborhood as well.

In addition to lot size and shape, there are some other issues which add to our difficulty. A utility easement for rear access to the sub-station on Homer Street runs in front of our property parallel and adjacent to Denms Place further constraining our options.

To accomplish the work we would like to do on our home, we are seeking special permits as described in the Zoning Review Memorandum (copy attached) submitted by Jane Santosuosso, Chief Zoning Code Official and Alexandra Ananth, Chief Planner for Current Planning on June 22, 2015 and quoted below:

There is an existing side setback of 2.6 feet on the eastern side lot line, where 3 feet is required per Section 30-15, Table 1. The applicants propose to make a two-story rear addition which will create a side setback of 2.5 feet, which further increases the nonconforming setback. A special permit per Section 30-21(b) is required to further extend the nonconforming side setback.

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The existing open space is 25.7% of the property, where the minimum required by Section 30-15, Table 1 is 50%. The proposed additions will further reduce the nonconforming open space to 24.5%, which requires a special permit per Section 30-21(b) to further extend the nonconforming open space.

The property has a nonconforming FAR of .47, where .46 is the maximum allowed per Section 30-15(u). The proposed additions create an FAR of .59, further increasing the nonconforming FAR. A special permit is required to increase the nonconforming FAR per Sections 30-15(u)(2) and 30-21(b). SR2

In addition to this special permit request, we will also be seeking a variance through the Zoning Board of Appeals for relief regarding rear set back and lot coverage as described in the Zoning Review Memorandum by Jane Santosuosso and Alexandra Ananth, quoted below:

Section 30-15, Table 1 requires a rear setback of 15 feet in the Single Residence 2 district. The existing dwelling meets the rear setback requirement. The applicants propose to remove the existing single-story rear addition, and rebuild it with two stories extending it to a setback of 11.3 feet, encroaching 3.7 feet into the rear setback. A variance is required for a rear setback of 11.3 feet.

The property has an existing lot coverage of 28.3%, where the maximum allowed per Section 30-15, Table 1 is 30%. The proposed additions to the property create a lot coverage of 33.3%, which exceeds the maximum allowed by 3.3%, or approximately 100 square feet. To exceed maximum lot coverage requires a variance.

A variance for these same two issues was applied for and approved in 1995 but was it never exercised and lapsed. (#45-95, copy attached). We have scaled back from that approved 1995 plan which called for expanding the attic space into a third floor thus raising the elevation of the house. Our present plan eliminates building upward and will only involve new windows and cosmetic changes in that attic space. Our new plan accomplishes the same goals by re-designing the first and second floors thus not increasing the height of our house.