



Marc C. Laredo  
Mayor

**City of Newton, Massachusetts**  
Department of Planning and Development  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459  
617-796-1120

Petition: #16-26  
Continued Hearing:  
2/10/26

Katie Whewell  
Acting Director

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**WORKING SESSION MEMORANDUM**

DATE: February 6, 2026

TO: City Council

FROM: Katie Whewell, Acting Director of Planning and Development  
Lara Kritzer, Acting Deputy Director of Planning and Development  
Cat Kemmett, Deputy Chief Planner for Current Planning  
Zach Melcher, Planning Associate for Current Planning

SUBJECT: **Petition #16-26**, for SPECIAL PERMIT/SITE PLAN APPROVAL to exceed floor area ratio (FAR) and to allow three stories within a single-family dwelling at 89 Redwood Road

Materials: <https://newtonma.viewpointcloud.com/records/904907>

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The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the City Council and the public with technical information and planning analysis conducted by the Planning Department. The Planning Department's intention is to provide a balanced review of the proposed project based on information it has at the time of the public hearing. Additional information about the project may be presented at or after the public hearing for consideration at a subsequent working session by the Land Use Committee of the City Council.



**89 Redwood Road**

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I. Project Description

**Background**

The first public hearing for this petition was held on January 6, 2026. The petitioner presented their plans to raze the existing split-level dwelling to construct a new three-story single-family dwelling. Special permit relief was requested to exceed FAR and allow three-stories within a single-family dwelling. The petition was held due to concerns raised by Committee members about the proposed FAR, impact to existing trees, and total impervious surface coverage.

**Project Updates**

The petitioner submitted revised architectural plans dated January 7, 2026 and a site plan last revised January 9, 2026. A revised zoning review memo was issued to reflect these revisions (Attachment A). The overall plan for the site remains largely the same, and as was true in the initial proposal, the project needs relief for FAR and to allow three stories. The proposed FAR in the revised plan shows a decrease from 0.50 to 0.47 through reductions to the deck and basement areas. The height will slightly decrease from 33.78 feet to 33.74 feet. Previously, a new driveway was proposed, resulting in an 898-square-foot increase in impervious surface area, a significant reduction from the previously proposed plan. The petitioner has elected to maintain the existing driveway and curb cut, resulting in an increase of 364 square feet of impervious surface area. This increase falls below the threshold requiring approval by the Engineering Department under the City's Stormwater Ordinance. Additionally, the house layout was revised and the footprint shifted to ensure that existing trees on the property that may have been impacted by the proposed construction will remain intact.

**Analysis**

The Planning analysis from the initial review still stands, noting that the proposed work complies with many applicable zoning requirements, including lot coverage, setbacks, and open space, and the dwelling does not appear to be out of context with the scale and massing of abutting homes in the neighborhood. As such, the FAR and number of stories are unlikely to have a negative impact on the neighborhood. Planning notes that the petitioner made improvements to the proposal by decreasing the FAR, height, and impervious surface area. Additionally, the revised plans minimize impact on existing trees on the property.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Attachment A:** Revised Zoning Review Memorandum  
**Attachment B:** DRAFT Council Order



City of Newton

Department of Planning & Community Development

Marc C. Laredo Mayor

1000 Commonwealth Avenue, Newton, Massachusetts 02459 (617) 796-1120 | newtonma.gov/planning

Katie Whewell Acting Director

ZONING REVIEW MEMORANDUM

Date: January 13, 2026

To: Anthony Ciccariello, Commissioner of Inspectional Services

From: Jane Santosuosso, Chief Zoning Code Official

Cc: 89 Redwood LLC, Applicant
Katie Whewell, Acting Director of Planning and Development
Jonah Temple, Deputy City Solicitor

RE: Request to exceed FAR and to allow three stories

Table with 2 columns and 3 rows: Applicant: 89 Redwood LLC; Site: 89 Redwood Road, SBL: 82015 0077; Zoning: SR2, Lot Area: 12,860 square feet; Current use: Single-family dwelling, Proposed use: No change

BACKGROUND:

The property at 89 Redwood Road consists of a 12,860 square foot lot improved with a single-family dwelling constructed in 1952. The petitioners propose to raze the existing structure to construct a three-story single-family dwelling exceeding the maximum FAR, requiring a special permit.

The following review is based on plans and materials submitted to date as noted below.

- Zoning Review Application, prepared by Stella Drizin, applicant, submitted 10/27/2025
• Existing Conditions Plan of Land, signed and stamped by Christopher C. Charlton, surveyor, dated 10/27/2025
• Zoning Plan, signed and stamped by Christopher C. Charlton, surveyor and Edmond T Spruhan, Engineer, dated 10/15/2025, revised 1/9/2026
• Existing floor plan, submitted 10/27/2025
• Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations, prepared by Owner, dated 01/07/2026
• FAR calculations, signed and stamped by Edmond Spruhan, engineer, submitted 1/9/2026

**ADMINISTRATIVE DETERMINATIONS:**

1. The petitioner proposes to raze the existing split level dwelling and construct a new three-story single-family dwelling. The proposed dwelling presents as 2.5 stories, however the midpoint of the basement is above the average grade, resulting in a three-story structure. Per section 3.1.3, a special permit is required to allow a three-story structure.
2. As mentioned above, where the midpoint of the basement is above the average grade, the basement is considered the first story and counts in its entirety toward the FAR calculation. The proposed construction increases the FAR from .27 to .47 where .35 is the maximum allowed, requiring a special permit per sections 3.1.3 and 3.1.9.

SR2 Zone	Required	Existing	Proposed
Lot Size	10,000 square feet	12,860 square feet	No change
Frontage	80 feet	85 feet	No change
Setbacks			
• Front	25 feet	28.6 feet	31.4 feet
• Side	7.5 feet	21.6 feet	19.4 feet
• Side	7.5 feet	9.2 feet	8 feet
• Rear	15 feet	56.3 feet	41.7 feet
Height	36 feet	22.5 feet	33.74 feet
Stories	2.5		<b>3*</b>
FAR	.35	.27	<b>.47*</b>
Max Lot Coverage	30%	Not provided	20.8%
Min. Open Space	50%	Not provided	70.1%

**BOLD** indicates a nonconformity

\*Relief required

1. See “Zoning Relief Summary” below:

Zoning Relief Required		
<i>Ordinance</i>		<i>Action Required</i>
§3.1.3		
§3.1.9	Request to exceed FAR	S.P. per §7.3.3
§3.1.3	Request to allow three stories	S.P. per §7.3.3

CITY OF NEWTON

IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDERED:

That the City Council, finding that the public convenience and welfare will be substantially served by its action, that the use of the site will be in harmony with the conditions, safeguards and limitations set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, and that said action will be without substantial detriment to the public good, and without substantially derogating from the intent or purpose of the Zoning Ordinance, grants approval of the following **SPECIAL PERMIT/SITE PLAN APPROVAL** to exceed Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and allow three stories in a single-family dwelling as recommended by the Land Use Committee for the reasons given by the Committee, through its Chair, Councilor Andrea Kelley:

1. The site is an appropriate location for the three-story dwelling with a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of .47 because the dwelling is at a scale that blends with the existing neighborhood of single-family homes. (§7.3.3.C.1)
2. The three-story dwelling which exceeds the FAR as developed will not adversely affect the neighborhood as the proposed height is below the maximum allowable height for the zoning district and complies with other applicable dimensional standards in the zoning ordinance including setbacks, lot coverage, and open space. (§7.3.3.C.2)
3. There will be no nuisance or serious hazard to vehicles or pedestrians because the project utilizes the existing curb cut and driveway, which provides adequate sightlines and access for those entering and exiting the site. (§7.3.3.C.3)
4. Access to the site over streets is appropriate for the types and numbers of vehicles involved. (§7.3.3.C.4)
5. The proposed addition, which exceeds the FAR, is not in derogation of the size, scale, and design of other structures in the neighborhood, and is similar in scale to the existing homes in the neighborhood. (§3.1.3, §3.1.9)

PETITION NUMBER: #16-26

PETITIONER: 89 Redwood LLC

LOCATION: 89 Redwood Road, Ward 8, Newton Centre, on land known as Section 82 Block 15 Lot 007, containing approximately 12,860 sq. ft. of land

OWNER: 89 Redwood LLC

ADDRESS OF OWNER: 61 Brookline Street  
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

TO BE USED FOR: Single-family dwelling

RELIEF GRANTED: Special Permit per §7.3.3 to exceed FAR (§3.1.3, §3.1.9) and allow three stories within a single-family dwelling (§3.1.3)

ZONING: Single Residence 2 (SR-2)

Approved, subject to the following conditions:

1. All buildings, parking areas, driveways, walkways, landscaping and other site features associated with this special permit/site plan approval shall be located and constructed consistent with:
  - a. A site plan titled Zoning Plan Layout and Topography, prepared, signed, and stamped by Edmond Spruhan, Professional Engineer, dated January 9, 2026, and stamped by Christopher C. Charlton, Professional Land Surveyor, dated January 9, 2026.
  - b. Architectural Plans by Spruhan Engineering, including:
    - i. Page A3, Front Elevation, Left Side Elevation, prepared, signed, and stamped by Edmond Spruhan, Professional Engineer, dated 1/7/26.
    - ii. Page A4, Rear Elevation, Right Side Elevation, prepared, signed, and stamped by Edmond Spruhan, Professional Engineer, dated 1/7/26.
2. No building permit (other than a demolition permit) and unless otherwise specified shall be issued by the City pursuant to this Special Permit/Site Plan Approval unless all applicable terms and conditions have been complied with and the Petitioner has:
  - a. Recorded a certified copy of this Special Permit/Site Plan Approval at the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds and filed proof of such recording with the City Clerk and submitted a copy with the building permit application.

- b. Obtained a written statement/sign off from the Planning Department that confirms the Building Permit plans are consistent with plans approved in Condition #1 including all dimensional requirements.
3. No certificate of occupancy (temporary or final) shall be issued by the City pursuant to this Special Permit/Site Plan Approval unless all applicable terms and conditions have been complied with and the Petitioner has:
  - a. Filed with the building permit record statements by a registered architect (or professional engineer) and a professional land surveyor (or professional engineer) certifying compliance with Condition #1, including FAR.
  - b. Submitted final as-built survey plans in digital format, stamped and signed by a professional land surveyor or professional engineer, as applicable.