



Setti D. Warren
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
Department of Planning and Development
1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

259-12
Telephone
(617) 796-1120
Telefax
(617) 796-1142
TDD/TTY
(617) 796-1089
www.newtonma.gov

Candace Havens
Director

MEMORANDUM

To: Land Use Committee of the Board of Aldermen

From: Candace Havens, Director of Planning and Development
Eve Tapper, Chief Planner for Current Planning^{ET}
Derek Valentine, Senior Planner

RE: Information for November 8, 2012 Working Session

DATE: November 2, 2012

CC: Petitioners
John Lojek, Commissioner of Inspectional Services

In response to questions raised at the Land Use Committee public hearings, previous working session meetings and/or staff technical reviews, the Planning Department is providing the following information for the upcoming working session. This information is supplemental to staff analysis previously provided at the public hearing.

PETITION #259-12

9 Ripley Street

Construct four attached dwelling units.

This project had a public hearing on October 9, 2012. The proposal is to attach a second dwelling to the existing single-family dwelling and add a separate building with two attached dwelling units for a total of four attached dwelling units. The Planning Department and the Land Use Committee expressed concerns about the degree of encroachment of both parking and buildings within the setbacks bordering residential abutters. The petitioner has responded to these concerns in the following ways:



- **Parking Areas with Respect to Property Lines:** The petitioner was proposing surface parking stalls within 7.2' and 3.2' of the east and west property lines, respectively. Parking stalls are required to be setback 25' from the property lines. The revised plan reorients the parking and eliminates one at-grade visitor space, increasing the setbacks to maintain 7.2' on the easterly property line and increasing the setback to 12.3' on the westerly setback. The guest parking stalls will also be

treated with pavers or other semi-pervious material to break up the mass of the parking area as recommended at the public hearing. The materials will be specified on the forthcoming landscape plan. The Planning Department believes that this flexibility is appropriate, given the narrow shape of the parcel and the petitioner's willingness to maintain and reuse the existing carriage house.

Likewise, the driveways are required to be setback 10' from the property lines. This setback was increased from 5.1' to 10' and is now conforming.

- **Size of the Units:** A number of the concerns were expressed with regard to the bulk of the buildings and the building location with respect to setbacks. The petitioner has worked with the Planning Department to reduce the size of three of the four units, which has decreased the total square footage of the units from 10,191 square feet to 9,141 square feet, a 10% reduction. The floor area ratio (FAR) restrictions do not apply to attached dwelling units, but the petitioner has provided this data for consideration. In the prior iteration, the FAR was proposed at .53, where .44 is allowed by right for single and multi-family structures in this zone. Through reducing the size of the units, the proposed FAR has been reduced to .47.
- **Building Setbacks:** The reduction in the size of the units has allowed the petitioner to increase the setbacks. The proposed front setback has increased from 16.4' to 25.2' and is now conforming. The historic structure is already nonconforming with respect to the easterly property line setback and the new structure will not encroach further than the existing structure. The rear property line setback is already nonconforming and this condition will not change. The westerly property line setback for the new construction portion was proposed at 17' in the prior iteration, but has now been increased to 20.2'. The easterly property line setback was increased to 20.1'. The Planning Department again believes that due to the narrow shape of the lot and the preservation of the existing structure, this flexibility is appropriate.
- **Below-Grade Parking:** The Planning Department had a number of concerns regarding the maneuverability within the proposed garages that have been addressed in the latest plans. All five garage spaces now provide adequate turn around space and safe entry and exit.
- **Landscape Plan:** A landscape plan has been requested and will be provided prior to the working session.
- **Consistency with the 2007 Newton Comprehensive Plan:** In accordance with multiple recommendations in the *2007 Newton Comprehensive Plan*, this proposal will provide housing units, of a variety of sizes, within walking distance to public transportation and a number of amenities within Newton Centre, while preserving an historic structure.