

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

2021 APR 14 PM 10:23:39
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

NOTICE OF DECISION

Case Number:	372
Address:	118 Holworthy Street
Zoning:	Residence B District
Applicant:	118 Holworthy St. Realty, LLC 586 Pleasant St., Unit 1, Watertown, MA 02472
Owner:	118 Holworthy St. Realty, LLC 586 Pleasant St., Unit 1, Watertown, MA 02472
Application Date:	December 11, 2020
Date of Planning Board Public Hearing:	January 26, 2021
Date of Planning Board Decision:	January 26, 2021
Date of Filing Planning Board Decision:	April 14, 2021
Application:	Special Permit for more than one structure containing a principal residential use (Section 5.53.2) and Special Permit for additional window on existing non-conforming building facade (Section 8.22.2.c).
Decision:	GRANTED, with Conditions.

Appeals, if any, shall be made pursuant to Section 17 of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40A, and shall be filed within twenty (20) days after filing of the above referenced decision with the City Clerk. Copies of the complete decision and final plans, if applicable, are on file with the Community Development Department and the City Clerk.

Authorized Representative of the Planning Board: Swaathi Joseph

For further information concerning this decision, please contact Swaathi Joseph at 617-349-4668, or sjoseph@cambridgema.gov.

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED

Application Documents and Supporting Material

1. Special Permit Application submitted on 12/11/2020, containing the Special Permit Cover Sheet, Dimensional Form, Ownership Certificate, Narrative, Community Outreach Summary, plan set titled Special Permit Set 118 Holworthy Street, prepared by Boyes-Watson Architects, dated 9/4/2020.
2. Presentation slides shown to the Planning Board on 1/26/2021.

City of Cambridge Documents

3. Memorandum to the Planning Board from Katherine F. Watkins, City Engineer, Department of Public Works (DPW), dated 1/19/2021.
4. Memorandum to the Planning Board from Community Development Department staff, dated 1/20/2021.

Other Documents

5. Email communication to the Planning Board from Mary A Jennings, dated 1/22/2021.
6. Email communication to the Planning Board from Carol Lynn Alpert, dated 1/25/2021.
7. Email communication to the Planning Board from Carol Lynn Alpert, dated 2/1/2021.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The Applicant proposes to renovate the existing building and to build a new detached single-family dwelling behind the existing building with required off-street parking on the site. The proposed house in the rear would be more than seventy-five (75) feet from Holworthy Street. The base zoning is Residence B and the parcel is located in the Strawberry Hill neighborhood. The requested special permits are discussed in detail in the Findings below.

FINDINGS

After review of the Application Documents and other documents submitted to the Planning Board, testimony given at the public hearing, and review and consideration of the applicable requirements and criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance with regard to the relief being sought, the Planning Board makes the following Findings:

1. Special Permit for more than one structure containing a principal residential use (Section 5.53.2)

Because the proposal includes two principal residential structures on the lot, and one of those structures is more than seventy-five (75) feet from the abutting street line of Holworthy Street, the following provisions of the zoning ordinance apply.

In Residence B districts more than one structure containing a principal residential use is allowed on a lot by special permit from the Planning Board provided the Board finds:
5.53.2

- (a) *that development in the form of two or more structures on the lot will not significantly increase or may reduce the impact of the new construction should it occur in a single structure; or*
- (b) *That two or more structures may provide identifiable benefits beyond that provided should all construction be in a single structure. In making its findings the Board shall consider the impact of the new construction on the following:*
 - (1) *the extent to which the preservation of a large contiguous open space in the rear of the lot or series of adjacent lots is achieved through the provision of a rear yard setback significantly greater than that required and through the dedication of that rear yard as Green Area, as defined in this Ordinance,*
 - (2) *incentives for the location of buildings and parking facilities in the front half of a lot in a pattern compatible with the development pattern prevailing in the neighborhood,*
 - (3) *the extent to which two or more structures provides an enhanced living environment for residents on the lot,*
 - (4) *incentives to retain existing structures on a lot, particularly any structure determined to be a Preferably Preserved Significant structure by the Cambridge Historical Commission,*
 - (5) *the opportunities presented to reduce the visual impact of parking from the public street and from adjacent lots,*

(6) The increased opportunities to reduce the height and bulk as new construction is deeper into a lot or closer to structures on abutting lots.

The proposed project will provide a separate private open space for each residence and will not enlarge or extend an existing nonconforming structure. The proposed rear structure will meet all required yard (setback) requirements. With the preservation of the existing structure, the streetscape view is not substantially altered. The proposed detached residences will be more modest in scale with smaller building footprints and a less massive built form than would otherwise be accomplished with an attached two-family structure that could be built as-of-right. For these reasons, the Board finds that development in the form of two structures will not significantly increase the impact of new construction, and therefore the proposal meets the criteria set forth in Section 5.53 Paragraph (a).

2. Special Permit for additional window on existing non-conforming building facade (Section 8.22.2)

8.22.2 The following changes, extensions, or alterations of a pre-existing nonconforming structure or use may be granted in the following cases after the issuance of a special permit. Such a permit shall be granted only if the permit granting authority specified below finds that such change, extension, or alteration will not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing nonconforming use.

c. In a Residence District the Board of Zoning Appeal may grant a special permit for the alteration or enlargement of a nonconforming structure, not otherwise permitted in Section 8.22.1 above, but not the alteration or enlargement of a nonconforming use, provided any enlargement or alteration of such nonconforming structure is not further in violation of the dimensional requirements of Article 5.000 or the off street parking and loading requirements in Article 6.000 for the district in which such structure is located and provided such nonconforming structure will not be increased in area or volume by more than twenty-five (25) percent since it first began to be nonconforming.

While the use of the existing single-family dwelling is a conforming use in the district, the existing building does not have the minimum side setback of 7.5 feet on the northern side, making it a nonconforming structure. The proposed addition and inclusion of a window opening on the nonconforming side of the building would comply with all dimensional requirements and would not enlarge or extend any existing non-conforming aspect of the building. Further, the proposed addition located in the rear side of the existing building would not be clearly visible from the street line. For these reasons, the Board finds that the proposed extension will not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing dimensional non-conformity.

The Planning Board is authorized to issue this special permit pursuant to Section 10.45 of the Zoning Ordinance.

3. General Criteria for Issuance of a Special Permit (Section 10.43)

The Planning Board finds that the project meets the General Criteria for Issuance of a Special Permit, as set forth below.

10.43 Criteria. Special permits will normally be granted where specific provisions of this Ordinance are met, except when particulars of the location or use, not generally true of the district or of the uses permitted in it, would cause granting of such permit to be to the detriment of the public interest because:

(a) It appears that requirements of this Ordinance cannot or will not be met, or ...

Upon granting of the requested special permits, it appears that the requirements of the Ordinance will be met.

(b) traffic generated or patterns of access or egress would cause congestion, hazard, or substantial change in established neighborhood character, or ...

The proposed construction of one new dwelling and modest enlargement to an existing dwelling, to include a total of two off-street parking spaces, is not anticipated to cause particular congestion or hazard or substantial change in the neighborhood character. With continuing design review and approval of the proposed driveway design, the pattern of ingress and egress from the site will not create hazard.

(c) the continued operation of or the development of adjacent uses as permitted in the Zoning Ordinance would be adversely affected by the nature of the proposed use, or ...

The proposed residential use complies with allowed uses in this district, and hence will not adversely affect adjacent uses that exist or are anticipated in the future.

(d) nuisance or hazard would be created to the detriment of the health, safety and/or welfare of the occupant of the proposed use or the citizens of the City, or ...

The proposed uses will not create nuisance or hazard, and all development activity will adhere to applicable health and safety regulations.

(e) for other reasons, the proposed use would impair the integrity of the district or adjoining district, or otherwise derogate from the intent and purpose of this Ordinance, and ...

The proposed infill residential use and increase in housing units are encouraged by City plans for the area and the Zoning Ordinance. The neighborhood generally consists of single-family and two-family dwellings, and the proposed development of two detached single-family dwellings would fit the existing pattern of development.

(f) the new use or building construction is inconsistent with the Urban Design Objectives set forth in Section 19.30.

The proposal is not inconsistent with the citywide urban design objectives. The urban design objectives are supported in the proposal with the expansion of the inventory of housing, improved streetscape appearance, compatibility with historic patterns of development, minimal environmental impacts on abutters, and minimal impact on City infrastructure.


DECISION

Based on a review of the Application Documents, testimony given at the public hearing, and the above Findings, the Planning Board hereby GRANTS the requested Special Permits subject to the following conditions and limitations. Hereinafter, for purposes of this Decision, the Permittee shall mean the Applicant for the requested Special Permits and any successor or successors in interest.

1. All use, building construction, and site plan development shall be in substantial conformance with the Application Documents and other supporting materials submitted to the Planning Board, and the additional Conditions of this Special Permit Decision. The project plans hereby approved by the Planning Board specifically include all revisions and modifications in the revised plan set titled Special Permit Set 118 Holworthy Street, prepared by Boyes-Watson Architects, dated 9/4/2020. Appendix I summarizes the dimensional features of the project as approved.
2. The project shall be subject to continuing design review by the Community Development Department (CDD). Before issuance of each Building Permit for the project, CDD shall certify to the Superintendent of Buildings that the final plans submitted to secure the Building Permit are consistent with and meet all conditions of this Decision. As part of CDD's administrative review of the project, and prior to any certification to the Superintendent of Buildings, CDD may present any design changes made subsequent to this Decision to the Planning Board for its review and comment.
3. The Permittee shall address the following comments through the continuing design review process set forth above. Each of the below items shall be subject to CDD review and approval of the final design details prior to issuance of a Building Permit:
 - a. CDD shall review and approve the selection of paving materials and landscaping to minimize the visual impact of the driveway and parking area and reduce the amount of impervious surface on the lot.
 - b. CDD shall review and approve landscape details, including proposed plantings and treatment of the space between the two dwellings.
 - c. The Traffic, Parking & Transportation Department shall review and approve the design of the proposed driveway to ensure that vehicles can safely turn around within the driveway area. Relocation or elimination of the enclosed parking garage shall be permitted if it results in improved vehicle maneuverability while minimizing impervious area.
 - d. The Permittee shall consult with residents of adjacent properties to receive feedback on the proposed landscaping and color of the proposed structures, and shall provide a report on the outcome of such consultations to CDD staff.
4. All authorized development shall abide by all applicable City of Cambridge Ordinances, including the Noise Ordinance (Chapter 8.16 of the City Municipal Code).

Voting in the affirmative to approve the Development Proposal were Planning Board Members Louis Bacci, Jr., Catherine Preston Connolly, H Theodore Cohen, Steven Cohen, Mary Flynn, Hugh Russell, and Associate Member Corinne Espinoza, appointed by the Chair to act on the case, constituting at least two thirds of the members of the Board, necessary to grant a special permit.

For the Planning Board,



Representative to the Planning Board, authorized by Catherine Preston Connolly, Chair.

A copy of this decision PB #372 shall be filed with the Office of the City Clerk. Appeals, if any, shall be made pursuant to Section 17, Chapter 40A, Massachusetts General Laws, and shall be filed within twenty (20) days after the date of such filing in the Office of the City Clerk.

ATTEST: A true and correct copy of the above decision has been filed on April 14, 2021 with the Office of the City Clerk, by Swaathi Joseph, duly authorized representative of the Planning Board. All plans referred to in the decision have been filed with the City Clerk on said date.

Twenty days have elapsed since the above decision was filed in the office of the City Clerk and:
_____ no appeal has been filed; or

_____ an appeal has been filed within such twenty days.

The person exercising rights under a duly appealed special permit does so at risk that a court will reverse the permit and that any construction performed under the permit may be ordered undone. This certification shall in no event terminate or shorten the tolling, during the pendency of any appeals, of the periods provided under the second paragraph of G.L. c. 40A, §6.

Date: _____, City Clerk

Appeal has been dismissed or denied.

Date: _____, City Clerk

Appendix I: Approved Dimensional Chart

	Existing	Allowed or Required	Proposed	Permitted
Lot Area (sq ft)	8,864	5,000	No Change	No Change
Lot Width (ft)	50	50	No Change	No Change
Total GFA (sq ft)	1,589	3,852	3,850	3,850
Residential Base	1,589	3,852	3,850	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Non-Residential Base	0	0	0	
Inclusionary Bonus	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Total FAR	0.18	0.43	0.43	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Residential Base	0.18	0.43	0.43	
Non-Residential Base	0	0	0	
Inclusionary Bonus	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Total Dwelling Units	1	2	2	2
Base Units	1	2	2	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Inclusionary Bonus Units	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Base Lot Area / Unit (sq ft)	8,864	2,500	4432	
Total Lot Area / Unit (sq ft)	8,864	2,500	4432	
Height (ft)	22.7	35	28	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Front Setbacks (ft)	18.9	15	98	
Side Setback (ft)	2.9; 24.4	7.5 (sum 20)	7.6; 13.7	
Rear Setback (ft)	106.7	35	35.2	
Open Space (% of Lot Area)	76	40	59	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Private Open Space	64	20	31	
Permeable Open Space	72	20	49	
Off-Street Parking Spaces	1	2	2	2
Long-Term Bicycle Parking	0	0	0	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Short-Term Bicycle Parking	0	0	0	
Loading Bays	0	0	0	

There are no changes to the existing building with regard to height and all setbacks.