



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Community Development Department

To: Planning Board

From: CDD Staff

Date: February 22, 2023

Re: Special Permit **PB-393, 23 Reed Street** (continued from 12/13/2022)

Overview

Submission Type: Special Permit Application

Applicant: Marcelo Tagore Hernandez

Zoning District(s): Residence B

Proposal Summary: Construct a single-family residence greater than 75 feet from the front line and to the rear of an existing single-family residence. The existing nonconforming single-family structure will be renovated.

Special Permits Requested: Special Permit for more than one structure containing a principal residential use (Section 5.53.2)

Other City Permits Needed: Received BZA special permit for altering the existing nonconforming structure

Planning Board Action: Grant or deny requested special permits.

Memo Contents: CDD Zoning Report & Urban Design Report

Other Staff Reports: None

IRAM FAROOQ
Assistant City Manager for
Community Development

SANDRA CLARKE
Deputy Director
Chief of Administration

KHALIL MOGASSABI
Deputy Director
Chief of Planning

Zoning Section	Required Planning Board Findings <i>(Summary - see appendix for zoning text excerpts)</i>
Special Permit for more than one structure containing a principal residential use (Section 5.53.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of two structures on the lot will not significantly increase the impact of the new construction should it occur in a single structure, <u>OR</u> • The development of two structures will provide identifiable benefits beyond that provided by construction in a single structure, considering the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Extent to which preservation of a large contiguous open space in the rear of the lot or series of adjacent lots is achieved ○ Incentives to locate buildings and parking in the front half of a lot per the prevailing development pattern in the neighborhood ○ Providing an enhanced living environment for residents on the lot ○ Incentives to retain existing structures, particularly structures that are preferably preserved ○ Opportunities to reduce visual impact of parking from the public street and adjacent lots ○ Opportunities to reduce height and bulk of new construction is deeper into a lot or closer to structures on abutting lots • Conforms to general criteria for issuance of a special permit.
General Special Permit Criteria (Section 10.43)	Special permits will be normally granted if the zoning requirements are met, unless it is found not to be in the public interest due to one of the criteria enumerated in Section 10.43: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) It appears that requirements of this Ordinance cannot or will not be met, or (b) traffic generated or patterns of access or egress would cause congestion, hazard, or substantial change in established neighborhood character, or (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

Zoning Section	Required Planning Board Findings <i>(Summary - see appendix for zoning text excerpts)</i>
	(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 (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 (f) the new use or building construction is inconsistent with the Urban Design Objectives set forth in Section 19.30.

Revised Proposal

Overview

On December 13, 2022, the Planning Board held a public hearing on an application by Group Design Build to construct a new principal dwelling in the rear yard of 23 Reed Street. The proposed dwelling would be located more than seventy-five feet (75') from the street line in a Residence B zoning district, which requires a special permit from the Planning Board pursuant to Section 5.53 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Following a presentation from the Applicant, testimony from the public, and reviewing materials from staff, the Planning Board voted to continue the public hearing to a future date, with requests that the Applicant further explore the following site design elements:

- Opportunities for reducing the size/layout of the off-street parking area and reclaiming some pervious area on the site;
- Preservation of the 3 existing, mature trees along the southern property line in proximity to the new proposed dwelling;
- Ability to consolidate the proposed trash and recycling area into a single area to be shared between the two structures;
- Opportunity to relocate the proposed solar array so that it would not be impacted by the existing mature trees along the southern property line.

Zoning Comments

Key Revisions

The Applicant has submitted revised plans and an updated narrative which addresses the Board's previous comments, as follows:

Tree Preservation – The new plans illustrate that all trees along the southern property line will be preserved and appropriately pruned. The Applicant states that efforts will be made to also protect any root impacts during construction.

Parking & Pervious Surface – The Applicant has redesigned the parking area and curb cut which reduces the number of proposed parking spaces from four to two and increases the amount of permeable area by approximately 500 square feet.

Solar Array – The Applicant is leaving the solar array in its original location on the new proposed dwelling, but noted in the Application that the existing trees to be preserved will be pruned so the solar array will be productive.

Trash & Recycling Area – The trash area has been consolidated to a single area along the existing dwelling and away from the neighboring property line.

These design updates do not result in zoning changes which require additional relief or new special permits from the Planning Board. Additional comments on the specific design changes are provided in the associated staff memo from Urban Design.

As noted in the previous zoning memo on this case, if the Board decides to grant the special permit, the following list summarizes the general categories of conditions recommended for this development based on the requested special permits:

1. **Approved Development:** Authorized development would need to conform with the submitted application materials. An Approved Dimensional Form would be attached as an Appendix.
2. **Continuing Design Review:** CDD staff would review and approve design details at the construction documents phase, prior to issuance of a building permit, to certify that the plans conform to the Planning Board's approval. Board members may cite specific areas of focus for detailed review, based on the Urban Design Report and Board discussion.
3. **Non-Zoning Requirements:** The development would need to comply with all other applicable City Ordinances, such as the Noise Ordinance and Tree Protection Ordinance.

Continuing Review

The following are additional recommendations for ongoing design review by staff if the Board decides to grant the special permit:

- All landscape details, including proposed plantings, hardscape materials, fences, exterior lighting, etc.
- Design details, materials, and colors.
- Any necessary acoustic screening of air conditioning condensers.