



City of Cambridge

O-3
IN CITY COUNCIL
April 4, 2016

COUNCILLOR KELLEY
VICE MAYOR MCGOVERN

- WHEREAS: Flat roofs and associated central drains on residential three story homes can lead to more storm water entering Cambridge's sanitary sewer; and
- WHEREAS: These flat roofs may be on homes that have been insulated or otherwise improved for energy efficiency with the result that snow and/or ice during the winter may build up amounts unanticipated by the original building designers; and
- WHEREAS: Climate change appears to be bringing more episodes of heavy snow and rainfall during winter months, as experienced during the winter of 2014-2015, and with clogged drains this results in more buildup of snow, ice, and water on flat roofs than may be safe, especially with an energy-efficient building; and
- WHEREAS: Retrofitting flat roofs on residential three story houses would alleviate snow, ice, and water buildup safety concerns and would decrease the amount of storm water going into Cambridge's sanitary sewer system; and
- WHEREAS: The expensive alteration of putting a pitched roof on a flat roof could be offset by the added value of increasing interior space in the existing home and possible improving other options for room use; and
- WHEREAS: The extra height and living space created as a result of installing a pitched roof may negatively impact neighbors; and
- WHEREAS: The Special Permit process used for other challenging zoning situations may be appropriate in this case; now therefore be it
- ORDERED: That the City Council refer to the Ordinance Committee and the Planning Board, for hearing and report, the following changes to the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance in Article 5.000 as follows:

Section 5.55: Special Provisions for Rainwater Separation in Residential Buildings

In an effort to further the City's storm-water management, modifications to the applicable dimensional requirements of this Article 5.000, in particular regarding FAR and height limitations, may be authorized by Special Permit from the Board of Zoning Appeal for eliminating rain-water from sewer lines

- On residential buildings with a flat (concave) roof, on which a drain pipe collects water from the roof and combines it with household waste-water, discharging into a single outflow pipe to the municipal sewer line
- Provided that the resulting construction authorized by the Special Permit entirely eliminate rain water entry from the concerned roof into said sewer line
- And that said rain water is either recycled or led down to the ground to follow its natural path

A Special Permit may allow the construction of a partial additional level within the following limitations

- Additional height not to exceed 10ft. above the existing roof line of the building
- Footprint to be no closer than 3ft. from either long edge or rear side of the building, and no less than 6 feet from front/street-side of building
- Side walls shall be mostly translucent above 4 feet from existing roof
- Additional FAR not to exceed 20% of the existing FAR of the building
- This addition may not become an independent or separate dwelling from the floor below the roof

Furthermore, in enhancing sustainable development and alternative energy sources (Article 22), additional positive consideration will be given to “sensibly green” projects that improve the (a) use of passive solar heating, convective cooling, seasonal shading with natural plants, (b) harvesting and/or using rainwater at the roof level or floors below, (c) planting flowering bushes and vegetation attractive to pollinating insects at the roof level, (d) maximizing the use of natural light, and (e) harmonization of the new roof profile with surrounding buildings.

In City Council April 4, 2016.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of eight members.

Attest:- Donna P. Lopez, City Clerk

A true copy;

ATTEST:-



Donna P. Lopez, City Clerk

REFERRED TO THE ORDINANCE COMMITTEE AND PLANNING BOARD FOR HEARING AND REPORT.