



# *Town of Brookline*

## *Massachusetts*

### **PLANNING BOARD**

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To: Brookline Board of Appeals  
From: Brookline Planning Board  
Date: June 6, 2019 (continued)  
Subject: Add rear dormer and convert from two-family dwelling to four units  
Location: **15 Lanark Road**

Atlas Sheet: 108	Case #: 2018-0084
Block: 19	Zoning: M-1.0
Lot: 01	Lot Area (s.f.): 6,100

Board of Appeals Hearing: **July 11, 2019 at 7:00 pm**

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### **BACKGROUND**

The ZBA met on June 6, 2019 and concluded that because the applicant had not reached out to the trustees at the Englewood Road condos with which his property has a reciprocal easement agreement, the ZBA continued the hearing to July 11, 2019 at 7 pm. The ZBA wants staff to confirm that owners of the condo units received notice for the June 6 hearing [they did]. Although not required for a hearing that is continued, staff sent out notices again to all property owners within a 300 foot radius. The Assessor's Department certified the abutters list once again June 18, 2019. Although it is a civil matter, the ZBA would encourage the applicant and the trustees to have a mutual plan for removing snow that would not make more narrow the passageway on which each has an easement for vehicular passage. (MM)

### **SITE AND NEIGHBORHOOD**

15 Lanark Road is a two-family dwelling built in 1900. The property sits on the Brighton border between Englewood Avenue and Kilsyth Road. The site currently has four tandem parking spaces

located outside of a stone retaining wall to the right side of the house and accessed by a common driveway that leads to a large multi-unit apartment complex that abuts this lot. Another large home also sits to the rear of the house and to the left is the Chilean Consulate in Brighton. The neighborhood consists of dense apartment buildings and multi-family homes and is located close to Cleveland Circle.

### **APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL**

The applicant, 15 Lanark Road LLC, proposes to add a rear dormer addition to this two-family dwelling and convert it into a four-unit building. The basement will also be finished in order to allow for the conversion and a small addition will be added on the left side. The number of parking spaces on site will be increased to seven by rearranging the four tandem spaces to five 90 degree spaces and adding two new tandem spaces.

The proposed dormer is to be added to the rear roof at the fourth ("loft") level in order to create habitable space at this floor for two bedrooms and two bathrooms. The shed dormer will be about 41 feet in length and will be clad in siding to match the existing home in material and color. A small three-story addition at the rear of the structure will add living space on each of the first three floors.

The newly-configured structure will have a one-bedroom unit in the lower level, a two-bedroom unit on the first level, a two-bedroom unit on the second level and a four-bedroom unit occupying the third and fourth floors. The structure's gross floor area will increase overall from .77 to 1.0 which is allowed in this district.

In response to the Planning Board's initial feedback, the applicant has reconfigured the parking area with now 6 spaces in a row and a 7<sup>th</sup> tandem space. They also added a retaining wall at the parking and added a path and steps at the rear. The dormer size was also reduced by 2 feet on the sides and 8" in the center.

### **FINDINGS**

#### **Section 5.05 – Conversions**

In the case of a conversion ... in an F or M district, the structure shall conform to all dimensional requirements specified in 5.01. However, the Board of Appeals may waive by special permit any of said dimensional requirements, provided that no previously existing nonconformity to such requirements is increased and provided that all other requirements are met.

#### **Section 5.09.2.d – Design Review**

Exterior alterations associated with multiple dwellings with four or more units on the premises require a **special permit** subject to design review standards listed under **Section 5.09.4 (a-m)**. The most relevant design review sections are described below:

- c. **Relation of Buildings to the Form of the Streetscape and Neighborhood** – The only proposed changes to the structure are the rear shed dormer and a small three-story addition at the left side. These changes will not have a significant impact on the relationship of the building to the neighborhood which consists of dense, multi-unit buildings.

- e. Circulation – The total of four units in the building require seven parking spaces. The applicant proposes to rearrange four existing tandem spaces into five 90 degree spaces and carve out two additional tandem spaces in existing green space.

**Section 5.43 – Exceptions to Yard and Setback Requirements**

**Section 5.60 – Side Yard Requirements**

**Section 5.70 – Rear Yard Requirements**

<b>M-1.0</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Relief</b>
<b>Side Yard Setback (Left)</b>	10 + L/10 = ~ 13 feet	8.7 feet	8.7 feet	<b>Special Permit*</b>
<b>Rear Yard Setback</b>	30 feet	12.3 feet	12.3 feet	<b>Special Permit*</b>

*\* Under Section 5.43, the Board of Appeals may waive yard and/or setback requirements by special permit if counterbalancing amenity is provided.*

**Section 8.02.2 – Alteration or Extension**

A special permit is required for alterations to a non-conforming structure.

**STAFF ANALYSIS**

The staff is supportive of the proposed changes to the structure. In this M-1.0 zoning district, the conversion of this two-family house to four-units through renovation of the basement and addition of a dormer seems reasonable, particularly due to the dwelling’s location directly abutting an apartment complex and parking area. The FAR is at the maximum allowed and no non-conforming setbacks will be increased.

The staff believes the applicant has made a concerted effort to improve the parking arrangement and the landscaping at the side and rear. The dormer was also reduced in response to Planning Board feedback.

**PLANNING BOARD COMMENTS**

After two meetings, the Planning Board felt that the site changes made to the grading and parking areas were an improvement. The Board did express significant concern about the basement unit and its ceiling heights and whether these meet building code for habitable space. The Board added a condition that the ceiling heights be verified by the Building Department. The Board also felt the new dormer at the rear could use some design improvements but that ultimately it was not highly visible to the public.

**Therefore, Planning Board recommends approval of the site plan by A. Matthew Belski, Jr., dated 9/21/2018 and floor plans and elevations by Michael Kim Associates, dated 3/19/2019, subject to the following conditions:**

1. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the Applicant shall submit a final site plan, dimensioned floor plans, and elevations, subject to review and approval by the Assistant Director for Regulatory Planning.
2. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit a verified ceiling height for the basement and attic for verification by the Building Commissioner to ensure compliance with applicable building code regulations.
3. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit a final landscaping plan including all counterbalancing amenities, subject to review and Approval by the Assistant Director for Regulatory Planning.
4. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit to the Building Commissioner for review and approval for conformance to the Board of Appeals decision: 1) a final site plan, stamped and signed by a registered engineer or land surveyor, 2) final floor plans and elevations, stamped and signed by a registered architect, and 3) evidence that the Board of Appeals decision has been recorded at the registry of Deeds.





