



Town of Brookline

Massachusetts

PLANNING BOARD

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To: Brookline Zoning Board of Appeals

From: Brookline Planning Board

Date: July 31, 2019

Subject: Renovate school building into four dwelling units, demolish free-standing garage, and construct a small rear addition.

Location: 1762 Beacon Street

Atlas Sheet:	22B	Case #:	2019-0040
Block:	102	Zoning:	M-2.5 (CAM)
Lot:	25	Lot Area (s.f.):	5,193

Board of Appeals Hearing: August 8, 2019 at 7:00 pm

DEMOLITION/PRESERVATION

At a Public Hearing on May 22, 2019, the Preservation Commission voted to uphold the initial determination of significance made by staff for the buildings at 1762 Beacon Street. An 18-month stay of (partial) demolition was imposed. The applicant has sought a lift of the stay of demolition based on submitted plans. At their meeting on July 9, 2019, the Commission voted to continue the request to a subcommittee. The subcommittee will only meet to discuss the design once the project has gone through review with the Planning Board.

SITE AND NEIGHBORHOOD

1762 Beacon Street is a 2.5-story Colonial Revival style attached townhouse that was built in 1890. The detached garage at the rear of the property was built in 1931. The property is located on Beacon Street at the approximate midpoint between the Chestnut Hill Reservoir and Washington Square. The neighborhood consists predominantly of attached townhouses and brick apartment buildings, making this structure a quintessential example for the area. The current educational use is a Workmen's Circle school. The Workmen's Circle organization is an organization that provides a community for secular Jewish life primarily through the fostering

of arts and education, but also through local advocacy for progressive Jewish values and social change.

APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

The owner, 1762 BS LLC, is proposing to renovate the interior of the building to change its use from a school to a four-unit dwelling. As part of the proposed renovations, the owner is also proposing to replace the existing detached garage with 4 open-air parking spaces in the rear and construct a 958 SF addition on the rear-left portion of the building that would add square footage on all 4 floors.

FINDINGS

Section 6.02.1: Table of Off-Street Parking Space Requirements

Section 6.02.2.f: Parking Space Requirements for Visitors and Tradespeople

Number of Spaces Per Dwelling Unit	Required	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Zoning District With 2.5 FAR Requirement	8 (2 per dwelling unit)	2	4	Special Permit

Section 6.01.2.a allows the Zoning Board of Appeals to waive by Special Permit up to 50% of the required parking for structures in F, M, L, or G districts that are being converted to residential uses.

Per Section 6.02.2.i, any residential uses on a lot within the Transit Parking Overlay District must provide 2 spaces per dwelling unit with 3 or more bedrooms. This property is within that Overlay District.

Therefore, the required parking is 8 spaces, and the ZBA may reduce the requirement to 4 spaces by granting a Special Permit.

Section 5.09.2.a: Design Review

The property is located on Beacon Street, and therefore any structure or outdoor use requires Design Review. Below are the relevant standards and criteria:

- Preservation of Trees and Landscape
- Relation of Buildings to Environment
- Open Space
- Circulation
- Stormwater Drainage
- Utility Service
- Heritage

The proposed addition generally maintains the existing footprint of the building so no significant changes to the landscape are proposed with the exception of the removal of a tree in the rear yard. Removal of the tree is necessary to provide a fire escape and to allow sufficient maneuvering space for residents' vehicles. The landscape is therefore preserved as much as is practicable. The renovations and the addition to the building will not significantly alter its design so the structure, which is currently consistent with the character of the neighborhood, will remain so. The proposed use and building will have minimal impact on abutters or the

public way, being consistent with surrounding uses. The Planning Department sees no other concerns related to circulation, utilities, stormwater, or heritage. The design standards of §5.09.4 are satisfied.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

The Planning Department is supportive of this proposal. The modifications to the structure are reasonable and minimal, retaining the integrity of a historically valuable building. The change of use is appropriate given the zoning and predominant uses of the surrounding neighborhood. The reduced parking requested by Special Permit amounts to 1 parking space per dwelling unit, which is also reasonable given the proximity of the Dean Rd Green Line Stop (<1 min walk). The proposal will minimally impact abutters and the public way and it satisfies all of the criteria and standards for Design Review.

PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Board is supportive of this proposal. The Board believes the project is very reasonable and consistent with the surroundings. Several Board members noted that the project shows restraint, remaining well below some of the Bylaw's density allowances and that the proposed renovations are well-designed. The Board raised very minor concerns about the attempt to replicate historic windows and the limited space for parking maneuvers, but otherwise expressed full support.

Therefore, the Planning Board recommends approval of the site plan and architectural plans by Sousa Design Architects, dated 7/25/19, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit a final site plan, floor plans and elevations subject to the review and approval of the Assistant Director of Regulatory Planning.**
- 2. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit a final landscaping plan subject to the review and approval of the Assistant Director of Regulatory Planning.**
- 3. 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; and 2) evidence that the Board of Appeals decision has been recorded at the Registry of Deeds.**

vp

Subject Site



Aerial Photograph - Neighborhood Context

