



CITY OF GLOUCESTER
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
3 POND ROAD, GLOUCESTER MA 01930

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Meeting Minutes

7:00 P.M., October 12, 2017

Kyrouz Auditorium, City Hall

Board Members Present: Francis S. Wright, Chairman
David B. Gardner, Vice Chairman
Michael C. Nimon
Joseph Parisi, III
Sage Wolcott
Alternates: Kris Howard
Adria Reimer-Nicholosi

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Previous meeting minutes of September 28, 2017 submitted for review. Mr. Parisi motioned to accept the minutes as written and Mr. Howard seconded the motion.

Old Business: ZBA Rules of Procedure continued to meeting of October 26, 2017

Continued Business:

742 Washington Street:

Mr. Wright recuses himself. Attorney Deborah Eliason presents with the applicants. She presented to the board photographs for review. Architect Robert Gulla is also present. This property, recently purchased by the applicant, is not habitable year round and the owners would like to live there year round. This home is not structurally sound. The home is on badly deteriorated pilings and, therefore, they would like to raze the structure and build a new one. They will stay within the existing footprint of the house, expanding off the back. No new setback encroachments, they will reduce the encroachment by pulling back from an abutter in deference to neighbors. It cannot be moved further away from 740-R due to the step-system location. Relief requested is a 2-foot increase in height due to FEMA requirements. The lot is narrow and steep and this is the only place the house could go due to the unusual topography. The front and rear yard setbacks are 20 feet and the property meets both now and will with the proposed building. Side setback is 10-feet on the right and the existing and proposed meet that requirement. On the left, the existing setback is 0.1 foot. It will remain at that for the portion built over the footprint of the existing house. The back footprint will move to a setback of 4.6 feet and that will give approximately 5 feet of distance from the lot line and the back portion of the building.

The height of the house will be 32 feet to meet FEMA elevation requirements.

Robert Gulla, Architect for the project stepped forward, reviewed the proposed project, and spoke to the issue of the height. To add square footage the second story was set “back” so it does not sit over the water. Mr. Gardner asked if the sole reason they are going up in height is due to the FEMA rules and, if so, what the elevation requirements are. As standing, the home is at elevation 8 and it needs to be at elevation 13.

No one spoke in favor of the application.

Speaking in opposition:

Diane Pappas, owner of 740/740R Washington Street, direct abutters. They feel that the project is much too big and too close to their house. It will affect rentals and possible resale. It will impair the view of 740 Washington Street as well. Photographs provided to the board for review.

Shelley & Richard Vassallo, potential buyers of 740 Washington Street, in addition to concerns regarding the height of the new structure which will block her views, she indicated there is a plan to add a third parking spot along an area that is a public way to the footbridge; there is no space for that in such a small, tight area.

Attorney Eliason commented that after reviewing the photos the views do not appear to be blocked. The architect could go in and try to flatten the roof however, in New England that is not a prudent choice due to snow load.

Mr. Gulla indicated even with redesign, the views are minimally blocked; there is vegetation in the direction of the photos provided. Moving the structure back would not change this. The view would remain blocked whether they chose to go to the 30 foot height allowance instead of asking for the special permit to go to 32 feet.

Mr. Gardner suggested continuing the meeting so members can revisit the site and go to both properties impacted by this application. Mr. Nimon motioned to continue and Mr. Gardner seconded the motion.

Against, Mr. Parisi - all others in favor.

Continued to October 26, 2017

New Business:

1082 Washington Street:

Mr. Wright recuses himself. The owner, William Rochford presents this evening; Architect Richard Bernstein and Builder Domenic Curreri are also present.

Mr. Bernstein presented the board with photographs of the structure as it stands; he has worked with the applicant on several projects in the past that have become tastefully restored homes. What they are requesting is minimal and is an effort to afford the occupants with more interior space as well as light and cross ventilation. There are no dormers at this time. The dormers would be approx. 4 feet above the existing roofline. There is no change to the existing footprint of the structure. The existing lines of the roof are maintained with the dormers being set into the roof and are not designed to go out to the front of the gable, they are set back from the edge of the roof. The interior of the structure is not

expanding; these are half windows, which will create more light in the rooms. He has spoken with neighbors and answered many questions including if there would be an impact to any views.

No one spoke in favor of the application.

Speaking in opposition:

Laura Lins & John Brennan, 1093 Washington Street, has a concern of view blockage. She indicated she believes she will lose 25% of her view with this project approval. Mr. Sanborn produced the plans and asked her to point out in what direction her view would be obstructed. Their view is only from the second floor through the alley between this building and the structure beside it. Mr. Sanborn explained to Ms. Lins how far the dormer would project with this plan and how far, by law, they would be allowed to extend it.

Alexandra Turner & John Bowman, 1084 Washington Street, direct abutters. Voiced concerns that the deck may expand later becoming enclosed, larger or more. Ms. Turner asked if the board should approve the decision, could it contain a restriction. She also asked about parking and Mr. Rochford explained the reconfiguration of the parking to satisfy and accommodate all that use the easement. It will relieve some of the on street parking issues; space added, not reduced.

Vote of the board: Granted

Voting in favor: Mr. Nimon, Mr. Parisi, Mr. Howard, Mr. Walcott, Mr. Gardner

165 Hesperus Avenue:

Rob Viccari, son of applicant and now owner of the property seeking a special permit for height to convert the house to a two family home. He provided a letter of support from a direct abutter. This addition would allow his parents to remain in the home and his family to live there as well to provide care as they age. There would be no negative impact to traffic and public utilities; he has approval for a new septic system. There would be an addition to the rear of the house and a second floor added to the structure.

No one spoke in favor or in opposition of the application.

Vote of the board: Granted

Voting in favor: Mr. Gardner, Mr. Nimon, Mr. Walcott, Mr. Wright, Mr. Parisi

Board discussion:

Mr. Wright laid out several blocks of wood used as example structures and began a conversation regarding the interpretation of the Deadrick decision. Based on the positioning of these blocks along certain lines the board discussed what is considered a required variance, special permit or if needed at all. The blocks were moved to different configurations several times and each member spoke as to how they interpreted the need for relief in each situation.

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Parisi. Mr. Howard seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.