



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS**  
**MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**  
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**MAYOR**

MICHAEL F. GLAVIN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING DIVISION

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEMBERS**

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RICHARD ROSSETTI  
DANIELLE EVANS  
ELAINE SEVERINO  
JOSH SAFDIE (ALT.)  
BRANDY BROOKS (ALT.)

**Case #: ZBA 2014-64**  
**Site: 55 Putnam Street**  
**Date of Decision: August 6, 2014**  
**Decision: Petition Approved with Conditions**  
**Date Filed with City Clerk: August 8, 2014**

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**ZBA DECISION**

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<b>Applicant Name:</b>	Michael Reed
<b>Applicant Address:</b>	55 Putnam Street, #1, Somerville, MA 02143
<b>Property Owner Name:</b>	Michael Reed
<b>Property Owner Address:</b>	55 Putnam Street, #1, Somerville, MA 02143
<b>Agent Name:</b>	N/A

Legal Notice: Applicant & Owner Michael Reed seeks a Special Permit under SZO §4.4.1 to alter a nonconforming structure by adding an exterior spiral stair as a third floor egress. RA zone. Ward 3.

<u>Zoning District/Ward:</u>	RA zone/Ward 3
<u>Zoning Approval Sought:</u>	§4.4.1
<u>Date of Application:</u>	June 20, 2014
<u>Date(s) of Public Hearing:</u>	August 6, 2014
<u>Date of Decision:</u>	August 6, 2014
<u>Vote:</u>	5-0

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Appeal #ZBA 2014-64 was opened before the Zoning Board of Appeals at Somerville City Hall on August 6, 2014. Notice of the Public Hearing was given to persons affected and was published and posted, all as required by M.G.L. c. 40A, sec. 11 and the Somerville Zoning Ordinance. After one hearing of deliberation, the Zoning Board of Appeals took a vote.



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[www.somervillema.gov](http://www.somervillema.gov)

**DESCRIPTION:**

The Applicant proposes to install an exterior spiral stair as a third floor egress. The structure is currently non-conforming with varying 3.3-7.3 foot setbacks on the side of the proposed stair. The proposed stair would not further decrease the setbacks.

**FINDINGS FOR SPECIAL PERMIT (SZO §4.4.1):**

In order to grant a special permit, the SPGA must make certain findings and determinations as outlined in §5.1.4 of the SZO. This section of the report goes through §5.1.4 in detail.

1. Information Supplied:

The Board finds that the information provided by the Applicant conforms to the requirements of §5.1.2 of the SZO and allows for a comprehensive analysis of the project with respect to the required Special Permits.

2. Compliance with Standards: *The Applicant must comply "with such criteria or standards as may be set forth in this Ordinance which refer to the granting of the requested special permit."*

Lawfully existing two-family dwellings, which are nonconforming with respect to dimensional requirements, may be enlarged, expanded, renovated, or altered by special permit granted by the SPGA in accordance with the procedures of Article 5. The structure is nonconforming in terms of side setbacks, which vary from 3.3 feet to 7.3 feet.

In considering a special permit under §4.4 of the SZO, the Board finds that the alterations proposed would not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing structure.

3. Consistency with Purposes: *The Applicant has to ensure that the project "is consistent with (1) the general purposes of this Ordinance as set forth in Article 1, and (2) the purposes, provisions, and specific objectives applicable to the requested special permit which may be set forth elsewhere in this Ordinance, such as, but not limited to, those purposes at the beginning of the various Articles."*

The proposal is consistent with the general purposes of the Ordinance as set forth under §1.2, which includes, but is not limited to providing for and maintaining the uniquely integrated structure of uses in the City and conserving the value of land and buildings; to promoting the health, safety, and welfare of the inhabitants of the City of Somerville; to protect health; to secure safety from fire, panic and other dangers; to provide adequate light and air; to conserve the value of land and buildings; and to encourage the most appropriate use of land throughout the City.

The proposal is consistent with the purpose of the RA district as it is being done as part of a renovation to a residential property.

4. Site and Area Compatibility: *The Applicant has to ensure that the project "(i)s designed in a manner that is compatible with the characteristics of the built and unbuilt surrounding area, including land uses."*

The surrounding neighborhood is a mix of 1- and 2- family homes. As noted by the applicant, some other homes of this size use spiral staircases. Additionally, since the stair would be mostly hidden from street view, it would have minimal impact on neighborhood character.

7. Housing Impact: *This proposal will not create adverse impacts on the stock of existing affordable housing.*



8. SomerVision Plan: *Complies with the applicable goals, policies and actions of the SomerVision plan, including the following, as appropriate: Preserve and enhance the character of Somerville’s neighborhoods, Transform key opportunity areas, Preserve and expand an integrated, balanced mix of safe, affordable and environmentally sound rental and homeownership units for households of all sizes and types from diverse social and economic groups; and, make Somerville a regional employment center with a mix of diverse and high-quality jobs.*

<u>SomerVision Summary</u>	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Proposed</i>
<i>Dwelling Units:</i>	2	No change
<i>Parking Spaces:</i>	2+	No change

This proposal does not significantly impact the SomerVision goals, but does help to preserve the residential areas by improving safety and livability.

**DECISION:**

Present and sitting were Members Herbert Foster, Orsola Susan Fontano, Richard Rossetti, Danielle Evans and Elaine Severino. Upon making the above findings, Susan Fontano made a motion to approve the request for a Special Permit. Richard Rossetti seconded the motion. Wherefore the Zoning Board of Appeals voted **5-0** to **APPROVE** the request. In addition the following conditions were attached:

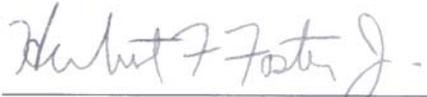
#	Condition	Timeframe for Compliance	Verified (initial)	Notes						
1	Approval is for the shed dormer. This approval is based upon the following application materials and the plans submitted by the Applicant:	BP/CO	ISD/PIng.							
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date (Stamp Date)</th> <th>Submission</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>June 20, 2014</td> <td>Initial application submitted to the City Clerk’s Office</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(July 15, 2014)</td> <td>Plans submitted to OSPCD (Site plans showing proposed location, plan, elevation and perspective of proposed stair.)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Date (Stamp Date)	Submission	June 20, 2014	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk’s Office	(July 15, 2014)	Plans submitted to OSPCD (Site plans showing proposed location, plan, elevation and perspective of proposed stair.)
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(July 15, 2014)	Plans submitted to OSPCD (Site plans showing proposed location, plan, elevation and perspective of proposed stair.)									
Any changes to the plans that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive SPGA approval.										
<b>Construction Impacts</b>										
2	The Applicant shall at his or her expense replace any existing equipment (including, but not limited to street sign poles, signs, traffic signal poles, traffic signal equipment, wheel chair ramps, granite curbing, etc) and the entire sidewalk immediately abutting the subject property if damaged as a result of construction activity. All new sidewalks and driveways must be constructed to DPW standard.	CO	DPW							

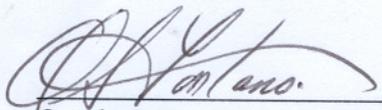


3	All construction materials and equipment must be stored onsite. If occupancy of the street layout is required, such occupancy must be in conformance with the requirements of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and the prior approval of the Traffic and Parking Department must be obtained.	During Construction	T&P	
<b>Final Sign-Off</b>				
7	The Applicant shall contact Planning Staff at least five working days in advance of a request for a final inspection by Inspectional Services to ensure the proposal was constructed in accordance with the plans and information submitted and the conditions attached to this approval.	Final sign off	Plng.	



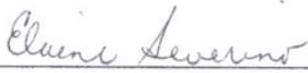
Attest, by the Zoning Board of Appeals:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Herbert F. Foster, Jr., Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Orsola Susan Fontano, Clerk

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Richard Rossetti

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Danielle Fillis

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Elaine Severino, (Alt.)

Copies of this decision are filed in the Somerville City Clerk's office.  
Copies of all plans referred to in this decision and a detailed record of the  
SPGA proceedings are filed in the Somerville Planning Dept.

**CLERK'S CERTIFICATE**

Any appeal of this decision must be filed within twenty days after the date this notice is filed in the Office of the City Clerk, and must be filed in accordance with M.G.L. c. 40A, sec. 17 and SZO sec. 3.2.10.



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In accordance with M.G.L. c. 40 A, sec. 11, no variance shall take effect until a copy of the decision bearing the certification of the City Clerk that twenty days have elapsed after the decision has been filed in the Office of the City Clerk and no appeal has been filed, or that if such appeal has been filed, that it has been dismissed or denied, is recorded in the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds and indexed in the grantor index under the name of the owner of record or is recorded and noted on the owner's certificate of title.

Also in accordance with M.G.L. c. 40 A, sec. 11, a special permit shall not take effect until a copy of the decision bearing the certification of the City Clerk that twenty days have elapsed after the decision has been filed in the Office of the City Clerk and either that no appeal has been filed or the appeal has been filed within such time, is recorded in the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds and indexed in the grantor index under the name of the owner of record or is recorded and noted on the owner's certificate of title. The person exercising rights under a duly appealed Special Permit does so at risk that a court will reverse the permit and that any construction performed under the permit may be ordered undone.

The owner or applicant shall pay the fee for recording or registering. Furthermore, a permit from the Division of Inspectional Services shall be required in order to proceed with any project favorably decided upon by this decision, and upon request, the Applicant shall present evidence to the Building Official that this decision is properly recorded.

This is a true and correct copy of the decision filed on \_\_\_\_\_ in the Office of the City Clerk, and twenty days have elapsed, and

FOR VARIANCE(S) WITHIN

\_\_\_\_\_ there have been no appeals filed in the Office of the City Clerk, or  
\_\_\_\_\_ any appeals that were filed have been finally dismissed or denied.

FOR SPECIAL PERMIT(S) WITHIN

\_\_\_\_\_ there have been no appeals filed in the Office of the City Clerk, or  
\_\_\_\_\_ there has been an appeal filed.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ City Clerk Date \_\_\_\_\_

