

September 3, 2014

Town of Belmont Planning Board

RE: Application for Design and Site Plan Review/ Special Permit

Proposed Development: Addition to an existing single family, to include an additional unit as a two-unit residence.

Applicant: John and Deborah Greene

Contact Info: 617-484-0906 [d.orange@verizon.net](mailto:d.orange@verizon.net)

Property Address: 22 Waverley St. Belmont

Year Built: 1865

GR: General Residence Zone

Lot Size: 10,000 sq. ft.

Frontage: 50 ft.

Building Coverage:

Unit 1 (Existing): 1,619.8 sq ft      Unit 1 (Modified): 1,424.9 sq ft (removal of deck)

Unit 2 (Proposed): 1,574.4 sq ft (incl. garage)

Unit 1 + Unit 2 (Proposed): 2,999.3 sq ft

Parking Spaces: 2 exterior (existing); 2 garage (proposed); 4 total spaces

## **Introductory Statement**

We have been in the process of adding another residence to the back lot of our family's home on Waverley St. We are a young family with a recent addition (our spunky 7 month old Charlotte!) and are hoping to stay residents of Belmont where my husband, Justin Greene and myself, Danielle Greene, were both born and raised. We have been greatly fortunate as our family has generously given us permission to build a residence on their back lot, in hopes we can stay living in the town we love so much. We started this process 2 years ago while the zoning laws allowed us to go ahead with our project by-right. Since we started the process we have invested a significant amount of our savings into our future home project. We have already had all of the utilities brought onto the property for the second residence before the first moratorium was put in place. In the meantime we were side-tracked (hence our spunky 7 month old) and the zoning requirements have changed. Now lots of time and money later we are in the middle of the process and are now applying for a special permit.

With the cost of living on the rise, especially in our beloved town, this is the only way my husband, daughter and I can stay in the town we treasure so much. I am hoping my daughter can grow up in the same wonderful community my husband and I did.

The proposed addition will be consistent with the general character (size / massing) and styling cues of homes in the immediate neighborhood and complement the existing historic home. The new structure will maintain the feel and integrity of the neighborhood and current Victorian home the new residence will be behind. The proposed addition will be mostly hidden from view from the street by the existing house. There will be 50 feet of yard space behind the new home and any trees that are proposed to be taken down are not the healthiest and need to be removed regardless of this project, because of their deteriorated condition. In lieu of tearing down a house of such historical value we thought it made more sense to enhance the property and current home by adding to it rather than tearing it down and building a new two family residence from the ground up. If we are unable to go forward with this project tearing down this architecturally iconic home and building a new two family by right is really our only option. We believe this would be a devastating loss to the neighborhood as well as significantly altering the streetscape in the area. Unfortunately it is impossible for us to replicate the exact feel of the existing home but we are trying to compliment the existing unit by carrying details such as paint color, windows and shutters along with a cohesive landscape throughout the lot including many trees, bushes, plants and flowers.

The deck on the existing residence will now be a stairs with a landing, and the existing small shed on the property will move to the new structure's backyard. Removing the deck will now create a long clean driveway making both residences easily accessible. Bushes and perennial plants will be added to the existing gardens, shrubbery and trees, helping to enhance the property's large lot and providing screening to adjacent properties.

**We all want the second unit to enhance the existing property and surrounding neighborhood and we truly believe it will.**

## DESIGN AND SITE PLAN REVIEW STANDARDS (Section 6D)

### **Scale of Building**

The proposed additional unit will have a similar scale and height. It will fit in with the existing cluster of homes. The proposed addition will be backed up to homes similar in structure, including the home directly behind the property, which is also a two family property. The home also will abut a cluster of garages on the left and a backyard, and garages on the right. The proposed unit will meet or exceed all required zoning setbacks and offsets. We believe the proposed addition will enhance the appearance of the property to our immediate neighbors and still maintain a large openness throughout the side and backyard of the property.

### **Design of Building and Proportions**

The proposed unit's character will be compatible with the general characteristics of existing surrounding homes including roofing and siding materials, roof pitch, window style, paint colors, and landscaping. The proportions of height to width between windows, doors and other architectural elements will be similar in style and character to that of other surrounding houses. Out of necessity to preserve the historic and architectural significance of the existing house on the property, the proposed unit will have some differing, although complementary, characteristics.

### **Height**

The proposed building is a 2-1/2 story structure with a height to the middle of the roof pitch of around 27 feet, well within the allowable maximum of 33 feet. The overall appearance and height will appear similar to other homes in the neighborhood.

### **Building and Driveway Siting**

The building and driveway will be built essentially following the existing topography with minimal re-grading work to not alter existing drainage of the natural topography. The re-grading would be limited to minimally building up the ground area immediately around the foundation as required to provide drainage away from the home. Due to the configuration of the lot and desire to not remove the existing historic house, the front door access to the proposed house must be on the side of the home. The existing driveway will be extended providing access to the proposed unit.

### **Lighting, Circulation and Screening**

Lighting will be limited to residential scale surface lighting mounted at the entryway of access doors to the proposed house and on the garage safety and security purposes. With the location of the proposed extended driveway and walkway to the new house there will be no detracting from the use and enjoyment of adjacent

properties, sidewalk and street. Screening of the new home will be provided by the use of existing and proposed trees and planting as well as privacy fencing.

### **Open Space and Trees**

Open space will be greater than 50% of the lot area with the addition of the second home on the property, well above the 40% minimum required. Although some trees will need to be removed to make room for the new house, there are other existing significant trees on the property and immediate adjacent properties together with proposed planting of new trees that will maintain the visual amenities and shading of the neighborhood.

### **Relation of Structure and Spaces**

The spacing of the proposed structure to the surrounding structures on adjacent properties will be compatible with the existing relationship to open space of the surrounding structures and area. The proposed 2 car garage will provide a visual separation from the existing home to reduce massing and keep in character with the neighborhood.

### **Drainage and Mechanical Equipment**

As noted previously, there is no significant re-grading work proposed to maintain the existing natural topography and drainage patterns. The removal of the existing deck supported on posts will not create any disturbance to the existing ground and therefore, no erosion concerns. As necessary, sediment and erosion control materials will be placed adjacent to areas to be excavated for foundation work and installation of utilities. Mechanical equipment for air conditioning will be located at the back of the proposed home outside of the required setback.

## **SPECIAL PERMIT CRITERIA (Section 7.4.3)**

### **Location**

There are adequate provisions for utility services to the proposed additional building including water supply, sewage disposal, and natural gas supply all of which have already been installed onto the property from the mains in Waverley Street. As noted previously, there will be no adverse impact on property drainage with the construction of the new home. The lot will have over 50% of its area as open space with the new home installed allowing sufficient pervious ground surface for handling storm runoff.

### **Activity Type and Mix**

The proposed addition of a second house on the property directly serves the needs of housing for local residents by providing a home for Belmont lifelong residents Danielle and Justin Greene along with their infant daughter Charlotte which they

would not otherwise be able to afford in Town. The use of the property with the addition of a second home is in keeping with the character of uses/activities of surrounding residential properties and complements the scale of buildings in the neighborhood.

### **Visual Concerns**

As noted previously, the proposed structure will visually be mostly hidden from the street by the existing historic home. Existing and proposed trees and plantings along with privacy fencing will help screen the proposed structure from adjacent properties.

### **Access**

Vehicular access will be via an existing driveway off Waverley Street that will be extended to the proposed house eliminating the need for a new curb cut. The driveway will be configured to allow vehicles to turn around to allow safe egress to the street.

### **Process**

The applicant has worked closely through the entire process with officials from the Town Planning and Engineering Departments through several meetings, phone calls and e-mails to obtain a full understanding of the applicable Town regulations and requirements and in development of plans and documents that meet the Town's standards to mitigate any negative impacts.