CITY OF WATERTOWN

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
WATERTOWN ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
149 MAIN STREET
WATERTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS 02472

Melissa M. SantucciRozzi, Chairperson
David Ferris, Clerk
Christopher H. Heep, Member
Kelly Donato, Member
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MINUTES

On Wednesday evening, April 27th, 2022, the Zoning Board of Appeals held a public hearing at 7 p.m. Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, the meeting and public hearing were conducted in a 'hybrid' format with options for public participation both in-person and via remote means, in accordance with applicable law.

In attendance: Melissa SantucciRozzi, *Chairperson*; David Ferris, *Clerk*; Christopher Heep, *Member;* Michael Brangwynne, *Member;* also present: Gideon Schreiber*, Sr. Planner*; Larry Field, *Sr. Planner;* Antonio Mancini, *Zoning Enforcement Officer*; Joshua Manion, *Code Enforcement Officer.*

Chair SantucciRozzi opened the meeting and introduced City Staff and the Board Members in attendance, noting that the Board had only four members present, meaning any petition would require a unanimous vote in order to receive an approval. The Chair then briefly outlined the agenda for the meeting and Staff explained the different methods of participation for the public.

Item #1: Administrative

Chair SantucciRozzi requested a motion on the Minutes from the January meeting. Member Ferris motioned to approve, seconded by Member Brangwynne. Motion to approve the Minutes from the January meeting was passed by roll call vote, 4-0-0, with Members Ferris, Heep, Brangwynne, and Chair SantucciRozzi voting in favor.

Item #2: 21-23 Hall Ave.

Chair SantucciRozzi introduced the first item to be heard, a petition regarding the property at 21-23 Hall Ave., and Member Ferris read the legal notice.

Ron Bourque, architect for the Petitioner, presented the project plans to the Board and described the scope of relief being sought. Mr. Bourque detailed the existing conditions of the rear of the house, the existing footings, the first-floor existing deck, and explained the rationale for performing the project. Mr. Bourque also noted they are eliminating the second-floor roof above the deck, extending the deck 1' in width and 1' in length, and repositioning the stairs.

Mr. Bourque completed his presentation and the Chair opened discussion to the Board. Member Brangwynne asked to see the pictures of the existing deck referenced during the presentation. Mr. Bourque showed the Board an image of the existing deck and reviewed how the space would change with the proposed plan.

Member Ferris questioned the petitioner about an apparent disparity between the dimensions of the deck shown on the architectural plans (13') and on the proposed survey (12'). The Petitioner confirmed that the proposed deck would extend further than existing. Member Ferris asked for confirmation that the proposal would also extend the first-floor deck out another foot and that this is not represented on the plot plan; Mr. Bourque confirmed. Chair SantucciRozzi followed up on Member Ferris' question and asked the Petitioner to clarify the depth of the deck as it relates to the rear and side setbacks. The Board reiterated the importance of ensuring the dimensions are accurately represented on the plans and the Petitioner agreed to clarify this on the plans. Member Ferris also noted there is a sizeable area beneath the decks that appear to be storage area; he questioned whether the Petitioner had plans to screen this area, given its proximity and positioning to the neighbor. Mr. Bourque confirmed that this area would be screened with a lattice-type material.

The Board had no further questions for the Petitioner and the Chair opened the floor for public comment. Laurel Correli, an abutter to the property in question, spoke in support of the petition and the Petitioners generally. With no further public comment offered, the Chair closed the public hearing.
Chair SantucciRozzi reviewed the petition and the scope of relief being sought, noting that there were three separate non-conforming aspects of the proposal that require relief and that the removal of the roof above the second deck results in a net reduction in FAR (floor-area ratio). The Chair also noted that the Petitioner would need to correct the discrepancies on the plans with regard to the projection of the deck. Chair SantucciRozzi then reviewed the staff report, noting a recommendation of conditional approval, and outlined the suggested conditions and added that: screening should be added on the plans as a detail to accurately reflect the proposal; confirmation of overall projection on the first-floor deck;

Member Ferris questioned staff about the FAR of the project – does the extension of the second-floor porch increase FAR? Staff confirmed but explained that the other aspects of the proposal result in a net reduction in FAR; Member Ferris asked if the FAR calculations reflect the 12' or 13' deck. Staff deferred to the Petitioner who stated they would review and confirm this – the Chair reiterated that FAR relief is not in the scope of this petition and that extending the deck cannot result in an increase in FAR. Petitioner stated if there is any conflict found, they would keep the deck at a 12' projection.
Member Ferris motioned to approve this petition, with conditions as discussed. Member Heep seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously, 4-0-0, with Members Ferris, Heep, Brangwynne, and Chair SantucciRozzi voting in favor. Petition was approved with conditions.

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Chair SantucciRozzi announced that Kelly Donato had completed her term on the Board and would no longer be participating in the Board's hearings. The Chair thanked Member Donato for her time and service on the Board and wished her well in her future endeavors.

Motion to adjourn made by Member Ferris, seconded by Member Brangwynne. Motion to adjourn passed unanimously, 4 – 0 – 0, with Members Ferris, Brangwynne, Heep, and Chair SantucciRozzi voting in favor. Meeting was adjourned.