



Planning Department

CITY of BOSTON

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sherry Dong
Chairwoman, City of Boston Board of Appeal

FROM: Joanne Marques
Planning Department

DATE: October 14, 2026

RE: Planning Department Recommendations

Please find attached, for your information, Planning Department recommendations for the October 22, 2026 Board of Appeals Hearing.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.



Case	BOA1862080
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-06-16
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-10-22
Address	85 Chandler ST Boston 02116
Parcel ID	0501062000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	South End Neighborhood MFR
Zoning Article	64
Project Description	The proposed project is an amendment to a previous submission, to include a new 3rd level roof deck to be constructed on top of a flat roof.
Relief Type	Conditional Use
Violations	Roof Structure Restrictions

Planning Context:

85 Chandler Street sits in a Multifamily residential subdistrict of the South End Neighborhood and is subject to Article 64 of the zoning code. The proposed is within the South End Landmark District, less than 0.3 miles from the Back Bay Amtrak and Orange Line station. This parcel sits in both CFROD and GCOD overlay districts, as well as Restricted Parking and Restricted Roof districts.

Zoning Analysis:

The refusal letter dated April 2, 2026 cites a single violation for the proposed project: Restricted Roof Structure regulations, pursuant to Article 64 Section 34 of the zoning code. A previous refusal letter dated September 30, 2025 cited a separate violation related to Article 32, Sect 32-4 Groundwater Conservation Overlay District Applicability, requiring relief, which was granted on November 18, 2025.



The original proposal detailed a complete renovation of an existing duplex and the addition of a roof deck - extending the building's height up to 53.25'. Plans were drawn by 1507 Architects, are dated 04-23-2025, and remain unchanged from their original proposal.

Zoning relief was recommended by the Planning Department to the Board of Appeal in August 2025, for GCOD Applicability, Roof Structure Restrictions and Flood Hazard District citations.

This relief was recommended on the basis that the proposed deck does not exceed the maximum building height within the MFR district (70') and is appropriately sited with adequate egress. The proposed has since gained approvals from the South End Landmark District Commission.

At the August 2025 Zoning Board of Appeal meeting, abutters at 79 Chandler St raised concerns about security risk, loss of privacy, noise, and congestion. Following this testimony, the Board motioned for Denial without Prejudice and the decision was carried unanimously after several rounds of votes.

79 Chandler St is a 9-unit multi-family building with decks on the penthouse level and balconies on each story. The penthouse deck at 79 Chandler sits a full story higher than the proposed deck at 85 Chandler. Consequently, visibility flows downward from 79 Chandler into the proposed project, rather than from the proponent's side. Additionally, the proposed deck faces an existing brick wall, and the penthouse at 79 Chandler itself is recessed and setback to comply with the zoning meaning views looking upward from the proponent side to the abutting penthouse property are limited.

The lower decks at 79 Chandler are already screened by existing steel fencing. Retaining this fencing adequately screens the decks from abutters. Because the dimensions of the proposed deck are within the existing length of the existing steel fence, the proposed decks would be screened from neighbors, and would not create any substantive dimensional change that would create any new impacts on sunlight or privacy.

Similar screening could help allay concerns about privacy for the proposed roof deck that aligns with the neighboring roof deck at 79 Chandler.



The proposed roof deck is a low-impact residential use which is quite common throughout the neighborhood, making zoning relief appropriate.

Plans were drawn by 1507 Architects, are dated 04-23-2025.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1862080, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

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Senior Planner



Case	BOA1872919
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-07-15
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-10-22
Address	10 to 18 Bowdoin ST Dorchester 02124
Parcel ID	1401418000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	Dorchester Neighborhood LC and 3F-5000
Zoning Article	65
Project Description	Renovate an unfinished retail space for a proposed take out juice business.
Relief Type	Conditional Use Permit
Violations	Conditional Use

Planning Context:

The proposed project would finish an existing retail space and allow for the operation of a take out juice restaurant. There is no external work being done. All renovations, including heating and sprinkler systems, will be internal construction. This proposed renovation is part of a larger mixed use development that underwent article 80 review and where the residential aspect is already completed. The planned restaurant use was part of the original plans.

Zoning Analysis:

The project is triggering the need for one conditional use permit for the proposed take out restaurant. The mixed use nature of this development and area make take out restaurants that require quick stops a fitting use.



Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1872919, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

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Senior Planner



Case	BOA1862299
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-06-17
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-10-22
Address	27 Greenwich ST Dorchester 02122
Parcel ID	1500212000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	Dorchester Neighborhood 2F-5000
Zoning Article	65
Project Description	Convert one family home to two family by adding a garage with above unit.
Relief Type	Variance
Violations	FAR Excessive Rear Yard Insufficient Side Yard Insufficient Front Yard Insufficient Usable Open Space Insufficient Lot Area Insufficient

Planning Context:

The proposed project would add a side yard extension to an existing one-family building, increasing the unit count to two units. The existing building is L-shaped, with the shorter spur running along the rear lot line. This renovation would extend that protrusion and convert it into a garage with a new dwelling unit located above. Two-family residential is an allowed use in this area, and this project works to incorporate a new unit into the neighborhood fabric without the disruption that new construction can bring.

The proposed project will be typical of Accessory Dwelling Units, as defined by the ADU Guidebook (2025). In particular, this project qualifies as a “Convert your garage” typology, identified as an appropriate fit for smaller lots such as the proposed project parcel. The guidebook highlights the planning goals of encouraging growth without disrupting neighborhood



character. By incorporating a new dwelling unit into a minimally changed building facade, this project helps to achieve these goals.

Zoning Analysis:

The first violation is in regard to the minimum lot area per dwelling unit. The zoning code requires an area of 5,000 sq ft for one or two units, whereas the proposed project lot has 3,600 sq ft. This is an existing nonconformity with the property. The lot size is under the minimum area, and this new proposal does not alter the land area. However, lots of this size are common in this area, with one-, two-, and even three-family residential units present. This requirement reflects a disconnect between the zoning code and the built reality of the neighborhood, suggesting that zoning reform should be explored for the area.

The proposed project is also receiving a violation in regard to Floor Area Ratio (FAR). The zoning code sets a maximum FAR of 0.5. The existing building has an FAR of 0.6, and the proposed addition would increase the FAR to 0.8. This is again a disconnect between the zoning code and the built reality of the area. Small lots with over 50% lot coverage are common here, with almost none of the nearby buildings meeting this requirement. While the proposed project exceeds the zoning maximum, it fits within the existing neighborhood context.

The next violation is in regard to open space per dwelling unit. The zoning code requires 750 sq ft per dwelling unit. The existing lot provides 865 sq ft per unit. With the expansion of the garage space and the addition of another unit, this number is reduced to 335 sq ft per unit. This, too, highlights a disconnect between the zoning code and built reality. Triple-deckers are common in this area, with multiple examples present on the same block. This typology is defined by three stories on a small parcel, and almost none of the nearby two- or three-unit buildings meet this requirement. This presents yet another case for zoning reform in the neighborhood.

The proposed project is also receiving violations for its front yard setback and rear yard setback. However, these are existing nonconformities that are not being expanded. The new addition sits further back from the front lot line than the current front entrance. The rear setback is also



already in violation and is not being worsened in any way; the rear footprint of the proposed building maintains the exact setback of the existing structure. These existing nonconformities align with the neighborhood character and should be granted variances.

The final violation is in regard to the side yard setback. This is an existing nonconformity that is actually being brought closer to compliance through this renovation. The existing side yard is 3.7 ft deep, whereas the proposed project expands that distance to 5.3 ft. As this condition is already present, it clearly fits within the neighborhood character.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1862299, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

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Senior Planner



Case	BOA1883830
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-08-07
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-10-22
Address	18 Baker AV Dorchester 02125
Parcel ID	2F-6000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	Dorchester Neighborhood 2F-6000
Zoning Article	65
Project Description	Legalize the existing shed and storage of two Bobcat machines on the property, and install a new curb cut for a proposed driveway.
Relief Type	Variance
Violations	Side Yard Insufficient Rear Yard Insufficient

Planning Context:

The project is located at 18 Baker Avenue in Dorchester, in a residential area characterized primarily by low-density homes. The property backs onto railroad tracks rather than a neighboring residential property. Nearby lots, including the adjacent property, contain similar sheds and accessory structures.

The proposal seeks to legalize an existing shed and the outdoor storage of two Bobcat machines, along with a new curb cut for a proposed driveway. The existing shed is generally consistent with similar structures on surrounding properties. Given the property's location adjacent to the railroad corridor, the proposed use and improvements are unlikely to significantly impact neighboring residential properties.

Zoning Analysis:

The property is located in the 2F-6000 Residential Subdistrict of the Dorchester Neighborhood District. The proposal requires zoning relief for insufficient side and rear yard setbacks.



Article 65, Section 9, Side Yard: A minimum side yard setback of 10 feet is required. The submitted plot plan identifies a setback of approximately 6.3 feet between the existing shed and the residential building. Zoning relief is required for the insufficient side yard.

Article 65, Section 9, Rear Yard: A minimum rear yard setback of 20 feet is required. The existing shed is located approximately 10.7 feet from the rear property line, requiring zoning relief for the insufficient rear yard.

The proposed project seeks to formalize existing site conditions and provide dedicated storage and access for two Bobcat machines. The property backs onto railroad tracks rather than a neighboring residential property, reducing potential impacts associated with the rear yard relief. Similar sheds and accessory structures are present on nearby properties, including the adjacent lot. The existing shed is generally consistent with the surrounding development pattern, and the proposed improvements are unlikely to significantly impact neighboring residential properties.

The submitted plot plan titled "Proposed Bobcat Storage, Plot Plan of Land in Dorchester, Mass," prepared by RealMapInfo LLC and dated August 3, 2026, was reviewed in support of this recommendation.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1883830, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO: that appellant submit plans for screening and buffering due to the property's location in a residential subdistrict.

Reviewed,

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Senior Planner



Case	BOA1777438
ZBA Submitted Date	2025-09-22
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-10-22
Address	68 Theodore Parker RD West Roxbury 02132
Parcel ID	2005888000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	West Roxbury Neighborhood 1F-6000
Zoning Article	56
Project Description	Additional footprint to the rear of the home with extension of living space into the attic.
Relief Type	Variance
Violations	FAR Excessive Height Excessive (stories) Rear Yard Insufficient Side Yard Insufficient

Planning Context:

The proponent at 68 Theodore Parker Road plans to add a mudroom to the rear of the house and finish the third floor attic.

68 Theodore Parker Road is a single-family residence located in a residential area of West Roxbury. It is along the West Roxbury Parkway and houses in this area are generally single-family residences.

The addition of mudroom and extension of living space into the attic are clear cases for zoning reform and a precedent for the Neighborhood Housing Zoning Initiative for which the draft zoning was published July 2026. The current code lacks a clear path for homeowners to make simple, interior adaptations that meet evolving household needs. These renovations provide additional living space without altering the exterior character of the home. The Planning Department encourages more additional by right pathways for homeowners to pursue simple home renovations.



Zoning Analysis:

The proposal has triggered four violations: FAR, height (stories), rear and side yards.

The maximum FAR allowed for this subdistrict is 0.4. Plans do not give indication of an existing or proposed FAR, but the addition of a small mudroom and extension of living space into the attic will confidently increase FAR. However, relief is recommended because these improvements are modest and do not notably alter the home's exterior.

The maximum height in stories allowed is 2.5. The project does not necessarily increase the height because the plans are finishing the attic instead of additional dormers that did not previously exist. Relief is recommended.

In this subdistrict, at least 10 feet of side yard setback and 30 feet of rear yard setback are required. This project does not worsen the existing side yard setback nonconformity, relief is recommended. While the mudroom does protrude five feet into the rear yard, relief is recommended because this is a modest increase that does not alter the character of the home. Furthermore, this addition will not be seen at the street level.

Plans reviewed are titled "Certified Plot Plan Located at 68 Theodore Parker Road West Roxbury, MA", are prepared by Boston Survey, Inc., and dated October 2, 2024.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1777438, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

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Senior Planner



Case	BOA1862338
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-06-17
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-10-22
Address	11 Altacrest RD West Roxbury 02132
Parcel ID	2009597000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	West Roxbury Neighborhood 1F-6000
Zoning Article	56
Project Description	The proponent is asking for a wider curb cut and expanded driveway for parking.
Relief Type	Variance
Violations	Use: Forbidden

Planning Context:

The proponent at 11 Altacrest Road proposes extending the curb cut and expanding the paved driveway in front of their attached garage for parking.

11 Altacrest Road is a single-family residence located in a residential area of West Roxbury. The home is just off Centre Street and houses in this area are generally single-family residences. In this area of West Roxbury, driveway parking is commonly observed.

Zoning Analysis:

This project has triggered one violation: use forbidden.

Front yard parking is forbidden per Article 56 Section 39 "Off-street parking and loading spaces shall not be located in any part of a landscaped area required by this Article or in any part of a Front Yard, except as specifically provided in this Section 56-39. If a Lot is located in a Residential Subdistrict, a total of two (2) accessory parking spaces serving residential uses on such Lot may be located in that portion of the Front Yard that lies between the side yard and the



Front Lot Line, provided that the total width of such Front Yard area used for parking does not exceed ten (10) feet."

Given that a paved driveway already exists on site and off-street driveway parking is a common feature of the surrounding streetscape, relief is not recommended.

Plans reviewed are titled "Plan Showing Proposed Driveway Expansion", are prepared by D. O'Brien Land Surveying, and dated July 25, 2025.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1862338, The Planning Department recommends DENIAL.

Reviewed,

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Senior Planner



Case	BOA1879905
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-07-29
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-10-22
Address	294 Stratford ST West Roxbury 02132
Parcel ID	2001878000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	West Roxbury Neighborhood 1F-6000
Zoning Article	56
Project Description	Extend living space into basement
Relief Type	Variance
Violations	FAR Excessive

Planning Context:

The proponent at 294 Stratford St plans to extend living space into a basement that is currently unfinished. The goal is to create a flexible space for extended family use, without altering the primary structure.

294 Stratford St is a single-family residence located in a residential area of West Roxbury. It is along the West Roxbury Parkway and houses in this area are generally single-family residences.

The extension of living space is a clear case for zoning reform and a precedent for the Neighborhood Housing Zoning Initiative for which the draft zoning was published July 2026. The current code lacks a clear path for homeowners to make simple, interior adaptations that meet evolving household needs. Finishing an existing basement to create additional living space supports family friendly living without altering the exterior character of the home. These projects, particularly where the only zoning violation is FAR, should be allowed by right.



Zoning Analysis:

The proposal has triggered one zoning violation: FAR excessive.

The FAR allowed for this lot is 0.4, the existing FAR is 0.46, and the proposed FAR is 0.64. The proposed addition creates additional living space that allows the property to meet the needs of the family living in this home. Because these improvements are not disruptive to the neighborhood context, relief is recommended.

Plans reviewed are titled "294 Stratford St Basement Renovation" and are prepared by Derek Rubinoff Architects and dated June 19, 2026.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1879905, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

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Senior Planner



Case	BOA1862382
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-06-17
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-10-22
Address	75 Oakland ST Brighton 02135
Parcel ID	2204414000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	Allston/Brighton Neighborhood 2F-5000
Zoning Article	51
Project Description	Addition of a 6-foot by 13.7-foot prefabricated sunroom, supported by helical pier foundations.
Relief Type	Variance
Violations	Front Yard Insufficient Side Yard Insufficient

Planning Context:

The project is located at 75 Oakland Street in Brighton, in a residential area primarily characterized by low-density homes. Nearby properties have similar porches, additions, and building projections with comparable setbacks.

The property contains an existing two-story residential building. The proposal is to add a 6-foot by 13.7-foot prefabricated sunroom to the existing home, supported by helical pier foundations. The proposed addition is modest in scale and maintains the existing residential use of the property. The size, location, and setbacks of the addition are generally consistent with similar projections found on surrounding residential properties.

Zoning Analysis:

The proposed project adds a 6-foot by 13.7-foot prefabricated sunroom to the existing residential building at 75 Oakland Street. The property is located in the 2F-5000 Residential Subdistrict of the Allston-Brighton Neighborhood District. The proposal maintains the existing residential use and requires zoning relief for front and side yard setbacks.



Article 51, Section 9, Front Yard: A minimum front yard setback of 20 feet is required. The existing building has a front yard setback of approximately 13.2 feet, which is reduced to approximately 7.2 feet with the proposed sunroom. Zoning relief is therefore required.

Article 51, Section 9, Side Yard: A minimum side yard setback of 10 feet is required. The existing building has a side yard setback of approximately 9.4 feet, which is maintained with the proposed addition. Zoning relief is required for the insufficient side yard. Given the narrow lot and existing placement of the home, the proposal does not further reduce the existing side yard condition.

The proposed project maintains the existing residential use while providing a modest addition to the home. The requested relief reflects the existing lot and building conditions, including a front yard that is already nonconforming and a side yard that is not further reduced by the proposal. Similar porches, additions, and building projections with reduced setbacks are present on nearby properties. The addition is limited in scale and is generally consistent with the established residential development pattern along Oakland Street.

Plans titled "Plan of Land Showing Proposed Improvements, 75 Oakland Street, Brighton, MA," prepared by Viney Land Engineering & Environmental Services Inc. and dated June 2, 2026, along with the submitted sunroom plans, were reviewed in support of this recommendation.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1862382, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

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Senior Planner