



Planning Department

CITY of BOSTON

MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: Joanne Marques
Planning Department

DATE: July 16, 2026

RE: Planning Department Recommendations

Please find attached, for your information, Planning Department recommendations for the July 23, 2026 Board of Appeals Hearing.

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



Case	BOA1850866
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-05-18
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-07-23
Address	85 Everett ST East Boston 02128
Parcel ID	0104966000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	East Boston Neighborhood EBR-3
Zoning Article	53
Project Description	The proposed project seeks to add a roof deck to an existing three-unit residential building. The scope includes new interior stairs to provide access to the roof deck.
Relief Type	Conditional use
Violations	Roof Structure Restrictions

Planning Context:

The proposed project at 85 Everett Street adds a roof deck to an existing three-story, three-unit residential building. The scope includes constructing interior stairs to provide the uppermost unit with private access to the roof deck.

The area surrounding the site is predominantly residential in character. One-, two-, and three-unit buildings make up the largest residential typologies. Larger multifamily buildings, including four- to six-unit and seven-or-more-unit properties, are present within the surrounding neighborhood context.

Lots in the vicinity are generally narrow and elongated. Along Everett Street, the prevailing pattern is a single building per lot, typically rising three to four stories in height, with building footprints occupying a substantial portion of the front lot area. The property is located within the East Boston Neighborhood Restricted Roof Area, where additional scrutiny applies to roof decks and other roof structures.

Zoning Analysis:

The proposal received one zoning citation concerning roof-structure restrictions. The property lies within the East Boston Neighborhood Restricted Roof Area, where roof structures are governed by Article 53, Section 53-25.



Section 53-25.2 permits open roof decks subject to standards governing location, height, access, and appurtenant structures. The proposal includes a 337-square-foot open roof deck on the main roof of the existing three-unit residential building, with interior access and cable guardrails. Dimensional relief is required because portions of the deck and guardrail do not maintain the required five-foot setback from the rear and east roof edges.

The deck's configuration responds to the roof's narrow dimensions and existing physical conditions. It is set back 2 feet 4 inches from the rear edge and extends to the east roof edge at the rear corner. Within this constrained area, the design preserves a clear 36-inch path from the roof hatch while accommodating the existing skylight. Providing the full five-foot setbacks would require a substantial reduction and reconfiguration of the deck, limiting its usability.

The requested relief is therefore confined to the rear and east roof-edge setbacks. Positioned toward the rear and contained within the existing roof area, the deck does not alter the street-facing facade and is not prominently visible from Everett Street, minimizing its effect on the streetscape.

The plans reviewed are titled "85 EVERETT ST #3 - ROOF DECK", prepared by Flow Design Architects and issued for review on March 10, 2026.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1850866, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

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Deputy Director of Zoning



Case	BOA1819861
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-02-10
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-07-23
Address	203 Falcon ST East Boston 02128
Parcel ID	0103280000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	East Boston Neighborhood EBR-3
Zoning Article	53
Project Description	The proposal seeks to renovate and vertically expand the existing two-story residential building. The scope includes a full interior renovation, construction of a new third story, and improvements to the building's facade and exterior envelope.
Relief Type	Conditional Use
Violations	Roof Structure Restrictions

Planning Context:

The proposed project at 203 Falcon Street adds a third story to an existing two-story, one-unit residential building. It renovates all interior levels and includes improvements to the exterior facade and building envelope. The surrounding area is predominantly residential, with two-, three-, and four- to six-unit buildings representing the principal typologies.

Nearby lots are generally narrow and elongated. Along Falcon Street, the prevailing pattern is one building per lot, typically two to three stories tall, with footprints occupying much of the front lot area.

The property is within the East Boston Neighborhood Restricted Roof Area, where additional zoning limitations apply to roof structures and upper-level improvements.

Because the work is within 100 feet of the American Legion Playground, a Boston public park, it is subject to Boston Municipal Code Section 7-4.11.

Zoning Analysis:



The proposal received one citation for roof-structure restrictions. The property lies within the East Boston Neighborhood Restricted Roof Area.

Article 53, Section 53-25.1 requires conditional use approval under Sections 6-2, 6-3, and 6-4 for a roofed addition that alters an existing residential roof. The Board must consider potential damage to the uniformity of height or architectural character of the immediate vicinity. The proposal raises no Section 6-3 concerns regarding residential use, vehicle or pedestrian safety, or nuisance. Its neighborhood impact relates to the addition's design and placement.

203 Falcon Street is a two-story residential building in the middle of a contiguous row of brick rowhouses. The buildings share a consistent set of architectural features including an ornate cornice, stone window surrounds, and a raised arched entrance with masonry steps. The addition is approximately 9 feet 10 inches high, with its front wall at the front roof edge. From Falcon Street, it reads as a full story above the cornice and reduces visual separation between the existing building and new construction. Its full-story massing and limited setback make it appear oversized in relation to the existing building. Because this would be the first vertical addition in the adjoining row of houses along Falcon Street, the proposal may influence future rooftop additions. Similar additions at the front roof edge could alter the row's visible roofline and architectural character.

Section 6-4 allows the Board to condition approval through changes to the structure's size and exterior appearance. The proposal would benefit from closer attention to the addition's height, setback from the front roof edge, and relationship to the existing building. Refining these elements would reduce the addition's prominence when viewed from Falcon Street, improve its visual separation from the existing structure, and establish a more contextually appropriate precedent for similar additions along the row. Urban Design review is recommended.

The plans reviewed are titled "203 Falcon Street, East Boston, MA", prepared by Design Build Architects and issued for review on February 6, 2026.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1819861, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO/S: that plans shall be submitted to the Planning Department for design review with attention to the height of the addition and other design features to reduce the prominence of the addition when viewed from Falcon Street and visual separation from the existing structure.



Planning Department

CITY of BOSTON

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning



Case	BOA1839249
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-04-14
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-07-23
Address	59H to 59 Washington ST Charlestown 02129
Parcel ID	0203895000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	Charlestown Neighborhood 3F-2000
Zoning Article	62
Project Description	Renovate an existing two-and-a-half-story, two-family home and construct a new rear dormer and rear addition above the existing two-story rear addition.
Relief Type	Variance, Conditional Use
Violations	Rear Yard Insufficient Roof Structure Restrictions

Planning Context:

Located in a dense, residential portion of Charlestown, 59H-59 Washington Street is a two-and-a-half-story, two-unit dwelling with a pitched roof and an existing two-story rear addition supporting a deck. The existing structure is built with a zero-lot-line condition along the rear property line, separated from the buildings to the rear by a narrow passageway. The surrounding neighborhood features traditional Charlestown blocks of row houses accommodating one- to three-family dwellings that typically stand two to three stories tall with pitched roofs and single- or two-story rear additions spanning the depth of the long, narrow lots. While nearby rear yard conditions vary between paved parking areas and grass lawns, the subject lot deviates from the standard pattern by being approximately twice as wide as surrounding parcels, accommodating a sizable side yard and driveway.

The proposed project involves a vertical expansion of the existing two-story rear addition to create a full third story. This scope includes a large, new, rear dormer, and additional deck, and new third-story living space. Nearby properties at 35 and 37 Washington Street establish context for this addition, as they feature similar large rear dormers that expand livable space into a full third story rather than restricting it under a traditional pitched roof.

Finally, the lot is located within both the Charlestown Neighborhood Design Overlay District (NDOD) and the Restricted Roof Structure District: Charlestown Neighborhood, requiring the issuance of a Conditional Use Permit for the proposed rooftop structures.



Zoning Analysis:

The proposed project requires a variance for an Insufficient Rear Yard and a Conditional Use Permit pursuant to Article 62-25.

The existing building at 59H-59 Washington Street features a zero-lot-line condition along the rear property line, creating a zero-foot setback where the 3F-2000 subdistrict requires a 20-foot rear yard. Although the project involves a rear addition, it does not alter how the existing structure aligns with the rear lot line, leaving the current setback violation unchanged. The proposed construction is concentrated immediately to the rear of the main two-and-a-half story structure and does not extend across the full length of the existing rear addition. Because this zero-lot-line condition is a product of the pre-existing structure that does not directly impact adjacent privately owned lots, and since the rear portion of the structure sharing a lot line falls outside the scope of work, relief is appropriate for the dimensional violation.

A significant proportion of the proposed rear addition consists of a dormer on the rear of the roof, triggering the requirement for a Conditional Use Permit under Article 62-25. The proposed dormer design is contextually consistent with other dormers found on properties fronting Washington Street. Additionally, the dormer will not alter the building's overall height or the slope of the existing roof, and will not be visible from Washington Street. Because the design complies with the requirements of Article 62-25, the Conditional Use Permit should be granted.

Finally, while the scope and scale of the proposed addition technically meet criteria for Planning Department Design Review under the Charlestown NDOD, no part of the addition will be visible from a public way. The addition is designed at a lower height than the primary residential structure, blocking it from view along Washington Street, while adjacent properties provide more than adequate screening from Union Street. As such, formal Planning Department Design Review is not recommended for this project.

Plans reviewed are titled "Washington St. Residences 59 Washington Street Charlestown, MA 02129" prepared by Studio47 Architects, Inc. and dated 03/10/2026.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1839249, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.



Planning Department

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Reviewed,

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Deputy Director of Zoning



Case	BOA1860034
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-06-10
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-07-23
Address	478 to 484 W Broadway South Boston 02127
Parcel ID	0601889000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	South Boston Neighborhood Multifamily Residential/ Local Services
Zoning Article	68
Project Description	Adding external signs to new restaurant. Associated with BOA1860029.
Relief Type	Variance
Violations	On-Premise Signs in Non-Residential Districts

Planning Context:

478 to 484 W Broadway sits at the heart of the mixed use area of South Boston. The building is on the corner of W Broadway and Dorchester Street, two main commercial corridors in the neighborhood. There are many similar uses in this area, including restaurants with takeout. The project is intending to add three types of signs to the exterior of the building, an illuminated window sign, a window mural exceeding thirty percent of the total glass area of the window, and a blade sign located away from the entrance.

Zoning Analysis:

The project is proposing an illuminated sign where one is not allowed, a violation of Article 11-2(c), and a wall mural that covers more than thirty percent of the total glass window area (11-2(c)). Additionally, the project intends to have more than one sign for the entrance of the establishment, a violation of 11-2(d)(i). All three signs require a variance. It should be noted that recent sign code modernizations have been passed with significant updates to Article 11. Under the new zoning, a wall mural is now considered an exempt sign, and would be allowed as-of-right, so long as it does not advertise the establishment. Furthermore, the blade sign and the illuminated signs are both allowed signs under new zoning. The signage for this project is contextually appropriate for this area given its location at a major commercial intersection along a major commercial corridor. The Planning Department recommends that the window sign be non illuminated and that all signs be on a dimmer. Additionally, there is no clearance height



labeled for the blade sign. It needs to be 10' minimum height if it's projecting into the public right of way and only 8' if it's over private property.

Plans reviewed are titled "Just Salad Stamped Set for ZBA" and were reviewed on 05/08/26.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1860034, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO/S: that the window sign be non-illuminated; that all signs be on a dimmer; that the blade sign have a 10' minimum clearance height over any projections into the publicly right of way and 8' minimum clearance height over any projections over private property.

Reviewed,

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Deputy Director of Zoning



Case	BOA1860029
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-06-10
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-07-23
Address	478 to 484 W Broadway South Boston 02127
Parcel ID	0601889000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	South Boston Neighborhood MFR/LS
Zoning Article	68
Project Description	The project intends to change its use from commercial space to commercial space and restaurant with takeout.
Relief Type	Conditional Use
Violations	Conditional use permit required

Planning Context:

478 to 484 W Broadway sits at the heart of the mixed use area of South Boston. The building is on the corner of W Broadway and Dorchester Street, two main commercial corridors in the neighborhood. There are many similar uses in this area, including restaurants with takeout. The project is proposing a change of use to add a restaurant with takeout on the first floor of the building, with no exterior renovations. The entrance to the restaurant will face the W Broadway and Dorchester Street intersection. The building has approximately 13 foot sidewalks that line either side and crosswalks at each street with street trees.

Zoning Analysis:

The project requires a conditional use permit to add a restaurant with takeout. This project is contextually appropriate given its location along a commercial corridor and adjacent to other takeout restaurants in the same subdistrict. The area, in general, is a highly-walkable, pedestrian-accessible area that is well suited for a takeout restaurant. Additionally, the change in use requires no construction or displacement, and thus no disruption to the surrounding area. The project meets the conditions of Article 6-3. A conditional use permit is recommended.

Plans reviewed are titled "Just Salad 160 480 West Broadway Unit 1 Boston, MA 02127" and were reviewed on 05/01/26.

Recommendation:



In reference to BOA1860029, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

Deputy Director of Zoning



Case	BOA1857382
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-06-03
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-07-23
Address	392 to 394 Geneva AV Dorchester 02122
Parcel ID	1501036000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	Dorchester Neighborhood LC
Zoning Article	65
Project Description	Remove the proviso to allow restaurant take out service which was granted to a previous petitioner only
Relief Type	Conditional Use
Violations	Remove Conditional Use Proviso

Planning Context:

The project site is located in a residential neighborhood on a mixed use corridor consisting of retail and service amenities. The take out operation within the existing restaurant required a conditional use and was granted in 2004. The project needs to go before the Zoning Board of Appeal in order to change the restriction that limits the take out operations to the previous owner. There are no structural alterations proposed, and the proposed use is staying consistent with the previous use.

Zoning Analysis:

The previously granted conditional use, including the take out proviso was granted only to the petitioner, the previous owner of the establishment. The only proposed change for this site is the ownership of the restaurant. The use remains consistent with existing neighborhood context. It is recommended that the conditional use continue under the new ownership and that the petitioner-specific proviso be removed.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1857382, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.



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Reviewed,

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Deputy Director of Zoning



Case	BOA1715115
ZBA Submitted Date	2025-04-28
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-07-23
Address	655 William T Morrissey BL Dorchester 02122
Parcel ID	1600220000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	Dorchester Neighborhood Community Commercial
Zoning Article	65
Project Description	Add the sale of used cars to the existing commercial uses on the lot
Relief Type	Variance
Violations	Forbidden Use

Planning Context:

The location of the proposed project is in the Neponset area of Dorchester, directly south of Savin Hill and almost a mile east of Fields Corner. In this area, major thoroughfares run parallel to each other: Morrissey Boulevard and I-93. Auto-related uses and transportation are common in this area. The proposed project is to allow an additional commercial use to an existing gas station and garage. The proposed commercial use is used car sales. Various commercial uses, including but not limited to new and used car sales, gas stations, and auto repair shops are commonly found along this corridor. It is also common for multiple of these uses to exist on the same lot. Notably, the site abuts a single-family residential district along the rear lot line.

Zoning Analysis:

The proposed project to add a commercial use to the existing commercial lot violated one use standard of the zoning code. The outdoor sale of new or used cars is a forbidden use in the Community Commercial District. According to Article 65-14, the Community Commercial District is meant to, "provid[e] a diversified commercial environment serving larger markets. All three types of Neighborhood Business Subdistricts encourage the development of neighborhood businesses that provide essential goods and services to, as well as jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities for, the Dorchester community."



The intended use will not cause a dangerous increase in intensity provided that the current parking (7 spaces) and site layout remains the same as indicated in the plans and that the site is properly screened with fencing along the rear lot line. Therefore, the forbidden use violation is recommended for approval of a variance.

Plans reviewed are titled "Site Plan of Land Located at 655 Morrissey Boulevard Dorchester, MA", prepared by Boston Survey, Inc., and dated 10/23/2024.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1715115, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

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Deputy Director of Zoning



Case	BOA1855992
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-05-29
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-07-23
Address	163 Beech ST Roslindale 02131
Parcel ID	2000689000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	Roslindale Neighborhood 1F-6000
Zoning Article	67
Project Description	This project encloses an existing deck at the rear of a home to create a sunroom.
Relief Type	Variance
Violations	Side Yard Insufficient Rear Yard Insufficient

Planning Context:

The project at 163 Beech St proposes enclosing an existing deck to create a sunroom. The property is located in a residential area of Roslindale that is made up of primarily one and two-unit homes with low to moderate lot coverage. Rear decks and porches are a common feature of homes in this area.

Zoning Analysis:

This proposal has triggered two zoning violations: side yard and rear yard insufficient.

The minimum required side yard setback is 10 feet and the required rear yard setback is 40 feet. The side yard setback is 6.5 feet on one side and 14.8 on the other. The rear yard setback is 32 feet. These are both existing nonconformities as the enclosure wraps around the existing deck and does not worsen the side or rear yard setbacks.

Plans reviewed are titled "Greenaway Residence 163 Beech St Roslindale, MA" prepared by Briar Bayer Architect, and dated May 1, 2026.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1855992, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.



Planning Department

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Reviewed,

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Deputy Director of Zoning



Case	BOA1851194
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-05-19
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-07-23
Address	16 High Rock WY Allston 02134
Parcel ID	2101083000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	Allston/Brighton Neighborhood 3F-4000
Zoning Article	51
Project Description	Erect a two-story rear addition to an existing single-unit residential building to expand the existing kitchen and primary bathroom and create a game/green room and an office. Renovations also include adding an entry vestibule.
Relief Type	Variance
Violations	Front Yard Insufficient Side Yard Insufficient Rear Yard Insufficient

Planning Context:

The proposed project seeks to renovate an existing single-unit residential building by erecting a two-story rear addition. This addition would expand the kitchen and primary bathroom and create a game/green room and an office. Renovations also include creating an entry vestibule. The existing building is a 2.5-story, three-bedroom residential building with a rear deck. No changes to the number of bedrooms are proposed. The first floor renovations include expanding the kitchen, converting an enlarged study into a game/green room, and creating an entry vestibule, where none currently exists. The second floor renovations include expanding the primary bedroom to create a walk-in closet and a primary bathroom. The lot directly abuts Ringer Park to its rear. There also appears to be common discrepancies with front, side, and rear yard within this street as many properties do not meet the minimum required yards. This project would further the goals outlined in the Allston-Brighton Needs Assessment (January 2024) as it would allow property owners to enhance their living spaces to meet their needs while preserving the existing structure.

Zoning Analysis:



The refusal letter states three citations: insufficient front yard, insufficient side yard, and insufficient rear yard.

The minimum required front yard is 20 feet while the project proposes a front yard of 10 feet. Relief is warranted due to the placement of the existing structure. The existing front yard is 15.1 feet. While the main addition is in the rear, the decrease in the front yard is due to the creation of an entry vestibule. The entry vestibule would have the proposed project align with the residential buildings on the street, many of which either have an entry vestibule or a covered porch. Additionally, many of these properties do not conform with the minimum front yard. For example at 10 High Rock Way, the stairs and porch start from the front property line. This is a case for zoning reform to align the dimensional regulations with the current built environment.

The minimum required side yard is 5 feet from a side lot line and 10 feet from an existing structure on an abutting lot with an aggregate no less than 15 feet. The project proposes a west side yard of 6.2 feet and an east side yard of 5 feet. Because the aggregate is 12.6 feet, it does not meet the 15 feet requirement. However, relief is warranted because of the expansion of living space. Because this is an expansion of an existing structure, the west side yard did not change to continue to accommodate the driveway to the existing garage. However, the east side yard decreased to 5 feet to replace the existing deck with a 1-story addition that would expand the kitchen. However, while the aggregate does not meet the 15' requirement, it still meets the 5 feet from the side lot line and 10 feet from a project on an abutting site as it is 17.5 feet from the structure on the abutting lot.

The minimum required rear yard is 30 feet, while the project proposes a rear yard of 27.7 feet. Relief is warranted because of the size and dimensions of the lot. The lot measures approximately 65 feet by 72 feet, and maintaining a 30-foot rear yard would significantly limit the developable area of the lot and the ability to provide living space comparable to the surrounding residential structures along High Rock Way. The requested relief is associated with the proposed rear addition and deck, which would allow for an expansion of living space while maintaining the existing structure.

Because the rear yard of the proposed building directly abuts Ringer Park, it will also undergo Parks Design Review as per Ordinance 7.4-11.



The plans reviewed are titled ZBA REFUSED EPLANS_16 HIGH ROCK WAY_ALT1819423 and are dated February 3, 2026. They were prepared by Salib Design.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1851194, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO/S: that plans shall be submitted to the Department of Parks and Recreation for review.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kathleen Onuf".

Deputy Director of Zoning