



Planning Department

CITY of BOSTON

MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: Joanne Marques
Planning Department

DATE: June 3, 2026

RE: Planning Department Recommendations

Please find attached, for your information, Planning Department recommendations for the June 11, 2026 Board of Appeals Hearing.

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



Case	BOA1822545
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-02-20
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-06-11
Address	5 to 7 Prescott PL Allston 02134
Parcel ID	2201141000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	Allston/Brighton Neighborhood 2F-5000
Zoning Article	51
Project Description	The proposed project includes remodeling the existing half bathroom and adding a three-quarter bathroom on the third floor, renovating the front two-level deck/porch, upgrading the side entrance with a new first-floor door, remodeling the second-floor kitchen, and adding a dormer on the left side of the attic.
Relief Type	Variance
Violations	FAR Excessive Height Excessive (stories) Side Yard Insufficient Rear Yard Insufficient

Planning Context:

The project is located at 5–7 Prescott Place in Allston within a residential area defined by two- and three-family homes on compact lots with limited setbacks. The surrounding neighborhood reflects a range of densities and includes many properties with longstanding dimensional nonconformities.

The proposal consists primarily of interior renovations and modest exterior modifications, including a dormer and porch improvements, rather than a substantial expansion. These changes are consistent with reinvestment patterns in Allston-Brighton, where incremental updates are commonly used to improve existing housing while maintaining neighborhood character.

Zoning Analysis:

The proposed project includes interior renovations, a dormer addition at the attic level, and exterior improvements to the porch and entrances, resulting in a modest increase in gross floor area. Zoning relief is required for the following reasons:



Article 51, Section 9, Floor Area Ratio (FAR): The proposed gross floor area is approximately 2,674 square feet on a 2,561 square foot lot, resulting in an FAR of 1.04, which exceeds the allowable FAR of 0.6. A variance is required. The increase is modest and primarily associated with the attic dormer rather than a substantial expansion of the building footprint.

Article 51, Section 9, Building Height (Stories): The proposed building includes three stories, exceeding the allowable 2.5 stories. A variance is required. This condition reflects a typical attic expansion and does not significantly alter the perceived scale of the structure.

Article 51, Section 9, Side Yard and Rear Yard: The property is required to maintain a minimum side yard of 10 feet and a rear yard of 30 feet. The existing structure does not meet these requirements. A variance is required. As the building footprint is not being expanded, the relief sought reflects existing nonconforming conditions rather than new encroachments.

The proposal maintains residential use and introduces modest improvements to the existing structure. The requested relief reflects limitations of the current zoning framework, particularly in relation to existing lot and building conditions, rather than impacts created by the project.

Plans titled "5-7 Prescott Place, Allston, MA," prepared by ARK Design & Build, dated November 12, 2025, were reviewed in support of this recommendation.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1822545, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

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

Deputy Director of Zoning



Case	BOA1844274
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-04-29
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-06-11
Address	68 Addington RD West Roxbury 02132
Parcel ID	2007086000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	West Roxbury Neighborhood 1F-6000
Zoning Article	56
Project Description	Renovate an existing single-unit residence and create an addition over the existing living space.
Relief Type	Variance
Violations	Front Yard Insufficient Side Yard Insufficient

Planning Context:

68 Addington Road sits in a low-density residential area of West Roxbury. The proposed project adds an addition to the existing living space of the single-unit dwelling on the lot. Multiple structures in the surrounding context have additions to the structure. Furthermore, multiple lots on Addington Road are narrow lengthwise and have a front lot line that slopes upward. The existing structure sits towards Addington Road and leaves about 45 ft towards the rear lot line. The proposed project asks to erect an addition on the second floor of an existing living space. The addition will be on the northeast side and will create a larger bedroom, multiple new closets and a new bathroom for the structure.

Zoning Analysis:

The zoning refusal letter states two violations of the Zoning Code: Front Yard Insufficient (Article 56, Section 8) and Side Yard Insufficient (Article 56, Section 8). The proposed new addition worsens the violations for both the front and side yard setbacks. Within this neighborhood, it is required for the front yard setback to be 20 ft and the side yard setback to be 10 ft. The existing front yard setback has a maximum depth of 28.5 ft to the southwest of the building and a minimum depth of 18 ft to the northeast of the building, this is due to the front lot line sitting on a diagonal. Furthermore, the southwest side yard setback sits at 11.1 ft to 11 ft and the northeast side yard setback sits at 9 ft. With the creation of the addition, the front yard setback continues



to worsen its violation (following the diagonal to the northeast) with the setback becoming 14.2 ft. The addition worsens the side yard setback to the northeast with the setback sitting at 9 to 8 ft. These violations are due to the placement of the existing building and the shape of the lot. Nevertheless, while these violations are worsening the front yard or side yard setback, the dwelling is generally in context with surrounding properties and preserves adequate spacing to the neighboring properties. Furthermore, this project provides an example for the Neighborhood Housing initiative which works on updating zoning to better match existing conditions of neighborhoods.

Plans are called ALT1807718 Zoning Refusal Stamped ePlans and were reviewed on 3/4/2026. They were prepared by GSD.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1844274, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

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

Deputy Director of Zoning



Case	BOA1821584
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-02-17
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-06-11
Address	6 Cranmore RD Hyde Park 02136
Parcel ID	1809886002
Zoning District & Subdistrict	Hyde Park Neighborhood 1F-6000
Zoning Article	69
Project Description	The project seeks to mount a solar panel in their rear yard.
Relief Type	Conditional Use
Violations	Accessory Buildings in Side or Rear Yard

Planning Context:

The property is a one-unit dwelling on a corner lot in Hyde Park. The lot is surrounded by other homes of similar dimensions. The proponent seeks to build an addition to the lot to accommodate a solar panel. On further observation to the surrounding properties, some of them already contain sheds of similar shapes and size as the proposed project. Particularly in the lots of 1060 Truman Parkway, 1068 Truman Parkway and 51 Badger Road suggesting that this project is similar to the existing context of the area.

Zoning Analysis:

The proposed project is in violation of side and rear back depths. However, the proposal isn't unique to the neighborhood as many homes have similar preexisting conditions. In this case, there's adequate space for the proposal as it will be 11.8 feet from the rear yard, and 20.6 feet from the front yard. The plans reviewed are titled, "6 Cranmore Road in Hyde Park" and were prepared by C & G Survey Company and dated 12/3/25.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1821584, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.



Planning Department

CITY of BOSTON

Reviewed,

Kathleen Onuf

Deputy Director of Zoning



Case	BOA1772126
ZBA Submitted Date	2025-09-04
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-06-11
Address	31 Mellen ST Dorchester 02124
Parcel ID	1704706000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	Dorchester Neighborhood 1F-7000
Zoning Article	65
Project Description	The project seeks to remodel an existing rear yard deck on the first floor and create two new rear yard decks for both floors in a two-unit building.
Relief Type	Conditional Use
Violations	Rear Yard Insufficient

Planning Context:

The proposed project sits at 31 Mellen Street, in a primarily residential neighborhood 0.3 miles from Dorchester Avenue's Ashmont station. The proponent seeks to demolish an old deck in the rear yard, with some additional repairs to the building. Following demolition of the existing deck, the proponent will establish a new deck on the first and second floors, further aligning the property's style with neighboring homes. This project's renovation aligns with the Planning Department's Neighborhood Housing initiative where these small scale renovations don't require review and approval.

Zoning Analysis:

According to Article 65 of the zoning code, properties must have a minimum of 40 ft in rear yard setback; this site currently sits at 41.5 ft and the proposed changes will place it at 33.6 ft. Given the small decrease in dimensional changes, and that many surrounding properties have yards around 30-40 feet, which is less than that the zoning demands, relief is deemed appropriate. Furthermore when looking at neighboring parcels such as 22 Mellen Street, 30 Mellen Street where the parcels are of similar shape and sizes, the rear yards are less than what's required in Article 65.

The plans reviewed are titled, " New Rear Decks at 31 Mellen Street Dorchester " and were prepared by Thomas McGrath Architects and dated 11/11/24.



Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1772126, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

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

Deputy Director of Zoning



Case	BOA1823198
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-02-24
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-06-11
Address	682 to 684 E Fifth ST South Boston 02127
Parcel ID	0604007000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	South Boston Neighborhood MFR
Zoning Article	68
Project Description	This project proposes to change the official building use from a single-unit dwelling and store to a two-unit dwelling, including minor interior renovations to the existing, non-conforming basement dwelling unit and modifying two points of rear egress to the upper unit.
Relief Type	Variance
Violations	Lot Area Insufficient Parking or Loading Insufficient Basement Units Forbidden

Planning Context:

682-684 East Fifth Street is located in the South Boston Neighborhood in the Multifamily Residential (MFR) subdistrict. The existing structure was constructed in 1885 as a single-unit dwelling, significantly set back from the public way. In 1924, construction of an addition was approved, extending the basement level to the front property line. As the subject site slopes down towards the street, the extension of the basement became accessible at street level, creating a boot-shaped building. This addition was utilized as a store for many years, until being occupied as a studio dwelling unit, taxed as such as early as 2003.

The subject property shares a party wall and similar development history with 686 East Fifth Street to the east, which also has a basement/first story extension to the front property line. No designated on or off-site parking is associated with the property, as is common in this part of the South Boston neighborhood. Surrounding development includes a mix of one-, two-, and three-unit dwellings on similar sized properties.

The subject proposal includes minor interior renovation to the existing studio dwelling unit, referred to as the basement unit due to its creation by extension of the existing basement. These renovations will reconfigure the existing bathroom and slightly expand the livable area.



The proposal will also modify two exterior points of egress to the upper level dwelling unit, accessed by stairs in the rear yard.

Overlays associated with the subject property include the Restricted Roof and Restricted Parking overlay districts.

Zoning Analysis:

While the property was originally permitted for one dwelling unit, a second, studio dwelling unit has been utilized on the property for over twenty years. The current owner purchased the property in 2025 and desires to legalize the second unit, changing the official occupancy from one to two dwelling units. The project was cited in violation to Article 68 regarding off street parking, basement units, and insufficient lot area, as discussed below.

Off-Street Parking: Per Section 33 of Article 68, "If a Structure existing on the effective date of this Article is altered or extended so as to increase its Gross Floor Area or the number of Dwelling Units, only the additional Gross Floor Area or the additional number of Dwelling Units shall be counted in computing the off-street parking facilities required." The official change of occupancy from one-unit to two-units as well as the expansion of the studio unit trigger the requirement for one additional parking space on site. Given the pre-existing nature of the subject unit, the lack of on-site parking present in the surrounding area, and the site's proximity (within 3 blocks) to four bus line connection points, Staff supports a variance to the required parking.

Basement Units: Basement dwelling units are strictly prohibited in the South Boston neighborhood. Article 2 of the Zoning Code defines Basement as "A building story where more than thirty-five percent (35%) of the story's height is below grade" and Grade as the "average elevation of the nearest sidewalk at the line of the street or streets on which the building abuts." Since the studio, "basement unit," as referred to in the plans, is accessed at street level and no portion of the story is lower than 1'2" below grade, the story is not classified as a basement by Code. Furthermore, the Staff does not believe the area to be at risk of future flooding as the property is located outside of the City of Boston's adopted Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District and the FEMA's 2025 Flood Hazard Area. The unit is therefore in compliance with this regulation and no variance is needed.

Insufficient Lot Area: In the subject zoning district, a minimum of 2,000 square feet are required with an additional 1,000 square feet per additional dwelling unit. The subject property is 2,125



square feet, a typical lot size in the area. The lot size is an existing condition and is not being worsened by this case. Furthermore, the lot size is not uncommon in the South Boston neighborhood for one-, two-, and three-unit dwellings. Staff supports a variance to this requirement and notes that this requirement is a case for future zoning reform.

Plans reviewed are titled "Change of Occupancy from a One-Family Dwelling and Store, to a Two-Family Dwelling 682-684 E 5th St South Boston, MA 02127," prepared by Lighthouse Architecture & Design, and dated January 2026.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1823198, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen O'Neil".

Deputy Director of Zoning



Case	BOA1833990
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-03-27
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-06-11
Address	306 Northern AV Boston 02210
Parcel ID	0602674045, 0602674225
Zoning District & Subdistrict	South Boston & Harborpark I-2 & South Boston Maritime Economy Reserve
Zoning Article	8
Project Description	This project proposes a seasonal outdoor patio (beer garden) as an accessory use to existing beer hall use.
Relief Type	Variance
Violations	Forbidden Use

Planning Context:

306 Northern Ave is associated with Mass Bay Brewing Co.'s (d.b.a Harpoon Brewery). The site is located in two zoning districts: the General Industrial subdistrict of the South Boston neighborhood and the South Boston Maritime Economy Reserve within the Harborpark zoning district, in the area commonly referred to as Seaport. The site is presently used as a beer hall with associated parking. The proposed seasonal outdoor patio will take the space of 27 existing, on-site parking spaces that are utilized by Staff. Various off-site parking options exist in the area on surrounding blocks for customer use.

The area is characterized by former industrial buildings and surface parking lots being transformed to residential, commercial, and office spaces. A bus stop is located at the corner of the site closest to the proposed patio serving MBTA bus Route 4 and the Silver Line 2 bus and a protected bike lane runs alongside the subject property. Adjacent to the proposed outdoor patio is an outdoor recreation/beer garden use known as Pickleball Social Club.

The site is within the Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District (CFROD) and a 2025 FEMA Flood Hazard Area. As it is within a Waterfront Designated Port Area, it is subject to Chapter 91 regulations. The area is also within the South Boston Restricted Parking District and an MHC Historic Inventory Area.

Zoning Analysis:



Accessory, outdoor patio use is a forbidden use in both the General Industrial (I-2) zoning subdistrict and the Maritime Economy Reserve subdistrict. This site's location is particular as it straddles the lines between zoning districts. Only a small portion of the site (approximately one eighth) lies within the Maritime Economy Reserve subdistrict, and the beer hall itself (primary use) lies entirely within the General Industrial subdistrict.

Staff recommends approval of this temporary use due to the use's general allowance in the area and the site specific location at an existing beer hall that supports ongoing successful industrial operations.

Plans reviewed are titled "Harpoon Patio 2026," prepared by Johnson Osband Architecture and Design and dated February 2026.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1833990, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.

Reviewed,

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

Deputy Director of Zoning



Case	BOA1821600
ZBA Submitted Date	2026-02-17
ZBA Hearing Date	2026-06-11
Address	60 Elm ST Charlestown 02129
Parcel ID	0200241000
Zoning District & Subdistrict	Charlestown Neighborhood 3F-2000
Zoning Article	62
Project Description	The proposed project is seeking to renovate the existing unfinished basement to add living space, storage, and a bathroom.
Relief Type	Variance
Violations	FAR Excessive

Planning Context:

60 Elm Street is located in a residential part of Charlestown on a block characterized by row houses and semi-detached two unit buildings. The building is similar in character and scale to abutting buildings and the greater neighborhood. The building sits one block off of Bunker Hill Street, a major thoroughfare and commercial corridor for the neighborhood. The proposed project intends to renovate the existing unfinished basement to add living space, a bathroom, kitchenette, and storage.

Zoning Analysis:

This project violates the maximum floor area ratio (FAR) for this subdistrict.

60 Elm Street is a single unit building that sits in a 3F-2000 subdistrict. The maximum allowed FAR is 2.0. The current FAR is 2.5. With the renovation of the basement, it is reasonable to expect an increase in FAR. The proposed renovation increases the FAR to approximately 2.6. The interior renovation will have no impact on the neighborhood character or scale of the building. Relief is recommended.

Plans reviewed are titled “60 Elm Street” and were reviewed on 02/04/26.

Recommendation:

In reference to BOA1821600, The Planning Department recommends APPROVAL.



Planning Department

CITY of BOSTON

Reviewed,

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

Deputy Director of Zoning