

September 2, 2021

To the Board of Adjustment:

We are writing this letter to share that Elyse Hambacher and Ashley Dickenson discussed the building project at 125 Elwyn Ave.

Elyse and Ashley shared the building plans and elevations, including plans to relocate one of the units above a newly constructed garage, decreasing the overall footprint of the main house, and adding dormers to the main house. We've concluded that it will not change the essential characteristics of the neighborhood and not negatively impact the surrounding properties.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristin Trapane-Otis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "K" and "T".

Benjamin Otis  
Kristin Trapane-Otis

To: Portsmouth Zoning Board of Adjustment

Subject: Comments for 10/26/2021 BOA Meeting for 52 Prospect Street

From: Jim Strack, 49 Prospect Street, Portsmouth, NH

I fully support the Applicant's request for relief from the zoning ordinances for the following reasons:

1. Request for Relief from the 10' Side Setback requirement. The existing deck and stairs do not currently meet the 10' side setback requirement. It also appears that part of the existing deck and stairs are on the neighbor's property (Dwg AD-02). While not fully meeting the side setback requirement, the proposed renovation will increase the current side setback and eliminate a potential legal issue by permanently removing the portion of the existing deck and stairs that are currently not on the Applicants property.
2. Request for Relief from the Allowable Building Coverage. The existing house has 26.0 percent coverage, so it does not meet the maximum coverage of 25.0 percent. Designing a renovation that provides the Applicant with the desired improvements while optimizing the flow between the existing and new space is a challenging undertaking. It's clear the Applicant and their Architect worked diligently to minimize expanding the Building Coverage and are only asking to increase the Building Coverage from 26.0 to 30.4 percent.
3. Request for Relief to Allow a Nonconforming Building to be Expanded. If the lot were conforming (7,500 square-feet) , the proposed renovation would only have 12.0 percent coverage and would conform. A conforming lot would most likely also have compliant side setbacks. The Nonconforming Lot issue is the direct result of the existing lot only containing 2,980 square feet which, unfortunately, the Applicant cannot change.
4. Additional Information for the Boards Consideration:
  - a. Not Visible from the Street. The existing deck and stairs at the back corner of the house are currently partially visible from the street (behind the lattice fencing). The proposed renovation will locate the new deck and stairs at the back of the property where they will not be visible from the street.
  - b. Impact on the Historic District. While not a specific factor in the request for Zoning Relief, it is important to note that as part of the renovation, the Applicant will be replacing the existing aluminum siding with siding that is more appropriate for a Historic District. The Applicant will also be replacing all the windows in the house with windows that are more energy efficient, something that is important in our fight against global warming.
  - c. Betterment to the Neighborhood. The proposed renovation will certainly be a betterment to the Neighborhood. It will transform a home with two bedrooms into a three-bedroom home with an additional bathroom.
  - d. Preparing for the Future. The renovation will add two offices. With more employees working from home now and into the foreseeable future, this renovation helps provide a home that will accommodate a changing world.
  - e. Stability. The Applicant has owned the home for about 15 years and have become an integral and valued part of the neighborhood. They are clearly not looking to buy, quickly renovate and then flip the house for profit. They are only asking for Zoning relief to allow them to continue to enjoy their home as their children grow.
5. As stated above, I fully support the Applicant's request for zoning relief.

**RE: 93 Pleasant St**  
**Meeting: 10-26-21**

Dear Members of the Zoning Board of Adjustments,

***Please do not approve any of the variances as requested by 93 Pleasant St.*** The variances requested are strictly to allow **for more units** and none are to try and meet **the bare minimum of parking**. These same variances could be used to provide the minimum of parking if presented differently. This building only needs to provide 35 spaces for 52 units and large business space. **Minimum parking is a construction standard!** **Why approve more units when the basics are not being met?** Would variances for more units be approved, if there weren't enough egress methods? The very minimums of construction standards and ordinances are not met by over 50% yet variances to allow more units are being requested.

Raising the height of the basement from the presented 10 or 12 feet to a mere 15 feet, the **minimum** parking requirements could be met, using lift parking without impacting the abutting neighborhoods.

Another way would be to use the required liner building along Court Street for parking. Per the Staff Report: *"The addition along Court Street will consist of residential units, including on the ground floor level, which is **not allowed** in the Downtown Overlay District (DOD). **One of the parking spaces** is located on the ground floor and the Ordinance requires a liner building along that portion, **which is not proposed**, thus the need for a variance."* Using the entire ground floor on Court St for parking, as has been approved at other sites in the city, would require the same variances and would provide more positive community impacts within the 5 Criteria.

This development plans on providing 18 spaces which they have already shared **they will be charging their tenants to use**. A lift system or using the liner building or both would be the opportunity to double their revenue and reduce the impact on the city's already overburdened parking system.

They have done a magnificent job in preserving the look and feel of the old Elks building! Please don't be fooled into not recognizing the negative impact granting the variances to allow for more units and NOT providing even the minimum parking will have.

More and more variances for more units are asked for from all boards and yet no consideration is given for providing the bare minimum of parking right from the get go!

Providing variances is about the rules and regulations and how they impact the neighborhoods that surround them and the entire city. IT IS the WHOLE picture!

Thank you for your consideration,

Elizabeth Bratter  
159 McDonough St  
Property Owner

RE: 93 Pleasant St  
Meeting: ZBA 11/16/21

Dear Members of the Zoning Board of Adjustments,

11/12/21

**Please do NOT rule on all these presented variances as one but consider each for its individual impacts and values for the abutting neighborhoods.**

Please take a moment and look at the pictures submitted by the applicant (pages 16 and 18) the east view from the parking lot and the east view from Court St. Notice all the parking spaces behind the original building (about 27).

[http://files.cityofportsmouth.com/files/planning/apps/PleasantSt\\_93/PleasantSt\\_93\\_BOA\\_111621.pdf](http://files.cityofportsmouth.com/files/planning/apps/PleasantSt_93/PleasantSt_93_BOA_111621.pdf)

***Before this board is a request for a variance from 10.642 regarding ground floor uses within the Downtown Overlay District.*** The request being made is to allow 15 residential units (prohibited), 1 parking space (prohibited) and 1852 sf of commercial space (allowed). This request should be denied because allowing the number to increase from 37 allowed units to 52 units will not meet the 5 required criteria. *It should be noted that provided 18 parking spaces will be charged for.*

1. It will be *contrary to public interest* and that of the developer because they will not be able to meet the required parking minimum which under the DOD is 35 spaces *if these units are added*. Creating more parking issues on the South End streets and already overfilled privately owned shared parking areas are contrary to public interest.
2. The DOD was established to promote economic vitality by providing a 4 parking space reduction as well as reduced parking requirements then previously granted in the downtown area. Under the old rules 68 spaces were needed, now only 35. The ground floor may not be suitable for all commercial uses but *office spaces would fit and require no parking per the DOD*.
3. There would be NO justice for the abutters or the property owner in granting this variance for residential units on the ground floor while already being short the minimum parking for the allowed residential units on the 2nd and 3rd levels. *Justice would be served if only parking were added to the ground floor.*
4. Parking is at a premium in Portsmouth. When a neighborhood has parking issues property values are affected. Houses with no parking in such a neighborhood are difficult to sell, especially when the nearest grocery store, doctors' office and pharmacy are not close. Granting this variance will negatively impact the abutting CD4-L1 neighborhood (staff notes pg 16) because it already has well known serious "overflow" parking issues and *this development is not able to meet the minimum to begin with!*
5. There is no hardship for this property. *The units could easily be converted into office space or the entire ground floor could be converted into parking.* Granting this variance for this use, will only add to the parking hardship for the abutting neighborhood and the entire community. Residential units must be open to the general public according to fair housing regulations. The type of apartment does not ensure no vehicles will be owned.

Thank you for your consideration of this request to deny a variance for 10.642 until the minimum requirements of regulating ordinances are met.

Respectfully,  
Elizabeth Bratter  
159 McDonough St (property owner)

**From:** [Brendan Cooney](#)  
**To:** [Planning Info](#)  
**Subject:** Abutter comment for November 16, 2021 meeting of the Board of Adjustment  
**Date:** Saturday, November 6, 2021 2:20:37 PM

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To the Members of the Board of Adjustment,

I am writing in support of the request by Cyrus B. and Robin B. Noble, Owners of 15 Mount Vernon Street, regarding needed relief from the Zoning Ordinance in order to build an addition over the existing garage. Besides being necessary for the proposed renovations to the Noble home, I believe that the requested variances will not have any negative impacts on the essential character of the surrounding neighborhood, nor will they have any foreseeable negative impact on abutting properties.

Thank you for your attention and for your service to the City.

Brendan Cooney  
57 Mount Vernon St  
Portsmouth NH

**Perry Silverstein  
25 Market Street  
P.O. Box 91  
Portsmouth, NH 03802  
(603) 767-1210**

11/15/21

To the Portsmouth Board of Adjustment:

From: Perry Silverstein

RE: Comments on the development of 93 Pleasant Street

Members of the Board of Adjustment:

My name is Perry Silverstein. I currently have twenty rental units in Portsmouth. They are in the Market Street area, close to Market Square.

Of the twenty units, five are residential. One of my residential rentals is a small studio apartment of about 300 sq. ft. In this studio I have always had a tenant with a car. I have even had couples in this small apartment, living together, and they have each had a car. Not once in twenty-six years with all my apartments have I ever had somebody living in any of my apartments without a car. Parking is always a primary concern for every residential tenant.

My tenants which are retailers, restaurant workers, office tenants, and residential tenants all struggle to find on-street parking and have trouble finding parking in the municipal lot by the pond. The argument made by Mr. McNabb that his proposed project really needs 18 parking spaces for 51 residential units seems ludicrous to me based on my experience.

I would also add that the lack of stores selling necessities for residential tenants (including groceries and grocery products) means that downtown tenants are going to need and have cars.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely

Perry Silverstein