

TOWN OF WELLESLEY



MASSACHUSETTS

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

888 WORCESTER STREET • SUITE 160 • WELLESLEY, MA 02482

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PETER COVO

NOV 19 2025
WELLESLEY'S OFFICE
WELLESLEY, MA 02482
11:12:33 AM

ZBA 2025-64

Petition of Gibson Donohue
17 Belair Road

Pursuant to due notice, the Special Permit Granting Authority held a Remote Public Hearing on Thursday, November 6, 2025, on the petition of Gibson Donohue requesting a Special Permit/Finding pursuant to the provisions of Section 5.1 and Section 6.3 of the Zoning Bylaw that construction of a second story addition over an existing nonconforming one-story structure with less than required front yard setbacks to Birch Road, on a 7,500 square foot corner lot in a Single Residence District in which the minimum lot size is 10,000 square feet, at 17 Belair Road, shall not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing nonconforming structure.

On October 8, 2025, the Petitioner filed a request for a hearing before this Authority, and thereafter, due notice of the hearing was given by mailing and publication.

Present at the public hearing were Gibson Donahue, the Petitioner, and John Bartek.

Mr. Donohue said that he and his wife Christiana have owned the property at 17 Belair Road for nearly four years. He said that the request is for a special permit for a vertical expansion over a pre-existing nonconforming one-story rear addition that was built in 2011. He said that the property is a 7,500 square foot nonconforming corner lot in a 10,000 square foot district. He said that the front yard setback to Birch Road is nonconforming at 22.3 feet. He said that the proposed construction will maintain the existing footprint and will not create new nonconformities.

Mr. Donohue said that a similar two-story addition was approved by the Board in 2002 but was never built. He said that the current proposal is more modest and more conforming than the 2002 approval. He said that the setbacks will remain unchanged. He said that the TLAG will be 3,147 square feet, which is below the 3,600 square foot trigger. He said that existing ridge height of 31 feet 6 inches will be maintained, with the addition lower at 28 feet 10 inches. He said that lot coverage will be unchanged at 1,548 square feet, or 20.6 percent.

No member of the public wished to speak to the petition.

Statement of Facts

The subject property is located at 17 Belair Road, on a 7,500 square foot corner lot in a Single Residence District in which the minimum lot size is 10,000 square feet, with a minimum front yard setback of 23.2 feet to Belair Road and a minimum front yard setback of 11.3 feet to Birch Road, where 30 feet is required, and a minimum side yard setback of 15.7 feet where 20 feet is required.

The Petitioner is requesting a Special Permit/Finding pursuant to the provisions of Section 5.1 and Section 6.3 of the Zoning Bylaw that construction of a second story addition over an existing nonconforming one-story structure with less than required front yard setbacks to Birch Road, on a 7,500 square foot corner lot in a Single Residence District in which the minimum lot size is 10,000 square feet, shall not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing nonconforming structure.

Zoning History, a Plot Plan, dated 9/26/25, stamped by Brendan P. Sullivan, Professional Land Surveyor, #46922, Floor Plans and Elevation Drawings, dated 9/30/25, prepared by Bartick Design Studio, TLAG Affidavit, dated 9/30/25, and photographs were submitted.

On November 6, 2025, the Planning Board reviewed the petition and recommended that a special permit be approved.

Decision

This Authority has made a careful study of the materials submitted and the information presented at the hearing.

It is the opinion of this Authority that construction of a second story addition over an existing nonconforming one-story structure with less than required front yard setbacks to Birch Road, on a 7,500 square foot corner lot in a Single Residence District in which the minimum lot size is 10,000 square feet will result in the intensification of existing nonconformities, will not result in additional nonconformities, and will not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing nonconforming structure.

Therefore, a Special Permit is granted, as voted unanimously by this Authority at the Public Hearing, for construction of a second story addition over an existing nonconforming one-story structure with less than required front yard setbacks to Birch Road, in accordance with the submitted plans.

The Building Inspector is hereby authorized to issue a permit for construction upon receipt and approval of a building application and detailed construction plans.

If construction has not commenced, except for good cause, this Special Permit shall expire two years after the date time stamped on this decision.

APPEALS FROM THIS DECISION,
IF ANY, SHALL BE MADE PURSUANT
TO GENERAL LAWS, CHAPTER 40A,
SECTION 17, AND SHALL BE FILED
WITHIN 20 DAYS AFTER THE DATE
OF FILING OF THIS DECISION IN THE
OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK.

Robert W. Levy (lrm)
Robert W. Levy, Acting Chairman

Walter B. Adams (lrm)
Walter B. Adams

Derek B. Redgate (lrm)
Derek B. Redgate

ZBA 2025-64
Applicant Gibson Donohue
Address 17 Belair Road

2025 MA 19 P112:33
WELLESLEY MA (12.482)
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
WELLESLEY, MA 02482

NOT VALID FOR RECORDING UNTIL CERTIFIED BY TOWN CLERK

In accordance with Section 11 of Chapter 40A of the Massachusetts General Laws, I hereby certify that twenty (20) days have elapsed after the within decision was filed in the office of the Town Clerk for the Town of Wellesley, and that no appeal has been filed, or that if such appeal has been filed, that it has been dismissed or denied.

Date:

Attest:

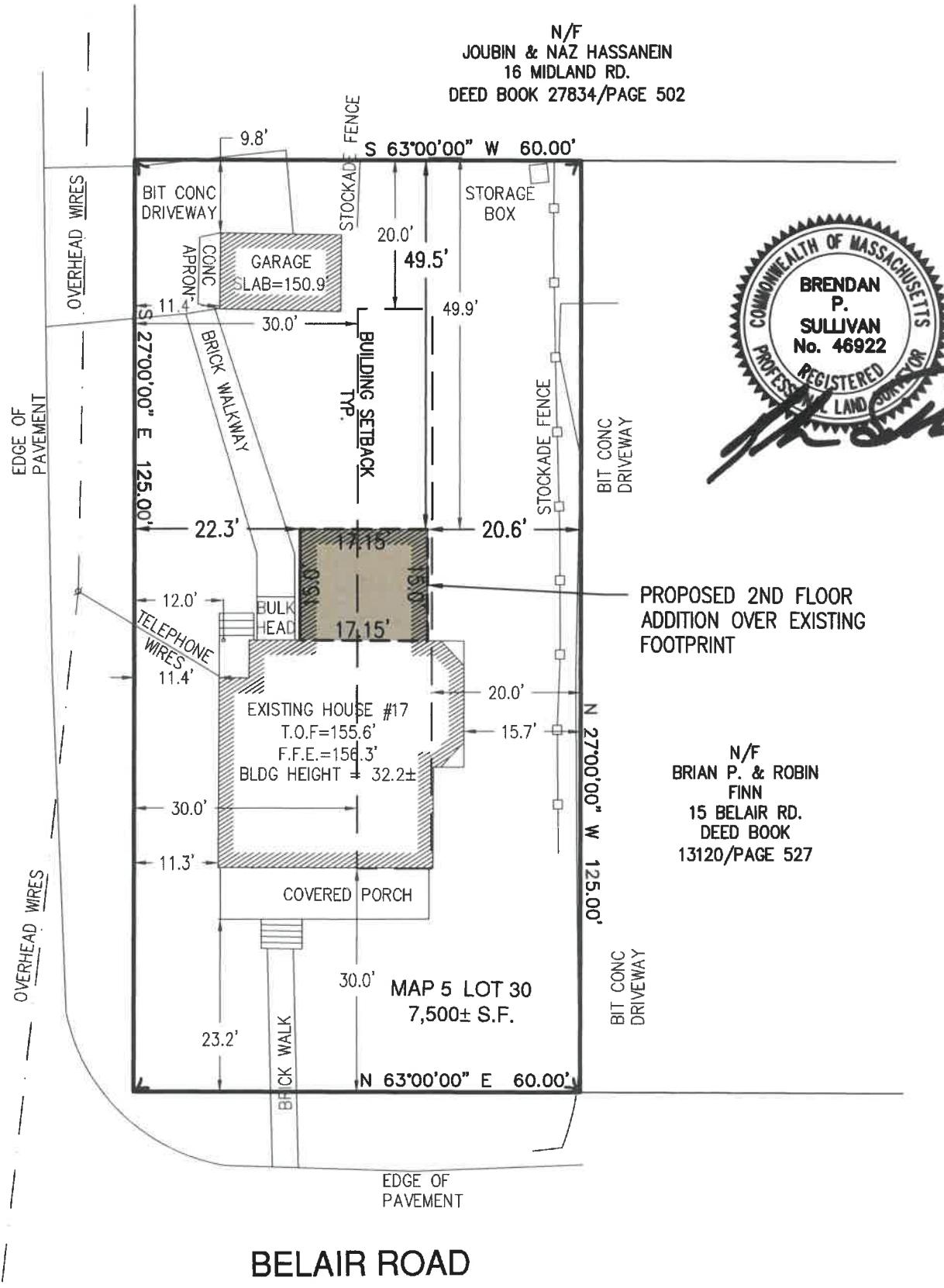
Cathryn Jane Kato
Town Clerk

cc: Planning Board
Inspector of Buildings
lrm

PLOT PLAN



BIRCH ROAD

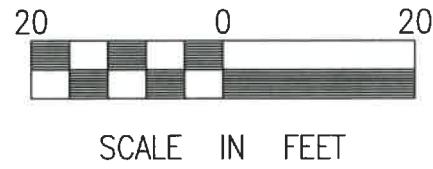


FEMA:

LOCUS LIES IN F.I.R.M. ZONE X AS SHOWN ON COMMUNITY PANEL NO. 25021C0016F DATED JULY 8, 2025.

OWNER OF RECORD:

GIBSON WILLIAM DONOHUE AND
CHRISTIANA HUNNEWELL DONOHUE
17 BELAIR ROAD
WELLESLEY, MA 02482
ASSESSOR'S PARCEL: #5-30
DEED BOOK: 40469, PAGE: 71



ZONING REQUIREMENTS
SINGLE RESIDENCE 10

REQUIRED	
AREA	10,000 SF
FRONTAGE	60 FEET
MINIMUM YARDS:	
FRONT*	30 FEET
SIDE*	20 FEET
REAR	20 FEET

*CORNER LOT HAS TWO FRONTS AND
TWO SIDES AS PER BUILDING INSPECTOR

17 BELAIR ROAD, WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS



Merrill
Engineers and Land Surveyors

427 Columbia Road
Hanover, MA 02339
781-826-9200

362 Court Street
Plymouth, MA 02360
508-746-6060

448 N. Falmouth Hwy, Unit A
North Falmouth, MA 02556
508-563-2183

Marine Division:
26 Union Street
Plymouth, MA 02360
508-746-6060

merrillinc.com

CLIENT:

GIBSON DONOHUE
17 BELAIR ROAD
WELLESLEY, MA 02482

MERRILL PROJECT #:	25-377
SCALE:	1" = 20'
DATE:	9/26/2025
DRAWN BY:	XO/BPS
SHEET 1 of 1 © Merrill Corporation	

Trans#: 85958 Open: YSANCHEZ

Book: 42819 Page: 102 Inst#: 87487
Ctl#: 227 Rec:12-10-2025 @ 11:14:45a
WELL 17 BELAIR ROAD

DOC	DESCRIPTION	TRANS AMT
<hr/>		
DECISION		
10.00	rec fee	10.00
50.00	Surcharge	50.00
5.00	Tech.Surcharge	5.00
Postage/Handling Fee		1.00
State Fee \$40.00		40.00
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Total fees:		106.00
*** Total charges:		106.00
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CHECK PM 245		106.00



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