

Kim Johnson

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, December 7, 2024 9:57 AM
To: Planning
Subject: Letter to ZBA: 262 Virginia Road

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To: Theo Kindermans
Chair, Zoning Board of Appeals
Town of Concord

7 December 2024

I am writing to oppose the approval of the application for a special permit for the Additional Dwelling Unit (ADU) at 262 Virginia Road as described in the revised application submitted 10 October 2024.

The revised application is hardly changed from the first one, the only concession to the rejection of the first being lower ceiling height in the basement.

In his accompanying narrative, applicant goes on at length about the hardships entailed in building the structure in a more appropriate place, where a new septic system would not need to be built. This pleading is irrelevant. The only question is whether the Board will approve the Special Permit on its merits; it cannot approve it just because siting the ADU elsewhere would be a pain.

Applicant could probably build a standard-sized ADU (no more than 750 sf) at the proposed site without facing significant hurdles. Instead, we still have a proposed square footage of 999 sf, with the potential to double or nearly double that area by later converting all or parts of the attic and basement to rentable space.

Of particular concern:

- Why are skylights needed in attic "storage spaces" when motion-sensing LED lights would cost much less, use almost no energy, and be instantly available the few times per year owners would presumably need to access storage space?
- Why is an external entrance to the basement needed when it is accessible from the first floor?
- Why are basement windows included if the basement space is not intended to be inhabited? Again, cheap on-demand lights would be a more sensible choice if there are no plans to rent the basement space. Although the lowered ceiling presumably prevents its use as living space under code, it might be acceptable to short-term renters.
- Why are four parking spaces needed? Zoning bylaw §4.2.2.2 (h) states in full: "One parking space shall be provided for the additional dwelling unit."

This design remains poised for expansion beyond 999 sf. There is no practical/physical reason why the basement could not be retrofitted with baseboard electric heat, another bathroom, and perhaps a kitchenette—plus 2 bedrooms in what plans show as storage space. Water and waste hookups will be there for the laundry room.

If the town approves ADUs that meet the letter of the law (750-1,000 rsf) at approval and construction but can be nearly doubled in size to maximize income because the Town cannot deny build-out permits, the intent of bylaw §4.2.2.2 is being flouted.

I urge the board to reject this application, effectively permitting an ADU of no more than 750 sf of livable space with no possibility of expansion.

Sincerely,

David Godolphin
232 Virginia Road