

**TOWN OF BELMONT  
PLANNING BOARD**

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**CASE NO:** 22-18

**APPLICANTS/OWNER:** Ruth Betts

**PROPERTY:** 18 Ash Street

**DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING:** November 15, 2022  
Continued: December 20, 2022, January 10, 2023, January 17, 2023

**MEMBERS SITTING:** Matt Lowrie, Chairman  
Thayer Donham  
Renee Guo  
Karl Haglund  
Jeffrey Birenbaum  
Carol Berberian (Associate Member)

**MEMBERS VOTING:** Matt Lowrie, Chairman  
Thayer Donham  
Renee Guo  
Karl Haglund  
Jeffrey Birenbaum

This matter came before the Planning Board (“Board”) of the Town of Belmont (“Town”) acting as Special Permit Granting Authority under the Zoning By-Law of the Town of Belmont, Massachusetts (“By-Law”) and Chapter 40A of the Massachusetts General Law (“Zoning Act”). The Applicant requests One Special Permit and Design and Site Plan Approval under sections 3.3 and 6D-2 of the By-Law to construct a two-family dwelling at 18 Ash Street Located in a General Residence zoning district.

**Proposal**

The applicant proposes to demolish the existing single-family dwelling at 18 Ash Street and replace it with a two-family dwelling on a lot having lot area of 6,774SF and a frontage of 62.37’.

The applicant had submitted for the Board’s review plans prepared by Inkstone Architects, dated July 8, 2022, a plot plan prepared by Paul J. Finoccio P.L.S dated October 14, 2022, zoning checklist dated October 14, 2022, landscape drawings, pictures of surrounding houses and a narrative.

Revised plans and plot plan were submitted to the Board dated December 13, 2022, December 30, 2022 and final and comprehensive revisions dated January 16, 2023.

**Public Hearings**

The Board held a duly advertised public hearing conducted via ZOOM videoconference (in connection with current restrictions regarding social distancing in connection with COVID-19) on November 15,

2022 and closed the hearing on January 17, 2023 after 2 continued hearings on December 20, 2022 and January 10, 2023.

Comments by the Board members and the public were received regarding the density, size, building height and parking.

The essential subjects discussed during the meetings were the Total Living Area (TLA) of the proposed dwellings, the height of the structure in comparison with other structures in the neighborhood and the parking layout.

Over the course of the hearings, the TLA was reduced by approximately 200SF, the height of the building was lowered by 2' and the parking layout was changed to allow unobstructed parking for all required 4 parking spaces on site.

### **Deliberation and Decision**

The Board deliberated on January 17, 2023. Mr. Lowrie voiced his concerns that in the past they had not approved a new structure at an 87 percentile compared to other two-family dwellings in the neighborhoods. Other members were at the opinion that this structure was in a neighborhood where many three family dwellings were in existence and that although comparing to other two-family dwellings it was a large structure, in this particular case, and without setting a new precedence for future applications, the proposed was in harmony with the other structures in the vicinity where the structure was to be constructed.

Accordingly, upon motion duly made by Jeffrey Birenbaum and seconded by Thayer Donham, **Board members Jeffrey Birenbaum, Thayer Donham, Karl Haglund and Renee Guo voted to grant the applicant's request for a Special Permit and the DSPR approval to construct a two-family dwelling. Chairman Mr. Lowrie abstained from voting.**

**The request for One Special Permit and DSPR was granted with a 4=1 vote.**

On Behalf of the Board,

Dated: January 23, 2023



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Ara Yogurtian  
Assistant Director,  
Office off Community Development