

6 Guyer Road - Nature and Justification of Petition for Variance

Petitioner: Alexandria Carlson

Background

Maynard's zoning laws for zone S1 require a maximum 15% coverage of a property by structures. Our property is 10,000 square feet, meaning the maximum coverage we could have within the zoning laws is 1502 square feet. We are proposing an addition that would increase our property coverage to 1583 of finished square feet plus our 192 square foot unfinished shed, which totals 17.75% property coverage. The home's current rear setback is approximately 36 feet, so the addition extending 18 feet would leave a remaining setback of 18 feet, which is less than the 30 feet required by zoning laws.

Discussion of hardship and preservation of neighborhood character

Strict enforcement of the 15 percent coverage limit or the maximum rear setback would prevent any modest addition to accommodate modern living needs, including adding a second bathroom to the home. The hardship is substantial because the existing house footprint make full compliance infeasible without removing or reconstructing portions of the existing dwelling.

The addition is located in a manner that preserves open space, and is consistent with the scale of neighboring homes. Using MassGIS Property Tax Records, we downloaded a dataset including property and building sizes for all single-family, 1-story residential homes in Maynard's zone S1. 56 properties have a building coverage of more than 15% (see attached list of properties). This research supports the claim that our addition would preserve similar open space to surrounding properties, and that it would be consistent with the scale of neighboring homes.

The proposed addition would be located at the back of the home, which is unlikely to be visible from the street due to its positioning within an already fenced-in area of the property. Notably, the back of the home preserves setbacks and maintains the neighborhood character most effectively, compared to an addition on the side or front of the home.

In summary, the relief requested will not be detrimental to the public good nor substantially derogate from the intent of the zoning bylaw, which is to ensure adequate open space and maintain neighborhood character.

Personal statement

We are a growing family of 3, including my husband, myself, my 2-year-old daughter, and our son who is arriving in April, 2026. We were lucky enough (or, possibly wise enough) to purchase our home in 2017 before home price inflation, and refinanced in 2021 when interest rates were below 3%.

Knowing we wanted to expand our family and being fully aware of the limitations of our space, we spent seven months in 2025 looking for a suitable home. As two working parents with one (soon to be two) wild daycare payments, we were looking for a home within our budget that

would offer modest amenities, with a second bathroom and a bit more space for living. Given the current economy and interest rates, we were unable to find a home that met these requirements and that was within our budget, having several offers rejected.

This addition would enable us to have an affordable home, with modest, modern amenities, such as a second bathroom and living space. And, I believe this is one of Maynard's goals - to attract and support young middle-class families who want to own a home and raise a family, while other towns' homes outprice the working middle-class families in the range of hundreds of thousands of dollars. We hope Maynard is supportive of our goal to continue to raise our family here, in a home appropriate for raising our two children.