



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
PLANNING BOARD
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE, MAYOR

STAFF PRESENT

MADELEINE MASTERS, *PLANNING DIRECTOR*
CHRISTOPHER DI IORIO, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*
LORI MASSA, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*

MEMBERS PRESENT

LINDA BOHAN
JOSEPH FAVALORO
JAMES KIRYLO
ELIZABETH MORONEY
MICHAEL CAPUANO, ESQ. (ALT.)

MINUTES

A joint public hearing for all interested parties was held by the Board of Aldermen Land Use Committee and the Somerville Planning Board on **Thursday, July 17, 2008 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Aldermanic Chambers on the Second Floor of Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA. The public meeting was moved to the Somerville High School Auditorium, 81 Highland Ave, Somerville, MA due to a timing conflict with a Board of Aldermen meeting. The purpose of the hearing was to receive public comments concerning proposed amendments to the Somerville Zoning Ordinance.

Land Use Committee members present were Chairman Sean O'Donovan, Aldermen Maryann Heuston and Thomas Taylor. In addition, Aldermen William White, Walter Pero and Bruce Desmond and City Solicitor John Gannon were present.

Proposed Zoning Amendments: Article 6, temporarily limiting development for the following parcels located in the vicinity of Broadway and Temple Street (identified by map-block-lot): 58-c-6, 58-c-7, 58-c-8, 58-c-9, 70-d-5, 70-d-10, 70-d-24, 70-d-25, 70-d-27

Rob May, Director of Economic Development, explained that the purpose of the moratorium was to complete a comprehensive study on development opportunities in Winter Hill. There is an MBTA green line stop proposed for this area and a development here with the current zoning could be detrimental to the long term growth of the City. The Aldermen asked questions leading to the following points. The timeframe for the moratorium would be six months. A zoning district that will be proposed for Union Square could make sense for this area. There would be neighborhood meetings to discuss the rezoning. If the site is left vacant concerns over maintenance of the property would be addressed by Inspectional Services Division. Another tenant with the same use in the Zoning Ordinance could use the building during the moratorium.

James Cohen, the owner of the former Star Market, spoke in opposition to the moratorium because he feels he would not be able to find a tenant that would be acceptable to the City to fill the current building. He also said that he was not notified of the meeting.

Alderman Taylor asked for clarification on the notice requirements for amendments. Madeleine Master, Planning Director, explained that the required notice was given which includes advertising notice of the meeting for an amendment in the newspaper and posted in City Hall; however, there is no requirement to mail notices to owners or abutters. Alderman Taylor commented that this requirement may need to be changed.

Alderman Pero spoke in favor of the amendment because he thought it would be a good opportunity for economic development in Winter Hill.

The Planning Board kept the record open and intended to deliberate at their August 7 meeting.

Chairman O'Donovan kept the hearing open to accept additional testimony until August 7, 2008.



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
PLANNING BOARD
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE, MAYOR

STAFF PRESENT

MADELEINE MASTERS, *PLANNING DIRECTOR*
CHRISTOPHER DI IORIO, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*
LORI MASSA, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*

MEMBERS PRESENT

LINDA BOHAN
JOSEPH FAVALORO
JAMES KIRYLO
ELIZABETH MORONEY
MICHAEL CAPUANO, ESQ. (ALT.)

Review of New Cases for the Zoning Board of Appeals:

44 Park Street: Applicant & Owner: Park Street Housing Associates, LLC seek a Special Permit with Site Plan Review for 89 dwelling units, and variances for parking, minimum lot area per dwelling unit, and number of stories (4 proposed). RC zone. Ward 2.

The Board heard comments from Aldermen and a representative on the Council on Aging on this proposal at the beginning of the meeting while they were available. After these comments, the Board tabled this case until they reviewed the other cases in order to give people sufficient time to speak on the case.

Alderman White stated at the public meeting that he would like to clarify that he did not give support to the applicant prior to the application submission and that he would like to hold further comment.

Alderman Heuston stated that she is in favor of affordable housing for seniors in Ward 2 but that she will hold her final comments until the rest of the issues are addressed. The neighborhood made valid points at the neighborhood meetings but the comments regarding seniors being a nuisance due to drug use should be disregarded.

Alderman Desmond stated at the public meeting that he is constantly called for affordable housing opportunities. He stated that he is overall in favor of the project and is aware that some details need to be worked out.

Alderman Connolly stated that he sees the benefit of affordable housing and that there is not enough for seniors. He stated that he lives near a 6-story, 60-unit senior affordable development unit and does not face issues with it. He has expressed support for the proposal and said that the Board can work out the details.

Alderman O'Donovan stated that he is in support of the proposal and that it is similar to other senior buildings in the City and that have not had problems. There was much concern with the VNA proposal on Lowell Street but it has been a beneficial project to the City.

Cindy Hickey from the Council on Aging stated that she sees the need for senior housing on a daily basis. Council on Aging staff are constantly in and out with social services for similar facilities. The facility needs to be on a bus line. The Council on Aging provides transportation so there is less of a need for parking in senior housing developments.

261 Highland Ave: Applicant & Owner: Natasha Onken seeks a special permit under SZO §4.4.1 to construct a roof deck that is approximately 10 feet by 20 feet. RC zone. Ward 3.

After Staff read the updated recommendation for conditional approval, Mr. Favaloro moved to accept the staff recommendation (date of applications and plans was noted as June 30, 2008). Ms. Bohan seconded. 5-0. Motion carried.



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
PLANNING BOARD
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE, MAYOR**

STAFF PRESENT

MADELEINE MASTERS, *PLANNING DIRECTOR*
CHRISTOPHER DI IORIO, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*
LORI MASSA, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*

MEMBERS PRESENT

LINDA BOHAN
JOSEPH FAVALORO
JAMES KIRYLO
ELIZABETH MORONEY
MICHAEL CAPUANO, ESQ. (ALT.)

48-50 Church St: Applicant & Owner: Alexander Keyes seeks Special Permit approval under SZO §4.4.1 for the alteration of a non-conforming structure in order to construct a two-story deck. RB zone. Ward 2.

There was discussion regarding how the proposed latticework would start to enclose the deck. The Applicants agreed with the condition to not erect the latticework. After Staff read the recommendation for conditional approval, Mr. Kirylo moved to accept the staff recommendation (date of applications and plans was noted as June 31, 2008). Ms. Bohan seconded. 5-0. Motion carried.

27 College Ave: Applicant: MetroPCS Massachusetts, LLC and Owner: Somerville Housing Authority seeks Special Permit Approval under SZO §7.11.15.3 for the installation of a wireless communications facility. CBD zone. Ward 6.

Mr. Favaloro moved to waive the reading of the conditions and accept the staff recommendation. Mr. Kirylo seconded. 5-0. Motion carried.

15 Weston Ave: Applicant: MetroPCS Massachusetts, LLC & Owner: Somerville Housing Authority seek Special Permit Approval under SZO §7.11.15.3 for the installation of a wireless communications facility. NB zone. Ward 7.

Staff had concerns regarding the design of the screening and location of the proposed antennas. The Applicant submitted new plans which were stamped in to the OSPCD July 16, 2008. The Planning Board replaced conditions five and six of the Staff report with the following conditions, "The Applicant shall make best efforts to maximize the flue pipes' distance from the building edges" and "Flue pipes shall be painted a similar color to that of the building and the equipment shelter walls shall feature materials visually similar to those of the building."

After Staff read the revised recommendation for conditional approval, Mr. Favaloro moved to accept the staff recommendation. Mr. Kirylo seconded. 5-0. Motion carried.

25 Moore Street: Applicant and owners James O'Keefe & Melanie Campbell seek a special permit under SZO §4.4.1 to alter a dimensionally nonconforming dwelling by constructing a two-story addition in the rear of the structure that is approximately 18 feet by 19 feet. RB zone. Ward 7.

Mr. Kirylo commended the Applicants for designing a home with green features. After Staff read the recommendation for conditional approval, Ms. Bohan moved to accept the staff recommendation. Mr. Capuano seconded. 5-0. Motion carried.

2-10 Highland Ave/64 Morrison Ave: Applicant: Alan Peterson & Owner: Richard & Nina Suchecki seek Special Permit approval under SZO §4.4.1 for the alteration of a non-conforming structure in order to construct two townhouses. RA zone. Ward 6.

The agent for the project explained that the project would be more conforming to zoning regulations than the prior structure. He also mentioned that they have met with the Alderman and Davis Square Task Force. Mr. Favaloro moved to waive the reading of the conditions and accept the staff recommendation. Ms. Moroney seconded. 5-0



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
PLANNING BOARD
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE, MAYOR

STAFF PRESENT

MADELEINE MASTERS, *PLANNING DIRECTOR*
CHRISTOPHER DI IORIO, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*
LORI MASSA, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*

MEMBERS PRESENT

LINDA BOHAN
JOSEPH FAVALORO
JAMES KIRYLO
ELIZABETH MORONEY
MICHAEL CAPUANO, ESQ. (ALT.)

48 Hudson Street: Applicant & Owner: Jim Gilbert seeks a special permit to operate a hobby kennel as an accessory residential use under SZO §7.11.4.i. RA zone. Ward 5.

The Applicants explained that they recently acquired three dogs and their tenant has a dog that evokes their dogs to bark. They would be willing to put citronella collars on their dogs and stay within the four to six dogs that are allowed under this use. They wish to breed their dogs which have litters of one to three dogs. The Board requested more information from the City's animal control officer. The case was continued until the August 7, 2008 meeting.

43 Russell Road: The applicant seeks Special Permit approval under SZO §4.4.1 for the alteration of a non-conforming structure in order to construct three dormers. RA zone. Ward 7.

The Board discussed issues with the massing and siding of the proposed dormer and recommended working with staff to come up with a compromise. The case was continued until the August 7, 2008 meeting.

44 Park Street

The discussion of the 44 Park Street proposal resumed. Philip Ercolini, Director of Housing, spoke in support of the project that would include deed restricted units in perpetuity. There is a great need in the City for affordable housing and not enough funding to support the demand.

The Applicant's design team introduced themselves and described the project. Since the community meeting the team made the following changes to the plans:

- Decreased the number of units from 98 to 89
- Increased the amount of open space from 25% to 40%
- The Properzi Way exit would only be used for emergency vehicular access
- As a result of the Design Review Committee recommendation, the front entryway has a new design

The Architect discussed other aspects of the project:

- This population has a low demand for cars and does not put a burden on the school system
- The design works as a sound barrier from the rail road tracks
- Shadows would be cast on the tracks
- There are design details to break down the mass of the building
- The amenities would only be useful for the residents and the neighborhood
- Modular buildings are less disruptive during construction and are of more predictable quality

The traffic engineer explained the site design, traffic trip data, and emergency access.

The landscape architect described the structural soil for the additional landscaped area and emergency access, the pathway, community gathering area, and the preservation of existing trees on the site.



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
PLANNING BOARD
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE, MAYOR

STAFF PRESENT

MADELEINE MASTERS, *PLANNING DIRECTOR*
CHRISTOPHER DI IORIO, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*
LORI MASSA, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*

MEMBERS PRESENT

LINDA BOHAN
JOSEPH FAVALORO
JAMES KIRYLO
ELIZABETH MORONEY
MICHAEL CAPUANO, ESQ. (ALT.)

The Civil Engineer explained how stormwater would be managed with a cistern system that would store and handle the water onsite. There would be an increase in landscaped area and minimal re-grading of the site.

The Planning Board had the following comments/questions/concerns. The design team's answers are in parenthesis ().

- A prior proposal at this site had parking under the building and needed to manage stormwater under the building. The Board asked for more explanation of the drainage system.
- How often would the hair salon and sundries shop be open? (Answer: 2 to 3 hours a few days a week)
- What is the floor to ceiling height? (Answer: 9'6" floor to floor and 8' floor to ceiling)
- One member had a concern with the proposed density and would like to see the top floor removed.
- Another thought that the unit sizes were acceptable.
- The increased landscaping looks good and the number of parking is not a big concern.

Fifteen people signed the attendance sheet for this case and approximately thirteen people spoke addressing the following concerns. Any of the design team's responses are in parenthesis ().

- Worsening the drainage issues in the area
- Worsening rush hour traffic between Somerville Avenue and the train tracks
- Traffic onto Properzi Way
- The parking study needs more analysis
- Impacts to limited on-street parking in the neighborhood
- Lack of sidewalks on Nevada and Village Streets
- The height of the building
- Lack of green space
- Transformer location and screening
- Impacts of concentrating subsidized housing
- There should be more renderings from the neighborhood
- Location of air conditioner units (on the roof)
- Increased demand for electricity (in anticipation of future demand, NStar is putting 20 volt lines along Somerville Ave)
- Size of the units (the units comply or exceed building codes)
- The number of handicapped parking spaces (the number is based on the percentage of parking spaces proposed)
- Shadow study (the Architect will go to the site again to document shadows)

The abutter adjacent to the proposal to the east supported the project provided that there was a condition that only emergency vehicles would have access to Properzi Way.

Staff provided information on the paper street, transformer location and deed restrictions. The paper street is a private way that exists on paper. Typically abutters have rights to paper streets but it is difficult to find the paper trail of its ownership. The electric company does not review preliminary plans. They often require that transformers are close to the street and the



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
PLANNING BOARD
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE, MAYOR**

STAFF PRESENT

MADELEINE MASTERS, *PLANNING DIRECTOR*
CHRISTOPHER DI IORIO, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*
LORI MASSA, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*

MEMBERS PRESENT

LINDA BOHAN
JOSEPH FAVALORO
JAMES KIRYLO
ELIZABETH MORONEY
MICHAEL CAPUANO, ESQ. (ALT.)

best way to plan for this is to include it in the plans with a landscaped buffer. The use of the structure as affordable elderly housing in perpetuity would be a condition of zoning approval and would be restricted on the deed.

The Board left the written comment period open until noon on August 4.

The meeting was then adjourned.

A recording of this meeting may be obtained in the Planning Division.