



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

PLANNING DIVISION

STAFF PRESENT:

CHRISTOPHER DI IORIO, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*
LORI MASSA, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*

MEMBERS PRESENT:

KEVIN PRIOR, *CHAIRMAN*
JAMES KIRYLO
ELIZABETH MORONEY
DANA LEWINTER, *ALT.*

MEMBERS ABSENT:

JOSEPH FAVALORO
MICHAEL CAPUANO

PLANNING BOARD 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, December 3, 2009** at **7:00 p.m.** in the Visiting Nurses Association Community Room, 259 Lowell Street, Somerville, MA. The purpose of the hearing was to receive public comments concerning:

An ordinance amending the Somerville Zoning Ordinance to include a **Senior Housing Use** Citywide. The amendment includes changes to Article 2 “Definitions” to add definitions for senior housing types, Article 5 “Special Permits and Special Permits with Site Plan Review” to add design guidelines, Article 7 “Permitted Uses” to allow the use, Article 6 “Establishment of Zoning Districts” and Article 8 “Dimensional Requirements” to alter in the RC, NB, CBD, BA, CCD, TOD-55 the minimum lot area per dwelling unit, number of stories, and landscape requirements, and Article 9 “Parking Requirements” to incorporate parking regulations.

Planning Staff gave a presentation on the amendment. The following summarizes the comments and concerns raised by Board Members. Staffs’ responses were provided at the meeting and following the meeting in a staff report to the Planning Board. The answers provided can be found in the staff report to the Planning Board for their December 17 meeting.

- *You can get more stories within the same height?*
- *Are we trying to attract for-profit developers? Is high-end housing and smaller units plausible?*
- *High-end developers may not be attracted to the City because of high land costs.*
- *Why is the affordable percentage 17.5% and not 20% to match the requirement for 40B?*
- *What are the limitations on developments that abut residential districts?*



CITY HALL • 93 HIGHLAND AVENUE • SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02143
(617) 625-6600 EXT. 2500 • TTY: (617) 666-0001 • FAX: (617) 625-0722

www.somervillema.gov



- *Provide more information about 40B developments.*
- *What happens for future senior developments if the amendment does not pass? Would 40B still be an option?*
- *What is the average size of senior housing units in the City?*
- *Explain the change in the parking requirements.*
- *Provide the number of units and parking spaces that would be allowed with the current and proposed zoning.*
- *Kitchens are important for seniors. Does the zoning address this concern?*
- *The size of the community space should be related to the number of units.*
- *Why is senior housing not included in the Residence A and Residence B districts, which will be the zones closest to the Green Line stops?*
- *Determine the number of seniors on the Somerville Housing Authority wait list.*
- *Provide the ratio of parking spaces to units in existing senior housing developments.*
- *Provide the permit history of existing senior housing towers.*

The following summarizes the comments and concerns raised by members of the public at the hearing. Staffs' responses were provided at the meeting and following the meeting in a staff report to the Planning Board. The answers provided can be found in the staff report to the Planning Board for their December 17 meeting. A total of 6 persons spoke.

- *The size of the units is too small for working at home.*
- *Would the developments be by-right?*
- *The developments should be close to public transportation.*
- *Seniors can't afford to stay in Somerville. How does the Ordinance actually accomplish keeping seniors here, or more specifically help to provide them with affordable housing?*
- *The trend is for larger units for seniors.*
- *Support should be provided for seniors in their homes.*
- *The number of handicap parking spaces decreases if the overall number of parking spaces decreases.*
- *Would all of the units get parking permit stickers and visitors parking passes?*
- *How does this proposal relate to the application for the housing project on Park Street?*

A public hearing for all interested parties was held by the Somerville Planning Board on **Thursday, December 3, 2009 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Visiting Nurses Association Community Room, 259 Lowell Street, Somerville, MA. The purpose of the hearing was to receive public comments concerning:

ASSEMBLY SQUARE - IKEA "Phase 1AA" Revision to SPSR-A (PB2009-05-R-1109)

The Applicant, FR Sturtevant Street, LLC, and its Agent, Hugh Hahn, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. seek to revise a previously approved Special Permit with Site Plan Review-A final level approval of a phase ("Phase 1AA") of a planned unit development (S.Z.O. §16.8.3) in order to: (1) incorporate "gateway" elements at the intersection of Assembly Square Drive and Route 28, (2) revise the interior of the traffic circle at the intersection of Assembly Square Drive and A Street in order to incorporate up to 13 flag poles at up to 80' in height, (3) revise Assembly Square Drive in order to locate trees along the western edge of the right of way near Route 28, (4) revise Assembly Square Drive to reduce the size of the median and associated landscaping at the intersection of North Union Street (discontinued), (5) revise the IKEA flag circle to incorporate "gateway" elements.

The owners of the parcels subject to these applications are:
 FR Sturtevant Street, LLC - Parcels 99-A-2, 99-A-3, 99-A-4, 99-A-5, 99-A-7, 99-A-8, 99-A-6, 101-B-24



CITY HALL • 93 HIGHLAND AVENUE • SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02143
(617) 625-6600 EXT. 2500 • TTY: (617) 666-0001 • FAX: (617) 625-0722

www.somervillema.gov



FR Assembly Square, LLC - Parcels 67-A-1, 67-A-2, 86-A-1

These parcels are also commonly known as 16-34 and 100 Assembly Square Drive (f/k/a Sturtevant Street), 123 and 147 Foley Street, the so-called "Yard 21 Parcel" and the proposed area of Assembly Square Drive.

Assembly Square Mixed Use District (ASMD); Planned Unit Development Overlay District - A (PUD-A); Waterfront Overlay District (WOD).

David Webster appeared and explained the project. The Board discussed the limitations of the flag circle. The Applicants were willing to revisit the flags in 2 years. The Planning Board added condition #73 regarding the timeline in addition to the staff recommended 3 conditions to the original special permit. The Applicants were requesting a decision at this meeting for state budget purposes. Kevin Prior stated that this Board needs more time in the future to review these cases. Kevin Prior made motion to recommend conditional approval. Dana LeWinter seconded the motion. Upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

ASSEMBLY SQUARE - MARKETPLACE "Phase 1AAA" SPSR-A

The Applicant, FR Sturtevant Street, LLC, and its Agent, Hugh Hahn, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. seek a Special Permit with Site Plan Review-A final level approval of a phase ("Phase 1AAA") of a planned unit development (S.Z.O. §16.8.3) for a Mall use (S.Z.O. §7.11.9.14) under the Planned Unit Development Preliminary Master Plan approved by the Planning Board on December 14, 2006 in order to locate trees and other landscaping elements in the area between the northernmost parking lot and the intersection of Middlesex Avenue and Route 28.

The owner of the parcels subject to this application (67-A-1, 67-A-2, 86-A-1) is FR Assembly Square, LLC

Assembly Square Mixed Use District (ASMD); Planned Unit Development Overlay District - A (PUD-A); Waterfront Overlay District (WOD).

David Webster appeared and explained the project. Condition #6 regarding the electrical outlets was altered. Elizabeth Moroney recommended conditional approval. James Kirlyo seconded the motion. Upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

282 Somerville Ave (Dunkin Donuts): (Case #PB 2009-12) Applicant Viewpoint Sign and Awning and Paul Rebelo PGR Construction & Owner D'Alelio LLC requests a Special Permit to alter the façade and signage for an existing fast order food establishment (SZO §5.1 & 6.1.22.D.5). CCD zone. Ward 2.

The Applicant appeared and stated the proposed plans. The Board discussed signage and landscaping issues. The Applicant submitted new plans dated 12/27/09 (the date was incorrect but stamped in on 12/3/09) that were incorporated in the record. The Planning Board updated condition 2. Elizabeth Moroney made a motion to approve the Applicant's request for a special permit. James Kirlyo seconded the motion. Upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

Review of Continued Cases for the Zoning Board of Appeals:

369-371 Beacon St (ZBA #2008-61) Applicant Beacon Street Hotel & Owner George Makrigiannis seek a special permit with Site Plan Review (SZO §7.11.10.5.b) in order to construct and establish a hotel of more than 10,000 gross sq.ft. BA zone. Ward 2.

The Applicant requested a continuance to December 17, 2010.



CITY HALL • 93 HIGHLAND AVENUE • SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02143
(617) 625-6600 EXT. 2500 • TTY: (617) 666-0001 • FAX: (617) 625-0722

www.somervillema.gov



9-11 Harvard Pl (ZBA #2009-04) Applicant & Owner Elaine Thibault seeks a Special Permit with Site Plan Review approval under SZO §7.2 to construct two principal structures on the same lot and under §7.3 to develop four (4) residential units, where 12.5% are affordable housing. RA zone. Ward 3.
The Applicant requested a continuance to December 17, 2010.

38 Gorham St: (ZBA #2009-49) Applicant & Owner Daniel O'Rourke proposes to convert a two-family into a three-family dwelling and seeks a variance (SZO §5.5) for lot area per dwelling unit. The Applicant also seeks a special permit (§4.4.1 & 5.1) for the alteration of a non-conforming structure in order to construct a dormer and deck within the required side yard. RB zone. Ward 7.
Kevin Prior made a motion to recommend conditional approval. James Kirlyo seconded the motion. Upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

Review of New Cases for the Zoning Board of Appeals:

61 Rogers Ave: (ZBA #2009-51) Applicant, David Crockett & Owner, Robert Chihade seek a Special Permit under SZO §4.4.1 in order to construct a dormer within the non-conforming side yard (§8.5.H). RA zone. Ward 5.
Elizabeth Moroney made a motion to recommend conditional approval. Dana LeWinter seconded the motion. Upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

212 Elm St: (ZBA 2009-54) Applicant & Owner, Davis Square Real Estate LLC, seeks a Special Permit under SZO §4.4.1 to alter the exterior of the ground floor office space in order to create two by-right retail storefronts of a combined approximately 4,350 square feet. CBD zone. Ward 6.
Attorney Adam Dash appeared on behalf of the Applicant and requested a change to a condition to allow some coverage of the windows. Alderman Rebekah Gewirtz submitted written conditions regarding energy efficiency of materials, loading dock and hiring Somerville residents. The Board changed the condition regarding window coverage and added two conditions regarding emergency egress and truck deliveries. Kevin Prior made a motion to recommend conditional approval. Elizabeth Moroney seconded the motion. Upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

73 Highland Rd: (ZBA 2009-55) Applicant & Owner, Christian Macdonald, seeks a Special Permit under SZO §4.4.1 in order to construct a dormer within the non-conforming side yard (§8.5.H). The applicant also seeks a Variance under SZO §5.5 in order to construct a dormer that exceeds fifty (50) percent of the length of the sloping roof to which it is attached creating a non-conforming third floor. RA zone. Ward 5.
Elizabeth Moroney made a motion to recommend condition approval of the special permit and to deny the request for a variance. Dana LeWinter seconded the motion. Upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

3-5 Vinal Ave: (ZBA 2009-56) Applicant & Owner, 3-5 Vinal Avenue LLC, seeks a Special Permit under SZO §4.4.1 to expand a nonconforming three-family residential structure by constructing a shed dormer on a gable roof. RB zone. Ward 3.
Attorney Richard G. DiGirolamo appeared and described the plans. Elizabeth Moroney made a motion to recommend conditional approval. James Kirlyo seconded the motion. Upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously 4-0.



CITY HALL • 93 HIGHLAND AVENUE • SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02143
(617) 625-6600 EXT. 2500 • TTY: (617) 666-0001 • FAX: (617) 625-0722

www.somervillema.gov



Other Business:

- Correspondence from Paulette Renault-Caragianes
Somerville Health Department
(Postponed until December 17, 2009)
- Local Historic District Recommendations

Jim Kirylo asked if property owners would be limited as to what work could be done to existing structures within a LHD. Staff responded that if the alteration was visible from the public way that the HPC would need to approve the work, however, property owners would be under no obligation to undertake renovations of their structure in order to comply with historic standards.

Jim Krylo asked if the City would contribute some form of financing to help property owners undertake renovations. Staff responded that the City was reviewing potential options.

Dana LeWinter asked if there were options if historic renovations were cost prohibitive for the home owner. Staff responded that hardship exemptions could be approved.

Elizabeth Moroney asked if HPC decisions could be appealed. Staff responded that HPC decisions were final and that legal action would need to be pursued.

Kevin Prior asked is there was an opt-in clause. Staff responded that there was not.

Following discussion, Kevin Prior made a motion to recommend approval of the proposed local historic districts, Elizabeth Moroney seconded the motion, which carried 3-1, with Jim Krylo voting in the negative, and Michael Capuano and Joseph Favaloro absent.

Plans and reports are available at the City of Somerville website at the following link:
www.somervillema.gov/planningandzoning

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

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



CITY HALL • 93 HIGHLAND AVENUE • SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02143
(617) 625-6600 EXT. 2500 • TTY: (617) 666-0001 • FAX: (617) 625-0722
www.somervillema.gov

