



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

DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE

STAFF PRESENT

GEROGE PROAKIS, *DIRECTOR OF PLANNING*
LORI MASSA, *SENIOR PLANNER*
ADAM DUCHESNEAU, *PLANNER*

MEMBERS PRESENT

JULIE BRADY
DEBORAH FENNICK
JAMES KIRYLO
MATTHEW RICE
FRANK VALDES

RECOMMENDATIONS and MINUTES

The City of Somerville Design Review Committee held a public meeting on **Thursday, January 27, 2011, 6:30 p.m.** in City Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA.

The purpose of the meeting was to review and make recommendations on the following proposals:

378, 380, 384, 388 and 390 Somerville Ave: (Case #PB 2010-23) Applicant W. James Herbert & Jean Herbert and owners W. James Herbert, Sr., & Jean L. Herbert, and The William James Herbert Family Trust & the Jean L. Schultz Herbert Family Trust seek a special permit with site plan review under SZO §6.1.22.D.1 to construct a new five story building and a special permit to establish 30 residential units in the building (§7.13.E). The building would also include approx. 6,500 sf of retail and 36 parking spaces, 30 of which would be underground. The applicant proposes to retain the façade of the historic structure at 378-384 Somerville Avenue and incorporate it into the new building. The structures at 388 and 390 Somerville Avenue would be demolished. CCD-55 zone. Ward 2.

The DRC is in favor of the project and felt that the initial design of the building was fairly good. The Committee would like to set a high quality standard for the design of this building because it is the first project to be designed in the new CCD 55 zoning district. The Committee felt that there was a good blending of the small scale details on the structure. One concern the Committee had was with regard to the new tower element on the west end of the building on Somerville Avenue. It did not seem to hold well with the rest of the building and the Committee would like to see it tie in better to the rest of the structure. If there is a way to make the tower less pronounced, the Committee felt this might improve the way it fits into the rest of the design. Additionally, there were also concerns that the historic component included in the design felt very heavy and independent from the rest of the building. The Committee was hoping that something could be done to help tie in this existing historic portion to the new design. They would like to see a balance between the historic elements in the design and the contemporary aspects, but they also expressed concerns about a historic interpretation that would have a very fake appearance. This clearly would not be preferred. In summary, the Committee would like to see the end, tower piece and some of the smaller details of the design refined before the project comes back before the DRC.



130 Broadway: (Case #PB 2011-02) Applicant Bernard H. Pucker and Owner S&B Realty Trust seek a special permit under SZO §6.1.22.D.5 to alter the façade of the building including window and door openings and a special permit to establish Medium Retail and Service uses in the building totaling approx 18,000 sf (§7.13.C). The proposal also includes site renovations to the rear parking lot where 19 parking spaces would be located. CCD55. Ward 1.

The Committee was supportive of the changes to the building. They noted that the lighting will give life to the building and the details of the fenestration will be important and should be carefully considered. The owners should have a plan for putting something interesting in the windows of a retail space if one is vacant. Finally, there should be a contingency plan for the design of the pediment if it cannot be restored to its original design. The pediment should incorporate interesting elements and not be a flat surface.

65 Beacon Street: (Case #PB 2011-06) Applicant and owner Beacon Court Realty Trust seek Special Permits with Site Plan Review pursuant to Somerville Zoning Ordinance Section 7.11.1.c, and Section 13.5 to establish fourteen (14) residential units, including affordable housing incentive units, in an existing structure that is currently used for medical offices. The project also includes two ground-floor commercial suites (totaling approximately 1760 square feet) and associated parking and landscaping. RC zone. Ward 2.

Since no modifications are proposed to the façade above the first floor, the DRC discussion centered around the design of the residential entryway and storefronts on the Beacon Street façade. The Committee had concerns about the two proposed cornices on either side of the entryway to residential portion of the building. As proposed, the cornices do not connect to the entryway or one another. The Committee felt that the cornices were too separated and they need to have some type of connection, whether that be to each another or the residential entryway. The DRC would like to see a reiteration of the cleaning of the brackets as well as the dimensions of the parallel connection between the cornices and the entryway. Some type alteration of the cornices is needed to provide design consistency around the entryway.

