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TO: **City of Somerville**
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DATE: 06/03/2022

FROM: Tanya Carriere
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RE: Design Review Report for 16-20 Medford Street, Somerville MA

Below is a summary, including images, of the three meetings we had with the Urban Design Commission (UDC) for the proposed project at 16-20 Medford Street.

Meeting 1: October 19, 2021

At this meeting, the overall project and three façade options were presented to the UDC.

We presented the proposed site layout including initial landscape plans, public realm improvements and the idea of a two-car drop off located on South Street to address concerns raised at the previous neighborhood meeting. The UDC responded that they appreciated the above and beyond proposed streetscape and specialty details. The UDC indicated that they did not like the idea of the South Street drop-off and would like to see that removed from the design. They commented that they preferred a more unified streetscape and linear pedestrian experience (equally spaced street trees and more standard paver layout) and urged us to meet and discuss it further with OSPCD. Additionally, they asked us to make better use of the rear yard area by making it a programable space for the building residents.

Three façade schemes were presented to the UDC showing a proposed façade design for Medford, South, Bedford, and Warren Streets. All three schemes were designed to follow the Façade Design guidelines from SZO Section 4.2.11.h, which specifies that the façade of any building greater than one hundred feet in width must be divided vertically and designed as two or more separate and distinct facades if differing architectural treatment so that the building appears to be multiple buildings. See details and images on the following pages showing proposed designs that were presented.

Façade comments from the UDC included to provide clearer rendering technique, material selection boards & further distinction between each of the three schemes. The UDC commented that they would like to see the cornice that creates a “horizontal datum” at the 2nd floor level removed. They also indicated that they would like to see Medford Street treated as the primary façade as it is the pedestrian designated streets. The suggestion was to look at flipping the façade treatments of “Façade 1” with “Façade 2”. Working further on the ground floor elevation and detailing in order to align the pilasters with the architecture above was discussed in detail.

- Drop-off proposed on South Street
- Street trees proposed on all streets and grouped in clusters
- Paver patterns proposed on Medford & South Streets

LATIN NAME	COMMON NAME	SIZE	NOTES
TREES			
erubrum 'Armstrong'	Armstrong upright Red Maple	3-3.5' cal.	B&B MA, Native Large Tree
erburgerianum Streetwise	Trident maple	3-3.5' cal.	B&B MA, Native Large Tree
glaberrima 'Golden Shower'	Forchata Sweetgum	3-3.5' cal.	B&B MA, Native Small Tree
ercus palustris	Pin Oak	3-3.5' cal.	B&B MA, Native Small Tree
ercus palustris 'Green Pillar'	Fastigate Pin Oak	3-3.5' cal.	B&B MA, Native Small Tree
GRASSES (<2' Height)			
maide virginiana	Virgins Bower	2 gal.	Pots MA, Native
urnum dentatum	Arrowwood Viburnum	3.6' ht.	B&B MA, Native
GRASSES (<2' Height)			
merocallis x Happy Returns'	Dry Lily	1 gal.	Pots
petra fasciata 'Walden Low'	Catmint	2 qt.	Pots
beckia fulgida 'Goldstrum'	Black-Eyed-Susan	1 gal.	Pots MA, Native
trachyrhynchus 'The Blues'	Little Bluestem	2 gal.	Pots



L1

UDC Meeting 1: Façade Scheme 1

- “Façade 1” at Medford St/ Warren St uses some traditional features including Red Brick found in the neighborhood along with traditional 2 over 2 black double hung windows, and horizontal lap siding on bays and vertical black metal railings at balconies.
- The central area at the 1st floor residential entrance is shown clad in simulated wood product highlighting and providing warmth to the entry point with brick & dynamic staggered balconies above.
- “Façade 2” at South Street & Bedford Streets (along with a portion of Medford St) have been designed with a more contemporary look with grey brick, white paneled bays with parapet and simulated wood inside balconies as well as casement window units.
- Ground floor on both façades includes storefront with decorative pilasters between.



PROPOSED VIEW FROM CORNER OF MEDFORD & SOUTH STREET



WARREN STREET ELEVATION



MEDFORD STREET ELEVATION



SOUTH STREET ELEVATION



BEDFORD STREET ELEVATION

UDC Meeting 1: Façade Scheme 2

- “Façade 1” at Medford St/ Warren St uses some traditional materials with a contemporary color scheme. Top floor is broken from the mass below with a 3rd floor cornice.
- “Façade 2” and the central building area design takes cues from Industrial architecture, including Red Brick, large grided windows and grey trim work. Storefront windows in this area have industrial grid pattern as well. Glass railings are used on the balconies.



PROPOSED VIEW FROM CORNER OF MEDFORD & SOUTH STREET



WARREN STREET ELEVATION



MEDFORD STREET ELEVATION



BEDFORD STREET ELEVATION



SOUTH STREET ELEVATION

UDC Meeting 1: Façade Scheme 3

- “Façade 2” from Scheme 1 is combined with contemporary scheme for “Façade 1”
- “Façade 1” uses a monochrome grey color scheme.



PROPOSED VIEW FROM CORNER OF MEDFORD & SOUTH STREET



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MEDFORD STREET ELEVATION



SOUTH STREET ELEVATION



BEDFORD STREET ELEVATION

Meeting #2: November 02, 2021

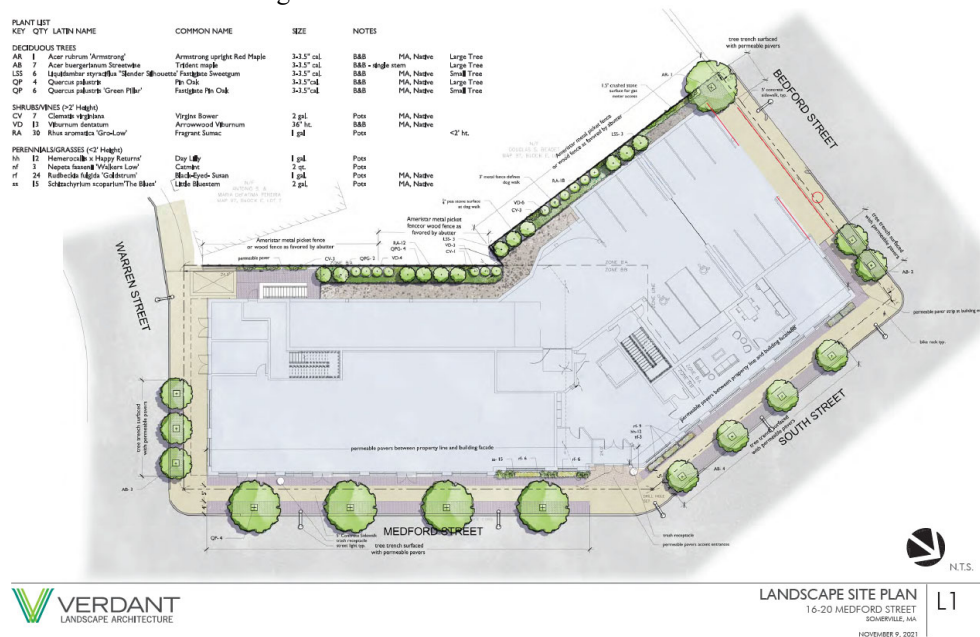
The three schemes that we presented at the 2nd UDC meeting addressed the comments received from the UDC at the 1st meeting as well as any further feedback or information received at additional meetings held with city departments. The façade schemes presented were further developed and rendered and each included an exterior materials board as requested. The cornice, “horizontal datum,” at the 2nd floor was removed and the 1st floor pilasters were aligned to correlate with the bay and balconies massing above. The schemes included different ground floor cladding materials and different treatments for the bays and central corner. The Site layout & Landscape Plans were revised to remove the South Street drop-off and equally space the trees along both Medford & South Streets. A dog run was proposed for the rear yard area to create a programmable space for the building’s residents. The paver design was revised for the sidewalk areas.

The comments we received from the UDC at this meeting were very constructive. The UDC came to the consensus that they generally prefer Scheme 1 and wanted that further developed. On the South/ Bedford Street sides, they mentioned that they still felt like a horizontal datum was being created at the 2nd floor level. They discussed how they like how they thought the detailing of that area was successful in Scheme 2 and suggested we incorporate that into the design of Scheme 1. They discussed exploring moving the residential lobby. They imposed a design guideline from the ordinance for the center area called “terminating vistas” and wanted the design of that area further studied and treated as a focal point.

They also discussed imposing the design guideline for “building lobbies”. They discussed treating Warren and Bedford Street differently as they are less prominent streets. Discussion was had about refining the sidewalk layout and about the tree layouts/ locations on Warren & Bedford Streets.

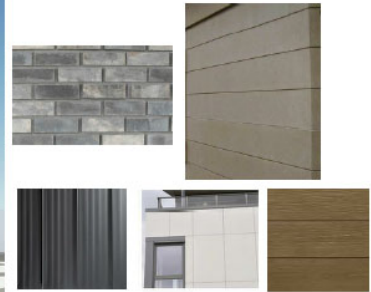
UDC Meeting 2: Landscape Plan

- Tree and paver layouts revise on Medford & South Street
- South Street drop-off removed
- Dog Run added at rear of building

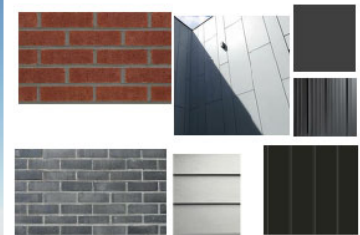


UDC Meeting 2: Façade Schemes

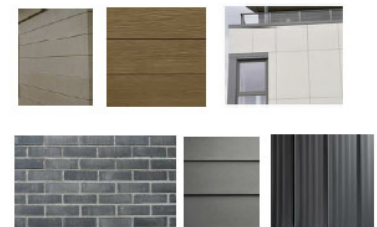
OPTION 1



OPTION 2



OPTION 3



Meeting #3: November 19, 2021

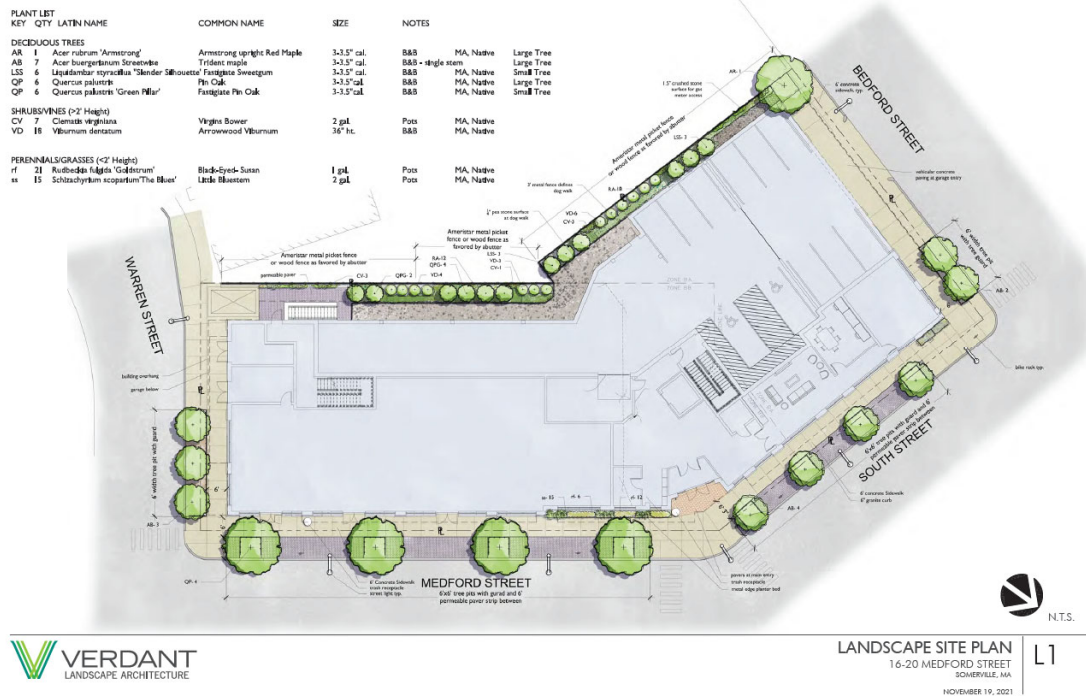
At our final meeting we presented Scheme 1 from the prior meeting but with revisions as requested by the UDC. We incorporated the balcony treatment from the prior Scheme 2. We removed the cornice at the 2nd floor level and reduced the dimension of the balcony floor edge as well as recessed it from the bay wall plane to create a shadow. We addressed the corner of the building at South & Medford Streets to be compliant with SZO "terminating vista" requirements by re-orienting the lobby to be at the corner point and by incorporating the detailing of the prior Scheme 2 central area with modifications, including adding wrap around balconies. This created a focal point to the building. We added a cornice at the 4th floor level on the Bedford Street side to diminish the scale and differentiate the façade. Additionally, we added a wall to shield the parking at Bedford Street.

The UDC stated that they greatly appreciated the changes we made and voted unanimously to proceed with their recommendation. They gave their final minor comments which included to confirm the transformer vault cover construction/ consider moving it out of the sidewalk area and extend storefront sill height closer to grade on the commercial space areas to differentiate from the residential 1st floor areas. They asked to see further refinement of the geometry of the wrap around balconies over the central residential entrance as well as the detailing of the central canopy and suggested to remove the 2nd floor cornice at that area. They indicated that reducing bays from 3-story bays to 2-story bays on Warren & Bedford St should be considered. The color/ material of the balcony faces were discussed for "Façade 2" and they asked us to consider another color such as matching the railing color. They also recommended that we add large scale details showing the façade detailing where the building meets grade at sidewalk areas.

On the Landscape design they commented that we should add an additional street tree to Warren Street and move one of the grouped trees on Bedford Street closer towards garage entrance as well as unify the furnishing zone at the corner of Medford & South Streets by extending the pervious pavers at the sidewalk edge. They asked us to further consider an alternative landscape plan for the rear area in lieu of a dog run.

UDC Meeting 3: Landscape Plan

- Tree spacing revised further.
- Paver locations revised further to meet city standards.
- Central entry angle revised.



UDC Meeting 3: Design Progression Slide

UDC MEETING 1: 3 SCHEME PROPOSAL



SCHEME 1



SCHEME 2



SCHEME 3

UDC MEETING 2: 3 SCHEME PROPOSAL- FURTHER DEVELOPMENT



SCHEME 1



SCHEME 2



SCHEME 3

UDC MEETING 3: FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF SCHEME 1 W/ SCHEME 2 ELEMENTS

CURRENT
PROPOSAL



DESIGN REVISIONS SINCE LAST MEETING:

- FURTHER STUDY & DEVELOPMENT OF SCHEME 1, WITH SOME CONCEPTS FROM SCHEME 2 INCORPORATED PER UDC BOARD COMMENTARY.
- CONTINUOUS HORIZONTAL CORNICE REMOVED FROM 2ND FLOOR LEVEL.
- BALCONY FACE TREATMENT REFINISHED FROM FRONT OF BAY. LOWEST LEVEL BALCONY FASCIA IS SHORTER THEN BAY LENGTHS (SIMILAR TO SCHEME 2 PREVIOUS PROPOSAL).
- CEDAR CLADDED CEILING ADDED TO UNDERSIDE OF BALCONIES.
- INTERSECTION OF SOUTH & MEDFORD STREETS TREATED AS A FOCAL POINT PER "TERMINATING VISTAS" DESIGN GUIDELINE.
- RESIDENTIAL LOBBY RELOCATED TO CORNER POINT AND ANGLED TO FACE CORNER POINT, PROVIDING A VISUAL FOCAL POINT AND WELCOMING ENTRANCE.
- DYNAMIC FACADE TREATMENT FROM SCHEME 2 INCORPORATED IN THE CORNER LOCATION WITH MODIFICATIONS.
- WRAP AROUND BALCONIES WITH GLASS RAILINGS ADDED AT CORNER POINT WITH CEDAR CLADDED CEILINGS.
- ON BEDFORD STREET, WALL ADDED TO SCREEN PARKING.
- ON BEDFORD STREET, CORNICE ADDED AT THE 4TH FLOOR LEVEL WRAPPING AROUND BAYS, WHICH VISUALLY REDUCES THE MASSING AND SCALE OF THAT FACADE.
- REVISIONS TO THE LANDSCAPE PLAN ADDRESSING THE SIDEWALK AND PUBLIC REALM PER FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH CITY DEPARTMENTS.

UDC Meeting 3: Façade Design



PROPOSED VIEW FROM CORNER OF MEDFORD & SOUTH STREET



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BEDFORD STREET ELEVATION



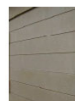
GREY BRICK BLEND



CONCRETE FINISH CEMENT PANEL
COLOR: WHITE



INSULATED CEDAR PANEL



CAST STONE



STAINED GLASS SIDING
COLOR: CHARCOAL GREY

Post UDC

Following the final UDC Meeting the design team has made a number of revisions in order to address the comments received at the final UDC meeting.

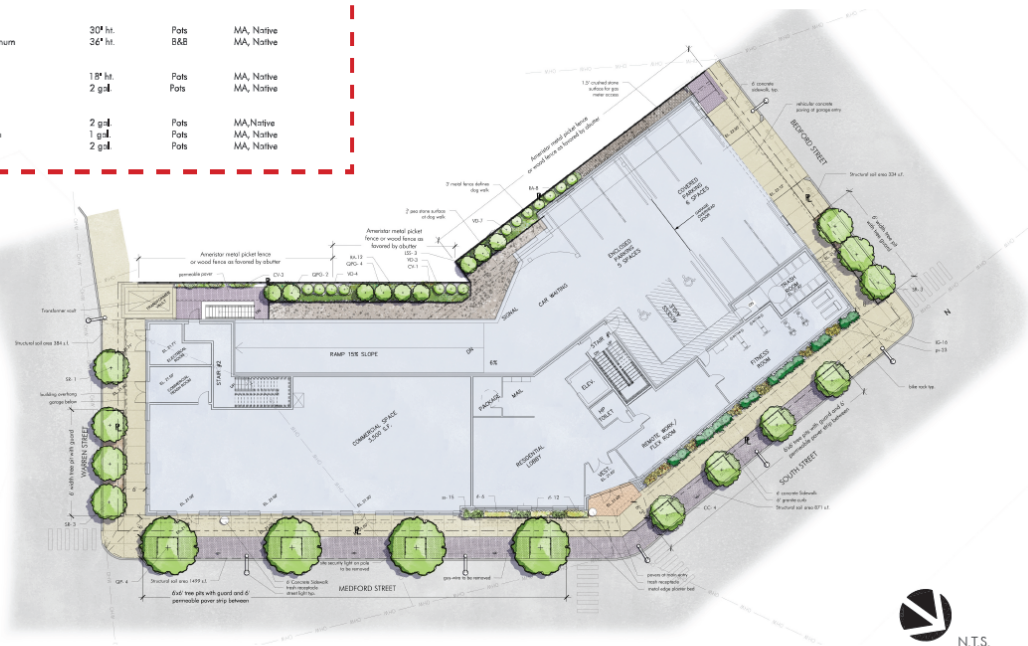
We have indicated the transformer vault cover construction to be of precast concrete, extended storefront sill height closer to grade on the commercial space areas to differentiate from the residential 1st floor areas. We have removed the wrap around balconies over the central residential entrance and redefined the geometry of that area by adding a wraparound cornice at each floor level with a simulated wood-cladded soffit as well as the detailing of the central canopy and removing the 2nd floor cast stone cornice at that area. The color of the balcony faces for "Façade 2" was revised to match the railing color. Additionally, we have included large scale details showing the façade detailing where the building meets grade at sidewalk areas.

On the Landscape design, we have added an additional street tree to Warren Street and moved one of the grouped trees on Bedford Street closer towards garage entrance as well as unified the furnishing zone at the corner of Medford & South Streets by extending the pervious pavers at the sidewalk edge.

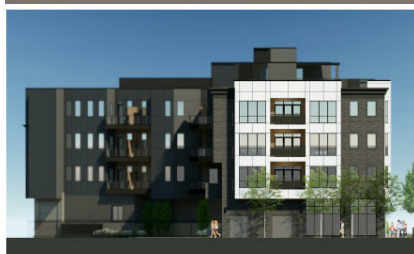
Post UDC Meeting: Landscape Plan

- Street tree added to Warren Street
- Tree moved closer to Garage Entry on Bedford Street
- Furnishing Zone/ paver detail unified at corner of Medford & South Streets

PLANT LIST	KEY	QTY	LATIN NAME	COMMON NAME	SIZE	NOTES
DECIDUOUS TREES						
CC	4		<i>Corylus colurna</i>	Turkish Filbert	3-2.5' cal.	B&B
LSS	6		<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i> 'Stander Silhouette'	Fastigiate Sweetgum	3-2.5' cal.	B&B
QP	4		<i>Quercus prinus</i>	Pin Oak	3-2.5' cal.	B&B
QPF	6		<i>Quercus prinus</i> 'Green Pillar'	Fastigiate Pin Oak	3-2.5' cal.	B&B
SR	7		<i>Syringa reticulata</i>	Japanese Tree Lilac	3-2.5' cal.	B&B
SHRUBS (>2' Height)						
IG	16		<i>Ilex glabra</i> 'Shamrock'	Inkberry	30" ht.	Pots
VD	18		<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>	Arrowwood Viburnum	36" ht.	B&B
SHRUBS/VINES (<2' Height)						
RA	20		<i>Rhus aromatica</i> 'Gro Low'	Fragrant Sumac	18" ht.	Pots
CV	3		<i>Clematis virginiana</i>	Virgins Bower	2 gal.	Pots
PERENNIALS/GRASSES (<2' Height)						
gr	23		<i>Panicum virgatum</i> 'Shenandoah'	Switch Grass	2 gal.	Pots
fl	18		<i>Rudbeckia fulgida</i> 'Goldsturm'	Black-Eyed Susan	1 gal.	Pots
ss	15		<i>Schizanthus scaberrimus</i> 'The Blue'	Little Bluestem	2 gal.	Pots



Post UDC Meeting: Façade Design



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Final Comments

The meetings with the UDC were constructive and the project was well received. The design team worked diligently to incorporate the comments and recommendations from the UDC, which in turn enhanced and aided in the development of the design for the proposed landscape and building facades.