

## **231 - 249 Elm Street and 6-8 & 12 Grove Street**

### **First Neighborhood Meeting**

August 25, 2021

Presentation of proposed retail and commercial building. Discussions of keeping the character of Davis Square, preserving the Burren, while also bringing in some of the intellectual design of the lab spaces down to the street level. Discussion of neighborhood considerations, preliminary floor plans, exterior views and proposed landscaping and green spaces.

Q (Debra): I have a few questions; it already seems unsafe and challenging making a right hand turn onto Elm from Day Street. It is already challenging to drive down Elm Street, with all the cafes and seating on the street, which may or may not be temporary, along with all the trucks servicing B Fresh, causing traffic on College Avenue. It's already a disaster, I want to know how you propose to add all these extra buildings/spaces and not make it worse. As well as how this will affect the cost of the retail rent spaces, if you plan on keeping the character of Davis Square, the rent is going to affect what kinds of who can move into the retail space. A lab can pay a certain amount per square foot. I will say that 260 Elm Street has applied to knock down my current space and build a 3-story building there. Sounds to me this is the start of something that needs to be carefully coordinated or it is going to turn into a disaster on many levels.

A: With regards to vehicular access to the site as well as transit to the site, we are in the early stages of doing transit and traffic studies and planning and we will certainly present those findings as soon as we have them. The existing layout and access in terms of parking and loading in the back end wasn't thoughtfully planned. We will make certain that the access and parking is managed better, and purposely designed to address that piece which we hope will be an improvement to the current conditions. With regards to the retail space, we are committed to preserving the fabric and the scale and culture of the tenant base and style. We have met with existing tenants who may be at the end of their terms and explained that we are willing to negotiate new reasonable terms with them and help to effectuate that if there is a desire. We are purposely designing retail spaces small so that rent will not be affected by having larger spaces but also having share amenities such as shared bathrooms, shared loading spaces, to keep costs down that way and make it more feasible for smaller scale tenants.

Response from Debra: I appreciate the response but I'm hoping that it will be affordable for the tenants who are currently there. It seems like we should view the hard numbers. I can tell you I was also offered a new space if I moved from my current space that it is going to be 2.5x what I am currently paying and then I have to foot the build-out. Who in the city of Somerville is actually working with the local community and the people who are currently tenants to make sure that they really can stay if they want to stay? If what is happening to me is any example it isn't going to be a very likely possibility. I will be willing to hear the traffic details but currently it is impossible to turn off of Day Street onto Elm at 5 pm.

Q: (Theresa): 1 – what type of lab do you envision renting/occupying this space and 2 what are the rough dimensions/sizes is “reduced” retail spaces.

A: The type of lab is yet to be determined. There will be commercial/office tenant and maybe a medical/life science tenant. As we've seen recently the types of tenants are evolving every week, but there are no current tenants being negotiated currently. We don't have any set dimensions yet, but smaller scale - 16.5 feet in width and 30-35 feet in depth, we feel this gives a good corollary to the current tenant spaces. In the corner we're considering a larger, anchor tenant in the corner and another slightly larger space next to the Burren. Also, we anticipate the loading for all tenants to occur in the loading space in the interior of the space and that loading will not be happening on the street.

Development Review Application update: The project complies with the small business overlay that is now incorporated into the base zoning, which is available online.

Q: (Jerimiah) – I am a tenant that will be displaced by this project. Overall, I’m not opposed to redeveloping and expanding Davis Square, I actually think the plan is well thought out and I agree with it. Question – I’m curious, what is a ballpark construction time on a project like this? If it’s a 3-4-year project, it could kill Davis Square. As far as designs go, I know people are concerned about height, has there been any talk about the top floor being offset 10-15 feet, possibly a tiered aspect and while I appreciate not making this another “glass tower”, I am curious if there isn’t more thought about making some kind of striking characteristic. What I saw looks a little drab. Maybe incorporate local art or something. Lastly, as a tenant, I haven’t been talked to by you, I’m not opposed to this again, but I want to make sure everything has been done and you have reached out to everyone.

A: With regard to the duration, it would likely be something between 18-24 months. From our standpoint we are certainly very mindful of the impact construction can have and with that in mind we will have a very detailed construction management plan put in to place to mitigate any construction issues. We are not at the point yet where we are designing the construction, we are hoping to keep construction off of Elm Street to be less disruptive to the Elm Street space. Our goal is aligned with yours to minimize disruption to the Elm Street area. In some ways I hope the design doesn’t appear drab but some of that is because it is still under development and want to leave it open to incorporate and absorb any of the feedback we get and reflect that in a responsive way. As we proceed, we would love to come back with more detail and some bolder images. We do feel very strongly that we want to preserve the authenticity of the urban fabric and urban grain as some of us have seen in other areas, the emergence of the big glass boxes, but our view, we want to integrate into the existing fabric with thoughtful design. We share your perspective and as we mold this further, we will hopefully express the design going forward. We have been inspired very much by the Davis Square plan, going forward with our fully compliant zoned building, our thought is that it will be a subtle building, when it is done it will look like it has been there forever.

Q (Kylie): I’ve heard a lot about the design and how it will be the way Davis looks like, what is going to happen to the small businesses, you’re going to have to take in the footprint of the building, where are those businesses going to go? What are you guys doing for the community and how is this going to make Davis better? How do we preserve the community and how do we figure out how single families come to Davis in an affordable way?

A: The spaces being stepped-in, this building follows all Somerville zoning so some of this is conforming the building to that. I think we can share with you that the existing spaces are very challenging with the tenants there currently. There is not enough storage space, lack of access, many of the buildings are at the end of their useful lives, many of the buildings have sort of been “grandfathered in” and are not fully in line 2021 ADA/accessibility standards. The retail space as it exists today, is not all that function to the tenants. We hope to update the space so the current tenants can operate more efficiently and can welcome more customers and sustain themselves over time. We are committed to working with tenants, we want to be a positive change to the area, and we hope to bring a vibrancy to this block. Some of the spaces have been empty for a long time because they are not currently rentable in the current form. They are functionally obsolete. I think there is a risk that if there is not an intervention to purposely design these spaces that even more of them will become obsolete.

Q: (Susan): My apartment overlooks the Burren's back patio. I'm not unsympathetic or unaware that parts of Davis Sq. need to be updated, the spaces not being up to code or up to date. I think this building looks fine. I think it's optimistic to think we are not going to lose McKinnon's and Sligo I can't imagine they can stay in business for 2 years and then slide into creating a new space for themselves but maybe I'm wrong. The residential buildings – I have some concern that this new building is coming pretty close to my windows, you didn't show the side of the building that my space will be facing, I'm hoping it will be a darker brick instead of this sandy brick but those are just details. But I'm sad to lose the light, can you please show that side and what other considerations are you making with respect to the residential side.

A: Another opportunity this design brings is a subtle and responsible activation on Grove Street. With regards to the residential questions, this is in compliance with the city's zoning, but you raise valid points. We want the building to be esthetically pleasing from all sides. This brick will be around the entire building. I share your view on the darker brick as opposed to sandy. We are willing to work with you on making considerations to work with residential units and/or your unit and to be mindful of how we can make the building work in a responsible and thoughtful way, whether its window treatments or other factors, we are willing to have those conversations with you as this progresses.

Q: (Kendra) You mentioned that "lab" might be the wrong name, and then said originally the space was designed for a lab, and further went on to talk about lab employees and mentioned specifically a medical lab, I'm curious what types of labs are being considered, it's very different to have that type of facility, how many people are you anticipating in total to be working here, also what is the duration of the entire project, when are you proposing the construction to start? You said you're committed to preserving the fabric of Davis and we all appreciate you saying that but from what you've described this sounds like it's going to dramatically and drastically change the dynamic of the square and not for the better, this sounds to me a very sad change. The surface lot is where people park who frequent the small businesses, there's not a lot of parking in Davis, how do you plan on preserving the ability of people coming to Davis to visit these small business if you're taking away the surface lot in which they park?

A: With regards to the lab use, again, I think that's a term we are using very generically. In this area it has typically been life sciences, biomedical, etc. We do not anticipate any "sensitive" lab work, but more of a lab office, but it remains a blank slate as of right now we can say there will not be any highly sensitive lab type tenant here.

With regards to the parking, the parking will be replaced with below grade parking, we do not anticipate any issue with access to the square and that it will remain accessible for anyone to park.

Q: (George): How many actual parking spaces do you anticipate on the 2 floors underneath?

A: I believe at the moment there approximately 80

Q: and that is replacing how many on the surface lot?

A: I can't speak to that specifically; I believe there are approximately 25 spaces on the surface lot

Q: I've seen over the years a call for making Elm Street have less traffic. The proposal now would increase the amount of parking and put more stress on Elm Street because the only way to get to the lot is to go on Elm Street. How do you envision you have 3 floors of labs/offices, what height are you anticipating? Will you have mechanicals on top of the roof, how do you have that space? What kind of brick are you going to use? You are arriving at a time where there is another proposal on the other side of the square. I would hope that

these two proposals should be received together. You can't build 120 units on one side and 300 new units on the other without any coordination.

A: We are proposing a CC4 lab building, the "lab" encapsulates a broad spectrum of tenants. However, we do not know if all floors would be "labs", it remains to be seen. With regards to the parking, much of that is articulated by the zoning code as well and that is where we have looked for guidance. As to the exterior façade, we want to work with the neighborhood and community from a materiality standpoint prior to construction.

Q: (Theresa): ON the diagram you showed before it looked like it was going to be retail space on facing the street side. Is that going to remain retail?

A: The Burren is remaining in its current form and that building is being preserved.

Q: (Kylie): Want to circle back re: how Davis Sq. and the MBTA is going to alleviate some of the stress of the new tenants/employees. Want to know the business in place, where are they going? All these businesses are stayed prior to this and I'm very concerned about why this is necessary?

A: With regards to the redline, we are working closely with the MBTA on analyses, the more focus we have on getting people to use the MBTA as opposed to cars and that transit infrastructure is very important and we will work closely with them to assure access. On the existing retail spaces, we are engaged with the tenants on anyone who wants to come back and we hope that we can bring a thoughtful balance to bring these tenants back in more suitable spaces.

Development Review Application update: The Transportation Impact Study included with the Development Review Application indicates that the Project will not cause any additional exceedances of passenger comfort/crowding thresholds on local MBTA services.

Q: (Aaron): To Kylie's question, why should this happen? One reason from the city perspective is we need more economic activity in the square to raise funds for infrastructure and new sewage bill. I have been following the discussions on this since the very beginning and the thing that comes up to me every time is that people want to know how we are going to save these original retail spaces. What can we do to bring in more money to support that? Why is this building so short? We should be going to at least 6 floors, and then we can raise enough money to save these original tenants and then gave a below market tenant some savings offset.

A: Thank you that was very helpful and adding things to reflect on and we will keep your comments under advisement.

Q: (Dennis): I'm not against new business or development at all. I can't wait for the pit to be filled; the market project has been great. But like everyone else I am concerned about the current small businesses and Davis has never been better with all the outside seating, etc. happening right now. Character isn't only about bricks and materials, its about multigenerational businesses. I'm worried this is going to kill the square. Projects never end on time; I see 3 years. How will you ensure this will be completed on time? Are you familiar with Davis Now and their movement to make Davis more pedestrian as opposed to adding traffic?

A: We appreciate the feedback and perspective. And we understand the concern about construction timing. We have an amazing team. I can personally say we have never delivered a project late and that we have thoughtful processes that happen before construction begins to ensure that the duration is condensed to the shortest amount of time possible. With regards to when it will start, we really can't say. We are in the very

beginning stages of a process that will go on for quite some time, but certainly not any time this calendar year.

Q: (Chris): What would the proposed down time of retail in your proposal? And how do you plan to mitigate the effect on other businesses that service the retail and vice versa? What about foot modality on the sidewalks? What about noise mitigation and noise plan and how loud it will be? Is there any possibility of Elm or Grove being closed completely?

A: Regarding the down time for local businesses, its hard to say, but we're pretty set on 18-24 months, but we do think some businesses will be able to reopen in a shorter time frame than that. With regard to streets being closed, at this time we do not anticipate closing any streets and that we will preserve pedestrian/modal on the sidewalks. We would like to engage with the local business community and we are very interested in local art and incorporating arts and cultural elements on the street level of this project and would love to hear more suggestions on how to do that from the local community.

Q: (Lee): The zoning is CC4 but there are 2 CC4s, one lab, one commercial. The lab zoning is much more flexible and includes and even encourages labs that experiment on animals. It also allows for an additional top-level space for mechanicals. Would you be open to written conditions of limitation on the kinds of lab work that could go in, including those which have no penthouse needs?

A: As referenced earlier we are anticipating CC4 lab and we anticipate the need for a mechanical penthouse. We do not anticipate a level 4 style lab.

Q: (Kendra): You mentioned a few times small scale retail, can you give us some insight at types of businesses you anticipate and how you plan to keep those tenants that fit in with the character of Davis, not chains and those types of tenants. And also following up on my earlier question can you tell us the total number of people you expect to work in the structure?

A: In terms of tenants and driving tenant mix is designing space that is marketed towards those tenants. If we look at the design, we do not intent to bring in any big box stores, but also by designing the space the way we have, we have essentially designed this space so that those tenants will not be able to take these spaces. We are encouraging restaurant type services in some spaces, and in other thoughtful design to do small scale, local tenants such as bakeries or local artisan type tenants. Thoughtful design is how you organically drive tenant base. With respect to employees, I just honestly don't have an answer to that. We will be conducting studies that should give us a better idea of that at a later date. Lab tenant users tend to be more sparsely divided as compared to office space with cubicle after cubicle type design.

**Development Review Application update: The project complies with the small business overlay that is now incorporated into the base zoning, which is available online.**

Q: (Chris): One of the things that I think is causing a disconnect with the business that are there now and how they can integrate into this new space. CC4 zoning lab space requires minimum of 18' floor to floor height, which allows for generously spaced spaces. Is the imposed scale given by the 18' floor zoning going to work against these current businesses being able to operate in the new space? Really small businesses wouldn't be in this space. I'm wondering if there is a way to do the first floor so that this 18' requirement isn't required. This building is larger than the surrounding ones but not enough to cause shadow issues, but I'm not sure about the residential side.

A: That is a great point regarding the first-floor space. While we would like to offer the current tenants the benefit of having that additional space, we will look into this point to see how this larger space could affect the current tenants. You've raised some very interesting perspectives that we haven't thought through yet.

**Development Review Application update: The project complies with the zoning requirements of the CC4 district.**

Q: (Mark): Wanted to follow up on the previous questions. I didn't hear a specific answer for green roofs and also whether you or the city was working with current tenants such as McKinnon's, etc. so that they will be able to survive this new construction?

A: The green roof is a key element to the sustainability of this building. The top of the building will be a key element to the ecosystem of the building and reaching the platinum level of green space.

Q: (Ulysses): First, I think there is a lot of good stuff in here, in particular you have done a great job of listening to all of the stuff going on here. I feel better about this than I did last time I met about this project. The community is telling you they are concerned about all the small businesses and tenants but what I'm hearing from you is that you're only really interested in saving/preserving the Burren. I like the Burren but why are you only focusing on preserving that business instead of addressing all of the small businesses that the community is concerned about? Yes its great you're bringing on these jobs, economic growth, etc. but I would really love at the next meeting for you to come with how you are proposing to work with all the existing businesses, not just the Burren on how they are going to survive and remain after this project is over. Or frontloading the construction so they can reopen quicker or working with the tenants on rental rates during construction. Can you actually come back with more detailed proposals on the other businesses?

A: While the Burren is only one establishment, but it's more of the location of the Burren in the structure makes it easier to preserve that business/structure. With regards to the rest of the tenants we continue to engage with them and hopefully by the next meeting we will know which are interested in coming back and how we can work with them to make that happen.

Q: (Kylie): What happens next with the current businesses? What do all these extra levels in the building mean and what are the benefits of having this multilevel structure?

A: we believe that this project is well-aligned with the vision of the City of Somerville as well as the vision of what the city wants for Davis Square. From our standpoint one of the biggest benefit is that if this site is not redeveloped in a thoughtful way, this area will go dark and become obsolete if it is not redeveloped in the next 5-10 years because the buildings that exist there are no longer sustainable. We are trying to prevent there being a series of dilapidated buildings on this site, which will happen.

Q: (Dennis): How this project would intersect with pedestrianizing Elm Street? I know this isn't a proposal that is universally supported and also how many cars in the underground parking?

A: We understand there have been discussions about pedestrianizing Elm Street, but this is not something that is in our purview to discuss but we are willing to work with the City of Somerville if this is something they decide that they would like to pursue. We defer to others on what will happen on Elm Street. Parking will be between 80-90 spaces.



Development Review Application update: The design has been revised since the meeting to include 77 vehicle parking spaces. The commercial garage parking spaces will be available to the public and the count has been calculated to be compliant with zoning.

Q: (George) The more I'm listening, the more I'm feeling you are being disingenuous with us. The title of the meeting was retail and office development and there was no mention in the first 10 minutes of the meeting about office space. Then it came to it being zoned CC4 lab space, which adds an additional 10-foot space on top for mechanicals. Then the parking went from 80 to 90. This is a typical developer's presentation; they say something at the beginning and by the time we come out at the end it's a completely different proposal. Are you proposing a CC4 Lab or are you proposing a CC4 office space with retail?

A: I pride myself and my team on our authenticity and I'm sorry if what I am saying is not clear. On the first slide it states we are proposing a CC4 lab/office building. We have gotten into discussions about the wide range that lab commercial space can accommodate, but to be clear, this is a CC4 lab building. With respect to the parking, the building is not fully designed so we are having this meeting so that we can design this with your input, and we want the community and the neighbors to feel they are a part of this discussion.

Q: (Kathy): I see a lot of little commercial spaces on first floor. On the upper floors are you anticipating one big tenant or multiple smaller ones. Second question is who (and you don't have to give me realtor or anything) but who do you envision doing the marketing for this business and selling this space and what are the selling points going to be?

A: We anticipate that the building will be multiple tenants, not just one. We believe it can be a really positive update that bring economic stimulation to an area that needs it. We want to ensure that this does not become a black hole in the Davis Square area. We want to do it thoughtfully and sustainably.

Q: (Theresa): Why did you select Davis Square?

A: We are active all over the Boston area, there is no one reason, but we are from Boston, members of the design team live in the Somerville area, we've always engaged in a responsible and thoughtful way.

Q: (Susan): Isn't Scape a British company? What does this process look like? This is number 1 of the meetings, what comes next? How do we proceed? How can I get more involved?

A: Scape is a partner of ours on certain projects, including projects in Boston, but we have various different platforms, myself and some of my team, some is with Scape, some is with hospitality, my team is in Boston and we are true stakeholders in Boston, Somerville, Quincy. This is the first public meeting. There are more steps that are required by the City of Somerville.

Following the zoning ordinances, this is neighborhood 1 meeting, there are 2 mandated neighborhood meetings, but that doesn't mean that these meetings are limited to 2. Next official step is an advancement/development of the design so that it can be submitted to urban design commission. Which will then go through a series of meeting with the design commission. Following a recommendation of the urban design commission, then come back to an official neighborhood meeting 2, where we present the design to you. Following that the project team would then release to prepare the development plan and to work with all 18 departments within the city who all have a stake in the project. Then the team will make its development review application. Once we make the official application, then the staff conducts its formal review commentary and how to best comply with zoning requirements, then staff report will be issued. Then we go before the planning board to present. We will not be requesting any variances in zoning. The planning board will then review the site plan and give commentary on how to bring this building/site plan into zoning conformance.

This is the beginning and there is a lot of opportunity for you to formally and informally come to us with questions, concerns or any other issues.

Q: (Kylie): Why is Davis Square being targeted for this? What is going on above the labs?

A: With regards to the dark spaces we don't view any of the existing tenants as dark spaces, it is the empty spaces that are not occupied and there is a risk due to the age of the buildings they will become functionally obsolete. The entire first floor is dedicated to retail and the floors above will be for the labs.

Q (Deborah): I'm Deborah Brushell I live in Lexington Avenue and I have a family practice in Davis Square and, you know, I, this has been a very interesting meeting. I learned a lot from George Oshea's questions and I hope that you folks will take Ulysses Lightner's comment to heart that you actually come back at the next meeting with some answers for some of our concerns. One of my concerns was that we don't know exactly what the fee is going to cost for these small businesses. Can you hear me? What is it going to cost for these small businesses to move into these space? Are you saying that their rent will basically be the same because their spaces is half the size and now one of the participants said now they're going to have a 16 foot ceiling so they'll be paying for heating and cooling that they can't really take any advantage of. So, I noticed that Mr. Flynn you've been very gracious for the most part but when Mr. Oshea said that you've been very disingenuous that wasn't a hostile comment but you seemed to take umbrage. Even though it sounds hostile the word, I mean he really wants an answer to his many thoughtful questions. Again, I just hope you come back with real answers for the real cost to the tenants that are currently occupying space on Elm Street will actually be. Because as I again will point out for some people who are not here, my rent, well I was offered something at the new 65 day street space that's being renovated and my rent more than doubled. And that building is not being renovated to the level that this building is being renovated. And there really needs to be some coordination with some of these projects that are going to be going on, whether you're protected from being concerned on a legal basis about the other projects because they have not been approved, but I have been told that the renovation of 260 Elm Street is a done deal. And that's going to mean more cars and more people working in Davis Square. So I'll leave it to you Andrew to comment.

A. Deborah I appreciate it and look we certainly and I personally want to continue to earn your trust and credibility and you know I hope to do that organically in the coming weeks and months and I certainly want to make myself available to everybody and you know our whole team will be accessible and transparent throughout this whole proceed. I think again there are some moving parts at the moment so as we speak in certain approximations it's not because there's any malintent there it's because many of these program elements are fluid at the moment and I think I will say and as I indicated earlier we're not in a position here this evening to speak specifically about rental rates or other parameters along those lines, and I think we are committed to working in good faith. And I think we also to some of the items alluded to I think we can really enhance and I know you speak from a tenant perspective which is very helpful and we may follow up to compare notes with you further but I think if you engage with some of the existing tenants they have plumbing issues they actually have inefficient HVAC systems because the systems are outdated at this point. And so we believe that the space we deliver back even if it's perhaps as you indicated to two feet higher that it will be with mechanical HVAC systems that are much more energy efficient, much more sustainable and much more cost effective than a lot of the kind of leakage that takes place today given the age and the vintage of the buildings the conditions of some of the facades and the roofs in the back of house so I think there are challenges on site as I think we can admit and I think some of the tenants would acknowledge in terms of problems with the existing building systems in the existing building conditions and so we do hope that any new space will be properly designed and function much more efficiently and on a much more cost effective basis for the users of that space.



Q (Ulysses): Ulysses Litigner the other side of Davis Square. First I just want to respond real quick to something Andrew said in response to my last comment. Where he pointed out that the Burren location in this particular series of parcels does make it easier to preserve it in situ while the rest of the construction of the project goes on. I get that, that makes sense, but still again I'm inviting you if you want to like build trust with us the community the next time we all meet tell us what you can do, not what you can't do. I get that you can't just like prop up the entire ground floor and build three stories on top of it and that the Burren's kind of a special case with that, but tell us what you can do in terms of rent, costs, lease durations, front loading, certain parts of the construction to allow those other businesses to maybe resume operations where they're currently located more quickly than waiting for the entire project to resume. Just come back tell us some proposals give us some details not about what you can't do, but what you can do and for me at least that would make me a lot more positive about this thing. But the main thing I just wanted to say what a piece of constructive feedback which is that this whole argument that I've heard you putting forward a few times about how without development this stretch of Elm Street will potentially be what you say dark in five to ten years empty dilapidated buildings I would encourage you to shelve that argument or at least change the words on it because it basically sounds to me that you're telling me that my neighborhood is run down and is on the verge of extinction. I don't think that's true. Maybe it is true but you got show me the proof if you can point to me you can get a bunch of your business owners who you're talking about here in front of me and have them tell me "Ulysses, without renovating this we're just gonna go out business in five to ten years and it's gonna be empty dilapidated buildings I'll believe it if they say it. But for you to come in here and tell us that this part of our neighborhood is like failing apart because the buildings are a little bit rough around the edges and the buildings and the businesses can't survive, that doesn't really fly. So I encourage you because we're all trying to get onto the same page here about how to improve this part of town or just these particular lots please find a more respectful way of presenting that argument because it really really just nails on a chalkboard to me. Thanks.

A. I appreciate it Ulysses and just to be clear we love and I personally for many years have had respect for the fabric in the kind of the personality of these buildings. I think we I'm not speaking as an outsider and commenting on what we perceive the buildings to be. I'm speaking as somebody who has actively been involved in the property management of these buildings over the past couple years. I think we're speaking from the inside out. We know the buildings and their challenges and again, I think what I was referencing was a kind of very present example of the space next to the Burren which has been vacant for a very very long time due to those types of challenges so I just want to be clear we are not commenting. We understand that the personality of these buildings is very pertinent to their charm and in what makes them great. I think we're speaking as you know from a kind of ownership in property management and building conditions standpoint. We just know that the buildings which have been around for over 100 years are facing some very serious challenges.

Q (Kendra): Thank so much. Kendra and I'm immediately in the Davis Square neighborhood, close proximity to this project. Just a quick echo of to follow up what Ulysses said and also to play on what Kylie said earlier about I think the reason why we're all sounding very proud of these businesses here and also a little defensive on their behalf is because of what Kylie said earlier that they have survived a once in 100 years pandemic and they have pivoted and they have just thrived and we are all so proud of what they have accomplished in this difficult time that we're in so I think that's why you might be sensing some defensiveness because we're very proud of this neighborhood and the way it's come through the past year in addition to its long history. But my two questions were the parking lot I was curious how many of those spots will be designated for the general public so they can support the small businesses in the neighborhood versus going to the staff and the employees of this new building. And the second thing is it was mentioned that construction work we could be at rest assured that the construction wouldn't begin this calendar year which is great but given that you said this is a very early stage in the process and tis a very lengthy process is there any scenario where construction could start in 2022 and could you give us an estimate of when work won't start any earlier than when what year what season of what year just given how long the process at minimum has to take. Thank you so much and

thanks for being so generous with this q and a.

A: No and thank you and thanks everybody for taking the time this evening. With regard and I think with regards to your first comment I think what we're really trying to align and conform with here is the city of Somerville went through a nearly 10 year rezoning process and specifically zoned this site in Davis Square to drive redevelopment in a thoughtful way to position it for the future and to position it with a vision for long term success. And so I think I just want to be clear these aren't ideas or concepts that we are kind of drawing upon or conceiving in a vacuum. I think they're very much aligned with the zoning that the city of Somerville went through in a very community oriented transparent collaborative process and you know that is has really been what framed our perspective our approach here. So I think that's kind of the paradigm to which we approach it and we approach it humbly. We approach it respectfully. We approach it within a set of parameters that have been prescribed by others and we are trying to come and bring a level of responsible thoughtful design again not doing some big glass building not doing something that is completely inconsistent with the history and legacy and heritage of the Davis Square neighborhood. So I think we're trying to work within an envelope in a set of parameters in a set of guidelines that were prescribed by the city of Somerville as a result of a very long public process that the public was very involved in so we consider ourselves partners and stewards in that journey, not folks who are trying to come in and dictate what is and isn't right for this site. With regards to parking, we'd certainly, a huge portion of parking will be public parking. I think that's kind of how we've always considered this, is that parking is primarily public parking. Perhaps some of which is allocated for employees but that we know that surface parking lot is very important element of the parking infrastructure in Davis Square. And again that's why we plan to replace and enhance that element of the parking infrastructure with the below grade garage. And with regards to precise timing, I mean I really can't say and I'm not being disingenuous in any way, I mean as you heard Jen and Lance and others articulate this is a long multifaceted process with many layers so I think at this point I can assure you it's no time this calendar year, and again it's from there I can't really anticipate or speculate how far out it will be but I think we consider ourselves in the first inning of this journey with eight nine or eight more innings to go I suppose.

Development Review Application update: The design has been revised since the meeting to include 77 vehicle parking spaces. The commercial garage parking spaces will be available to the public and the count has been calculated to be compliant with zoning.

Q (Lance): I had raised my hand during when Ulysses was speaking but I'll make a key point now just to clarify a couple things. I believe that when Dan Bartman who's from our planning department is also on the call can correct me if I'm wrong or clarify but my understanding of the zoning is that this parking would is not able to be allocated and so it would be you know it would be available to the public or tenants to the member that the zoning will dictate that. But I believe that that's what zoning says but if I'm wrong then I'll stand corrected. To Ulysses point, it's one of the things that I had written down as well I thought it might be a good time to just rather than my laundry list of things I'm going to say at the end, it's a point that I had flagged as well. They're characterizing this stretch and sort of this um it felt to me and obviously to others as sort of a "dead or dying" lost cause where quite to the contrary when I was drafting the proposed zoning amendment to require small commercial spaces which we'll get to later. I use this as an example and I'm not the only public planner to use this exact stretch but I'm not a public planner. I'm not the only person to use this exact stretch of Elm Street as an example for the ideal pedestrian experience. I'm told by people who do this that others have looked at this and used this space as an example. It is a gem; it is an absolute crown jewel in the city of Somerville in terms of lots of little engaging small businesses where the pedestrian can pop in and out and have difference experiences and enjoy different businesses so you know yeah there's one space that has been empty and there's I think a few reasons why that might be. That entirely unrentable I don't believe to be the case. I know for a fact there's artists arts related organizations that have asked me about it. Maybe there's whether its up to code I don't know but you know that none of that holds water. And I don't meant to sound argumentative but I just want to reiterate and sort of emphasize what is the point Ulysses made is that it feels completely

tone deaf to me to hear that characterization of this block and to use that as a justification for this project. In my opinion you don't need that justification for the project. In my opinion the justification for development in Davis Square is all of the things that this community has been talking about for 10 years if not more. The fact that for years we've seen small businesses leave because of rising rents, because of difficulty in spaces, because of banks and restaurants seem to be only ones that can afford the leases, because the property owners have only those commercial spaces to pay the taxes, to pay the upkeep, to pay everything else so that's not to mention as someone else mentioned earlier the multi-million dollar billion dollar infrastructure cost that we have and everything else that it costs that the cities have. And this is a transit hub and it's a place where its perfectly appropriate for development. It's a huge space and it's . . . the public process that we undertook before I sort of allowed the mayor to start pushing projects down onto the table confirmed that, that at the very least whether it was four stories or six stores this was a good spot to do something, right? So that is the only debate we had really after the public planning process was a matter of four stories five stories because we haven't developed a way to allow six yet that makes sense because of a lot of reasons – COVID and staffing capacity administration and others. I prefer to see that but here we are at the moment. What I hope to see a project like this be able to accomplish is now that the property owner isn't relying entirely on those commercial leases and this was touched upon earlier that the commercial spaces can be held out and that those aren't set out for a top dollar rent. My view of this and if I had a tool to do it through a legislative process I would, I'm trying to, and I haven't gotten anywhere with the administration yet, but short of the legislative requirement zoning requirement is that when we say build a few extra stories on top or four or five extra stories on top, use that income to subsidize the kind of place that made this location popular and attractive to you in the first place. To maintain the small businesses current and going forward. Some of these businesses might not want to deal with it; they may have been looking to open a shop in their hometown, I don't know. Small businesses open and close for a lot of reasons, but I do think that it is there are vibrant very successful businesses now and I'm sympathetic to people who have said that what we've heard from you doesn't sound detailed enough. In terms of what you can do whether its relocation whether it's a commitment to an x number of years at a rate that is not 2x, as one of the other folks mentioned, that that's the kind of thing that I think we're hoping to see that you talked about the life cycle of the building or the metaphor you used but that the upper floors can help to sustain a pedestrian experience and a business environment at the bottom that is consistent with what is here now and not looking for time. So that's a couple points off my list, still have a few more but I'll stop there now.

A: Lance I really appreciate everything you said and I think again part of the purpose tonight is for us to hear this feedback from you and others so that we can incorporate it for instance on the retail we don't have all the detail tonight perhaps that's detail we can establish as we proceed in this process but I think, and I will just take a moment and I respectfully I'm not trying to be argumentative but more just saying at a personal level it's important to me, I want to clarify for the record that I don't believe this is what I said earlier and I just don't want to be mischaracterized in any forum tonight or in the future, I by no means characterize, classify or consider the buildings today to be dilapidated or in any way undesirable. We love these buildings, we love the businesses in the buildings, we love the fabric of the buildings, we love the design of the buildings. The only reference I made was an abstract one, to what we have seen in other urban core environments, whether it be in Somerville or Boston or other cities in looking through a prism into the future, that if certain properties aren't thoughtfully redesigned and thoughtfully reprogrammed for success, they can end up in a dilapidated state that becomes a negative feedback loop instead of a positive feedback loop. So I want to be very clear for the record I at no point did I or would I ever characterize the existing structures, buildings or businesses as such. And I think we're trying to be thoughtful and the whole reason Somerville wen through their zoning process, was to make sure that all areas are positioned for success and sustainability in the future. I think the only context in which I referenced that was through a prism of 10 to 15 years down the road that if thoughtful steps aren't taken today that is an outcome that has been seem time and time again in different local urban core environments. And again that perspective is also directly informed from the property management lens through which we see, where there was a plumbing issue that we were solving,

that we have seen before whether it be with an old car or an old house you can band-aid things but at some point there becomes a need for more meaningful intervention. So that is simply the context for the discussion here and I think a classification and characterization that was made in response to a specific question, but we are committed to preserving all of the positive elements that exist today and we hold and I reverence all of those elements today. We are here in a solution oriented fashion with you counselor, with all the stakeholders, at this meeting this evening to work together to achieve that. So I think we can turn it back to the q and a but I appreciate everyone's time this evening and I want to be very clear that that is the lens through which we are approaching this and we would not approach it in any other way.

Q (Dennis): 12 Level street, north of Davis. I want to thank Ulysses and Counselor Lance Davis; I couldn't agree more with both of their comments. I found them insightful and interesting and I also agree that this Davis Square and even particularly that strip is one of the best urban experiences in Somerville presently, which is why you're finding so many people so passionate about it. In a similar vein of getting the impression that perhaps you were viewing them in a , these are gonna be falling down in 10 years, my house has been standing for 125 years. We live in one of the oldest parts of the country and I think there's something that be good about that, not necessarily bad about that. I don't think my house needs to be bulldozed it's actually in pretty good shape, as are many of the ones on my street. But that comment aside, I just again maybe be careful with the like "something is 100 years old and therefore must be bulldozed" a lot of the people here might disagree with that. But my question is someone had a question earlier about this project ultimately being owned by a massive UK corporation which was my understanding as well. I missed the first few minutes of the meeting so this was probably answered then, and I probably missed it, Andrew Flynn, can you, who are you, like what is your job title and what company do you work for if it's not scape? Do you work with scape? Your team works with scape? Is the company you work for owned by Scape UK? Is the building ultimately owned by Scape UK? I feel confused now and similarly, who are you, Jordan Smith? Thank you.

A: So my name's Andrew Flynn, I was born in Boston, grew up in Boston, currently live in Boston. Scape has been a partner of ours on various different projects. Myself and my team execute each project on a project-by-project basis with different partners. This project is not ultimately owned by Scape UK, this project is a specific standalone project and we will have many local partners on the project. So I am here, I am a Boston native, I will be here throughout this entire process, through the next several months and years. Jordan Smith works with our legal counsel, Sullivan and Worcester, and he has also been the technology MC for this meeting.

Q(Dennis): Okay and when you say "us" what is the name of "us"? Who is us? What is the name of the company that you work for, and what is your job title? Like I just don't know who you are.

A: Sure, I'm an independent person and developer and we partner with Scape on certain projects, we partner with other partners and investors on other projects. As I said we're involved in residential development, mixed use development, hospitality development and in commercial office development. Each project is executed on a project-by-project basis.

A (Jordan): I work at Sullivan and Worcester and I work with Jen on the permitting for this project.

Q(Lee): 17 Chapel Street. The next time around, it'd be very helpful to have a transparent drawing showing what the mechanicals will look like. What we have now is a very thing line with a few brushes of green to show the green roof, but behind it there are no mechanicals. It's my understanding that in addition to the 65 feet of height you get for a lab building, you're allowed another 18 feet for mechanicals, bringing the total to 83 feet. My question would be what that will look like – is it a little square 10 foot tower or is it, does it cover most of the roof? So I think that would be helpful. The other thing to put in context is that your soon-to-be neighbor, diagonally across the street, Asana Partners, is also putting in for a CC4 lab building, with a .

penthouse. So what happens here will give some strength that required a zoning change because the other side is MR4, right, not CC4? When this was bumped down to CC4, I don't think anybody was fully aware of the rigidity of the zoning code and that you can now claim CC4, means a lab building as opposed to an office building. For the record, for the health of Davis Square, it seems to me that an office building is much preferable to a lab building because the density of employment is higher and therefore there are more potential consumers of the retail services on the first level throughout Davis Square. My suggestion would be to be a little bit more straightforward in picturing the final look of a lab building. The second comment to make is that I did ask whether you'd be willing to accept conditions as Jennifer Schutlz pointed out, there will be conditions. Whether you're willing to accept them or not, there will be, the question is whether you will fight them. I look forward to the next meeting. Also, I would like to say that this strip has been an example of the under utilization of the business district of Davis Square, so I personally welcome this development and appreciate that you have taken into consideration the brick theme. Your soon to be neighbor said that in the event we pedestrianized Elm Street, he'd be willing to chip in to a handicap accessible brick sidewalk treatment and I'm wondering if you would do the same?

A: Yes, to address a couple of the items brought up, we certainly can come back with more details regarding the mechanicals, the building, all of the items you alluded to. I think at this point, for this meeting, those are underdeveloped at this point, just given the preliminary stages of the design. I think that is something that as we go forward we can bring much more detail to. With regards to the pedestrian overlay on Elm Street, I think that's something we need to learn more about. But we certainly want to understand what some of the needs and desires and preferences of the community are and we certainly want to support them in ways that we can. I'm a bit under informed on that specific item, but I'm certainly open to that discussion.

Q (Kylie): Thank you, Kylie Berkley, just as things have gone on throughout the night, just wanted to ask a couple more questions. I'm here to drive home a community aspect of everything, it was mentioned before that businesses outside the burn would be preserved, but looking at the slide and everything, it looks like things are going to be remodeled and everything so just still looking to see what Scape is going to do for the community or just more somewhat a non picturesque status of things. What is Scape really looking to do for the community of Davis Square, because we've done a lot through COVID. What is Scape looking to do for the community, and really get to know the community and the people that you're putting space in, and what they're going to do. Just trying to kind of figure out what's going on, it was mentioned before that scientists and everything would be running the labs on the first level, is it going to be solely those scientists living in those three stories above the space? Why is Scape going to be here? Why are you excited to be here?

A: Thank you Kylie. So again I think we share the love and appreciation that everybody on this call does for Davis Square. And again we want to be a positive force and kind of reiterate and help position that ecosystem for success in the years to come. With regards to your question, so the levels upstairs will be where the lab users are and where they work on a day-to-day basis and the level downstairs will be reserved for retail and parking access. I will say we want to support Davis Square directly in very many ways, those are conversations that we would like to understand better. What are some of the needs for Davis Square and how we can help be a positive force to support Davis Square, so I think we welcome those discussions and we want to participate in a very direct way to help support the neighborhood's goals and objectives.

Q(Joe): Thanks, Joe Herbert Street, live about a block away from your building. I was at the last Scape meeting, if I remember correctly it came up during that meeting that the existing tenants on the first floor had received an eviction notice that was about 18 months out. I know it's been 18 months since then, obviously they're still there, so that situation has changed, but I would curious what the status of those tenants are? Are they currently month to month? Do they have the stability of a lease currently? I want make sure my first question is excluding the burn, I know they're a special case. I think we're primarily talking about all the other tenants in that building.



Second question, it sounds like with the Asana building and this building there's going to be hundreds and thousands of square feet of lab space being built in Davis. I have a feeling the reality is this is going to office space and not lab space. I'm assuming that's probably something to do with zoning; I'm guessing lab space is not going to be consuming hundreds of thousands of square feet in Davis over the next three years. Even given that, even if it is office space, I have to imagine renting office space is probably a little tough in COVID days, even after COVID is a memory. I'd be curious if you had any consideration of putting retail on the second floor and getting a little less office space. And I just wanted to clarify based on some of the other questions I've heard I believe there's zero residential space in this building? I think that's your previous plan which is no longer being considered. I think this is entirely lab space, office space and commercial.

A: That's correct, thank you Joe. There is no residential space in this building. With regards to stats of ongoing tenants, those discussions are ongoing. Each tenant, some are on month to month, some are on long term leases. And something I'll say too which I think is important is we have worked very closely with these tenants over the past 18 months to help them remain on site throughout the pandemic. I'll keep those discussions and those accommodations and those arrangements that were made private, but I think if you speak to many of the existing tenants they would indicate that our self and the property management team made some very major accommodations to make sure everybody could remain. And I think that's just indicative of our willingness to work in good faith with tenants that are here and that want to be here and that may want to be here in the future.

Q (Kylie): Thank you for the update that it was no longer residential. I'm just still kind of curious why you think Davis is the best space for this just from being on this call here tonight, a lot of people are concerned about why this space. And I would still like a more enthusiastic response as to why you are excited to be here?

A: at a personal level I've always had a affinity and connection with the fiber and the fabric of this area, we love the diversity of Davis Square. We wanted to be a positive force in that ecosystem. The genesis of this project, we took our cues from the City of Somerville and the zoning process they went through, we are doing the 4 story lab building because that is the direction the City of Somerville prescribed the rezoning to go towards, so I just want to, we're enthusiastic and excited about it for all the same reasons everyone else on this call is that is why we are approaching this project with respect and deference. The framework we are proposing was drafted and conceived by stakeholders and community members and others involved in the process, but not by us.

Q: (Lee): Just a mild correction to what Mr. Flynn said, the city did not endorse or envision a lab building on that site. It designated it as CC4, and I think the general expectation was that it was going to be commercial. I'm going to read description of a lab building from the zoning code and you'll see why net conditions are absolutely necessary if this is to be described as a lab.

"Floor space is typically custom designed as complex, technically sophisticated and mechanically intensive, wet or dry labs or vivariums for animal research". If you are going to exploit that full meaning specific wording under Section 6.2.8 of the code and you think that is what the City of Somerville intended, I beg to correct you.

A: I would like Dan Bartman to provide a better definition as to what the difference is between a zoning district, building types allowed in the district and then the uses allowed within that district to get to the heart of what is contemplated and allowed in zoning. I would certainly describe the commercial core district as permitting a range of possibilities, so all of the questions about residential are now nullified by the zoning itself. A lab building was certainly within the realm of possibility even for Davis Square. I think something that may be valuable for everyone to realize this, is that the Boston metropolitan region may be best understood as the biotechnology capital of the US and a lot of the development we're seeing will fall in that realm.



But also there are going to be some activities that fall within the design services and arts and enterprise use category. And all of that is what you're seeing drive the use and development in Somerville. The scale and the range and rate in which the community has embraced the biotech realm has grown faster than most had anticipated. I realize that it may be inappropriate to have labs that do testing on animals in the area in Davis Square so talks about limiting certain uses like that is not out of the realm of possibility here.

Q: There is a question in the chat regarding rodent management, trash disposal and loading of the building.

A: We have dealt with rodent management on other projects and we are very hands on with the mitigation on that during our construction management. Trash and loading are happening primarily in the interior of the building and will mostly be happening off the street, which we believe will be an improvement to the current conditions in the area.

Q: There is a question in the chat about the type of foundation.

A: It is so early in the development/design of this building we haven't gotten there yet, but I think with this only being a 4-story building, the foundation would be pretty reasonable and would not be overbearing in the construction.

Q: (Lee): I appreciate Dan Bartman's very diplomatic description. I think as it happens my son is in the bio-tech industry, so I appreciate the explosion and also the rental possibilities that spring to mind. The description of the building would be "lab/office" is what we would prefer to see. What we do not want to see is that it will be all Lab, but there needs to be some conditions to overlay and correct this description. Rather than push as hard as we can on whatever use we can get and to fight the board on any conditions.

A: While you are correct that there is only a lab building type or a commercial building type and there is no lab/office building type. That has to do with the exterior footprint of the building. Within the Lab building type building includes a definition that can still have all the other uses, including restaurant, retail office, etc. You are right you do have to apply under a building type for the exterior zoning, that building type includes ALL types of uses under that type.

We may end up leasing one, two or even three of the floors to non-lab uses, whether it's an architectural firm, a law office, a marketing or design firm. There is an intention that there may be a portion of lab uses, but it does not restrict us as to lab uses only and we want to remain as open as we can at this point to all those uses.

Q: (Lee) I think a mixed building is a great idea but as Chris pointed out the big difference between a lab building and a commercial building is that the ground floor only needs to be 14' instead of 18' for a lab building. And as Chris pointed out this really goes against the small business type, we would like to see in the retail space in the building. This is a zoning problem, this is not anyone's fault, but we are concerned about that

A: I would like to clarify that 18' ceiling is applicable to all CC4 building types, commercial and lab, so it's the same standard across the board. The primary feedback that we are receiving from small business is that is limitation on the floor area, not the building height, is what is affecting their rent, along with share services such as bathrooms. The reason the zoning has an 18' is to accept the broadest range of uses throughout time. This is falling within the mid-range of these types of buildings that are being developed in the area.

Q: (George): Again, I would like to reiterate that you are in fact you are going for a lab. You aren't going for an architectural firm who doesn't need a 10' mechanicals on top [some technical difficulties with the zoom, hard to hear]. Just be honest.

A: I appreciate your concern, but we have been very clear that we are building a lab building. We are building this to lab requirements and specifications. However, we are not saying that the only tenant will be a lab from now until the future and we want to remain open to other uses as much as we can but to reiterate and be perfectly clear we are intending to building a lab building for lab uses and using lab specifications. We are not trying to be misleading, directly or indirectly, with any of you. We are building a lab building in a lab building box and that is what we are being guided by and that our approach is this being a lab building but we are not going to restrict our use to just lab spaces. I want that to be totally clear.

Q: (Dennis) It's getting to the end of the night and I've already asked a bunch of questions and I just wanted to say thank you for the presentation and this version of the building is so much better than the version that was presented last year.

A: Thank you for your level of engagement you've asked so insightful questions and we look forward to working together and incorporating all the comments and concerns into a design and project going forward.