



City of Somerville

## PLANNING BOARD

City Hall 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

**TO:** Planning Board  
**FROM:** Planning, Preservation, & Zoning (PPZ) Staff  
**SUBJECT:** 59 Bow Street, P&Z 21-017  
**DATE:** January 26, 2023  
**RE:** Supplemental Staff Memo

**RECOMMENDATION:**     **Special Permit:** Approve with Conditions  
                                  **Site Plan Approval:** Approve with Conditions

At their January 19, 2023, meeting, the Planning Board (“the Board”) heard the Applicant presentation for the proposed project at 59 Bow Street for a Net Zero Ready, LEED Certifiable General Building in the MR5 zoning district that is on a Pedestrian Street and within a Transit Area. (See the Staff Memo for additional details). Public testimony was taken. After closing the public comment portion of the hearing, the Board stated that it would continue to accept written testimony. The Board deliberated the proposal and asked that the Applicant address the following:

Bedroom count. The Board asked for an increased bedroom count.

Landscaping. The Board asked for more information regarding the vegetation proposed for the planters.

Deliveries/loading/ride share. The Board raised concerns about the location/handling of loading, delivery, and ride share locations and asked the Applicant to provide further work in this area.

As the Board was not ready to vote on the Special Permit or Site Plan Approval at the meeting, it looked to continue the case until February 2, 2023. Staff noted to the Board that any changes to the delivery/loading/ride share proposal in the Mobility-approved TAP would necessitate additional review and comment from the Mobility Division. Staff further noted that it would be challenging for the Mobility Division to be able to turn around a review by Tuesday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, the outlying date by which Staff would need all updated documents from the Applicant. The Applicant stated that they wished to continue the case to the February 2, 2023, meeting date and the Board voted unanimously to do so.

The following provides a brief update on each of the three areas that the Board asked the Applicant to address. There is no updated comprehensive plan set for the Board to consider at this time.

**Bedroom count**

On January 24, 2023, the Applicant submitted updates to the interior residential programming. Below is a brief comparison between the Applicant's original and revised 15-unit proposal:

**Original proposal**

1 two-bedroom unit  
14 one-bedroom units

**Revised proposal**

3 two-bedroom units  
8 one-bedroom units  
4 studio units

**Landscaping**

On January 24, 2023, the Applicant submitted a proposal for the contents of the planter boxes. Staff uses the term "contents" rather than "vegetation" because the updated plan sheet states that "high quality faux plants" are proposed for the planter boxes.

Staff notes that faux plants do not count toward the Green Score. An updated Green Score has not been provided. Even if the Applicant met or surpassed the Green Score prior to addressing the treatment of the planter boxes, Staff recommends that the Board ask for further clarification on this matter and have the Applicant return at a subsequent hearing with a plan for year-round (living) greenery.

**Deliveries/loading/ride share**

On Monday, January 23, 2023, the Applicant submitted two concept plans to the Mobility Division for their consideration. As of the date of this Supplemental Memo, the Mobility Division has not provided feedback; Staff has no update to provide on this item.

Staff has advised the Applicant that this additional review by Mobility may be iterative in nature.