

## **Project Narrative : 256-260 Elm Street**

Located in the epicenter of the lively and diverse Davis Square, the proposed development of 256-260 Elm Street will be an approximately 104,000 SF 4-story, Lab Building with ground floor retail and lab space on the upper floors. The site is within a CC-4 zoning district, following a Zoning Map Amendment adopted on August 26, 2021, and abides by all of the requirements outlined in the Somerville Zoning Ordinance for such designation. The new building footprint maintains the existing plaza area at 270 Elm Street, which has been designated as a new Civic Plaza. This plaza will be fully renovated to meet the accessibility, sustainability, and place making requirements for the Through-Block Plaza.

The Architecture of 256-260 Elm Street compliments the urban fabric of Davis Square and improves the pedestrian experience along Elm Street, which is identified as a Pedestrian Street by the zoning ordinance. This is accomplished by providing three properly sized storefronts for the activated ground floor retail, that is fully compliant with the Small Business Overlay. There are also additional setbacks from Elm and Herbert Street to create unique urban moments along the streetscape. A public art program will be put in place incorporating local art and murals throughout the development and the building will also pursue LEED Platinum certification.

The Development Covenant has been negotiated with the City of Somerville and agrees to contribute funds for the continued improvements of Elm Street and maintain below market rents for two of the three retail streets along Elm Street. A maintenance agreement and public access easement will also be put in place for the Civic Plaza at 270 Elm Street.

The project received unanimous approval from the Urban Design Commission on April 26, 2022.

The existing structures at 256 Elm Street were deemed to be not preferably preserved by the Historic Preservation Commission on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021.