



City of Somerville

PLANNING BOARD

City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

TO: Planning Board
FROM: OSPCD Staff
SUBJECT: 620 Broadway, P&Z 21-145
POSTED: May 26, 2023

RECOMMENDATION: No change

This memo is supplemental to the PPZ Staff Memo dated March 10, 2023.

This Staff Memo provides supplemental information about the loading and pavement marking plans for the proposed development, and recommends amending one condition.

BACKGROUND

This application for Site Plan Approval and a Special Permit (SPA/SP) for Cannabis Retail Sales was reviewed by the Planning Board on April 6th and May 4th, 2023. At the May 4th meeting, the Board expressed concern that the Transportation Access Plan (TAP) was incomplete as it relates to the loading plan, and noted that approval of other projects have been subject to a completed loading plan. Since the May 4th meeting, the Applicant has met with Mobility and PPZ Staff and continued to address the loading area.

ANALYSIS

Following Staff review of the SPA/SP application for 620 Broadway, the Mobility Division recommended the following conditions related to loading and street design (signage and pavement markings):

- “Botanica, LLC shall submit an updated Transportation Access Plan (TAP), subject to review and approval by the Director of Mobility, which identifies a loading zone within three hundred (300) feet of 620 Broadway sufficient to serve the largest delivery vehicle type anticipated for this use.” (This condition is proposed to be attached to the Site Plan Approval.)
- “The Applicant shall develop and implement a sign and pavement markings plan for Broadway between the Broadway bridge deck and the crosswalk at Winchester Street that enhances safety conditions and protection for people bicycling and reduces opportunities for illegal curbside parking and loading. Final design must be approved by relevant City Departments.” (This condition is proposed to be attached to the Special Permit for Cannabis Retail Sales.)

The first of these conditions guarantees specific attention to the loading zone, while the second condition requires design and implementation of a sign and pavement markings plan that would include loading. Both conditions (including full implementation of the

sign and pavement markings plan) would need to be met prior to a Certificate of Occupancy. PPZ and Mobility Staff have proposed amending the second condition (see Permit Conditions) to clarify that the loading area must be included in the plan; an acceptable loading plan is dependent upon a complete and approved sign and pavement markings plan.

In the Mobility Division's review of Broadway in this area (including the street directly adjacent to the site), they have determined the curb-to-curb width of approximately 56 feet. The Mobility Division have confirmed that they are confident that a pavement markings plan can be produced that both improves safety conditions and protection for bicyclists and creates an appropriate loading zone on the west side of Broadway, the same side as the proposed development.

The Applicant has begun coordination with the Mobility Division on the design of the pavement. However, Staff would like to clarify that the development and approval of a final sign and pavement markings plan, without which the loading plan cannot be completed, may take several months.

The Mobility Division will continue to work with the Applicant if the Board determines an approved loading plan is necessary to make a decision. However, the Mobility Division has also stated their comfort with the Planning Board making a decision on the application as conditioned (noting the proposed amendment to the condition as described below). While the vast majority of projects have provided an approved loading plan as part of their applications, Staff note that this development presents a unique circumstance due to the proposed location of the loading area and the timing of re-signing and striping that portion of Broadway.

PERMIT CONDITIONS

Staff recommend the revision to the following condition from the Staff Memo dated March 10, 2023 (with new language underlined):

- The Applicant shall develop and implement a sign and pavement markings plan for Broadway between the Broadway bridge deck and the crosswalk at Winchester Street, including a designated loading area for 620 Broadway, that enhances safety conditions and protection for people bicycling and reduces opportunities for illegal curbside parking and loading. Final design must be approved by relevant City Departments, including but not limited to Mobility, Engineering, and PPZ, prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.