



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

**18 MAY 2023 MEETING MINUTES**

This meeting was conducted via remote participation on GoToWebinar.

NAME	TITLE	STATUS	ARRIVED
Michael Capuano	Chair	<i>Present</i>	
Amelia Aboff	Vice Chair	<i>Present</i>	
Erin Geno	Clerk	<i>Present</i>	
Jahan Habib	Member	<i>Absent</i>	
Michael McNeley	Member	<i>Present</i>	
Debbie Howitt Easton	Alternate	<i>Absent</i>	
Luc Schuster	Alternate	<i>Present</i>	

City staff present: Raisa Saniat (Planning, Preservation & Zoning Division), Emily Hutchings (Planning, Preservation & Zoning Division), and Andrew Graminski (Planning, Preservation & Zoning Division)

The meeting was called to order at 6:03pm and adjourned at 9:24pm.

**GENERAL BUSINESS: Meeting Minutes**

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Vice Chair Aboff, the Board voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the 2 March 2023 meeting minutes.

Chair Capuano and Member Geno stated that they reviewed the previous Planning Board meeting recording and have submitted an affidavit to be able to participate in tonight's meeting regarding the meeting items that were continued from the 4 May 2023 meeting.

**PUBLIC HEARING: 620 Broadway (P&Z 21-145)**  
*(continued from 4 May 2023)*

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Vice Chair Aboff, the Board voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the applicant's request to continue the case to 1 June 2023.

**RESULT:**

**CONTINUED**

Vice Chair Aboff recused herself from this item. Vice Chair Aboff left the meeting at 6:08pm and stated that she will rejoin the Planning Board at the Joint Hearing at 6:30pm.

**PUBLIC HEARING: 1 McGrath Highway (P&Z 21-028)**  
*(continued from 20 April 2023)*

The applicant team provided a summary of the previous meetings and other basic project information. The team noted that the development covenant has been fully executed since the last meeting.

The Board and applicant team discussed the required neighborhood meetings for the project, considering the last meeting was held in October 2021. The applicant team stated that they have confirmed with the Inspectional Services Department (ISD) that a third neighborhood meeting did not need to be held. They also noted that there have been several delays with the project due to coordination with two cities (Somerville and Cambridge), two MassDOT districts, and several local and state entities.

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Clerk Geno, the Board voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the Site Plan Approval to establish a 6-story general building in the HR district, with conditions.

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Clerk Geno, the Board voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the Special Permit to establish a hotel use in the HR district, with conditions.

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Clerk Geno, the Board voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the Special Permit for Parking Relief from the minimum parking standards in the HR district, with conditions.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS</b>
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Chair Capuano put the Planning Board in recess at 6:21pm in order to join a Joint Hearing with the Land Use Committee at 6:30pm.

### **OTHER BUSINESS: Joint Hearing with the Somerville City Council's Land Use Committee**

**Mayor Ballantyne requesting ordainment of an amendment to Section 12.2 of the Zoning Ordinances to reflect the recommendations in the 2022 Somerville Linkage Nexus Study.**

**John Fragione and Agostino Feola, requesting the adoption of an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance Map to change the zoning district of 295-297 Medford Street and 93 Walnut Street from MR3 to MR5.**

**Union Square One Development, LLC requesting the adoption of a Zoning Text Amendment to Section 8.17. g. iii to permit variations to build out regulations by Special Permit in the CC5 District, USQ sub-area.**

**Mayor Ballantyne requesting ordainment of an amendment to Section 8.1, Affordable Housing, of the Zoning Ordinance to remove errant text and amend the dimensional standards.**

The Planning Board returned from the Joint Hearing with the Land Use Committee at 9:11pm.

### **PUBLIC HEARING: 51 Prospect Street (P&Z 21-181)**

*(continued from 4 May 2023)*

Due to the Planning Board's Rules of Policy and Procedure, the Board cannot take up new business after 9:00pm without a majority vote. The Board discussed whether or not to take up new business this late in the evening due to the time sensitive nature of the project. The Board agreed that this case deserves a substantive deliberation and consideration and they did not want to rush the discussion.

Staff addressed the Board and noted that they met with the applicant team regarding the Board's recommendation that they use full dimensional bricks. The applicant team told Staff that full bricks may not be possible on the Prospect Street side of the site due to the fact that the walls need to be moveable. Staff also noted that the team provided an updated native planting list, which is still being reviewed by the Public Space & Urban Forestry (PSUF) Division. Therefore, Staff recommended that the Board continue the case to a future meeting to allow PSUF time to review the submitted materials.

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Vice Chair Aboff, the Board voted unanimously (5-0) to continue this case to the 1 June 2023.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>CONTINUED</b>
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*NOTICE: These minutes constitute a summary of the votes and key discussions at this meeting. A recording of these proceedings can be accessed at any time by using the registration link at the top of the meeting agenda.*