



City of Somerville

PLANNING BOARD

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

DECISION

2023 JUL 27 A 11:51

PROPERTY ADDRESS: 16 and 20 Medford Street
CASE NUMBER: P&Z 23-012
OWNER/APPLICANT: Somerville Living, LLC
ADDRESS: P.O. Box 780, Lynnfield, MA 019040
DECISION: Approved with Conditions (Special Permit)
DATE OF VOTE: July 20, 2023
DECISION ISSUED: July 27, 2023

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
SOMERVILLE, MA

This decision summarizes the findings made by the Planning Board (the "Board") regarding the Special Permit application submitted for 16 and 20 Medford Street.

LEGAL NOTICE

Somerville Living, LLC seeks a Special Permit for Parking Relief from the minimum parking requirements in the MR4 zoning district.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

On June 1, 2023, the Planning Board held a public hearing advertised in accordance with M.G.L. 40A and the Somerville Zoning Ordinance. Present and sitting at the public hearing were Board Members Chair Michael Capuano, Vice-Chair Amelia Aboff, Clerk Erin Geno, Jahan Habib, Michael McNeley, Alternate Debbie Howitt Easton, and Alternate Luc Schuster. The Board took up this case concurrently with a related case, P&Z 23-011, both associate with the same Applicant and address. The Applicant introduced the project and why they are returning to the Board for a Major Amendment and additional Special Permit request. After the presentation by the Applicant, the Board asked the Applicant some clarifying questions, which were addressed by both the Applicant and Staff. After a brief discussion between the Board, the Applicant and Staff, the Chair opened up the public testimony portion of the hearing where a few members of the public voiced their concerns. After the public testimony section of the hearing was closed, the Chair Board went into discussion.

The Board discussed that this project could use another neighborhood meeting to offer another opportunity for the public to provide comments and concerns to the Applicant. The Board asked the Applicant questions about the proposed bedroom mix, mobility and traffic items, and why the Applicant is pursuing a Special Permit for parking relief. Several of the Board's questions necessitated follow-up from the Applicant or Staff. The Board asked the Applicant to coordinate another neighborhood meeting with the Ward Councilor before they come back to the Board and voted to continue the project to the next Planning Board meeting on June 15, 2023.

On July 20, 2023, the Board resumed the public hearing. Present and sitting at the public hearing were Board Members Chair Michael Capuano, Vice-Chair Amelia Aboff, Clerk Erin Geno, Jahan Habib, Michael McNeley, Alternate Debbie Howitt Easton, and Alternate Luc Schuster. Before the Applicant presented, Ward 2 Councilor JT Scott made remarks that he supports the project. After a follow-up presentation by the Applicant, the Board went into discussion with the Applicant. Several board members voiced their support but had some additional questions regarding parking and other traffic-related topics. After responses by both the Applicant and Staff, the Board moved to vote.

PLANS & DOCUMENTS

Application plans, documents, and supporting materials submitted and incorporated are identified below.

Document	Pages	Prepared By	Date	Revision Date
16 and 20 Medford Street Parking Plans	4	Khalsa, 17 Ivaloo Street, Ste 300, Somerville, MA 02143 & GM2 Associates, 10 Cabot Road, Ste 101B, Medford, MA 02155	March 22, 2023	July 12, 2023
16 and 20 Medford Street Parking Relief Narrative	3	DiBiase Companies, 144 Haven Street, Reading, MA 01867	March 29, 2023	n/a
16 and 20 Medford Street Neighborhood Meeting Report	10	DiBiase Companies, 144 Haven Street, Reading, MA 01867	March 29, 2023	July 13, 2023
16 and 20 Medford Street On-Street Parking Suppl/Demand Study and Transportation Demand Management Memorandum	15	GM2 Associates, 10 Cabot Road, Ste 101B, Medford, MA 02155	March 21, 2023	n/a
16 and 20 Medford Street Transportation Access Plan	24	GM2 Associates, 10 Cabot Road, Ste 101B, Medford, MA 02155	March 2023	n/a
16 and 20 Medford Street Mobility Management Plan	70	GM2 Associates, 10 Cabot Road, Ste 101B, Medford, MA 02155	February 2023	n/a

SPECIAL PERMIT FINDINGS

In accordance with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, the Board may approve or deny a special permit upon making findings considering, at least, each of the following:

1. *The comprehensive plan and existing policy plans and standards established by the City.*

The Board finds that this project supports the goals laid out in SomerVision 2040, the City's Comprehensive Master Plan, including the following:

- Minimize the overall land use in Somerville dedicated to personal vehicles while encouraging alternative modes.

2. *The intent of the zoning district where the property is located.*

The Board finds that the proposal is consistent with the intent of the MR4 zoning district which is, in part, "[T]o create, maintain, and enhance areas appropriate for smaller scale, multi-use and mixed-use buildings and neighborhood serving uses."

3. *The supply and demand of on-street parking in the neighborhood, as determined through a parking study.*

The Board finds that there will be minor impacts to the existing on-street parking in the neighborhood. The Applicant's traffic study provides data on the neighborhood's on-street parking numbers and existing parking permits.

4. *Mobility management programs and services provided by the Applicant to reduce the demand for parking.*

The Board finds that the Applicant is proposing a robust set of mobility management programs to help offset the demand for parking for motor vehicles including ride-share parking spaces, bike share, and transit credit, and a commitment in the approved Mobility Management Plan to limit on-site vehicle trips over the long-term.

5. *That parking provided in excess of any maximum permitted does not result in the increase in impervious lot area.*

Due to the fact that the amount of parking proposed is below the minimum requirements, the Board finds that this consideration is not applicable to the proposal.

DECISION

Following public testimony, review of the submitted plans, and discussion of the statutorily required considerations, Chair Capuano moved to approve the **SPECIAL PERMIT** for Parking Relief from the minimum parking requirements in the MR4 zoning district with the conditions included in the staff memo dated May 25, 2023. Vice-Chair Aboff seconded. The Board voted **5-0** to approve the permit, subject to the following conditions:

Perpetual

1. This Decision must be recorded with the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds.
2. Dwelling units must be advertised as ineligible for on-street Residential Parking Permits, subject to the regulations of the Somerville Traffic Commission.
3. All buyers, grantees, lessees, renters, and tenants must be notified in writing prior to sale or lease of any dwelling unit that the residents are ineligible for on-street Residential Parking Permits, subject to the regulations of the Somerville Traffic Commission.
4. Formal acknowledgement that residents are ineligible for on-street Residential Parking Permits, subject to the regulations of the Somerville Traffic Commission, must be filed with this Decision.

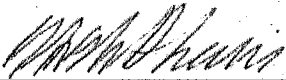
5. At least two (2) parking spaces must be reserved for loading and drop-off uses on the surface level parking area. The spaces should be regulated with signage with the following language:
 - o Loading Zone
Monday – Saturday
8am-10pm
Commercial Plate 20 Min.
Passenger Plate 5 Min.

Prior to Building Permit

6. A copy of the recorded Decision stamped by the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds must be submitted to the Planning, Preservation & Zoning Division for the public record.
7. One (1) digital copy of all required application materials reflecting any physical changes required by the Board, if applicable, must be submitted to the Planning, Preservation & Zoning Division for the public record. Materials must be submitted in accordance with the document format standards of relevant Submittal Requirements.
8. The Applicant must allocate an additional parking spot for short-term parking purposes and all three spots must be located next to each other near the entrance/exit to the surface parking area with appropriate signage. Changes must be reflected in an updated ground floor plan to be reviewed and approved by the Mobility Division.
9. The Applicant must provide signage to be placed on Medford Street and Bedford Street to alert drivers of the availability of short-term parking and rideshare parking spaces within the surface parking lot. Signage designs must be reviewed and approved by the Mobility Division.

Attest, by the Planning Board:

Michael Capuano, *Chair*
Amelia Aboff, *Vice-Chair*
Erin Geno, *Clerk*
Jahan Habib
Michael McNeley



Sarah Lewis, Director of Planning, Preservation, & Zoning
Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development

CLERK'S CERTIFICATE

Any appeal of this decision must be filed within twenty days after the date this notice is filed in the Office of the City Clerk, and must be filed in accordance with M.G.L. c. 40A, sec. 17 and SZO sec. 15.5.3.

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 40 A, sec. 11, no variance shall take effect until a copy of the decision bearing the certification of the City Clerk that twenty days have elapsed after the decision has been filed in the Office of the City Clerk and no appeal has been filed, or that if such appeal has been filed, that it has been dismissed or denied, is recorded in the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds and indexed in the grantor index under the name of the owner of record or is recorded and noted on the owner's certificate of title.

Also in accordance with M.G.L. c. 40 A, sec. 11, a special permit shall not take effect until a copy of the decision bearing the certification of the City Clerk that twenty days have elapsed after the decision has been filed in the Office of the City Clerk and either that no appeal has been filed or the appeal has been filed within such time, is recorded in the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds and indexed in the grantor index under the name of the owner of record or is recorded and noted on the owner's certificate of title. The person exercising rights under a duly appealed Special Permit does so at risk that a court will reverse the permit and that any construction performed under the permit may be ordered undone.

The owner or applicant shall pay the fee for recording or registering. Furthermore, a permit from the Division of Inspectional Services shall be required in order to proceed with any project favorably decided upon by this decision, and upon request, the Applicant shall present evidence to the Building Official that this decision is properly recorded.

This is a true and correct copy of the decision filed on _____ in the Office of the City Clerk, and twenty days have elapsed, and

FOR VARIANCE(S) WITHIN

_____ there have been no appeals filed in the Office of the City Clerk, or
_____ any appeals that were filed have been finally dismissed or denied.

FOR SPECIAL PERMIT(S) WITHIN

_____ there have been no appeals filed in the Office of the City Clerk, or
_____ there has been an appeal filed.

FOR SITE PLAN APPROVAL(S) WITHIN

_____ there have been no appeals filed in the Office of the City Clerk, or
_____ there has been an appeal filed.

Signed _____ City Clerk Date _____