

## Master Plan Narrative

### 3.1 Introduction

In Accordance with Article 15 of the city of Somerville Zoning Code (the “Ordinance”), Boston Pinnacle Properties, through its subsidiary Mystic 45 Development LLC, (the “Proponent”), respectfully submits this Master Plan Special Permit application (the “MPSP”) to the City of Somerville (the “City”) to initiate the MPSP review and approval process.

The Proponent proposes to redevelop 8,640 square feet (SF) parcel of land in the Assembly Point neighborhood of the Assembly Row Mixed Use District (ASMD) at the address 45 Mystic Avenue. The redevelopment will include one, community-oriented, mixed-use Laboratory building that will contain 52,185 gross square feet (GSF) that will include: 25,040 square feet of combined state-of-the-art laboratory space designed as versatile bench space, 3,880 square feet of amenity/conference space, and 760 square feet of community space on the ground floor intended to be maker/artisan space. This project will offer no structured parking.

Through this development proposal, the Proponent intends to foster innovation and startup growth, pursue the highest level of sustainability, and create welcoming community space much needed in the Assembly Point neighborhood, the largely undeveloped portion of ASMD. Visually, the proposal will transform the Southern entrance to ASMD along Mystic Avenue, and in doing so, inspire future development proposals in the immediate area and set a precedent for how community-oriented development is conducted.

The Proponent, together with its team of engineers, has high hopes for this versatile laboratory building.

### 3.2 Existing Conditions & Context Analysis

The Site is situated in the heart of Assembly Point. Assembly Point is a unique portion of the larger Assembly Square Mixed-Use District located at the southern tip of the ASMD between Interstate 93 and the MBTA Orange line. The Site at 45 Mystic Avenue directly abuts the Northwestern-flowing Mystic Avenue, which is the thoroughfare that provides access to the site. The Project Site currently contains an outdated auto repair shop which occupies approximately 50% of the site. The Site’s direct abutters consist of Roman Iron Works (53 Mystic Avenue), Enterprise Rent-A-Car (37 Mystic Avenue), Tracer Technologies (11 North Union St), and several smaller commercial properties. Assembly Point consists of 23 individual parcels, independently owned by both business owners and individuals alike.

The Assembly Point neighborhood is vastly underutilized and underdeveloped in comparison to the greater ASMD District. The Proponent intends for this Project

to stimulate the neighborhood and make Assembly Row more accessible to the broader population of Somerville.

Refer to Chapter 13: Civic Space Study for more contextual information and analysis.

### **3.3 Project Vision and Development Concept**

In today's rapidly evolving world, the need for innovation and creativity is greater than ever. This Proposal aims to meet this need by providing a unique and dynamic space where scientists, artists, and the community can come together to collaborate, experiment, create, and browse.

With the recent explosion in demand for life-science and research laboratory space in throughout Greater Boston, Somerville, and Cambridge, companies of all sizes continue to flock to the area in search of state-of the art space to innovate and grow. Many of the larger, well-established companies enter into agreements with developers and create their development proposals in conjunction with one another. For many smaller, life science and bio-tech startups, finding transitory, individualized laboratory bench space proves difficult due to high demand. Designed specifically for research-based startups, this type of laboratory will provide entrepreneurs and early-stage life science companies top-tier, strategically located laboratory and office space.

On the ground floor of the building, the Proponent proposes two dedicated artist/maker spaces where painters, sculptors, musicians, and other creative individuals can work, exhibit, and perform. This space may also serve as a community center, offering classes, workshops, and events that bring together artists and the local community.

Together the lab and artist space will foster a culture of innovation and creativity and will become a hub for the community's intellectual and cultural growth. The proposed development will not only provide much needed space for scientists and artists to work, but it will also serve as an economic engine, generating jobs and driving local businesses in the greater ASMD and surrounding districts.

The Proponent believes that this unique blend of incubator laboratory and artist space will be a major asset to the community, and the Proponent is committed to working closely with local leaders and residents to ensure that the development meets the needs of all stakeholders. This Proposal will not only become an innovative, entrepreneurial hub for startups, but will also achieve the highest level of sustainability, LEED Platinum, and provide ample outdoor Civic Space and community space.

With a history of working with local leaders, the Proponent, a boutique real estate developer, has delivered hundreds of residential units over the past decade. For this Project, the Proponent has partnered with local commercial laboratory outfitter, Boston Lab Services, to deliver a premier incubator laboratory

specifically designed for startups. Boston Lab Services understands the highly specific needs of life science and biotechnology firms and pharmaceuticals facilities. The Proponent is well-positioned to deliver a state-of-the-art facility that will allow infant companies to flourish.

### **3.4 Development Site Vulnerabilities**

According to Somerville's Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment, our site, 45 Mystic Ave., is located in a "High Outdoor Heat Exposure" zone. The city of Somerville has identified that, "Temperature is a ubiquitous threat throughout the city and will be relatively more intense in some areas based on a combination of surface types, lack of vegetation and level of emissions." Due to the significant square footage of hardscape and lack of vegetation surrounding our site, we are especially prone to the heat island effect and accompanying high temperatures. To mitigate this, the team has designed the site to include ample shading from vegetation and overhangs, generous amounts of greenspace, and pervious, light-colored paving with minimal amounts of asphalt. As such, we are projected to achieve both "Heat Island Reduction" credits within the LEED v4 BD+C: Core & Shell rating system, indicating an effective outdoor heat exposure reduction strategy. Though Somerville's Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment indicates that our site is not at risk of coastal or storm surge flooding, the project has been designed with a backup generator, as well as ample stormwater infrastructure. Please refer to the National Flood Hazard Layer Locus map on the next page.