



City of Somerville
URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION
City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

12 SEPTEMBER 2023 MEETING MINUTES

This meeting was conducted via remote participation on GoToWebinar.

NAME	TITLE	STATUS	ARRIVED
Sarah Lewis	Co-Chair	<i>Present</i>	
Cortney Kirk	Acting Co-Chair	<i>Present</i>	
Frank Valdes	Member	<i>Present</i>	
Deborah Fennick	Member	<i>Absent</i>	
Andrew Arbaugh	Member	<i>Absent</i>	
Cheri Ruane	Member	<i>Present</i>	6:10pm
Tim Talun	Member	<i>Present</i>	
Tim Houde	Alternate	<i>Present</i>	

City staff present: Andrew Graminski (Planning, Preservation, & Zoning).

The meeting was called to order at 6:06pm and adjourned at 6:52pm.

GENERAL BUSINESS: Meeting Minutes

Following a motion by Member Valdes, seconded by Member Talun, the Board voted unanimously (3-0) to continue the 8 August 2023 meeting minutes to the next meeting.

GENERAL BUSINESS: Recommendations for review, 53 Chester Street

Following a motion by Co-Chair Lewis, seconded by Member Talun, the Board voted unanimously (3-0) to continue this item to the next meeting.

DESIGN REVIEW: 720-722 Broadway

(continued from 8 August 2023)

There was not a quorum of the Commission available this evening for this item.

Following a motion by Co-Chair Lewis, seconded by Member Talun, the Commission voted unanimously (3-0) to continue 720-722 Broadway to the next Commission meeting convenient to the applicant.

RESULT:

CONTINUED

OTHER BUSINESS: Eversource Substation in USQ

The Commission discussed that Eversource has been working collaboratively with the City on this project. The City's power needs are constantly increasing and some of the City's goals include becoming more electrified. As a utility, Eversource goes through different zoning requirements than private development projects. There have been a number of community meetings as part of this project. Per the zoning process, Eversource must discuss the

new area for the third transformer, but Eversource is also working to improve the existing equipment, which has not been well maintained over the years. The original proposal was to wrap the equipment with a wall, but that was not approved by the neighborhood. The current proposal is to create a wall that appears as a building around the new equipment, along with translucent, 12' high fencing. Unused equipment will be removed. The bridge and fencing along Webster Avenue is within DOT's purview and fencing will be installed to the extent Eversource can do so. As the panels of the building come together, artwork details will be made available, after discussion between the Arts Council, neighborhood, and Eversource. The Commission discussed the painted panels being more architectural if possible. Eversource received a Special Permit for the use of this site from the Planning Board.

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.