



City of Somerville, Massachusetts
Condominium Review Board
Katjana Ballantyne, Mayor

Staff Members

Michael Feloney
Housing Director

Lisa Davidson
Acting Assistant Housing Director

Cecelia Kelly
Interim Staff to Condo Review Board

Board Members

Patricha Paul, Chair
Zachary Zasloff, Vice-chair
Kate Byrne
Alix Simeon
Elizabeth Champion

Meeting Minutes

August 28, 2023 Meeting – 6:00 PM

Virtual Hearing

Board Members Present: Patricha Paul, Zachary Zasloff, Kate Byrne, Alix Simeon and Elizabeth Champion

City staff present: Michael Feloney, Housing Director, Lisa Davidson, Acting Assistant Housing Director, and Cecelia Kelly (Staff to Condominium Review Board)

Chair Paul convened the meeting at 6:05 PM. She read the following information aloud: Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting of the Condominium Review Board will be conducted via remote participation. We will post an audio recording, audio-video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of these proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting on the City of Somerville website and local cable access government channels.

1. MEETING CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order with a call for attendance made by Chair Paul. Responses were as follows:

Chair Paul- present

Vice-chair Zasloff-present

Member Byrne- present

Member Simeon-present

Member Champion - present

With five in attendance there was a quorum, and the meeting was called to order.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

• STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Cecelia Kelly introduced herself to the Board; she is temporarily filling in for Morena Zelaya who is currently out on parental leave. Michael Feloney and Lisa Davidson, both of the City's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development were also in attendance.
- Elizabeth Champion was welcomed as the newest board member.

Cecelia made a note to only commence with recording of the Condo Review Board meeting if there is a quorum.

• CONDOMINIUM REVIEW BOARD RULES UPDATES

- Chair Paul passed the floor to Lisa Davidson. Cecelia shared the Tracked Changes version of the CRB Rules.
- Lisa began to review Tracked Changes text; Member Byrne mentioned that removal of City's right to purchase units was the only major change to the Rules; other changes were formatting, spelling and grammar.
- Chair Paul noted that review of Board Rules necessary for any public attendees and is for public record, not just Board members and permit applicants.
- Lisa suggested and Chair Paul agreed to add review of Rules at the next CRB meeting in September.
- Chair Paul agreed to table the CRB Rules update.

3. NEW BUSINESS

a. APPLICATIONS FOR FINAL/COURTESY CONDOMINIUM CONVERSION PERMITS

WARD 3 PRECINCT 3 **33 Porter Street**

Application of 33 Porter Street LLC. Seeking a Final Conversion permit for Unit #1 & Unit #2 at 33 Porter Street. Representative Kwesi Acquah was present. He had submitted all necessary documentation, including the condominium Master Deed and architect's master report.

Chair Paul opened up the Board; with no comments the floor was closed.

Chair Paul opened the floor to public comment. Mr. Ronald Cavallo requested to speak and expressed his support for the application and his opposition to the condominium conversion ordinance. Chair Paul thanked him for his comments and with no further comment, the floor was closed.

On a motion duly made a roll call vote was called and it was voted 5-0:

Chair Paul- yes

Vice-chair Zasloff - yes

Member Byrne- yes

Member Simeon-yes

Member Champion - yes

To grant a Final Conversion permit for Unit #1 and Unit #2 at 33 Porter Street.

WARD 1 PRECINCT 4

9 Pearl Street Place

Application of Xiamon Song & Xinsheng Chang. Representative Xiamon Song was present. Seeking a Final Conversion permit for Unit #1 at 9 Pearl Street Place. Tenant in Unit #1 will be purchasing their unit. Ms. Song noted they are also seeking a Final Conversion permit for Unit #2 and had sent the fully executed Purchase and Sale Agreement to the City on Friday, August 25.

Chair Paul recommended the application for Unit #2 be brought to the Board meeting in September. Ms. Song will be traveling overseas; however, she does not need to be present at meeting in order for her application to be considered. City staff will work with Ms. Song to ensure her application will be on September's agenda.

Chair Paul opened the floor to Board; with no questions or comments the floor was closed.

Chair Paul opened the floor to public comment; Mr. Ronald Cavallo requested to speak and expressed his support for the application and his opposition to the condominium conversion ordinance. Chair Paul thanked him for his comments and with no further comment, the floor was closed.

On a motion duly made a roll call vote was called and it was voted 5-0:

Chair Paul- yes

Vice-chair Zasloff - yes

Member Byrne- yes

Member Simeon-yes

Member Champion - yes

To grant a Final Conversion permit for Unit #1 at 9 Pearl Street Place.

WARD 5 PRECINCT 1

9-11 Upland Park

Application of 9-11 Upland Park LLC, Nima Behkami. Seeking a Final Conversion permit for Unit #1 & Unit #2 at 9-11 Upland Park. Representative Nima Behkami was present. Submitted Master Deed as well as architect's conditional report.

Chair Paul opened the floor to Board.

Member Byrne concerned about owner-occupant affidavit from preliminary application – was this resolved? Chair Paul recommended Member Byrne review that document. The vote this evening is based on the final permit so that document would not apply.

Member Byrne said that this was the clarification she needed.

With no more comments Chair Paul closed the floor.

Chair Paul opened the floor to public comment; Mr. Ronald Cavallo requested to speak and expressed his support for the application and his opposition to the condominium conversion ordinance. Chair Paul thanked him for his comments and with no further comment, the floor was closed.

On a motion duly made a roll call vote was called and it was voted 5-0:

Chair Paul- yes

Vice-chair Zasloff - yes

Member Byrne- yes

Member Simeon-yes

Member Champion -yes

To grant a Final Conversion permit for Unit #1, Unit #2 at 9-11 Upland Park.

WARD 3 PRECINCT 2

55 Montrose Street

Application of BOS Smiles I LLC, Guarav Paraquil. Seeking a Final Conversion permit for Unit #1 & Unit #2 at 55 Montrose Street. Representative Cameron McGinn was present. They submitted the final conversion permit application as well as the engineer's report and the Master Deed.

Chair Paul opened the floor to Board for comments and questions; as there were no questions or comments the floor was closed.

Chair Paul opened the floor for public comments; Mr. Ronald Cavallo requested to speak and expressed his support for the application and his opposition to the condominium conversion ordinance. Chair Paul thanked him for his comments and with no further comment, the floor was closed.

On a motion duly made a roll call vote was called and it was voted 5-0:

Chair Paul- yes

Vice-chair Zasloff - yes

Member Byrne- yes

Member Simeon-yes

Member Champion -yes

To grant a Final Conversion permit for Unit #1, Unit #2 at 55 Montrose Street.

WARD 7 PRECINCT 1
37 Elmwood Street

Application of SSD 37 Elmwood LLC, Jeremy Stivaletta. Seeking a Final Conversion permit for Unit #1 & Unit #2 at 37 Elmwood Street. Representative Attorney Mark Sheehan. Client has submitted a Master Deed and a property condition report.

Chair Paul opened the floor to Board for comments and questions; as there were no questions or comments the floor was closed.

Chair Paul opened the floor to public comment; Mr. Ronald Cavallo requested to speak and expressed his support for the application and his opposition to the condominium conversion ordinance. Chair Paul thanked him for his comments and with no further comment, the floor was closed.

On a motion duly made a roll call vote was called and it was voted 5-0:

Chair Paul- yes

Vice-chair Zasloff - yes

Member Byrne- yes

Member Simeon-yes

Member Champion -yes

To grant a Final Conversion permit for Unit #1, Unit #2 at 37 Elmwood Street.

WARD 4 PRECINCT 4
37-39 Bond Street

Application of Andrew Bennett & Arlen Weiner. Seeking a Final Conversion permit for Unit #37 at 37-39 Bond Street. Representative Attorney Mark Sheehan was present. Unit #37 is currently owner-occupant. Client has submitted the Master Deed and property condition report.

Chair Paul opened the floor to Board for comments and questions; as there were no questions or comments the floor was closed.

Chair Paul opened the floor for public comments; Mr. Ronald Cavallo requested to speak and expressed his support for the application and his opposition to the condominium conversion ordinance. Chair Paul thanked him for his comments and with no further comment, the floor was closed.

On a motion duly made a roll call vote was called and it was voted 5-0:

Chair Paul- yes

Vice-chair Zasloff - yes

Member Byrne- yes

Member Simeon-yes

Member Champion -yes

To grant a Final Conversion permit for Unit #1 and Unit #2 at 37–39 Bond Street

WARD 4 PRECINCT 1

55 Derby Street

Application of 55 Derby Street LLC, Steve Vettori. Seeking a Final Conversion permit for Unit #1 & Unit #2 at 55 Derby Street. Representative Attorney Mark Sheehan present. Property was owner-occupied prior to client’s purchase, and property has remained empty since the closing date. Has submitted affidavit from prior owner and proof of residential exemption, as well as final paid water bill, Certificate of Good Standing, property condition report, Master Deed and a bank check made payable to City of Somerville for \$1,200.

Chair Paul opened the floor to Board for comments and questions; as there were no questions or comments the floor was closed.

Chair Paul opened the floor for public comments; Mr. Ronald Cavallo requested to speak and expressed his support for the application and his opposition to the condominium conversion ordinance. Chair Paul thanked him for his comments and with no further comment, the floor was closed.

On a motion duly made a roll call vote was called and it was voted 5-0:

Chair Paul- yes

Vice-chair Zasloff - yes

Member Byrne- yes

Member Simeon-yes

Member Champion -yes

To grant a Final Conversion permit for Unit #1 and Unit #2 at 55 Derby Street

b. APPLICATIONS FOR PRELIMINARY CONDOMINIUM CONVERSION/COURTESY PERMITS

WARD 6 PRECINCT 1

37 Banks Street

Application of Colleen Gillard & William Wells. Seeking a Preliminary Rental Conversion Permit for Unit #1 & Unit #2 at 37 Banks Street. Representative Attorney Mark Sheehan present. Property currently vacant, complete applications submitted along with paid final water bill, Certificate of Good Standing, and a bank check made payable to the City of Somerville in the amount of \$1,200.

Chair Paul opened the floor to Board. Chair Paul inquired about whether or not there are tenants in the property as there was no prior tenant information. Attorney Sheehan affirmed there were prior tenants who vacated in April and July of 2023. This was seconded by Member Byrne and Vice-chair Zasloff, who

also noted a lack of evidence that prior tenants had been notified of intent to convert.

Attorney Sheehan responded that both prior tenants were visiting academics and tenant contact information had been sent to the City.

Member Byrne – prior tenants still need to be notified according to the Ordinance and offered relocation expenses. Vice Chair Zasloff agreed with Member Byrne’s statement– we need documentation from each of the prior tenants stating they defer the relocation payment or that they accept the relocation payment.

Attorney Sheehan – we applied for this permit when the property was vacant; there were no tenants when we submitted the application. Prior tenants not protected because they weren’t tenants at the time.

Vice-chair Zasloff disagreed. Owner of property required to reach out to any tenants within last 12 months.

Sheehan – we did contact them but they weren’t current tenants at the time.

Vice-chair Zasloff – you are still required to get something in writing that certifies the relocation payment or exhaust all opportunities to reach them. That does not seem like that has happened.

No evidence that prior tenants were notified. Chair Paul not comfortable accepting this.

Vice-chair recommends tabling this application; allow applicant 30 days to contact the former tenants. Notify prior tenants via certified mail and email to ensure that they receive information.

Chair Paul seconded tabling the application.

On a motion duly made a roll call vote was called and it was voted 5-0:

Chair Paul -yes

Vice-chair Zasloff -yes

Member Byrne -yes

Member Simeon -yes

Member Champion -yes

To table the application for a preliminary non-rental condo conversion permits for Unit #1 and Unit # to the September 2023 Condo Review Board.

WARD 5 PRECINCT 2
16 Woodbine Street

Application of 16 Woodbine LLC, Lucas Garcia. Seeking a Preliminary Non-Rental Conversion Permit for Unit #1 and a Courtesy Permit for Unit #2 at 16 Woodbine Street. Representative Attorney Matthew Spang present. Property is a single family house that was owner-occupied prior to purchase. LLC intends to add a second unit. Submitted application; tax certificate evidencing residential exemption; Deed, bank check in amount of \$600; paid final water bill; Certificate of Good Standing and building permit for second unit.

Chair Paul opened the floor to Board comments or questions. Member Byrne inquired if there were no previous tenants; Spang affirmed that there were non.

Chair Paul then closed the floor for Board comments; opened up the floor for public comments.

Mr. Ronald Cavallo requested to speak and expressed his support for the application and his opposition to the condominium conversion ordinance. Chair Paul thanked him for his comments and with no further comment, the floor was closed.

On a motion duly made a roll call vote was called and it was voted 5-0:

Chair Paul- yes

Vice-chair Zasloff - yes

Member Byrne- yes

Member Simeon-yes

Member Champion-yes

To grant a Preliminary Non-rental Conversion permit for Unit #1 and a Courtesy permit for Unit #2 at 16 Woodbine Street.

WARD 3 PRECINCT 2
85 Oxford Street

Application of 85 Oxford Rd, LLC, Fernando Bento. Seeking a Preliminary Non-Rental Conversion Permit for Unit #1 & a Courtesy Permit for Unit #2 85 Oxford Street. Representative Attorney Matthew Spang present. Property is a single family that was owner-occupied prior to purchase. LLC plans to add a second unit. Have provided a tax bill evidencing residential exemption; affidavit from the seller; a bank check in amount of \$600; paid final water bill; Certificate of Good Standing and Deed, as well as building permit for second unit.

Chair Paul opened the floor to Board comments or questions. Seeing none, the floor was closed.

Chair Paul opened the floor to public comment; Mr. Ronald Cavallo requested to speak and expressed his support for the application and his opposition to the condominium conversion ordinance. Chair Paul thanked him for his comments and with no further comment, the floor was closed.

On a motion duly made a roll call vote was called and it was voted 5-0:

Chair Paul- yes

Vice-chair Zasloff - yes

Member Byrne- yes

Member Simeon-yes

Member Champion-yes

To grant a Preliminary Non-rental Conversion permit for Unit #1 and a Courtesy permit for Unit #2 at 85 Oxford Street.

3. ADJOURN

Chair Paul motioned to adjourn at 7:32 pm which Vice-chair Zasloff seconded. The meeting was adjourned.