



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

6 JUNE 2024 MEETING MINUTES

This meeting was conducted via remote participation via Zoom.

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

City staff present: Emily Hutchings (Planning, Preservation, & Zoning); Stephen Cary (Planning, Preservation, & Zoning)

The meeting was called to order at 6:03pm and adjourned at 7:09pm.

GENERAL BUSINESS Meeting Minutes

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Vice Chair Aboff, the Board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the 18 April 2024 meeting minutes.

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Vice Chair Aboff, the Board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the 2 May 2024 meeting minutes.

PUBLIC HEARING: 290 Revolution Drive (ZP24-000024)

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Vice Chair Aboff, the Board voted unanimously (6-0) to continue this hearing to 20 June 2024.

RESULT:

CONTINUED

PUBLIC HEARING: 17-27 Holland Street (P&Z 22-025)

The applicant team explained that the proposal is for an adult-use cannabis retail store. There will be no delivery, manufacturing, or cultivation at the site. The total build-out will be all internal, and will be approximately 1,750 s.f. No additional parking is proposed. The site is within the Davis Square District. When fully operational, the site is anticipated to have 16-20 employees. The hours of operation will be Monday through Friday, 9am-10pm, on Saturday 10am-11pm, and on Sunday 11am-8pm. It is anticipated there will be product deliveries one-two times per week, as well as cash pickups two-three times per week. Based on occupant load, the building is allowed to have up to 11 people in the waiting area at the front of the store and 15 customers inside. The store will be able to handle approximately 30 customers per hour. There will be four employees on-site at all times, with a max occupancy of 32 people. There will be eight mobile and stationary Point-Of-Sale machines within the space.

The applicant team explained that there is an intention to have different pockets within the store and some activation on the street. A new rear door is proposed from the street. The company has confirmed that the nearby Kinder Care location does not fall under the zoning requirements. The waiting area will be similar to the look of riding on a T. Anyone entering the facility has to be 21 years or older. They will be checked by ID in the security area prior to entry and checked again once inside. No consumption is allowed on site and no loitering is allowed in the area. Employees will likely walk the neighborhood daily to make sure the store is being a good neighbor. Most people will likely come to the store via walking or public transit. There are two loading areas nearby that are utilized by other businesses in the area.

Chair Capuano opened public testimony. Hearing no public testimony for or against, Chair Capuano closed public testimony.

The Board discussed Kinder Care as an educational use, for which there would be a 300' buffer required to an adult cannabis retail location. The applicant team explained that their interpretation of the definition of educational services is anything registered with the Department of Early and Secondary Education. This includes educational institutions providing a curriculum and teaching to children of kindergarten through 12 ages. Kinder Care is not registered through that agency. Staff stated that they agree that Kinder Care is a licensed childcare facility, but not an educational facility. The Board discussed a potential gap in the requirements for a buffer distance from cannabis facilities for children under a certain age at private facilities.

The Board discussed the loading zones proposed. The applicant team explained that both of the zones on Holland Street and Winter Street are considered viable.

The Board discussed the proposed conditions. Staff explained that these are all standard conditions and the vast majority of them have been required for all cannabis retailers, including the transit screens, required Blue Bike memberships, MBTA passes, etc.

There was discussion regarding monitoring the actions around the store. There was a request for additional information regarding security and exterior premises management. The applicant team noted that security was addressed at the Neighborhood Meetings and can be further explained to the Board.

The Board discussed a potential hiring plan and how this will be connected to the larger Davis Square business community. The applicant team stated that the goal is to hire as many local people as possible.

The Board discussed the intensity of this use, and the saturation of this use in Davis Square. This approval would allow for four permitted cannabis sales uses within the Davis Square area, as well as a vape shop. This does not seem like good planning. The concern does not come from this applicant or the specific use, but the saturation of any use within the same space. The Board tries to seek a mix of businesses in any given area.

The Board asked Staff to consider rewording the standard conditions to make them more easily enforceable for the Inspectional Services Department (ISD).

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Vice Chair Aboff, the Board voted unanimously (6-0) to continue this hearing to 20 June 2024.

RESULT:

CONTINUED

NOTICE: These minutes constitute a summary of the votes and key discussions at this meeting. To review a full recording, please contact the Planning, Preservation & Zoning Division at planningboard@somervillema.gov.