



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

18 JULY 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>Absent</i>	
Jahan Habib	Clerk	<i>Present</i>	
Michael McNeley	Member	<i>Present</i>	
Debbie Howitt Easton	Alternate	<i>Absent</i>	
Luc Schuster	Alternate	<i>Present</i>	

City staff present: Sarah Lewis (Planning Preservation, & Zoning); Stephen Cary (Planning, Preservation, & Zoning)

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm and adjourned at 6:31pm.

GENERAL BUSINESS: Meeting Minutes

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Member Habib, the Board voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the meeting minutes of 6 June 2024.

PUBLIC HEARING: 45 Mystic Avenue (P&Z 22-029)
(continued from 20 June 2024)

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Member Habib, the Board voted unanimously (4-0) to continue this hearing to 15 August 2024.

RESULT:

CONTINUED

PUBLIC HEARING: 290 Revolution Drive (ZP24-000024)
(continued from 20 June 2024)

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Member Habib, the Board voted unanimously (4-0) to continue this hearing to 1 August 2024.

RESULT:

CONTINUED

PUBLIC HEARING: 71-72 Union Square (ZP24-000059)

The applicant team stated that, as part of the requirements of the Special Permit, they were told that, as long as any customer coming into the business fills out an appointment card, this was considered "appointment only." This is not what the definition of "appointment only" is. This creates an undue hardship upon applicants. They disagree that other similar businesses are operating this way, as "appointment only." The applicant team is requesting that

this “appointment only” requirement be removed and is asking for the traffic study to be waived. Some store owners do not require appointment only cards to be filled out online.

Staff stated that there appears to be a technical difficulty with the public accessing this meeting.

The Board recessed for eleven minutes.

Staff suggested continuing all remaining agenda items to the 1 August 2024 meeting, as the public was not able to access this meeting in the normal way.

The applicant team added that the Special Permit condition states that “retail sales to walk-in customers are prohibited. Customer visits must be by appointment only.” As currently structured in the City, customers walk into the store and then make an appointment. Thus, by definition, they have become walk-in customers in violation of the Special Permit requirement. The suggestion would be for the Board on its own initiative to request Staff to bring all of the Special Permit holders forward and remove this condition from their licenses, instead of having the holders make the affirmative step to file it. It was wrong to include this as a perpetual requirement. These stores are having a difficult time operating in this way.

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Member Habib, the Board voted unanimously (4-0) to continue this hearing to 1 August 2024.

RESULT:

CONTINUED

OTHER BUSINESS: Brickbottom Neighborhood Plan

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Member Habib, the Board voted unanimously (4-0) to continue this presentation and discussion to 1 August 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.