



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

17 OCTOBER 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>Absent</i>	
Michael McNeley	Member	<i>Present</i>	
Luc Schuster	Alternate	<i>Present</i>	

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:02pm and adjourned at 9:22pm.

PUBLIC HEARING: 45 Mystic Avenue (P&Z 22-029)
(continued from 3 October 2024)

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Vice Chair Aboff, the Board voted unanimously (4-0) to continue this hearing to 7 November 2024.

RESULT:

CONTINUED

PUBLIC HEARING: 74 Middlesex Avenue (ZP24-000087)
(continued from 3 October 2024)

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Vice Chair Aboff, the Board voted unanimously (4-0) to accept the withdrawal request for 74 Middlesex Avenue without prejudice.

RESULT:

WITHDRAWN WITHOUT PREJUDICE

GENERAL BUSINESS: Meeting Minutes

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Vice Chair Aboff, the Board voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the 19 September 2024 meeting minutes, as presented.

PUBLIC HEARING: 120 Beacon Street (ZP24-000096)

The applicant team explained that they seek to open a veterinary clinic at 120 Beacon Street on the ground floor space, which has been vacant for a long time. The 15 surface parking spaces proposed will be for all the customers on the first floor of the building. There is also an underground parking garage, which is where employees and the upper-level people will park, although no parking is required for this project, as the space is less than 5,000 s.f. This request is only for a change of use in an existing commercial building. The building is adjacent to multiple bus stops

and bike lanes. The clinic will also have a virtual component. The team also noted that the existing façade is proposed to remain the same, except for a swap in signage. There will be no overnight boarding of animals at this facility. The applicant team believes that the clinic will serve the neighborhood and be a benefit by providing a full-service veterinary clinic with advanced diagnostics and surgery services to the community. There have been no letters in opposition, but some submitted in support, and there was no opposition stated at the Neighborhood Meeting. The team stated that there is a need for veterinary services in this neighborhood, as the one down the street is not taking new clients and will be moving. The only relief required is for a Special Permit for a veterinary services use on a pedestrian street.

Chair Capuano opened public testimony.

Michael Byrne (79 Kirkland Street, Cambridge MA) – stated that he is a member of the Cambridge Village Neighborhood Association, which tries to get the pulse of the neighborhood. He has spoken to many neighborhood members who are excited for this use to move in, as it is a needed use in the area. The applicant team was very transparent and well-motivated during the Neighborhood Meeting.

Chair Capuano closed public testimony.

The Board discussed that it felt comfortable voting on this item this evening, as this seems to be an additive to the neighborhood and no comments against it were heard.

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Vice Chair Aboff, the Board voted unanimously (4-0) to approve, with the conditions outlined in the Staff Memo, the Special Permit to establish a Veterinarian use on the first floor facing a pedestrian street in the Mid Rise 4 District.

RESULT:

APPROVED

The Board recessed at 6:18pm until its Joint Hearing with the Land Use Committee at 6:30pm.

At 6:30pm the Board entered its Joint Hearing with the Land Use Committee, noting that it would reconvene to adjourn the meeting afterwards.

OTHER BUSINESS: Joint Hearings with the Land Use Committee

- Walter Tauro requesting a Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning district of 282 McGrath Highway from Neighborhood Residence (NR) to Small Business (SB) Overlay District. (ID # 24-1080)
- Requesting ordinance of an amendment to Sections 2.2.1, 3.1.16, 3.2.15, 4.1.13, 4.2.13, 4.3.13, 4.4.14, 5.1.15, 6.1.11, 6.2.13, 6.3.11, 6.4.14, 9.2.6.h, 9.2.14.b.v, and Table 9.1.1 of the Zoning Ordinance to streamline the regulation of daycare services and permit additional daycare operation in the Residential, Mid-Rise, and Commercial zoning districts. (ID # 24-1196)
- Requesting ordinance of an amendment to Sections 1.1.4, 2.1.1, 3.1.18, 3.2.17, 4.1.15, 4.2.15, 4.3.15, 4.4.16, 5.1.17, 6.1.13, 6.2.15, 6.3.13, 6.4.16, 7.2.9, 7.3.9, 8.2.4.c, 9.2.3, 9.2.6, 11.2.4, 11.2.5, 11.2.6, 11.3, 12.1.7, 15.2.1, and Table 9.1.1 of the Zoning Ordinance to address various parking requirements. (ID # 24-1197)
- Requesting ordinance of an amendment to Articles 2-7, Articles 9-11, Article 13, and Article 15 of the Zoning Ordinance to make corrections, clarifications, and regulatory framework improvements. (ID # 24-1259)
- Charles DeCecca requesting a Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning district of 501 Mystic Valley Parkway from Neighborhood Residence (NR) to Urban Residence (UR). (ID # 24-1367)

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