



City of Somerville

# PLANNING BOARD

City Hall 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

**TO:** Planning Board  
**FROM:** OSPCD Staff  
**SUBJECT:** 720-722 Broadway, ZP24-000047 (Special Permit) & ZP24-000048 (Site Plan Approval)  
**POSTED:** January 30, 2025

This memo is supplemental to the PPZ Staff Memos dated October 31 and December 12, 2024, and provides an overview of these submitted materials, staff review and comments, and updated process requirements.

## BACKGROUND

Since the Planning Board opened the public hearing for the aforementioned cases on November 7, 2024, and subsequently continued the case, City Staff reviewed the previously submitted documents along with an updated TAP (Transportation Access Plan) submitted January 23, 2025. ISD Zoning Review planners provided updated comments on the proposed plans on January 27, 2025.

In response to ISD's updated comments, the Applicant team submitted updated building and site plans and a narrative later on January 27, 2025. As these plans (labeled Design Review App) were submitted less than two weeks prior to the scheduled hearing date of February 5, 2025, Staff have not yet completed their review of these updated documents.

The following analysis is based on the previously submitted plans, as the plans submitted on January 27<sup>th</sup> are still under review.

## ANALYSIS

### Housing and unit mix

No changes have been made to the housing unit mix since the previous Supplemental Staff Memo dated December 12, 2024. The Housing Division maintains its concerns about the revised unit mix and notes that 2+ bedroom units are not 3-bedroom units. Please refer to the previous Supplemental Staff Memo for the Housing Division's full comments and concerns.

### Design and HPC MOA

The Applicant is coordinating with HPC Staff to update the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) governing the design of the building on the 722 Broadway portion of the property. Since the new design deviates from that approved by the HPC during the MOA process, the MOA must be updated by HPC Staff to formally codify the design changes requested by the Planning Board on the northwest corner and west elevation. The updated MOA must be recorded at the Registry of Deeds prior to the issuance of a Building Permit. The fact that this process is currently being finalized does not preclude

the Planning Board from acting on the Site Plan Approval or Special Permit applications, as HPC Staff will be approving the proposed design change.

**Mobility and TAP**

Mobility Staff have reviewed the updated Transportation Access Plan (TAP) plans submitted on January 23, 2025. Mobility Staff have commented that concerns and comments described in previous Staff Memos have been addressed, and that they maintain their proposed conditions of approval.

**Landscape and Public Space**

PSUF Staff have not provided any additional comments at this time, although they maintain the concerns noted in the previous Staff Memo dated December 12, 2024.

**Zoning Compliance**

ISD Zoning Review Staff have reviewed the amended plans and confirmed that the majority of comments have been addressed. They requested additional information to confirm the building meets requirements for curb setbacks, minimum sidewalk width, and maximum distance between ground floor entrances. The updated plans and narratives address those comments. ISD and PPZ Staff are continuing to review the updated plans and may be able to provide an update on zoning compliance at the Planning Board meeting on February 5<sup>th</sup>.

The proposed development continues to require a land plat. The site is currently three separate parcels, which must be merged for the proposed development to be zoning compliant. The Applicant has submitted a Minor Site Plan Approval application for this land plat, which is currently under review. ISD and PPZ Staff have recently determined that the land plat process must be completed prior to the issuance of a Building Permit. The fact that the land plat process has not yet been completed does not preclude the Planning Board from acting on the Site Plan Approval or Special Permit applications.

**PERMIT CONDITIONS**

OSPCD Staff recommend all other previously proposed conditions, as noted in the Staff Memos dated October 31 and December 12, 2024, remain included with the same language and timing.