



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

**20 FEBRUARY 2025 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>	
Luc Schuster	Alternate	<i>Absent</i>	
Lynn Richards	Member	<i>Present</i>	

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm and adjourned at 7:01pm.

**PUBLIC HEARING: 20-23 Cummings Street (ZP24-000046)**  
*(continued from 6 February 2025)*

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Vice Chair Aboff, the Board voted unanimously (5-0) to continue the hearing for 20-23 Cummings Street (ZP24-000046) to 6 March 2025, at the request of the applicant.

**RESULT:**

**CONTINUED**

**PUBLIC HEARING: 20-23 Cummings Street (ZP24-000085)**  
*(continued from 6 February 2025)*

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Vice Chair Aboff, the Board voted unanimously (5-0) to continue the hearing for 20-23 Cummings Street (ZP24-000085) to 6 March 2025, at the request of the applicant.

**RESULT:**

**CONTINUED**

**PUBLIC HEARING: 53 Chester Street (ZP24-000054)**  
*(continued from 6 February 2025)*

The applicant team explained that the corner area of the building has been changed to be more similar to a four-season porch, with a Juliet balcony, creating an open feeling to the street. This ties the rest of the building into the first-floor storefront. The top of the bay windows was lifted up to the band of the building, improving the disposition of the bays. The applicant team explained that they considered the blank walls of the building, which face the fire separation areas between the buildings. Different colored metal panels are now suggested for these areas, allowing for a more interesting look visually. There could also be some growing plants in these areas. Some horizontal banding was also added for some delineation.

The Board discussed and agreed upon a condition to review the final material samples of the metal paneling proposed with Staff to make sure they align with the visuals as presented.

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Vice Chair Aboff, the Board voted unanimously (5-0), in the case of 53 Chester Street (ZP24-000054), to approve the Site Plan Approval to develop a four-story general building along a pedestrian street in the Mid-Rise 4 zoning district, with the recommended conditions listed in the Staff Memo dated 13 January 2025, and as amended this evening.

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS**

### **PUBLIC HEARING: 53 Chester Street (ZP24-000055)**

*(continued from 6 February 2025)*

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Vice Chair Aboff, the Board voted unanimously (5-0), in the case of 53 Chester Street (ZP24-000055), to approve with conditions the Special Permit to establish a residential housing principal use along a pedestrian street in the Mid-Rise 4 zoning district with the recommended conditions listed in the Staff Memo, dated 13 January 2025, and as amended by discussion this evening.

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

### **OTHER BUSINESS: Community Outreach & Engagement**

Staff explained that during a discussion regarding proposed amendments to the Rules and Regulations around the deadline for written testimony, the Board made comments regarding how to better improve engagement and communication with the public. The Board noted that there were comments raised regarding the Board receiving emails directly from constituents rather than having Staff consolidate them or considering other forms of public participation.

The Board agreed to continue this discussion topic on 6 March 2025.

*The Board entered into a recess at 6:30pm in order to go into a Joint Hearing with the Land Use Committee. Vice Chair Aboff recused herself from the Joint Hearing and exited the meeting.*

- Joint Hearings with the Land Use Committee
  - Horace-Ward LLC, Bealm Realty, LLC, Delhi Properties, LLC, and Delhi Properties II, LLC requesting a Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning district of 11 Horace Street, 5-7, 9, 13, and 15 Ward Street, and 15 and 21 South Street from Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) to Mid-Rise 6 (MR6) (File # 24-1584).

*The Board reconvened its meeting at 7:00pm.*

**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](mailto:PlanningBoard@somervillema.gov)