



City of Somerville  
**URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION**  
City Hall 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

**23 SEPTEMBER 2025 MEETING MINUTES**

This meeting was conducted via remote participation on Zoom.

NAME	TITLE	STATUS	ARRIVED
Sarah Lewis	Co-Chair	<i>Absent</i>	
Estello Raganit	Co-Chair	<i>Present</i>	
Frank Valdes	Member	<i>Absent</i>	
Deborah Fennick	Member	<i>Present</i>	
Andrew Arbaugh	Member	<i>Present</i>	
Tim Talun	Member	<i>Present</i>	
Martin Pavlinic	Alternate	<i>Present</i>	

City staff present: Lexie Payne (Planning, Preservation, & Zoning)

Estello Raganit, Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:01pm and adjourned at 6:35pm.

**GENERAL BUSINESS: Meeting Minutes**

Following a motion by Member Arbaugh, seconded by Member Talun, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the 22 July 2025 meeting minutes.

Following a motion by Member Pavlinic, seconded by Member Fennick, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the 12 August 2025 meeting minutes.

Following a motion by Member Arbaugh, seconded by Member Talun, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the 26 August 2025 meeting minutes.

**DESIGN REVIEW: 1 Washington Street**

The applicant team reviewed the specific materials proposed for the various options. Option 1 includes a scarlet molded thin brick veneer, and a large format tile for the wood-like bump-outs, which will act as rain screens. Mullions were added throughout the building to break up the façade and match the partitions of the large format tiles. The larger storefronts happen at the bump-outs, with the smaller punched openings where the building resets back. The language will be carried through the Crescent Street façade to the back of the building, where there will be larger storefront openings. On the west façade, a Hardie plank siding is proposed which will match the large format tiles in color. The materials for Option 2 include the large format wood tiles for the bump-outs, but uses more traditional materials, such as a black board and batten siding, and a lighter-toned horizontal lap siding to wrap around Washington Street and Crescent Street, connecting the two facades around the corner. Option 3 is more of a monolithic look, with large openings sitting on the bump outs, and punctured openings where the building recesses. In terms of treating the bathroom exhausts, these will be run up to the roof, and all the mechanical equipment will be on a portion of the roof, which will be covered by a mechanical screen. The applicant team stated that Option 1 is preferred.

The Commission stated that the refinements to the façade are an improvement overall. There was discussion regarding the materiality of the large tiles. The applicant team explained that there will be fasteners and open

joints between the tiles. At their largest, the tiles are 4'x8'. The corners will also have open joints, and it is unclear at this time how the joints will meet each other at the corners. The Commission stated that it would like to make sure there are through-body panels for the building.

The Commission asked about the proposed brick. The applicant team stated that the brick material is used around Boston, but it is unclear if this material is used on this street specifically. To add more texture and rhythm, vertical brick is proposed as the foundation base. At the top it would be used as a trim to match the awnings that wrap around the bump-outs. The Commission suggested making the brick a higher contrast to the wood to ground the building further. The Commission discussed making sure the tile and Hardie plank match. Also, it may be better for the tile to wrap around the southwest corner a bit more than currently proposed.

The Commission suggested requesting samples of all materials prior to the issuance of a Building Permit. There was discussion regarding the proposed thin brick system and its durability. This should be included in the applicant's mock-up.

Following a motion by Member Talun, seconded by Member Pavlinic, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to recommend Option 1, contingent on the material samples being approved, a higher contrast between the brick with the wood, and a lighter tile wrapping around the corner of the building.

Following a motion by Member Arbaugh, seconded by Member Pavlinic, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) that the design guidelines have been satisfied.

Following a motion by Member Talun, seconded by Member Fennick, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) that the applicant will provide the Commission with material samples, and specifications for the building materials for the façade, prior to Building Permit issuance.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED</b>
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*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 [UrbanDesign@somervillema.gov](mailto:UrbanDesign@somervillema.gov).*