



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

19 FEBRUARY 2026 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>Absent</i>	
Lynn Richards	Member	<i>Present</i>	
Luc Schuster	Alternate	<i>Absent</i>	
Coralie Cooper	Alternate	<i>Present</i>	

City staff present: Alvaro Esparza (Planning, Preservation, & Zoning)

The meeting was called to order at 6:04pm and adjourned at 6:42pm.

GENERAL BUSINESS: Meeting Minutes

Following a motion by Chair Capuano, seconded by Vice Chair Aboff, the Board voted (4-0-1), with Member Cooper abstaining, to adopt the 15 January 2026 meeting minutes.

RESULT:

APPROVED

OTHER BUSINESS: 44 White Street (ZP25-000038) Vote Clarification

The Board discussed that the application for 44 White Street had three requests for relief. One was a Special Permit for the proposed use; one was a Special Permit for parking relief; and one was a Site Plan Approval to build a three-story building in a Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) zoning district. The Special Permit for parking passed with a vote of 5-1. The Special Permit for the proposed use was unanimous 6-0. The vote on the Site Plan Approval was tallied, and Staff confirmed the tally of 3-3; three in-favor votes and three in-opposition votes meaning that, under the rules and statutes of Massachusetts, the vote had failed. It later came to the Board's attention that the vote was mis-tallied for the Site Plan Approval. A Board member spoke to the fact that she had intended to vote in-favor of the application, but her microphone was cut off as she was speaking, making it sound like a vote in opposition, therefore resulting in the actual vote being 4-2 for the Site Plan Approval.

The Board noted that the only way it could deny a Site Plan Approval would be if the application is not complete, or if the requests made in the application were so intransigent that no reasonable conditions could be imposed to mitigate them. In this case, there was no finding by Staff and there was no discussion by the Planning Board to that nature. A failed vote on Site Plan Approval for this particular application likely would have exposed the Board to litigation by the applicant. It is important to correct the record at this time.

The Board discussed the importance of being able to discern where members stand during the application presentation process and the ability to speak on various application topics throughout the process.

OTHER BUSINESS: 40B Process Presentation

Staff made a brief presentation on the 40B process and there was discussion amongst the Board.

OTHER BUSINESS: Board Administration Open Discussion

The Board discussed a future discussion topic regarding ways in which the City's sustainability goals and form-based code may need to be reconciled.

NOTICE: These minutes constitute a summary of the votes and key discussions at this meeting. A recording of these proceedings can be found online here: [Agendas, Minutes, & More.](#)