



City of Somerville

## **URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION**

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

### **DESIGN REVIEW RECOMMENDATION**

**120 Middlesex**

January 13, 2026

The Urban Design Commission (UDC) met virtually via Zoom on November 25, 2025, and January 13, 2026, to review a lab building proposed at 120 Middlesex in the Assembly Square Mixed-Use (ASMD) zoning district of the Assembly Square neighborhood of Somerville. The purpose of design review, as established by the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, is for peers in the professional design community to provide advice and recommendations during the schematic design phase of the architectural design process. In accordance with the UDC's adopted Rules of Procedure and Policy and Section 15.1.4 Design Review of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, this recommendation includes, at least, the following:

1. Identification of the preferred schematic design option
2. Identification if applicable design guidelines are satisfied
3. Guidance and recommended modifications to address any design issues or concerns

Design review was conducted over the course of two meetings and the Commission guided the Applicant through various recommendations and suggestions to the applicants preferred façade design concepts. At the meeting on November 25, 2025, Andrew Arbaugh, Tim Talun, Frank Valdes, and alternate Martin Pavlinic were present. At the meeting on January 13, 2026 Andrew Arbaugh, Deborah Fennick, Tim Talun, and alternate Martin Pavlinic were present. At the meeting on January 13, 2026 recommendations that were incorporated into the design through the review process included recommending façade option 1 and voting to approve massing option 1. They also stated that illumination should not be used at the external face of the penthouse and it should be minimized at the mechanical floors.

Following a presentation by the Applicant and review of the design guidelines for the ASMD district, the Commission provided the following final guidance and recommended modifications:

1. To clad the hanging boxes on the second story in a different material to give them a warmer appearance and to carry it through to the balconies.
2. No illumination at the external face of the penthouse.
3. The illumination must be minimized at the mechanical floors that are clad in glass and vision glass.
4. Include curved glass on the second floor (as shown in the rendering that was presented).

Commissioner Deborah Fennick made a motion to recommend approving the façade Option 1. Commissioner Tim Talun seconded. Motion was approved unanimously (4-0).

Commissioner Martin Pavlinic made a motion that the design guidelines for the ASMD zoning district have been met with design guidelines. Commissioner Deborah Fennick seconded. Motion was approved unanimously (4-0).

Commissioner Tim Talun made a motion to approve the additional design guidance given at the meeting, detailed in the recommended modifications. Commissioner Deborah Fennick seconded. Motion was approved unanimously (4-0).

Attest, by the voting membership:

Andrew Arbaugh  
Deborah Fennick  
Martin Pavlinic  
Tim Talun  
Frank Valdes

Attest, by the meeting Co-Chairs:

Dan Bartman  
Luisa Oliveira

**Preferred façade option (Option 1):**

