

Neighborhood Meeting Report

Project: 32 Webster Avenue, Somerville, MA

Meeting Date: May 27, 2025

Meeting Location: 21 Properzi Way (in-person) and via Zoom

Prepared For: Somerville Planning Board

Prepared By: Applicant Team – Ryan Wittig, Matt Moore, David Swanson, Phil Sima

Submitted By: 32 Webster Holdings LLC

Date of Report: October 28th, 2025

1. Meeting Overview

The Neighborhood Meeting for 32 Webster Avenue was held on Tuesday, May 27, 2025, at 6:00 PM. The meeting was hosted both in-person at 21 Properzi Way and virtually via Zoom to allow broad community participation. The meeting was facilitated by Ward 2 City Councilor JT Scott and Planning, Preservation & Zoning (PPZ) Staff Member Kit Luster.

The applicant team provided a brief presentation outlining the proposed project and its alignment with Somerville’s zoning and sustainability goals, followed by a Q&A session with neighborhood residents and attendees.

2. Attendees

Applicant Team:

Ryan Wittig Matt Moore
David Swanson Phil Sima
Akshit Sethi

City Officials:

- Councilor JT Scott (Ward 2)
- Kit Luster, Planner – Planning, Preservation & Zoning Division

Community Attendees (as recorded):

Michele Hansen	Betsy Larkin	David Keeler	Joshua Michel
Bill [Last Name Unknown]	Cosmo Di Schino	Emily Baillieul	Jim McGinnish (USNC)

3. Summary of Concerns and Applicant Responses

Comment / Concern

Applicant Response / Follow-Up Action

Sidewalk Widening: Councilor Scott asked if the proposal significantly widens sidewalks on both sides and at the corner.

Sidewalks are generally 12 feet wide, widening to approximately 18–20 feet at the corner. This improvement supports pedestrian safety and streetscape enhancement consistent with the City’s mobility plan.

Transformer Vaulting: Councilor Scott asked if transformers could be placed underground (in a vault).

Vaulted transformers would be challenging due to proximity constraints and existing utilities near the sidewalk. Coordination with the utility provider will continue to explore feasible placement options.

Building Proximity to Property Lines: An attendee asked if building directly up to neighboring properties poses an issue.

The project complies with zoning dimensional standards, including required setbacks. The design ensures no encroachments and respects all abutting properties.

Outreach Efforts: Michele Hansen asked what community outreach had been conducted prior to the meeting.

Door-to-door outreach was conducted to inform nearby residents of the meeting and proposed project.

Retail Use Consideration: An attendee asked whether ground-floor retail was considered.

Retail was not considered, as the building is intended for residential use and the location is more suitable for housing.

Change in Unit Count: An attendee asked why the number of proposed units had changed.

Above 30 units, the inclusionary housing requirement increases to 20% 3+ bedroom units, which impacts project economics. The revised count aligns with zoning and feasibility.

Loading Zones / Rideshare Pick-Up: Michele Hansen asked about loading zones or rideshare access.

Access and loading are planned via Newton Street, and coordination with the mobility plan will ensure safe and efficient drop-off/pick-up zones.

<p>Bridge Plan Coordination: An attendee asked whether the project aligns with upcoming City or MassDOT plans for the nearby bridge.</p>	<p>The applicant will coordinate with MassDOT and the Somerville Mobility Division to ensure site design remains consistent with planned bridge improvements.</p>
<p>Abutter Concerns – Scale, Traffic, Aesthetics: Betsy Larkin expressed concern about feeling 'closed in,' potential traffic, and building appearance.</p>	<p>The applicant will explore alternative color schemes and façade treatments to soften the visual impact. The no-vehicle parking policy and proximity to transit will minimize new traffic generation.</p>
<p>Parking & Car Ownership: David Keeler noted that residents may still own cars despite limited parking.</p>	<p>The site lies within 0.25 miles of an MBTA station, making residents ineligible for on-street parking permits. This supports transit-oriented development and reduces vehicle dependence.</p>
<p>Bike Parking: Joshua Michel asked about bike parking provisions.</p>	<p>The project includes indoor bike storage (for standard and cargo bikes) and outdoor racks for visitors, meeting City standards.</p>
<p>Green Roof and Historic Review: Bill asked about a green roof and historic review.</p>	<p>A green roof area is included for sustainability, though not as an amenity space. The property has completed demolition delay review and is clear of further historic commission requirements.</p>
<p>Construction Impacts – Truck Access and Idling: Bill requested that contractors avoid using Emerson Street and minimize idling.</p>	<p>These restrictions will be included in the Construction Management Plan. Coordination with the City will ensure compliance with anti-idling policies.</p>
<p>Parking Availability: Betsy Larkin asked again if any on-site parking is proposed.</p>	<p>No vehicle parking is provided — only bike parking — consistent with zoning intent and sustainability goals.</p>
<p>Energy Code & Sustainability: Councilor Scott asked if the project will meet stretch code and achieve net-zero performance.</p>	<p>The building will comply with Somerville’s Stretch Energy Code and be Net Zero in design and operation.</p>

4. Follow-Up Actions and Commitments

- Review potential alternate façade color palettes to address aesthetic concerns.
- Confirm coordination with MassDOT and the Somerville Mobility Plan regarding nearby bridge work.
- Incorporate construction access and idling restrictions into the Construction Management Plan.
- Continue engaging abutters and stakeholders throughout the permitting process.

5. Conclusion

The 32 Webster Avenue Neighborhood Meeting was conducted in accordance with Somerville's zoning requirements. The applicant team provided project details, fielded questions, and gathered constructive feedback from the community. The team remains committed to refining the project design and operations to align with community values, City policies, and sustainability goals.

6. Attachments

- Meeting notice and outreach summary (attached separately in the portal)
- Roster/Sign-in Sheet: Was not provided to Applicant Team

32 Webster Neighborhood Meeting #2 Report

Neighborhood Meeting Report

Project: 32 Webster Avenue, Somerville, MA

Meeting Date: September 29, 2025

Meeting Location: 21 Properzi Way (in-person) and via Zoom

Prepared For: Somerville Planning Board

Prepared By: Applicant Team – Ryan Wittig, Matt Moore, David Swanson, Phil Sima

Submitted By: 32 Webster Holdings LLC

Date of Report: October 29, 2025

1. Meeting Overview

The second Neighborhood Meeting for 32 Webster Avenue was held on Monday, September 29, 2025, at 6:00 PM. The meeting was hosted both in-person at 21 Properzi Way and virtually via Zoom to allow broad community participation. The meeting was facilitated by Ward 2 City Councilor JT Scott and Planning, Preservation & Zoning (PPZ) Staff Member Kit Luster.

The applicant team provided a brief presentation outlining project updates and refinements since the first meeting, followed by a Q&A session with neighborhood residents and attendees.

2. Attendees

Applicant Team:

Ryan Wittig Matt Moore
David Swanson Phil Sima
Akshit Sethi

City Officials:

- Councilor JT Scott (Ward 2)
- Kit Luster, Planner – Planning, Preservation & Zoning Division

Community Attendees (as recorded):

Emily Doran Michael Katz Evelyn Persoff Betsy Larkin
Michele Hansen Clark Mitchell Jenn Harrington 3 Emerson St

3. Summary of Concerns and Applicant Responses

Comment / Concern

Applicant Response / Follow-Up Action

Fence and Rear Area: Betsy Larkin asked about the fence and what will be behind the building, with some clarifying questions regarding the plot plan.

The applicant clarified that a fence will be included along the rear property line to provide privacy and security. The rear area will include landscaped buffer space and plantings as shown on the updated plot plan.

Sidewalk Width: Michael Katz asked about the width of the sidewalks.

The applicant confirmed that sidewalks are planned to be 12 feet wide, consistent with the City's mobility standards and prior meeting discussions.

Unit Breakdown: Michele Hansen asked about the breakdown of unit sizes.

The applicant provided an approximate breakdown of studio, one-, two-, and three-bedroom units, noting that a mix of unit sizes supports both family and individual residents.

Bike Storage: An attendee asked about bike storage and accessibility for larger bikes.

The applicant explained that bike parking has been relocated to the ground level to meet accessibility and code requirements. The team will evaluate larger door options to improve access for cargo and adaptive bicycles.

Special Permit for Residential Use: Michele Hansen asked why a special permit is needed for residential use.

Councilor JT Scott clarified that in the Mid-Rise zoning district, residential development requires a special permit under the Somerville Zoning Ordinance.

Affordable Housing: Evelyn Persoff asked how many affordable units there will be and what sizes they will be.

The applicant explained that 20% of the total units will be designated as affordable. Final size and configuration will be determined with the Somerville Housing Division during permitting.

Demolition and Construction Timing: Betsy Larkin asked for updates on demolition timing.	The applicant noted that coordination with necessary utility and environmental processes is ongoing and demolition is anticipated to occur by the end of October 2025.
Coordination with 24 Webster: Michael Katz asked whether the applicant is working with the neighboring property at 24 Webster.	The applicant confirmed communication with the ownership team at 24 Webster, with the goal of coordinating demolition schedules where feasible.
Parking Impacts on Emerson Street: A resident at 3 Emerson Street asked how residents will be prevented from parking on Emerson Street since no parking is provided on-site.	The applicant explained that owners will be ineligible for residential parking permits, consistent with City policy. The building will operate as a condominium, with the condo board reinforcing this restriction.
Affordable Housing Policy: Jenn Harrington expressed concern that 20% affordability feels low compared to nearby large projects and asked about collaboration opportunities for deeper affordability.	Councilor JT Scott noted that organizations such as the Somerville Community Land Trust are exploring partnerships and policy solutions to increase affordable housing supply beyond baseline requirements.
ADA and Accessibility: Michele Hansen asked about ADA requirements, and Clark Mitchell inquired about Group 2 accessibility units.	The applicant stated that all units will meet Group 1 accessibility standards. Group 2 units are not required for this project per code, but accessibility features will exceed minimum thresholds where feasible.
Unit Mix and Landscaping: Emily Doran asked about two- and three-bedroom units due to the nearby school, and expressed hope for additional landscaping to replace lost greenery.	The applicant confirmed that the project includes two- and three-bedroom units and will enhance the landscaping plan with native plant species and street trees to restore visual greenery.
Native Plants: Michele Hansen asked whether native plants must be used for this project.	The applicant confirmed that the use of native plants contributes positively to the project's Green Score and LEED Platinum objectives, and they are being incorporated into the landscape plan.

4. Follow-Up Actions and Commitments

- Coordinate with 24 Webster regarding demolition timing and logistics.
- Refine landscaping plan to include native plantings and visual buffering.
- Evaluate options for larger access doors to improve bike storage accessibility.
- Continue coordination with the Somerville Housing Division regarding affordable unit sizes.
- Maintain communication with nearby residents and the Planning Department through the permitting process.

5. Conclusion

The second Neighborhood Meeting for 32 Webster Avenue was conducted in accordance with Somerville's zoning requirements. The applicant team provided updates to the project, responded to community questions, and gathered valuable feedback. The team remains committed to design and operational refinements that align with community interests, City goals, and sustainability standards.

6. Attachments

- Meeting notice and outreach summary (attached separately in the portal)
- Roster/Sign-in Sheet: Was not provided to Applicant Team