



City of Somerville

PLANNING BOARD

City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

TO: Planning Board
FROM: Planning Division
SUBJECT: 6 Wheatland Street, ZP26-000016 (Site Plan Approval) & ZP26-000017 (Residential Use – Special Permit)
POSTED: July 31, 2026

RECOMMENDATION: Continue

Staff memos are used to communicate background information, analysis, responses to public comments, review of statutory requirements and other information from Planning Division to the Review Board members.

This memo summarizes the Site Plan Approval and Special Permit application submitted for 6 Wheatland Street, identifies any additional discretionary or administrative development review that is required by the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, and provides related analysis or feedback as necessary. The application has not yet been deemed complete by the Mobility Division and is scheduled for a public hearing on August 6, 2026. Any Staff recommended findings, conditions, and decisions in this memo are based on the information available to date prior to any public comment at the scheduled public hearing.

LEGAL NOTICE

6 Wheatland Street - ZP26-000016

Adam Dash, Esq. on behalf of Nelson Group Construction Corp. proposes to develop an Apartment Building in the Mid-Rise (MR3) zoning district, which requires Site Plan Approval.

6 Wheatland Street - ZP26-000017

Adam Dash, Esq. on behalf of Nelson Group Construction Corp. proposes to establish residential housing in the Mid-Rise (MR3) zoning district, which requires Special Permit.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

Nelson Group Construction Corp. is proposing to demolish the existing two and a half (2 ½) two (2) family structure and construct a new three (3) story, five (5) unit Apartment Building with five (5) motor vehicle parking spaces, five (5) long-term bicycle parking spaces, in the rear of the project, and two (2) short-term bicycle parking spaces in the front public way. The proposed development will produce five (5) dwelling units, four (4) two (2) bedroom units and one (1) three-bedroom (3) unit, of which one (1) will be an affordable unit. The proposed landscape will earn a Green Score of 0.258.

BACKGROUND

6 Wheatland Street is not located in any Transit Area nor a Pedestrian Street. This property is located in Mid-Rise 3 (MR3) zoning district in the Winter Hill neighborhood, represented by Ward 4 Councilor Jesse Clingan. Establishing an Apartment Building in the MR3 district requires Site Plan Approval. The Planning Board is the decision-making authority for all (non-variance) discretionary or administrative permits required for the MR3 zoning district.

This project received two (2) variances on July 17, 2026. The ZBA granted the reliefs from requirements [SZO 4.1.7.c](#), to build a primary front facade of 74.7% where 80% is the minimum in the Mid-Rise 3 (MR3) under permit number [ZP26-000018](#) and [SZO 10.3.6.a.i](#), to build a new three (3) story apartment building that does not meet the landscape buffer requirements as its abutter in the northeasterly (right) side is a residential condominium building in the Neighborhood Residence (NR) district under permit number [ZP26-000019](#).

As the existing structure was constructed over 75 years ago, this building went through the Demolition Review Step 1 (Determination of Significance) on May 6, 2025. The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) found the existing structure not to be Historic Significant, therefore there was no demolition delay imposed. The staff memo and decision related to this hearing can be found [here](#).

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS

The first neighborhood meeting was hosted by Ward 4 Councilor Jesse Clingan and the applicant on June 30, 2025, in person at the Elizabeth Peabody House, 275 Broadway, Somerville, MA. The residents had questions about the historic demolition process of the building, parking, construction management, green score, the design of the building and concerns as the building will be abandoned between the permitting process until the construction.

The second neighborhood meeting was hosted by Ward 4 Councilor Jesse Clingan and the applicant on January 26, 2026, via zoom. The residents had questions about the historic demolition process of the building, any potential zoning changes proposed, if the apartments will be used as short rentals and if they will be sold or rented, the parking amount proposed, construction management and timeline, and if the timeline will match with a potential city projects that may impact Wheatland Street.

DESIGN REVIEW

The proposal was reviewed by Somerville Urban Design Commission (UDC) via the Zoom meeting platform on November 25, 2025. The UDC requested that the applicant confirm with Eversource if transformer is required for this building. Look into expanding the planting palette with Somerville Pollinator Action Plan guidelines and recommendations.

Clarify the hardscape detail on the driveway north and note how the sidewalk edge and fence are supported and study the ramp as it ends in the proposed driveway and consider a vehicle notifier or change in paving material to improve safety of pedestrians.

ANALYSIS

Building / Land Use / Housing

The Applicant is proposing a new three (3) story, five (5) unit Apartment Building where four (4) dwellings will be two-bedroom units and one (1) dwelling a three-bedroom unit. The applicant has signed an Affordable Housing Acknowledgement (AHA) form and will provide an affordable unit; no fractional payment is required. The proposed building will be built abutting the existing commercial building and move away from the existing residential building as shown in the satellite image and diagram below.

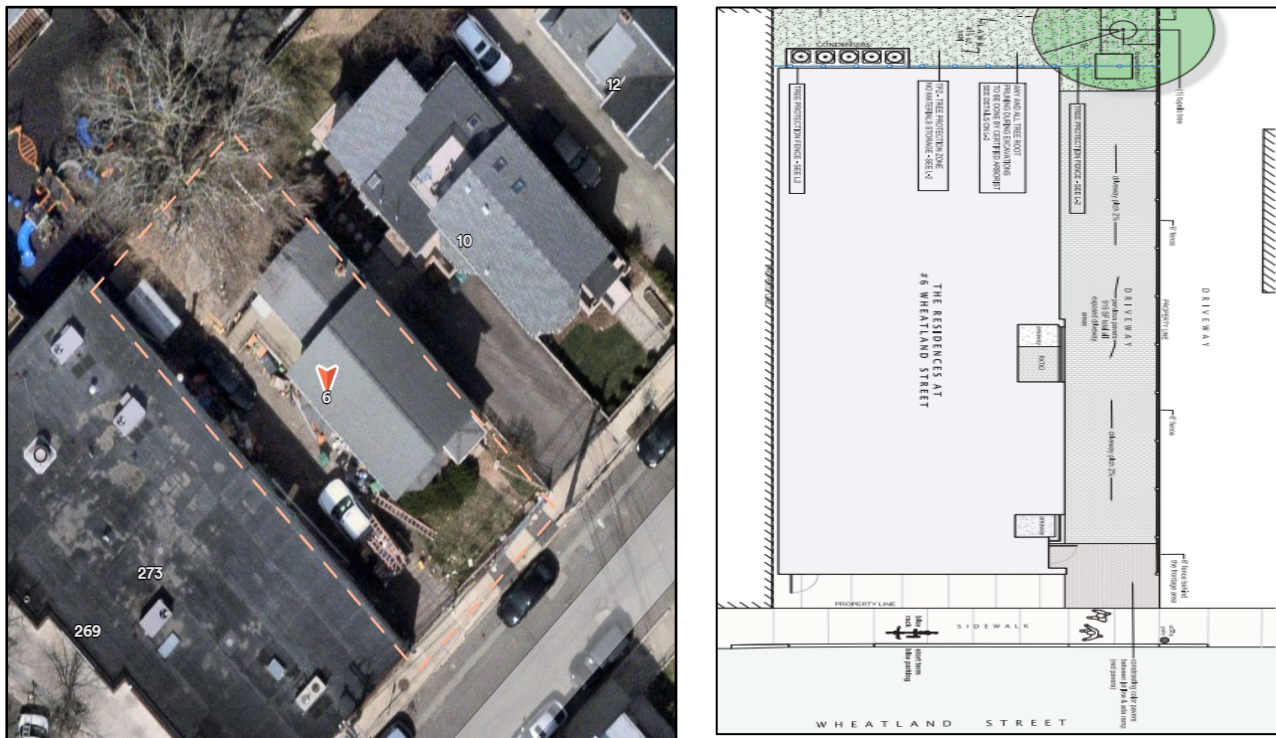


Figure 1 - Current satellite image and proposed diagram of 6 Wheatland Street.

Mobility

As noted above 6 Wheatland Street is not located in any Transit Area or a Pedestrian Street. This proposal includes five (5) motor vehicle parking spaces, five (5) long-term bicycle parking spaces at the rear of the project, and two (2) short-term bicycle parking spaces in the front public way. Mobility staff have provided comments regarding

alternative locations for the proposed short-term bike parking, and whether there is any type of enclosure for the long-term parking. Mobility staff also asked the Applicant to propose locations where additional accessible parking spaces or loading zones could be added within 200 feet of your site entrance. These comments have been received by the Applicant; however final revisions have not been revised and deemed completed by the Mobility Division.

Public Space and Urban Forestry (PSUF)

The latest landscape submitted by the Applicant shows a Green Score of 0.258 where the minimum is 0.25, and the ideal is 0.30. This plan includes a green roof. PSUF staff have not finalized the revision of these materials.

Sustainability

Sustainability staff have finalized the review of the project and have issued the Certificate of Required Materials (CRM).

CONSIDERATIONS & FINDINGS

The Planning Board is required by the Somerville Zoning Ordinance to deliberate each of the following considerations at the public hearing. The Board must discuss and draw conclusions for each consideration but may make additional findings beyond this minimum statutory requirement.

Site Plan Approval Considerations

1. The comprehensive plan and existing policy plans and standards established by the City.
2. The intent of the zoning district where the property is located.
3. Mitigation proposed to alleviate any impacts attributable to the proposed development.

Special Permit Considerations

1. The comprehensive plan and existing policy plans and standards established by the City.
2. The intent of the zoning district where the property is located.

Information relative to the required considerations is provided below:

Site Plan Approval and Special Permit

1. *The comprehensive plan and existing policy plans and standards established by the City.*

Staff believes that this project supports the goals laid out in SomerVision 2040, the City's Comprehensive Master Plan, including the following:

- Increase the Housing Supply.
- Increase affordability and housing stock diversity.

2. The intent of the zoning district where the property is located.

The intent of the MR3 zoning district is, in part: "To create, maintain, and enhance areas appropriate for smaller scale, multi-use and mixed-use buildings and neighborhood serving commercial uses."

- To provide a range of housing types, unit sizes, and price points to accommodate the diverse household sizes and life stages of Somerville residents at all income levels.
- To balance the supply of off-street parking with local thoroughfare network capacity.
- To require a strong connection and gradual transition between the public realm (sidewalks, thoroughfares, and civic spaces) and private realm (yards and building interiors).
- To increase commercial tax base in support of the fiscal health of the City.

Summary of relevant information.

Site Plan Approval Specific

3. Mitigation proposed to alleviate any impacts attributable to the proposed development.

- Staff believes the proposed conditions mitigate any significant impacts
- attributable to the proposed development

PERMIT CONDITIONS

Site Plan Approval – ZP26-000016

Should the Board approve the required Site Plan Approval for the 3-story Apartment Building in the Mid-Rise 3 (MR3) zoning district Planning Staff recommend the following conditions:

Permit Validity

- This Decision must be recorded with the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds.

Public Record

- A digital copy of the recorded Decision stamped by the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds must be submitted to the Planning Division for the public record.

Special Permit – ZP26-000017

Should the Board approve the required Residential Housing Special Permit for the 3-story Apartment Building in the Mid-Rise 3 (MR3) zoning district Planning Staff recommend the following conditions:

Permit Validity

- This Decision must be recorded with the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds.

Public Record

- A digital copy of the recorded Decision stamped by the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds must be submitted to the Planning Division for the public record.