

Balance Architects

December 17th, 2025

Urban Design Commission

City of Somerville
93 Highland Ave
Somerville, MA 02143

Re: 40 White Street – Building Narrative

The proposed building at 40 White Street is a four-story residential development, including a basement level with 3 residential units, comprising a total of 29 units located at the corner of White Street and White Street Place in Somerville, MA, within the MR4 zoning district.

The building leverages its corner orientation to maximize natural light and street engagement. At grade, landscaped frontage along White Street Place enhances the public realm, with the bicycle and trash room being located near the lobby and accessed from the sidewalk. The first floor has 2 townhouse units that utilize light wells to bring daylight and ventilation to the basement, which also includes a shared amenity space with windows along White Street and White Street Place while the upper floors are fully residential with projecting bays and balconies, and the roof incorporates green roof elements.

The building is designed to meet Passive House certification and achieve net-zero ready performance, with a highly insulated and airtight envelope, balanced ventilation, and minimized thermal bridging that significantly exceed current energy and building code requirements.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Philip Sima". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Philip" and last name "Sima" clearly distinguishable.

Philip Sima, RA + CPHC

Balance Architects, Inc.