



City of Somerville

PLANNING BOARD

City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143-1212

2025 JUL 28 P 2:31

DECISION

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
SOMERVILLE, MA

PROPERTY ADDRESS: 1 McGrath Highway
CASE NUMBER: ZP25-000113
OWNER: Somerbridge Hotel LLC
OWNER ADDRESS: 10 Cabot Road, Suite 209, Medford, MA 02155
APPLICANT: Somerbridge Hotel LLC
APPLICANT ADDRESS: 10 Cabot Road, Suite 209, Medford, MA 02155
DECISION: Approved with Conditions (Plan Revision)
DATE OF VOTE: July 16, 2026
DECISION ISSUED: July 28, 2026

This decision summarizes the findings made by the Planning Board (the "Board") regarding the Plan Revision application submitted for 1 McGrath Highway.

LEGAL NOTICE

Somerbridge Hotel LLC proposes a Major Revision to the previously Site Plan Approval case # P&Z 21-028 in the High-Rise (HR) zoning district.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

On June 18, 2026, the Planning Board held a public hearing advertised in accordance with M.G.L. 40A and the Somerville Zoning Ordinance. Present and sitting at the public hearing were Board Members Chair Michael Capuano, Clerk Jahan Habib, Board Members Michael McNeley, Lynn Richards, Alternates Luc Schuster and Coralie Cooper. The Applicant team presented a revised proposal for a six (6) story hotel for a previously approved development project, and two (2) special permit requests, one for a Hotel Use and one for a Formula Business. The Applicant team provided a brief overview of the previously approved permits and explained the reason for the revision of case # P&Z 21-028 was due to changes in the timeline for the development of the proposed abutting (15 McGrath) lab building. The Applicant team explained that the major changes were to the scale of the project, and a new parking layout which required two (2) Hardship Variances that were approved at the June 17, 2026, Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) meeting. The Chair opened public comment, and three (3) members of the public provided comments. Comments included the importance of the pedestrian connection to the community path network at the back of the proposed project and raised concerns about the parking lot and proposed Green Score. The Chair closed public comment and indicated that the project cannot be voted on at this hearing as the 20-day appeal period for the approved variances was still in effect. The Board continued the public hearing to the July 16, 2026, meeting.

On July 16, 2026, the Board resumed the public hearing. Present and sitting at the public hearing were Board Members Chair Michael Capuano, Clerk Jahan Habib, Board

Members Michael McNeley, Lynn Richards, and Alternate Luc Schuster. The Applicant team, represented by attorney Adam Dash, noted that since the last hearing they submitted an updated landscape plan for Somerville's PSUF (Public Space and Urban Forestry) Division to review compliance with Green Score requirements. Attorney Dash also indicated that the supplemental memo dated July 10, 2026, included revised language to condition #13 of the previous June 12, 2026 staff memo and explained that they have communicated with Planning staff to suggest additional language to this condition. Planning staff confirmed that they agree with the proposed language and the additional changes can be recorded as amended with the Applicant's suggestion if the Board chose to approve the proposal. The Board indicated that they received one (1) written comment past the deadline, though it was received and reviewed by the Board. The Board had one clarifying question about the amount of parking.

PLANS & DOCUMENTS

Application plans, documents, and supporting materials submitted and incorporated are identified below.

Document	Pages	Prepared By	Date	Revision Date
Narrative	17	Adam Dash, Esq. 48 Grove St #304 Somerville, MA 02144	March 24, 2026	N/A
Site Plan	7	Allen & Major Associates, Inc. 400 Harvey Road Manchester, NH 03103	October 15, 2025	N/A
Illustrative Site Plan	1	Allen & Major Associates, Inc. 400 Harvey Road Manchester, NH 03103	November 24, 2025	N/A
Landscape Plan	33	Allen & Major Associates, Inc. 400 Harvey Road Manchester, NH 03103	October 15, 2025	July 9, 2026
Architectural Plans	16	Jason T. Diorio Auburn, NH	November 25, 2025	N/A
Shadow Study	8	JAL Hospitality Design LLC 10 Cabot Road, Suite 209 Medford, MA 02155	October 15, 2025	N/A
Stormwater Compliance Report	152	Allen & Major Associates, Inc. 400 Harvey Road Manchester, NH 03103	November 5, 2022	October 14, 2025
Context analysis 1 & 2	18	Jason T. Diorio Auburn, NH	October 15, 2025	N/A
Neighborhood Meeting Report	3	Adam Dash, Esq. 48 Grove St #304 Somerville, MA 02144	March 24, 2026	N/A
Previous Recorded Decision	20	City of Somerville 93 Highland Ave. Somerville MA 02143	May 23, 2026	N/A
Transportation Access Plan	41	Allen & Major Associates, Inc. 400 Harvey Road Manchester, NH 03103	October 15, 2025	June 12, 2026
Supplemental Transportation Impact Study Information – Revised Program and Trip Generation	35	VHB 99 High Street, 13 th Floor Boston, MA 02110	November 14, 2025	N/A
Supplemental Transportation Impact Study Information – Traffic Analysis and	17	VHB 99 High Street, 13 th Floor Boston, MA 02110	December 16, 2022	N/A

Future Transit Capacity Analysis				
Transportation Impact Study + Appendix	360	VHB 99 High Street, 13 th Floor Boston, MA 02110	September 14, 2022	N/A
Mobility Management Plan	59	Allen & Major Associates, Inc. 400 Harvey Road Manchester, NH 03103	December 9, 2025	April 1 2026
Mobility Management Plan - Signed Letter	7	City of Somerville 93 Highland Ave. Somerville, MA 02143	May 29, 2026	N/A

SITE PLAN APPROVAL FINDINGS

In accordance with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, the Board may approve a Revision to a Site Plan Approval upon making findings considering, at least, each of the following:

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

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

- Promote a dynamic urban streetscape that embraces public transportation, reduces car dependence, and is accessible, inviting, and safe for all pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders.
- Invest in the growth of a resilient economic base that is centered around transit, generates a wide variety of job opportunities, creates an active daytime population, supports independent local businesses, and secures fiscal self-sufficiency.

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

The intent of the HR zoning district is, in part: "To accommodate the development of areas appropriate for an intense mix of multi-story multi-unit, mixed-use, and commercial buildings; neighborhood-, community-, and region-serving uses; and a wide variety of employment opportunities."

Additionally, the Board believes that granting the requested Site Plan Approval and Special Permits would support the broader intent of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- To permit development and redevelopment according to plans that are collaboratively developed with the Somerville community.
- To preserve and enhance the design of Somerville's public realm.
- To increase commercial tax base in support of the fiscal health of the City.
- To protect and promote a diverse mix of businesses.

- To capture a fiscal return on investments made in transportation infrastructure by locating higher intensity development, employment opportunities, and a broad mix of uses along major corridors and within walking distance of transit stops.

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

The Board believes that, as conditioned, the mitigation proposed properly alleviates any impacts attributable to the proposed development.

DECISION

Following public testimony, review of the submitted plans, and discussion of the statutorily required considerations, Chair Michael Capuano moved to approve the Plan Revision to previously Site Plan Approval case # P&Z 21-028 in the High-Rise (HR) zoning district with the conditions included in the staff memo dated June 12, 2026, supplemental memo dated July 10, 2026, and as discussed at the July 16, 2026, hearing. Jahan Habib seconded. The Board voted **5-0** to approve the permit, subject to the following conditions:

Permit Validity

1. This Decision must be recorded with the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds.
2. A written narrative or descriptive checklist identifying the completion or compliance with permit conditions must be to the Inspectional Services Department at least ten (10) working days in advance of a request for a final inspection.

Public Record

3. If the Board requires any changes to the submitted plans, digital copies of all applicable application materials reflecting those changes must be submitted to the Planning Division for the public record. Materials must be submitted in accordance with the document format standards of relevant Submittal Requirements.
4. One (1) digital copy of all required application materials reflecting any physical changes required by the Board, if applicable, must be submitted to the Planning Division for the public record. Materials must be submitted in accordance with the document format standards of relevant Submittal Requirements.
5. 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.

Construction Documents

6. Construction documents must be substantially equivalent to the approved plans and other materials submitted for development review.
7. Material specifications from suppliers must be submitted to confirm fenestration glazing is compliant with the VLT (Visible Light Transmittance) and VLR (Visible Light Reflectance) ratings required by the Somerville Zoning Ordinance.
8. An outdoor lighting plan and supplier cut sheet specifications of chosen lighting fixtures must be submitted to confirm compliance with Section 10.7 Outdoor Lighting of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance. The site photometric plan must include a keyed site plan identifying the location of all luminaires; total site lumen limit table (calculations from the SZO); lighting fixture schedule indicating the fixture type, description, lamp type, lumens, color temperature, color rendering index, BUG rating, mounting height, and wattage of all luminaires; and notation of any timing devices used to control the hours set for illumination.

Mobility

9. Prior to Building Permit, the Applicant or their successor shall coordinate with the Mobility Division to complete a feasibility study, to be funded and executed by the Applicant, of the Community Path Ramp. The scope of the feasibility study shall include, at minimum, analysis of constructability, grading, soil conditions, materials selection, and alternative ramp alignments. The scope of the feasibility study must be approved by the Mobility Division. The Applicant's site plan will be modified, if necessary, to address the results of the feasibility study and ensure the final site plan is compatible with the preferred Community Path Ramp alternative.
10. Prior to Building Permit, and prior to application for a MassDOT Access Permit, the Applicant or their successor must submit final designs for all project elements on the McGrath Highway Right-Of-Way for review and approval by relevant City of Somerville departments.
11. Prior to Building Permit, the Applicant or their successor shall modify their site plan to provide an accessible route between onsite accessible parking and the principal building entrance that does not require travel in the driveway, to reduce the potential for conflicts between motor vehicles and vulnerable road users. In the Applicant's proposed site plan, the accessible route between onsite accessible parking and the principal building entrance requires a person to travel in the driveway with motor vehicles. This is anticipated to be a high-volume driveway, with the Applicant estimating over 800 daily motor vehicle trips generated by the project.
12. Prior to Building Permit, the Applicant or their successor shall reconfigure the placement of the proposed short-term bike parking racks so that both sides of the racks can be used. In the Applicant's proposed site plan, the majority of the short-

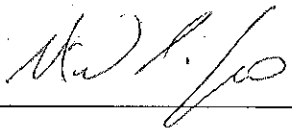
term bike parking racks can only accommodate one bike because of the proximity of the racks to the building façade. Reconfiguration will allow the Applicant to provide the same number of bike parking spaces using fewer racks. The Mobility Division recommends that the Applicant shift the placement of short-term bike parking from the Somerville side to the Cambridge side of the McGrath Highway/O'Brien Highway frontage, so that the space on the Somerville side can be preserved for a future Bluebikes station.

13. Prior to Certificate of Occupancy, the Applicant or their successor shall fund and execute a design of the Community Path Ramp to the 25% design level. The scope of the design must be approved by the Mobility Division. If the Community Path Ramp design is initiated by others prior to the Applicant initiating design, the Applicant shall, at the City's sole discretion, provide to the City a payment-in-lieu of the 25% design, however, the amount of said payment shall not exceed \$105,038.88, being the offsite improvement calculation of 44,508 square feet times \$2.36 per square foot.
14. Prior to Certificate of Occupancy, the Applicant or their successor shall install weather shields adjacent to the long-term bike parking near the edge of the building overhang. In the Applicant's proposed site plan, several of the long-term bike parking spaces are likely to be exposed to the elements due to their location near the edge of the building overhang. If these long-term bike parking spaces are exposed to the elements, they will be out of compliance with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance and will need to be relocated or reconfigured to be fully sheltered from the elements.
15. The Applicant or their successor shall coordinate with the Cities of Somerville and Cambridge on the design and construction of the proposed Community Path Ramp. The Applicant will provide the space on their site for the Community Path Ramp and will allow for all site access necessary for construction to occur.
16. The Applicant or their successor must provide a public right-of-way or pedestrian access easement in perpetuity by a covenant or other deed restriction for the full area of the proposed Community Path Ramp. Final easement language must be approved by the City Solicitor. The easement must be recorded at the Middlesex Registry of Deeds prior to Certificate of Occupancy.
17. The Applicant or their successor shall continue to coordinate with the City, MassDOT, and the proposed developments at 15 McGrath Highway and 35 McGrath Highway to ensure cohesive design and implementation of changes to the adjacent sections of McGrath Highway.
18. The Applicant or their successor must provide a public right-of-way or pedestrian access easement in perpetuity by a covenant or other deed restriction for the full area of the sidewalk provided within the frontage area of the lot. Final easement

language must be approved by the City Solicitor. The easement must be recorded at the Middlesex Registry of Deeds prior to Certificate of Occupancy.

19. The Applicant or their successor shall construct the sidewalk across the curb cut on McGrath Highway as a continuous concrete sidewalk-level crossing.
20. The Applicant or their successor shall work in good faith with the Mobility Division to provide a location for a future City owned Bluebikes bike share station on the project site, provided there is no loss of necessary functionality. The location will be determined in coordination with the Mobility Division and must be approved prior to the issuance of any building permit for the site and identified on building plans as applicable. The Siting Agreement with the operator of Bluebikes must be signed prior to issuance of any Certificate of Occupancy.
21. At least one (1) bicycle repair facility shall be provided for employees and hotel guests in a convenient and visible location near the long-term bike parking, and must be maintained in a state of good repair. The location will be determined in coordination with the Mobility Division and must be approved prior to the issuance of any building permit for the site and identified on building plans as applicable.

Attest, by the Planning Board:



Michael Capuano, *Chair*

Jahan Habib, *Clerk*
Michael McNeley
Lynn Richards
Luc Schuster, *Alternate*

CLERK'S CERTIFICATE

Any appeal of this decision must be filed within twenty days after the date this notice is filed in the Office of the City Clerk, and must be filed in accordance with M.G.L. c. 40A, sec. 17 and SZO sec. 15.5.3.

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 40 A, sec. 11, no variance shall take effect until a copy of the decision bearing the certification of the City Clerk that twenty days have elapsed after the decision has been filed in the Office of the City Clerk and no appeal has been filed, or that if such appeal has been filed, that it has been dismissed or denied, is recorded in the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds and indexed in the grantor index under the name of the owner of record or is recorded and noted on the owner's certificate of title.

Also in accordance with M.G.L. c. 40 A, sec. 11, a special permit shall not take effect until a copy of the decision bearing the certification of the City Clerk that twenty days have elapsed after the decision has been filed in the Office of the City Clerk and either that no appeal has been filed or the appeal has been filed within such time, is recorded in the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds and indexed in the grantor index under the name of the owner of record or is recorded and noted on the owner's certificate of title. The person exercising rights under a duly appealed Special Permit does so at risk that a court will reverse the permit and that any construction performed under the permit may be ordered undone.

The owner or applicant shall pay the fee for recording or registering. Furthermore, a permit from the Division of Inspectional Services shall be required in order to proceed with any project favorably decided upon by this decision, and upon request, the Applicant shall present evidence to the Building Official that this decision is properly recorded.

This is a true and correct copy of the decision filed on _____ in the Office of the City Clerk, and twenty days have elapsed, and

FOR VARIANCE(S) WITHIN

_____ there have been no appeals filed in the Office of the City Clerk, or
 _____ any appeals that were filed have been finally dismissed or denied.

FOR SPECIAL PERMIT(S) WITHIN

_____ there have been no appeals filed in the Office of the City Clerk, or
 _____ there has been an appeal filed.

FOR SITE PLAN APPROVAL(S) WITHIN

_____ there have been no appeals filed in the Office of the City Clerk, or
 _____ there has been an appeal filed.

Signed _____ City Clerk Date _____