



City of Somerville

PLANNING BOARD

City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

TO: Planning Board
FROM: OSPCD Staff
SUBJECT: 222 Broadway, ZP26-000008
POSTED: September 10, 2026

RECOMMENDATION: None

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

This memo summarizes the Special Permit application submitted for 222 Broadway, identifies any additional discretionary or administrative development review that is required by the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, and provides related analysis or feedback as necessary. 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. The application has not yet been deemed complete so Staff review is based on limited information.

LEGAL NOTICE

Mission Hill Donuts, LLC proposes to expand the hours of an existing nonconforming business in the Mid-Rise 5 (MR5) zoning district, which requires a Special Permit.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

Mission Hill Donuts (Nicole Sullivan) is proposing to extend the hours of a nonconforming formula business from 5:00 am – 8:00pm to 24 hours/day in the Mid-Rise 5 (MR5) zoning district. The proposed development will not change the square footage or category of use of the structure.

BACKGROUND

222 Broadway is located on a Pedestrian Street in the Mid-Rise 5 (MR5) zoning district in the Winter Hill neighborhood represented by Ward 1 Councilor Matt McLaughlin. Altering a nonconforming use within a structure in the MR5 district requires a Special Permit. Per SZO 14.1.6.c.ii.e. any change in hours of operation between the hours of 7:00am to 9:00pm requires a Special Permit. The Planning Board is the decision-making authority for all (non-variance) discretionary or administrative permits required for the MR5 zoning district. Following the Planning Board process, this proposal would need to obtain an updated business license issued by the City Council.

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS

The neighborhood meeting was hosted by Ward 1 Councilor McLaughlin and the applicant on August 12, 2026, via the Zoom meeting platform. Neighbors came to the neighborhood meeting and requested that issues regarding rodents, noise, trash, and loitering customers be mitigated before this goes to the Planning Board. Councilor McLaughlin requested that an additional on-site in-person neighborhood meeting be hosted for the neighbors and applicant to walk the site together and talk through mitigation and improvement strategies. There has been no indication from the applicant that this has occurred or been scheduled.

Note: *Planning Staff have not received the required Neighborhood Meeting Report for this application. Planning Staff has recommended the applicant withdraw without prejudice and resubmit for an application when that document can be provided, and the Applicant can respond to the comments and concerns made by the residents.*

ANALYSIS

Staff have reviewed this incomplete application to the fullest extent and recommend that the Applicant should request to withdraw without prejudice until an on-site meeting with the neighbors can be held, and a Neighborhood Meeting report can be produced regarding the concerns of the residents in the area.

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.

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.*
3. *The extent and nature of the proposed alteration.*
4. *The ability of conforming alterations to meet the demonstrated need of the Applicant.*
5. *Consistency of the proposed alterations with the evolution of neighboring structures.*
6. *The impact of the alteration to the neighborhood when compared to the existing nonconforming use.*

Full findings could not be made due to the application being incomplete, however staff has considered the required findings based on the currently available materials.

Special Permit

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

Staff do not believe that this application currently supports the goals of SomerVision 2040.

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

The intent of the MR5 zoning district is, in part: "To create, maintain, and enhance areas appropriate for moderate scale, multi-use and mixed-use buildings and neighborhood- and community- serving commercial uses."

The Dunkin' in its current form and operating hours provides neighborhood and community serving commercial uses.

3. *The extent and nature of the proposed alteration.*

The current operating hours of the Dunkin' are 5:00am – 8:00pm. The proposed alteration would extend the hours to operating 24 hours a day.

4. *Consistency of the proposed alterations with the evolution of neighboring structures.*

The structure is situated on Broadway and abuts a residential neighborhood to the rear. The immediate abutters are a mix of Neighborhood Residential and MR5 zoned- parcels.

5. *The impact of the alteration to the neighborhood when compared to the existing nonconforming use.*

As heard at the neighborhood meeting, the current business is perceived to be disruptive to the surrounding area. Staff have concerns about the extension of hours related to the concerns shared at the meeting. Staff believe these concerns should be responded to, and mitigation strategies should be in place before this application can proceed further.

PERMIT CONDITIONS

As this application is complete as of the posting of this staff memo and a thorough review could not be conducted, Planning Staff does not recommend any conditions at this time.