



City of Somerville
PLANNING BOARD
City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

DECISION

PROPERTY ADDRESS: 32-40 White Street
CASE NUMBER: ZP25-000118
OWNER: 32-40 White St LLC
OWNER ADDRESS: 667 Somerville Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143
APPLICANT: Kinvarra Capital / David Swanson
APPLICANT ADDRESS: 667 Somerville Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143
DECISION: Approved with Conditions (Site Plan Approval)
DATE OF VOTE: September 3, 2026
DECISION ISSUED: September 14, 2026

This decision summarizes the findings made by the Planning Board (the “Board”) regarding the Site Plan Approval submitted for 32-40 White Street.

LEGAL NOTICE

32-40 White St LLC/Kinvarra Capital proposes to develop an Apartment Building in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) zoning district, which requires Site Plan Approval.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

On July 16, 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, Vice-Chair Amelia Aboff, Clerk Jahan Habib, Michael McNeley, Lynn Richards, and Alternate Coralie Cooper. The Applicant gave a presentation on the proposal for a 29-unit residential building in the MR4 Zoning District. The Chair opened the public testimony portion of the hearing. Two neighbors gave testimony on the project, and the Chair left the written testimony portion the hearing open until July 31, 2026. The Board then discussed the proposal. The Planning Board requested that larger family size units (three-bedroom units) be incorporated into the unit mix. The Board also asked about the underground vaulted transformer viability. The Applicant confirmed they had spoken to Eversource regarding the location of the transformer. The Chair requested an updated unit mix be presented at a future hearing. The Board continued the public hearing to August 6, 2026.

On August 6, 2026, the Board resumed the public hearing. Present and sitting at the public hearing were Board Members Chair Michael Capuano, Vice-Chair Amelia Aboff, Clerk Jahan Habib, Lynn Richards, Alternate Luc Schuster, and Alternate Coralie Cooper. Member Luc Schuster was absent from the hearing on July 16, 2026, but submitted an affidavit confirming review of the evidence, and was able to participate in the decision. The Applicant team presented an updated plan and stated their request for the Planning Board to approve the previous unit-mix presented on July 16, 2026 and should the 3-bedroom unit be required the project runs the risk of being financially

unviable due to market conditions. The Board suggested continuing this application further for the Applicant to discuss relief options with the City. The Board brought up that the intent of the MR4 district is to in part, to create dwelling unit types, sizes, and bedroom counts ideal for larger households in apartment buildings, and to create dwelling unit types, sizes, and bedroom counts ideal for smaller households in general buildings. The Applicant stated that they would work with City Staff to find potential solutions to address the need for a three-bedroom unit while creating a financially viable project. The Board continued the hearing to August 20, 2026.

On August 20, 2026 the Planning Board resumed the public hearing. The applicant team requested a continuance to the September 3, 2026 Planning Board meeting. The Board continued the hearing to the September 3, 2026 hearing.

At the September 3, 2026 hearing the Planning Board resumed the public hearing. Sitting and present at the public hearing were Board Members Chair Michael Capuano, Vice-Chair Amelia Aboff, Clerk Jahan Habib, Michael McNeley, Lynn Richards, Alternate Luc Schuster, and Alternate Coralie Cooper. Member Michael McNeley was absent from the hearing on August 6, 2026, but submitted an affidavit confirming review of the evidence, and was able to participate in the decision. The applicant presented updated plans showing one three-bedroom unit in the basement level of the building. The Planning Board discussed the proposal and moved to approve the Site Plan Approval. The motion passed 5-0.

PLANS & DOCUMENTS

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

Document	Pages	Prepared By	Date	Revision Date
32-40 White Street Plan Set	39	Balance Architects 1 Thompson Square Boston, MA 02129	May 15, 2026	July 27, 2026
32-40 White Street Narrative	1	Balance Architects 1 Thompson Square Boston, MA 02129	December 17, 2026	n/a
Civil Site Plan	4	Peter Nolan & Associates 80 Jewett Street, Suite 1 Newton, MA 02458	May 29, 2026	n/a
Transportation Access Plan	5	MDM Transportation Consultants, Inc 28 Lord Rd, Marlborough, MA 01752	March 10, 2026	n/a
Topographic Plan	1	Summit Surveying Inc. 4 South Pond Street, Newburyport, MA 01950	March 11, 2026	n/a
Bicycle Parking Plan	2	MDM Transportation Consultants, Inc 28 Lord Rd, Marlborough, MA 01752	December 2025	n/a
Sustainability Questionnaire	1	City of Somerville 93 Highland Ave Somerville, MA, 02143	December 22, 2025	n/a
Landscape Plans	4	Verdant 318 Harvard, Suite 25 Brookline, MA 02446	November 19, 2025	n/a

Mobility Management Plan	44	MDM Transportation Consultants, Inc 28 Lord Rd, Marlborough, MA 01752	December 11, 2025	n/a
Mobility Management Plan Approval Letter	4	City of Somerville 93 Highland Ave Somerville, MA, 02143	April 21, 2026	n/a
Neighborhood Meeting Report #1	4	Balance Architects 1 Thompson Square Boston, MA 02129	February 2, 2026	n/a
Neighborhood Meeting Report #2	4	Balance Architects 1 Thompson Square Boston, MA 02129	December 8, 2025	n/a

SITE PLAN APPROVAL FINDINGS

In accordance with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, the Board may approve or deny 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 finds that this project supports the goals laid out in SomerVision 2040, the City's Comprehensive Master Plan, including the following:

- Focusing on our largest GHG contributor (buildings).
- Increase the housing supply.
- Prioritize walking, biking, and transit options and minimize space dedicated to personal vehicles.

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

The Board finds that this proposal meets the intent of the MR4 zoning district which is, in part: "To create, maintain, and enhance areas appropriate for smaller scale, multi-use and mixed-use buildings and neighborhood serving commercial uses."

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

The Board finds that the approved conditions mitigate any significant 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 Site Plan Approval to approve a residential building in the MR4 district with the conditions included in the staff memos and discussed at the hearing. Vice-Chair Amelia Aboff seconded. The Board voted **5-0** to approve the permit, subject to the following conditions:

General

1. Utility and mechanical equipment is not permitted on any façade or within the frontage area of the lot.
2. Electrical transformers and other mechanical equipment are not permitted above ground within the frontage area of any lot.
3. If the Board requires any changes to the submitted plans, digital copies or 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 the Submittal Requirements.
4. A digital copy of the recorded Decisions stamped by the Middlesex South Registry of Deed must be submitted to the Planning Division for the public record.
5. Construction documents must be substantially equivalent to the approved plans and other materials submitted for Site Plan Approval.
6. Alterations to the design or location of the transformer is a major amendment to the approved plans, and requires board review.
7. A deed restriction limiting the sale or rental of all affordable dwelling units to eligible households in perpetuity must be executed and recorded with the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds.
8. An affordable housing implementation plan (AHIP) must be submitted to the Director of Housing for review and approval prior to applying for a Building Permit.
9. The Applicant or their successor in interest shall make a fractional buyout for 0.8 ADUs not provided.
10. The property owner(s) and applicable future tenants must comply with the Mobility Management Plan dated December 11, 2026, as approved and conditioned by the Director of Mobility's Final Approval dated April 21, 2026.
11. Dwelling units must be advertised as ineligible for on-street Residential Parking Permits, subject to the regulations of the Somerville Traffic Commission.
12. All buyers, grantees, lessees, renters, and tenants must be notified in writing prior to sale or lease of any dwelling unit that the residents are ineligible for on-street Residential Parking Permits, subject to the regulations of the Somerville Traffic Commission.
13. Formal acknowledgement that residents are ineligible for on-street Residential Parking Permits, and that dwelling units will be advertised as such, subject to the regulations of the Somerville Traffic Commission, must be filed and recorded with this Decision and forwarded to the Somerville Traffic Commission and Inspectional Services Division.

14. The Applicant or their successor in interest must submit all Stage 2 documentation required by the Office of Sustainability & Environment's LEED Certifiability Requirements.
15. The Applicant or their successor in interest must submit all Stage 3 documentation required by the Office of Sustainability & Environment's LEED Certifiability Requirements.

Prior to Building Permit

16. This decision must be recorded with the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds.
17. A Digital Massing Model of only the building's massing, in SketchUp format (.skp), that is to scale and properly geo-located and oriented for use in placing and viewing the project within the City's digital model of existing buildings in the city must be submitted to the Planning Division prior to the issuance of a Building Permit. The model should be main mass only and should not include any detailed architectural features of the proposed building, including building components or materiality.
18. Sheet Z-0.13 calls out permeable concrete paving in the White Street frontage. This area is subject to material requirements in previous comment for future public sidewalk easement. Engineering will require construction details for this design as part of future Building Permits. Permeable poured concrete paving may be acceptable if it performs similarly to standard cementitious concrete paving with respect to ADA/MAAB requirements. It is unlikely that permeable unit pavers will be approved for the area adjacent to White Street public way.
19. Material Specifications from suppliers must be submitted to confirm fenestration glazing is compliant with the VLT and VLR ratios required by the Somerville Zoning Ordinance.
20. An outdoor lighting plan and supplier cut sheet specifications of chosen lighting fixtures must be submitted to confirm compliance with Section 10.6 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.

Prior to Certificate of Occupancy

21. A written narrative or descriptive checklist identifying the completion or compliance with permit conditions must be submitted to the Inspectional Services Department at least ten (10) working days in advance of a request for a final inspection.
22. Final sidewalk design must provide sufficient width to guarantee at least 5' clear width of cement concrete surface for ADA/MAAB access on White Street. The 5' width may be combined by land in public right of way and private land dedicated via a public access easement. Establish easement line parallel to White Street side line. Submit easement plans for City Review providing the City and general

public 24/7/365 access to sidewalk on private property adjacent to White Street, as necessary. Executed easement is required prior to Certificate of Occupancy.

23. A public right-of-way or pedestrian access easement must be provided 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 application for a Certificate of Occupancy.

Attest, by the Planning Board:



Michael Capuano, *Chair*

Amelia Aboff, *Vice-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 _____