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Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development

TO: Zoning Board of Appeals
FROM: Planning & Zoning Staff
DATE: September 11, 2020
RE: 40B #2020-0001, Clarendon Hill

This memo summarizes the 40B Comprehensive Permit submitted for Clarendon Hill, 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 was deemed complete on May 21, 2020 and the public hearing was opened on June 10, 2020. The next public hearing is scheduled for **September 16**, 2020.

This memo has been updated since the August 5, ZBA hearing to reflect recent changes to the project. Additions are **highlighted**, deleted items are ~~struck~~.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH), Gate Residential (Redgate), and the Somerville Community Corporation (SCC) are proposing to construct 3 apartment buildings, 5 row houses, 3 thoroughfares, and a civic space. Overall, the proposed development will produce 591 dwelling units, 357 motor vehicle parking spaces (both on- and off-street), 191 long-term bicycle parking spaces, 55 short-term bicycle parking spaces, 19 docked bike share spaces, and over 16,000sf of new civic space.

Of the 591 units, 216 will be replacement public housing, 16 will be affordable to households making less than 80% AMI, and 64 will be affordable to households making less than 110% AMI. The remaining 295 units (49% of the total units) will be market rate.

This project is closely intertwined with a MassWorks-funded redesign and reconstruction of the Alewife Brook Parkway/Powder House Boulevard intersection that the Applicant team and City departments are collaborating on. The redesign and slight relocation of the intersection is necessary for the Applicant to construct this proposal, as a portion of Building A/B will cover land that is currently part of the intersection.

ELIGIBILITY

The applicant has received and submitted a PEL (Project Eligibility Letter) from the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) certifying that the project meets the requirements set forth in 760 CMR 56.04(1) and is eligible to

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apply for a Comprehensive Permit. The most recent version of the PEL is dated January 21, 2020.

A project is eligible to apply for a Comprehensive Permit if a subsidizing agency determines that:

- 1) The applicant must be a public agency, non-profit organization, or limited dividend organization.
- 2) The project must be fundable, although it would not have to necessarily be funded, by a subsidizing agency.
- 3) The applicant must have control of the site.

If a Comprehensive Permit is granted, the subsidizing agency will have to reaffirm the Applicant's eligibility prior to final approval.

ADDITIONAL REVIEW NECESSARY

Clarendon Hill is located in the Urban Residence (UR) zoning district in the Hillside neighborhood represented by Ward 7 Councilor Katjana Ballantyne. The Clarendon Hill property currently includes nine 3-story apartment buildings with the following addresses: 125, 139, & 153 Alewife Brook Pkwy; 268, 268R, & 278 Powder House Blvd; 24, 34, & 34R North St. The Applicant seeks a Comprehensive Permit pursuant to M.G.L Chapter 40B and is requesting waivers from various sections of the City's ordinances and requirements.

BOARD FINDINGS

M.G.L Chapter 40B requires that the ZBA balance the regional need for affordable housing against local health, safety, open space, and site and building design concerns when deciding a Comprehensive Permit case. The Board must make findings that document how its decision is Consistent with Local Needs, as defined by 760 CMR 56.02. The Board's decision will be Consistent with Local Needs if:

- 1) The City meets one or more of the safe harbor criteria listed under 760 CMR 56.03(1), or
- 2) Local Requirements and Regulations imposed on a Project are reasonable in view of the regional need for Low and Moderate Income Housing, considered with the number of Low Income Persons in the affected municipality and with Local Concerns, and if such Local Requirements and Regulations are applied as equally as possible to both subsidized and unsubsidized housing.

The City submitted the General Land Area Minimum analysis to the Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) and the Applicant. According to 760 CMR 56.03(3)(b), a municipality has achieved one of the Statutory Minima if properties listed on DHCD's most recent Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) account for more than 1.5% of a municipality's General Land Area. In Somerville, properties listed on the most recent SHI (excluding group homes and those with unlisted addresses) account for 3.8% of the City's General Land Area, far exceeding the 1.5% minimum. Therefore, the Board's decision is Consistent with Local Needs, as defined by 760 CMR 56.02.

In addition, the Board's decision is Consistent with Local Needs, as defined by 760 CMR 56.02, as the decision balances local concerns (especially those related to good urban and architectural design, the promotion of sustainable modes of transportation, and the use of sustainable building practices) with the regional need for additional affordable housing.

The Somerville Zoning Ordinance and the Zoning Board of Appeals Rules and Regulations do not require any specific findings for Comprehensive Permits. However, the Board may find it useful to consider the following review criteria found elsewhere in the Zoning Ordinance when considering this project:

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

The proposal is generally consistent with the City's comprehensive plan. The proposal:

- *maintains and expands the affordable housing in the City, and has promised all existing residents a right-to-return to minimize displacement;*
- *promotes non-vehicular modes of travel by providing bicycle parking in excess of that required by zoning and by addressing the pedestrian experience when designing the new thoroughfares;*
- *promotes sustainable development by complying with the LEED Platinum requirement for all three apartment buildings ~~and exceeding the LEED requirement for row houses by pursuing LEED for Homes;~~*
- *creates new gathering spaces, both outdoors in the new Neighborhood Park, and indoors in the "amenity lobbies" of the apartment buildings; and*
- *will comply with stormwater management requirements, an improvement over the existing site which was not built with stormwater management considerations in mind.*

2. The intent of the UR zoning district.

The intent of the UR zoning district is "To create, maintain, and enhance areas appropriate for multi-unit residential buildings."

The existing multi-unit residential buildings on the site are dilapidated, arranged in a highly impervious sub-urban organization, and disconnected from the urban fabric of the surrounding neighborhood. The project improves the situation by extending the existing street grid into the site; replacing existing units with new, well-designed apartment buildings and row houses; and providing new open space accessible to the neighborhood.

3. The proposed alignment and connectivity of the thoroughfare network.

The three new streets break up a large block and provide new vehicular and pedestrian connections through the site. With the exception of street width and other requirements for which waivers have been requested, all three streets will be built in compliance with City standards. Once constructed, Thoroughfares 1 and 2 will be offered to the City Council for acceptance as public streets; should the Council accept the streets, they will be owned, maintained, and managed by the City.

The project's internal vehicular circulation was designed with the existing neighborhood traffic conditions in mind, and the Applicant has limited vehicle access to the site from North Street and Alewife Brook Parkway in an effort to limit cut-through traffic through the site and neighborhood.

The project provides new pedestrian connections through a site that is currently inaccessible to much of the wider community. These connections include a new ADA-accessible pedestrian route from North Street to the green space at Alewife Brook Parkway (the general park, Alewife Greenway Bike Path, and Dilboy Stadium, Pool, and Tennis Courts). The project also includes traffic calming measurements like the woonerf on Thoroughfare 1 that are intended to enhance the pedestrian experience and connections to the central Neighborhood Park.

4. Mitigation proposed to alleviate any adverse impacts on utility infrastructure.

The project will comply with City standards and requirements related to water distribution systems, sanitary system collection, and storm drain collection and management.

The Applicant will be removing existing municipal utilities from private property and shifting them into the new public and private thoroughfares, providing easier maintenance access for the City.

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

The Applicant and City collaborated on applying for a MassWorks Infrastructure Program grant to fund the redesign of the Alewife Brook Parkway / Powder House intersection; a \$4.4 million award was announced in December 2019. The Applicant has committed \$600,000 as a grant match. The redesigned and rebuilt intersection will provide significant improvements for all modes of mobility in the area and will help mitigate any congestion and safety concerns caused by the additional pedestrian and vehicular traffic generated by the site.

6. Proposed development phasing.

The project will be constructed in two phases. Phase 1 will include the demolition of 6 of the existing buildings and the construction of Building A/B and Building E for a total of 499 units, 41% of which will be affordable. This Phase is tied to the redesign of the Alewife Brook Parkway / Powder House intersection, as a portion of Building A/B sits within the current intersection footprint. It will also include the construction of stormwater and other infrastructure that is necessary to support the buildings constructed as part of this phase.

Phase 2 will include the demolition of the rest of the site and the construction of Building D, all 5 series of row houses, the central civic space, and the three thoroughfares. At the end of Phase 2, there will be a total of 591 units and 51% will be affordable. Phase 2 will also include the completion of any remaining work necessary to achieve the project as proposed to the Board.

As not all existing buildings are being demolished as part of Phase 1, the Applicant will work with City staff to ensure that, throughout the course of construction, the utility services are maintained to the buildings not demolished as part of Phase 1. Dividing the project into two phases makes construction more economical and reduces the number of residents that are displaced from the site at any given time.

7. The supply and demand of on-street parking in the neighborhood, as determined through a parking study.

The Applicant is balancing multiple competing goals when determining the amount of parking to provide on the site. Zoning requires that the project provide a minimum of 1 parking space per dwelling unit, but the Applicant has requested a waiver to provide a minimum of approximately 0.46 parking spaces per dwelling unit site wide, although currently approximately 0.55 spaces per unit are proposed; neither of these numbers include the 33 parallel parking spaces on Thoroughfares 1 and 2 which are anticipated to become public streets. The Applicant submitted a Transportation Impact and Access Study which finds that the parking utilization rate at the St. Polycarp Village in Somerville (a comparable affordable housing development) is 0.62 spaces/dwelling unit.

During the public hearing some members of the public, City staff, and the Board all expressed support of the Applicant's request for a waiver from the minimum vehicular parking requirement and a willingness to see the amount of vehicular parking provided on the site reduced beyond the 357 spaces proposed.

8. Mobility management programs and services provided by the applicant to reduce the demand for parking.

The Applicant has submitting Mobility Management Plans (MMPs) for the three new apartment buildings. In addition to the minimum requirements for MMPs found in the Zoning Ordinance, the Applicant has committed to: funding and installing a 19-space Bluebikes docking station on the central civic space; committing to the SomerVision goal of increasing non-auto mode share; and providing one month of MBTA bus fare on a Charlie Card to each new household.

In addition to reducing the demand for parking at the site by implementing MMPs, the Applicant will be working with the City as part of a MassWorks grant to redesign the intersection of Alewife Brook Parkway and Powder House Boulevard. This redesigned intersection will provide mobility improvements for all transportation modes in the area, including the for pedestrians, bikes, and buses.

9. The ability of alternative technologies and methods of bicycle parking to provide equal or greater benefits to bicycle users.

As this is a residential project in the Urban Residence district, the Zoning Ordinance does not require that the Applicant provide any bicycle parking. However, as part of the mobility management plan for this project the Applicant has committed to providing ~~18~~ 55 short-term and ~~223~~ 191 long-term bicycle parking spaces. Not all of these spaces comply with the design and siting requirements of SZO §11.1, which are intended to ensure that new bicycle parking accommodates a range of users and bicycles. While the proposed alternative bicycle parking locations and designs do not provide equal or greater benefits for the full variety of bicycle users than if the Applicant complied with zoning, the Board finds that it is worth allowing a deviation from the design standards in order to increase the overall number of bicycle parking spaces. That said, the Applicant should adhere to the bicycle parking design requirements of the Zoning Ordinance whenever possible, particularly if there is found to be additional demand for bicycle parking in the future.

DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW

The following City Departments and Divisions have been involved in reviewing this project:

Engineering Division – Submitted a memo on June 24, 2020.

Mobility Division – Submitted a memo on June 19, 2020.

Public Space and Urban Forestry (PSUF) Division – Submitted memos on June 12, 2020 and June 25, 2020. Submitted additional comments on July 30, 2020.

Office of Sustainability & Environment (OSE) – Submitted a memo on June 19, 2020.

Historic Preservation Division – Submitted a memo on July 31, 2020.

All departmental memos have been attached at the end of this document in Appendix B.

WAIVERS OVERVIEW

M.G.L. Chapter 40B allows Comprehensive Permit applicants to request “waivers,” or variances/exemptions, from local ordinances and to request that the Zoning Board provide all local approvals that a project requires. The purpose of this is to make the development of low- and moderate-income housing easier, as the Zoning Board grants a “comprehensive” permit rather than the applicant needing to go to multiple boards for approval.

The Applicant has submitted a list of requested waivers as part of their application. The most recent waivers list is dated ~~July 21~~ **September 10**, 2020. The Applicant is requesting waivers from both substantive and procedural requirements of the zoning ordinance and other municipal ordinances. The substantive waivers will be addressed later in this report.

The Applicant has requested procedural waivers, addressed here, from the requirements of Subdivision Plan Approval, Site Plan Approval, the Demolition Review Ordinance, the Tree Preservation Ordinance, and various requirements for review by Directors of Engineering, Mobility, and Public Space and Urban Forestry:

The subdivision of land requires Preliminary and Final Subdivision Plan Approval from the Planning Board under SZO §15.3.1. The Applicant is requesting a waiver to have Preliminary Subdivision Plan Approval be conducted as part of the Comprehensive Permit process and to have the Zoning Board act as the SPGA for both Preliminary and Final Subdivision Plan Approval. This request is in line with the purpose of Comprehensive Permits to have the ZBA grant all necessary approvals.

The development of any new thoroughfare or civic space requires Site Plan Approval followed by a Thoroughfare Permit (§13.2.1.a) or by a Civic Space Permit (§13.1.1.a). The Site Plan Approval “process provides an applicant with the opportunity to submit architectural, site, landscape, and engineering plans so that compliance to the provisions of this Ordinance can be determined prior to preparation of construction documents.” The Applicant is requesting to waive the requirement for Site Plan Approval as all new thoroughfares and civic spaces will be reviewed as part of the Comprehensive Permit. The Applicant will apply for a Thoroughfare Permit for each new thoroughfare and a Civic Space Permit for the new civic space once the Comprehensive Permit is approved. The purpose of the Thoroughfare and Civic Space Permits is to ensure that construction documents comply with all relevant requirements.

Municipal Code, Chapter 7, Article II, § 7-28 is the Demolition Review Ordinance. This ordinance states that “Significant building or structures, including those at least 50 years old and determined by the Somerville Landmarks Commission to be a significant building or structure, are subject to Demolition Review by the [Historic Preservation] Commission.” The Applicant has requested a waiver to have the ZBA, rather than the HPC, grant the necessary approvals under the Demolition Review ordinance. This request is in line with the purpose of Comprehensive Permits to have the ZBA grant all necessary approvals.

Municipal Code, Chapter 12, Article VI, §12-112 regulates the removal of trees on private property. This section states that “No person may Remove any Significant Tree from private property without first obtaining a Tree Permit from the Tree Warden.” The Applicant has requested a waiver to have the

ZBA, rather than the Urban Forestry Committee and Tree Warden, grant the necessary approvals under the Tree Preservation Ordinance for all private trees on the property. The Applicant has not requested a waiver from the substantive requirements of the Tree Preservation Ordinance (e.g., the replacement of all caliper-inches removed), and their compliance with those requirements are addressed in the June 24th PSUF memo.

The Applicant has not requested a waiver from the requirement to apply for Building, Thoroughfare, and Civic Space Permits once the Comprehensive Permit has been granted. The purpose of the Building, Thoroughfare, and Civic Space permits is to review construction documents for compliance with any conditions of approval and with all applicable departmental standards and City Ordinances from which the Board has not granted a waiver.

PHASING

The project will be constructed in two phases in order to displace as few residents as possible during construction. Phase 1 will include demolishing six existing buildings, reconstructing the Alewife Brook Parkway/Powder House Blvd intersection, and constructing buildings A/B and E (a total of 499 units). The remaining three buildings will continue to be inhabited during phase one. The Alewife Brook Parkway/Powder House Blvd intersection must be relocated prior to construction commencing on building A/B since a portion of Building A sits on land currently utilized by the intersection. At the end of phase one, there will be 295 market-rate units, 145 replacement public housing units, and 59 units affordable to households making less than 80% or 110% of AMI.

The Applicant has said that concentrating the construction of market-rate units into Phase 1 will generate profits that can be used to finance construction of the rest of the site.

Phase 2 will include demolishing the remaining three buildings, constructing the central civic space, building D, the row houses, and finishing all three internal streets. This phase will include the construction of the remaining 92 units, all of which will be affordable.

The Applicant has submitted a preliminary phasing plan to the Engineering Division. Engineering has provided comments on the phasing in the June 24th memo.

URBAN DESIGN ANALYSIS

This section will review the design of the site overall, and then address each of the building lots, thoroughfares, and the civic space individually. Not all waivers requested for each lot are addressed in this section, as staff feels that some of the waivers are self-explanatory and do not require additional analysis.

Site Design

The site is bordered by the Neighborhood Residence district on the north and east sides, by the Alewife Brook Parkway and a park on the west side, and by Stop & Shop and the North Street Playground on the south side. The site currently contains 216 affordable housing units spread throughout 9 low-rise buildings. All existing buildings will be demolished as part of this project. The Applicant has submitted a letter from the Massachusetts Historical Commission which determined that the proposed project will not have an adverse impact on any historic or archeologically significant properties.

The proposal is to redevelop the existing site and construct up to five hundred and ninety-one (591) rental dwelling units within four (4) buildings and thirty-four (34) townhomes along with related infrastructure. The proposed plan also includes a network of open spaces connecting an expansion to the existing North Street community playground, to a new central Civic Space, and a pedestrian plaza to the DCR parkland. The Civic Space will be designed as a Neighborhood Park and the team has been working cooperatively with the Ward Councilor and the Division of Planning & Zoning for a number of years to arrive at this site plan and get this redevelopment moving forward. There has been considerable community interaction in creating the schematic site plan and refining the overall program.

The street grid of the proposed project extends the existing neighborhood block structure while mitigating the steeply sloping hillside dropping from North Street down to the Alewife Brook Parkway. The building footprints and setbacks are necessary to fully utilize a tight, urban site to maximize the number of residential units to in order finance the reconstruction of the public housing units.

The Applicant has requested waivers from the following requirements: the creation of through lots, and the layout and shape of blocks and lots.

"Through lots are prohibited, except for lots intended as a Through Block Plaza civic space type or a Block Building building type" (§10.1.6.e). The Applicant is requesting a waiver because they are proposing to create a through lot and construct an Apartment Building on it. The creation of Lot C1 as a through lot is the result of site topography and thoroughfare locations. Lot C1 is not a Through Block Plaza but the open space between buildings A and B includes a staircase and lift that provide pedestrian connection between the new park at the center of the site and the crosswalk to Dilboy Field.

"To avoid creating irregular lot shapes, lots must be platted to be generally rectilinear, where the side lot lines are within 45 degrees of perpendicular to the front lot line or to the tangent of a curved front lot line, and generally straight throughout their length" (§10.1.6.f). The Applicant is requesting a waiver as the lots do not meet this criterion. The lots respond to the topography and natural features within the project site, but none of the lots are rectilinear.

Architectural Review

The team has stated that the buildings will be constructed of prefabricated components. While the construction means and methods have no bearing on zoning relief, the detailing of such components will have a large impact on the quality of the architecture. For example, it is important that the windows are properly recessed from the exterior face of the building, especially in the expanses of cementitious panels where standard details often give an extremely flat appearance. Further review of the elevations as the design progresses is highly recommended.

The buildings are shown with a variety of materials, including masonry, siding, and metals. Samples should be provided for review of colors and textures with future building permit applications. The application states that "upper levels of the buildings will be banded with an ornamental cladding, suggesting a visually lighter upper story" however, this is not clear on all elevations as currently drawn and more detailed elevations will need to be provided.

Where the buildings address the slope on Powder House Boulevard and Thoroughfare #1, there is little detail shown regarding the pedestrian sidewalk experience. The buildings do not effectively step down the hill so there appears to be quite a lot of exposed concrete wall where the apartment building garages are visible at Buildings A/B. Whereas Buildings D and E show a mix of concrete and fiber cement materials along Thoroughfare #1, providing better visual and textural interaction for residents and visitors walking passed.

The Applicant has requested waivers from the 2' ground story elevation requirement for all buildings on the property. The grading of the site varies such that achieving the required ground story elevation is challenging. The Applicant is trying to achieve "visitability" (i.e., easily accessible for individuals using wheelchairs or other mobility aids) rather than strictly meeting the 2' requirement.

Apartment Buildings

The Applicant has requested a number of waivers for the three Apartment Buildings proposed; the waivers are addressed separately for each building. As the urban design for this project is dense, these waivers are necessary to accomplish the connections of the street network and to create the central open space.

Regarding the required outdoor amenity space, the area listed in the June 2, 2020 waiver table for Lots B1, F1, and C1 total 14,500+ square feet. This amount of open space, combined with the 16,385+ square feet of the Neighborhood Park on Lot D1, will be shared by the 557 apartment residents as the row houses have individual outdoor yards. Sharing the space is permitted in section 2.4.5.viii.c). "Buildings with seven (7) or more dwelling units may provide shared outdoor amenity space, provided that the space includes the total seating area required for each dwelling unit that the shared space is meant to serve." This amount of outdoor amenity space translates to approximately 55.45+ square feet per apartment, which is considerably more than the minimum required by section 2.4.5.viii.b). "Each outdoor amenity space must provide an unobstructed area of at least twenty-four (24) square feet that may be used for seating."

As the Applicant is refining the elevations, they should revisit the Architectural Design Guidelines for the Urban Residence District (§3.2.14). Specifically, §3.2.14.a.i states that "Ground story dwelling units should be elevated above the grade of any adjacent sidewalk so that the window sills of the dwelling unit are at or above the eye-level of passing pedestrians. This elevation change maintains privacy for occupants while also encouraging open blinds or curtains to allow natural daylight into the unit." As the Applicant has requested a waiver from ground elevation requirements due to accessibility and visitability requirements, special attention should be paid to the sill heights, window size, and glass transparency as the building design progresses. This can be seen most readily on the "Building A/B - Thoroughfare Street #2 Elevation" (Z-002 dated 02/12/20) in Exhibit H3 of the application package.

There are no specific Building Components identified on any of the Apartment Buildings. However, it is expected that the main entrances to each building will have Entry Canopies for the comfort and convenience of the residents and visitors.

Building A/B (Lot C1)

Building A/B is designed to appear as two separate buildings (hence the labels), but it is located on one lot and is linked below ground by structured parking and above ground by a bridge connecting the 2nd through 6th floors. The buildings line Alewife Brook Parkway with "Building A" is on the northern end next to Powder

House Blvd and “Building B” on the southern end. The building has 331 units overall for a total of 451 bedrooms; 11% of the units will be affordable.

These buildings rise above a parking podium and the placement of the taller buildings on the lower areas of the site will reduce their perceived scale which vary in height from 76’ to 159’. As this is a through lot, all facades are considered “fronts” and require further detailed attention to the pedestrian interaction at the ground floors as mentioned above. This is specifically noticeable on the elevation along Alewife Brook Parkway where it appears to have mostly blank wall of the garage along the sidewalk. Planting is shown on the site plan but more articulation of the wall should be required.

The ground level of Building B will have a significantly sized amenity lobby with community spaces. In the schematic plan provided, the main entry to both buildings A and B are shown from the plaza between the two buildings. The lobbies should also provide doors directly to Thoroughfare #2 for ease of visitor orientation and emergency access. Building B should also have the trash room relocated from the Primary Frontage – preferably to the garage level facing Thoroughfare #1.

The Applicant has requested waivers from the following requirements: minimum front setbacks, maximum floor plate, maximum number of stories, minimum vehicular parking, minimum GFA/DU, ground story elevation, minimum ADU requirements. For more detail and a full list of requested waivers, see Appendix A.

The maximum number of stories is 4; the Applicant has proposed a maximum of 9 stories (the southern portion of the building next to Stop & Shop is 9 stories while the northern half closer to NR zones is 6). Additional stories allow additional units to be constructed on the site and as part of phase one. The Applicant has tried to be conscientious of the surroundings by having the taller portion of the building further away from other residential buildings to reduce the potential impact of shadows.

The waiver requests for minimum ADU requirements, minimum vehicular parking are addressed elsewhere in this memo.

Building E (Lot B1)

Building E is a 9-story apartment building located at the corner of Alewife Brook Parkway and Thoroughfare 1. It has 168 affordable units for a mixture of incomes and a total of 301 bedrooms. The ground level of Building E will have an amenity lobby directly across from the Neighborhood Park and will be connected via an at-grade festival street. There are no specific comments on this building beyond those applicable to all apartment buildings mentioned above.

The Applicant has requested waivers from the following requirements: minimum front, side, and rear setbacks, maximum floor plate, maximum number of stories, minimum GFA/DU, ground story elevation, and minimum vehicular parking. For more detail and a full list of requested waivers, see Appendix A.

The maximum number of stories is 4, but the Applicant has proposed a maximum of 9 stories. Additional stories allow additional units to be constructed on the site and as part of phase one. The additional shadows cast from the building will primarily impact other lots that are part of this project, as this building is at the south east corner of the site.

The GFA/DU requirement is calculated based on 186,000sf of GFA and the Applicant has used the 1,125sf/unit requirement resulting in a maximum of 165 units. The Applicant is proposing 168 units (1,107sf/unit). However, since all units in the building will be deed-restricted to households making less than 120% of AMI, the Applicant could choose to use the more generous 875sf/unit requirement which would leave them under the allowed maximum of 212 units.

The waiver requests for ground story elevation, and minimum vehicular parking are addressed elsewhere in this memo.

Building D (Lot F1, née B2)

Building D is a 7-story apartment building located at the corner of North Street and Thoroughfare 1. It has 58 affordable units for a mixture of incomes and a total of 98 bedrooms. The ground level of Building D will have an amenity lobby adjacent to the expanded North Street Playground. There are no specific comments on this building beyond those applicable to all buildings.

The Applicant has requested waivers from the following requirements: minimum front and side setbacks, maximum floor plate, maximum number of stories, minimum GFA/DU, minimum façade buildout, ground story elevation, and minimum vehicular parking. For more detail and a full list of requested waivers, see Appendix A.

The GFA/DU requirement is calculated based on 64,000sf of GFA and the Applicant has used the 1,125sf/unit requirement resulting in a maximum of 56 units. The Applicant is proposing 58 units (1,103sf/unit). However, since all units in the building will be deed-restricted to households making less than 120% of AMI, the Applicant could choose to use the more generous 875sf/unit requirement which would leave them under the allowed maximum of 73 units.

The required minimum façade buildout is 80%, but the Applicant is proposing 68%. The lot does not meet the minimum façade buildout due to the landscaped area provided at the intersection of North Street and Thoroughfare 1, sometimes referred to as the North Street Park extension.

The waiver requests for ground story elevation, and minimum vehicular parking are addressed elsewhere in this memo.

Row Houses (Block E)

Lots E1 and E2 both contain Row House Buildings with 16 units grouped into series of 3, 5, and 8 on Lot E1 and 18 units grouped into series of 8 and 10 on Lot E2. All 34 units will be affordable and there will be a total of 102 bedrooms. The dimensional waivers for the Row Houses are addressed below. As the urban design for this project is dense, these waivers are necessary to accomplish the connections of the street network and to create the central open space.

The Row Houses form the block at the North Street and Powder House Boulevard intersection, and act as a transition between the scale of the apartment buildings and the existing residential neighborhood. The dwelling units have private back yards and will have stoops at the front doors on the streets.

Although building heights vary from two to three stories, the individual houses are expressed through bays and stepping forms. While the application states “The design character of the townhouses will work well with the “Craftsman” style of the surrounding neighborhood, with hipped and pitched roofs and dormered forms”, this is not shown on the revised elevations (“Townhouses Elevations” Z-009 dated 02/12/20). The current design shows flat roofs but seem to be well articulated and clad with materials similar to the apartment buildings. As the design is refined, care should be taken to ensure that the ends of building rows have windows and visual variety (rather than blank walls).

The Applicant has requested waivers from the following requirements: minimum lot depth, minimum setback requirements, minimum row house width, maximum dwelling units per site, ground story elevation, and minimum vehicular parking.

Individual row houses are required to be 24’ wide, but the Applicant is proposing a width of 13’8”. Narrower row houses make it possible to fit additional units on a lot. The interiors of the row houses are designed in a shotgun style, which is traditionally quite narrow, to maximize use of the limited width.

Each site is permitted a maximum of 10 dwelling units, but Lot E1 proposes 16 units and Lot E2 proposes 18 units. The units have been grouped into series of between 3 and 10 units and so will appear to comply with this requirement. This waiver allows the Applicant to fit more units onto the site than would otherwise be allowed, but a pedestrian walking by the site will be unlikely to notice that a waiver has been granted.

The waiver request for ground story elevation and minimum vehicular parking are addressed elsewhere in this memo.

Affordable Housing

The Applicant has requested to waive out of Article 12 of the SZO entirely. The proposal provides more affordable units and deeper subsidies than would be required by that article, and rather than need to prove that it has met the specific requirements laid out in zoning, the Applicant has elected to request a waiver from it. Fifty-one percent of the units are affordable, which far exceeds the Article 12 requirement for a minimum of 20% and the M.G.L. 40B requirement for a minimum of 20-25%.

The only building that does not meet or exceed the ADU requirement is Building A/B, in which only 11% of the units are affordable. The Applicant has explained that since Building A/B will be constructed as part of Phase 1, concentrating market rate units into it helps with cashflow during construction of the rest of the site.

Civic Spaces

The proposal includes three new civic space areas: a neighborhood park on Lot D1, a plaza on Lot C1, and a small area on Lot F1.

Lot D1 – Central Civic Space

Lot D1 is a 16,385sf Neighborhood Park that includes seating areas, ~2,500sf of play area, a docked bike share station, and a large passive open space. This area is intended to be a central gathering space for residents of Clarendon Hills.

The play area is at the southeastern portion of the lot next to Thoroughfares 1 and 3. The Applicant proposes to fence in 1,500sf of the 2,500sf playground; PSUF's June 24th memo notes that "because the play area (intended primarily for younger age children) directly abuts two streets, PSUF will pay close attention to how the design team defines the edge of the play area to ensure the safety of playground users." The PSUF memo also notes that the Applicant will need to consider how the playground will be shaded during the summer.

The Applicant has requested waivers from the following requirements: park public access hours; PSUF approval of bicycle parking; providing curbing for landscaping; tree planting requirements; and Neighborhood Park permeability requirements.

The Applicant has requested a waiver from the requirement that the park be publicly accessible 24/7; they propose that the park instead be accessible from dawn to dusk, as is common for many City-operated parks.

The Applicant has requested a waiver from the requirement that the Director of Public Space and Urban Forestry (PSUF) approve bicycle parking within the park, as this will be reviewed as part of the Comprehensive Permit. The Applicant has provided a 19-space bike share station in the park, as well as 5 short-term bicycle spots on the sidewalk directly adjacent to the park.

Zoning requires that there is curbing or a change in the elevation for landscaped areas within 6' of a street. Because the woonerf on Thoroughfare 1 is at sidewalk-grade, a portion of the landscaped area in the civic space does not comply with this requirement. PSUF addresses this waiver in their June 12th memo and recommends that the Applicant provide curbing with gaps. The curbing would protect the plantings while the gaps would allow pedestrians and stormwater to easily move through the area. These comments are reiterated in PSUF's July 30th memo. As of September 16th, the Applicant has revised the waivers list to accommodate this concern – the Applicant will not be providing *continuous* curbing along the landscaped area, and instead will be providing curbing with gaps.

The waiver request for tree planting requirements is addressed elsewhere in this memo.

The Applicant has requested a waiver from the minimum pervious area requirement for the Neighborhood Park. Zoning requires that at least 85% of neighborhood parks must be pervious; the Applicant has requested a waiver for 55% to provide flexibility in the ultimate design. The actual design of the park has not changed. PSUF addresses this new waiver request in their July 30th memo. The Applicant and PSUF have discussed this topic and have agreed that a minimum of 70% pervious area is acceptable; the Applicant has revised their waivers list to reflect this change.

Lot F1 – North St Park Extension

Lot F1 (Building D) contains a small landscaped area along North Street and the rear of the building that functions as an extension of the North Street playground. The area has picnic tables, garden beds, and a garden shed that residents can utilize. Building D has an amenity lobby adjacent to this area.

PSUF's June 25th memo expresses some concern that the garden beds on Lot F1 "will not get adequate southern exposure for crop production due to shading from mature trees on the adjacent Veteran's Memorial site."

Lot C1 – Building A/B Plaza

The plaza between Building A/B will be level with Thoroughfare 2 and provide an overlook over Alewife Brook Parkway to the green space bordering Alewife Brook. Buildings A/B will have entrances from the plaza into their “amenity lobbies.” The plaza provides seating areas, a bocce court, and landscaping. Building A/B will shade the plaza during mid-day in summer.

The Applicant has noted that there will be a staircase and an all-season lift connecting the Lot C1 plaza with the sidewalk at Alewife Brook Parkway, thus providing a mid-block pedestrian connection through the lot. However, not all drawings depict this staircase and lift; the intention to include it can be seen in the Transportation Access Plan on the “Pedestrian Access Plan” (C-103 dated 2/5/2020).

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Trees

The Applicant is removing both private trees and public shade trees as part of this project. The removal of private trees is regulated only by the local Tree Preservation Ordinance (TPO) and the Applicant has requested a waiver from the local process, but the removal of public shade trees is regulated by state law and cannot be waived.

As noted earlier, the Applicant has requested a process waiver from the TPO, but not a substantive waiver. As is required by the TPO, the Applicant will be replacing the caliper-inches of all trees they remove that are in fair or good health. PSUF’s June 24, 2020 memo notes that the Applicant’s current plans show that this requirement is being met. The Applicant has also voluntarily committed to planting all native species; PSUF supports the commitment to native species but notes that this will not eliminate the need for irrigation as summers get hotter due to climate change.

The Applicant has also requested waivers from various requirements related to planting new trees in the civic space and on thoroughfares. They are requesting to use Sand-Based Structural Soil (SBSS) rather than suspended pavement or structured soil; to have tree pits smaller than 36sf; and to plant trees closer together than 35-40ft. PSUF addresses these requests in the June 12th and June 24th memos. Generally, PSUF is comfortable with granting all three waivers provided that the Applicant plant appropriate tree species for those locations. PSUF will review the proposed species prior to Civic Space and Thoroughfare Permit approvals to ensure that the selected species can thrive there.

Green Score

The minimum Green Score requirement for the Urban Residence district is 0.35, with an ideal Green Score of at least 0.40. All six lots have Green Scores above the ideal: the buildings range from 0.51 to 1.02, and the central civic space has a score of 0.84.

LEED

All three apartment buildings are larger than 50,000sf and so are required to be LEED Platinum certifiable. The Applicant will be meeting this requirement and proposes to meet LEED for Homes for the row houses, despite no LEED rating being required by zoning.

The Office of Sustainability and Environment submitted a memo on June 19, 2020 addressing the LEED requirements and other sustainability aspects of this project in more detail.

On July 28, the Applicant submitted an updated LEED checklist and narrative for the apartment buildings showing that the buildings will comply with the LEED Platinum requirement. As required by zoning, the narrative and checklist will be updated and reviewed by the Office of Sustainability and Environment prior to the Building Permit and Certificate of Occupancy being granted to confirm that the apartment buildings continue to be LEED Platinum certifiable as the design progresses.

Stormwater

The Applicant has submitted a preliminary hydrology report which shows that, compared to existing conditions, the proposal will have lower peak rates of stormwater runoff during storms. This is despite the impervious area increasing from 66% to 72% of the site. The Applicant will install on-site infiltration systems to mitigate the increased runoff caused by the additional impervious area.

The Engineering Division has reviewed the preliminary stormwater calculations and has provided comments in the June 24th memo. As noted in that memo, compliance with stormwater requirements will be evaluated once the Applicant submits construction documents.

Shadows

The Applicant has submitted a shadow study (G-301 to G-309) comparing the shadow impacts of the existing and proposed buildings. The proposed buildings cast more shadow on the surrounding area by dint of being taller than the existing buildings. However, the taller buildings have been pulled back from the edge of the site that would be cast the largest shadows on the nearby detached houses. The tallest buildings (Building A/B and E) cast their shadows primarily on roadways and other areas within the site.

Only in the December 21st 3pm and June 21st 6pm drawings does the project cast significant shadows on the surrounding detached houses. The amount of shadow this project casts during winter evenings is expected, and the amount it casts during summer evenings will be likely appreciated. The shadows cast on the green space next to Alewife is comparable with the amount of shadow cast by the nearby Clarendon Towers development.

Screening

The Applicant has requested a waiver from the requirements to screen ground-mounted mechanical equipment. The “Proposed Transformer Locations” (T-100, dated 5/19/20) show that three of the four transformers proposed are not fully enclosed in compliance with SZO §10.8. PUSF’s June 12th memo noted that “mechanical equipment locations should be fully coordinated with the site design” and should be screened in compliance with SZO §10.8. PSUF’s July 30th memo reiterates this comment. After discussing this topic with PSUF, the Applicant submitted an updated transformer location plan on August 14 that replaces the transformer on Lot D1 (central civic space) with a smaller electrical box, comparable to what is found in other City parks.

PARKING & MOBILITY

The proposal includes a total of 357 vehicular parking spaces (58 of which are on-street), 191 long-term bicycle parking spaces, 55 short-term bicycle parking spaces, and 19 docked bike share spaces. Mobility is reviewing the updated bike parking plan received on July 30th but has not had time to provide comments. The total number of bicycle parking spaces will increase by 5.

The Applicant has submitted Mobility Management Plans (MMPs) for Buildings A/B, D, and E since each of those buildings contain more than 20 residential units. The MMPs include commitments to post and distribute mobility management information, provide unbundled parking, and conduct annual monitoring. Mobility's June 19th memo addresses the MMPs in more detail.

This project is intimately intertwined with the redesign of the Alewife Brook Parkway / Powderhouse Blvd intersection as part of a MassWorks grant. As noted by Mobility and Engineering, the intersection redesign is spearheaded by the City, but the Applicant is contributing \$600,000 to the project. The redesigned intersection, along with nearby improvements to bus lines and the arrival of the long-awaited Green Line Extension to College Ave, will result in a more transit and pedestrian friendly environment.

The Applicant has requested waivers from the following requirements: minimum vehicular parking per dwelling unit, the design of short- and long-term bicycle parking requirements, and Mobility approval of loading facilities.

Zoning requires that this project provide 1 parking space per dwelling unit. The Applicant is requesting a waiver to provide approximately 0.6 spaces per dwelling unit on average across the entire site, including all on-street spaces. As of July 21, the Applicant has revised their waiver request to allow for additional flexibility in the amount of parking they must provide. While the proposed number of spaces has not changed (299 structured spaces, 58 on-street spaces), the revised waiver would allow the applicant flexibility to respond to design challenges that might require reducing the number of spaces. If waiver request is granted and the Applicant builds the minimum number of spaces required, the site will have a total of 308 parking spaces (249 structured spaces, 58 on-street spaces).

	Proposed Parking Spaces	Parking Ratio Waiver Request
	<i>Includes only spaces on the lot; based on current design</i>	<i>the minimum ratio that the Applicant must provide; the number of spaces has been calculated based on the number of units in the building and the space/du ratio</i>
Building A/B	0.63/du 208 spaces	0.50/du <i>(min 165.5 spaces; reduction of at most 42 spaces)</i>
Building E	0.37/du 62 spaces	0.35/du <i>(min 58.8 spaces; reduction of at most 3 spaces)</i>
Building D	0.49/du 29 spaces	0.43/du <i>(min 24.9 spaces; reduction of at most 4 spaces)</i>
Row houses on Lots E1 & E2	0/du 0 spaces	0/du
Thoroughfare 1 (public)	12 spaces (managed by the City)	n/a
Thoroughfare 2 (public)	21 spaces (managed by the City)	n/a

Thoroughfare 3 (private)	25 spaces (managed by the Applicant)	n/a
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There are 0 spaces on the same lot as the row houses on E1 and E2, but the 25 spaces on Thoroughfare 3 will be available to project residents (0.74 spaces/du). The Applicant does not include the 33 on-street spaces on Thoroughfares 1 and 2 in their building-specific parking ratio calculations, as those spaces will be managed by the City. SZO §3.2.17.g sets out criteria for the Board to consider when granting parking relief. These criteria include:

- i) The supply and demand of on-street parking in the neighborhood, as determined through a parking study.
- ii) Mobility management programs and services provided by the applicant to reduce the demand for parking.

The Mobility Division has reviewed the Applicant's Traffic Impact and Access Study and MMPs and has provided comments on both in the June 19th memo. Mobility is comfortable with the reduction in the amount of vehicular parking provided and would likely be comfortable with a further reduction if the Applicant desired it.

The Applicant has requested a waiver from a number of requirements for short- and long-term bicycle parking. The Applicant is not required to provide any bicycle parking but has voluntarily committed to providing 233 long-term spaces and 18 short-term spaces as part of their MMPs. Their "Bicycle Parking Diagram" (B-100 dated May 20, 2020) shows the proposed type and location of bicycle parking spaces. They are requesting waivers from the location of spaces, the requirement to provide a barrier from vehicles, and the design of spaces. Section 11.1.4 sets out criteria for evaluating deviations from the bicycle parking requirements, specifically:

- a) The ability of alternative technologies and methods of bicycle parking to provide equal or greater benefits to bicycle users.

The Mobility Division has reviewed the Applicant's bicycle parking plan and has provided comments in the June 19th memo.

The Applicant has requested a waiver from separate review of the loading facilities by the Director of Mobility.

THOROUGHFARES

As part of the Comprehensive Permit, the Applicant is proposing three new thoroughfares. Thoroughfares 1 and 2 are intended to become public streets, while Thoroughfare 3 will remain private. The Applicant will construct all three thoroughfares, and then offer Thoroughfares 1 and 2 to the City Council for acceptance as public ways.

The Comprehensive Permit approval would be of the schematic designs for the streets; the design will not be finalized until the Thoroughfare Permits have been issued. The Mobility and Engineering Divisions plan to work with the Applicant prior to the Thoroughfare Permit applications to ensure that the final design of Thoroughfares 1 and 2 comply with all City standards waivers are not granted for. This may require design changes within the right-of-way. For example, the NACTO Urban Street Design Guide says that "channelized turning 'porkchop' islands are not recommended and should be avoided. Turning traffic often fails to yield to pedestrians crossing at these locations."¹

¹ <https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/intersection-design-elements/crosswalks-and-crossings/>

Engineering has provided comments on the proposed thoroughfares in their June 24th memo; some of those comments are reiterated here. Mobility has also provided some comments on the proposed sidewalks in their June 19th memo.

At the last ZBA meeting, the Applicant submitted an updated site plan showing the grading of the site ("Roadway Grading" C-113, dated July 15, 2020). This site plan indicates that there is an accessible route between the North Street Playground and Alewife Brook Parkway and provides access to all apartment building entrances and the central civic space.

The Applicant is requesting multiple waivers for all three thoroughfares including: minimum right-of-way width, minimum sidewalk walkway width, and minimum furnishing zone width. The Applicant is also requesting waivers related to tree plantings; those waivers are addressed elsewhere in this report.

Municipal Code, Chapter 11, Article II, Section 11-88² requires that the location of curb cuts be approved by the Engineering Division. The Applicant is requesting that the Engineering Division approve the general location of curb cuts for all thoroughfares and buildings. Review and approval of the exact location of all curb cuts will be conducted prior to Building or Thoroughfare Permits being issued.

Thoroughfare 1

Thoroughfare 1 extends from Hamilton Road to connect North Street and Alewife Brook Parkway. Vehicles can enter and exit the site from Alewife Brook Parkway, but the North St intersection will be limited to exit-only. It provides 12 spaces of on-street parallel parking and provides access to the parking structures under Building A/B, D, and E.

A portion of Thoroughfare 1 between its intersection with Thoroughfare 2 and the parking entrance to Building D is designed as a "woonerf," or a street that is designed to promote the shared use of the space with a focus on pedestrians.³ The woonerf provides a more pleasant pedestrian connection between buildings D and E and the civic space on lot D1 and encourages traffic to drive more slowly in the area.

As noted in the June 24th Engineering memo, some of the proposed sidewalk grading for this Thoroughfare exceeds the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB) 5% maximum slope requirement and so will require a variance from the MAAB. Despite the Applicant's recent changes to the grading of the site, there is still a small portion of this thoroughfare at the west end that exceeds the 5% maximum slope and will require a MAAB variance.

The Applicant is requesting waivers from the minimum required widths for the street, the sidewalk walkway, and the sidewalk furnishing zone.

Municipal Code, Chapter 11, Article III, §11-81⁴ regulates the "width and elevation of new streets" and requires that new streets be at least 40' wide. Article 13 of the SZO requires that local streets be a minimum of

² Prior to February 20, 2020, this was §11-33.

³ For more information about woonerfs, see "The Woonerf Concept: Rethinking a Residential Street in Somerville" by Natalia Collarte. A PDF of the paper can be found for free on NACTO's website: https://nacto.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/woonerf_concept_collarte.pdf

⁴ Prior to February 20, 2020, this was §11-23.

60' wide although that may be reduced by 7' for every parking lane not provided. Thoroughfare 1 varies from 38' to 51' wide and portions of it include parking on both sides.

The sidewalk walkway and sidewalk furnishing zone must each be at least 6' wide; the Applicant is proposing a minimum walkway width of 5' ~~to 6'~~ and a minimum furnishing zone width of 3'. The furnishing zone contains street trees and street furniture like benches and bike racks. The Applicant is requesting 3' for the furnishing zone to avoid reducing the walkway width beyond what is required by MAAB regulations; MAAB regulations require a minimum of 4' of walkway space (see 521 CMR 22.02).

Thoroughfare 2

Thoroughfare 2 is a two-way street that connects Powder House Blvd and Thoroughfare 1. It has 21 on-street parallel parking spaces.

The Applicant is requesting waivers from the minimum required widths for the street, the sidewalk walkway, and the sidewalk furnishing zone.

Article 13 of the SZO requires that local streets be a minimum of 60' wide although that may be reduced by 7' for every parking lane not provided. Thoroughfare 2 is 52' wide and portions of it include parking on both sides.

The sidewalk walkway and sidewalk furnishing zone must each be at least 6' wide; the Applicant is proposing a minimum walkway width of 5' ~~to 6'~~ and a minimum furnishing zone width of 3'. The furnishing zone contains street trees and street furniture like benches and bike racks. The Applicant is requesting 3' for the furnishing zone to avoid reducing the walkway width beyond what is required by MAAB regulations.

Thoroughfare 3

Thoroughfare 3 connects Thoroughfares 1 and 2. It has 25 spaces of on-street 90-degree parking spaces; 12 of the spaces are organized into a parking lot-style configuration. This street will remain privately owned.

The Applicant is requesting waivers from the minimum required widths for the street, the sidewalk walkway, and the sidewalk furnishing zone.

Article 13 of the SZO requires that local streets be a minimum of 60' wide although that may be reduced by 7' for every parking lane not provided. Thoroughfare 3 varies from 58.5' to 77' wide and portions of it include parking on both sides.

The sidewalk walkway and sidewalk furnishing zone must each be at least 6' wide; the Applicant is proposing a minimum walkway width of 5' and a minimum furnishing zone width of 3'. The furnishing zone contains street trees and street furniture like benches and bike racks. The Applicant is requesting 3' for the furnishing zone to avoid reducing the walkway width beyond what is required by MAAB regulations.

Brief Summary of Waivers List

For an accurate and complete list of the requested waivers, see the attached waivers list.

Ref #	Summary of Waiver Request	Relevant Lots
1-2	Subdivision Plan Approval is a two-step process: Preliminary and then Final. Preliminary Subdivision Plan Approval is part of Comprehensive Permit. Final Approval involves signing the approved Mylar and will be done later.	All
3-5	Location and layout of thoroughfares is part of Comprehensive Permit approval; not all lots are shaped and laid out according to code.	All
6	Apartment buildings will be set closer to lot lines than permitted.	B1; F1; C1
7	The minimum Façade Build Out is 80%. Building D covers ~70% of the width of the lot.	F1
8	Apartment buildings have larger floorplates than permitted.	B1; F1; C1
9, 18	The apartment buildings and row houses do not meet the minimum Ground Story Elevation of 2 feet.	B1; F1; C1; E1; E2
10	Some stories are taller than 12', the maximum permitted.	B1; F1; C1
11	Apartment buildings are taller than the maximum of 4 stories.	B1; F1; C1
12	Apartment buildings exceed the maximum GFA/DU requirements.	B1; F1; C1
13	Waiver from minimum Outdoor Amenity Space of 24sf of seating area per unit.	B1; F1; C1
14	Waiver from building-specific affordability requirement for Buildings A/B.	C1
15, 17	Row houses do not meet minimum lot width and depth requirements.	E1; E2
16	Row houses will be set closer to lot lines than permitted.	E1; E2
19	More row house units are on each site than permitted.	E1; E2
20	Ground-mounted transformers may not meet screening requirements.	D1; E2
21	Not all landscaped areas will be raised or have continuous curbing or edging.	D1; T1
22	Less than 1 parking space is provided for each dwelling unit.	B1; F1; C1; E1; E2
23-25	Some or all bicycle parking will not comply with location design requirements.	All
26	Approval of general location of curb cuts.	All
27	Approval of loading facilities.	B1; F1; C1; D1; E1; E2
28	Waiver from affordable housing requirements (tiers, other affordability provisions).	B1; F1; C1; E1; E2
29	Site Plan Approval for Civic Space is part of Comprehensive Permit.	D1
30	Civic Space is accessible from dawn to dusk.	D1
31, 39	Use of Sand-Based Structural Soil System (SBSS) in Civic Space and Thoroughfares.	D1; T1; T2; T3
32, 40	Waiver from minimum open soil requirements around trees in Civic Spaces and Thoroughfares	D1; T1; T2; T3
33	Bicycle parking within Civic Spaces must be approved by Director of Public Space & Urban Forestry	D1
34	Neighborhood Parks must include at a minimum 85% pervious area; will achieve 70%.	D1
35-37	Local street rights-of-way, sidewalk walkways, and sidewalk furnishing zones are narrower than required.	T1; T2; T3
38	Trees are spaced closer together than permitted.	T1; T2; T3
41	Waiver from the requirement for Demolition Review, to the extent applicable.	All
42	Approval of the general location of curb cuts.	All
43	Waiver from City-owned tree removal requirements, to the extent applicable.	All
44	Waiver from Tree Permit requirement for private Significant Trees.	All

Appendix A: Waivers List

Waivers List

	Topic	Sub-Topic	Ordinance Section	Requirement	Relevant Lots	Requested Waiver	Details
1	Site Plan Approval	Subdivision/Lot Merger Development Review	15.3.1.d	Subdivision Plan Approval requires a two (2) stage permitting process that requires the submittal of a preliminary plat plan as a prerequisite to submittal of a final plat plan.	B1; F1; C1; D1; E1; E2; T1; T2; T3	Waiver from preliminary Subdivision Plan Approval	Preliminary Subdivision Plan Approval will be conducted as part of the Comprehensive Permit. Final Subdivision Plan approval will occur after the Comprehensive Permit has been granted.
2	Site Plan Approval	Subdivision/Lot Merger Development Review	15.3.1.c	The Planning Board is the decision making authority for a Subdivision Plan Approval.	B1; F1; C1; D1; E1; E2; T1; T2; T3	Waiver from Planning Board review for preliminary and final approval.	The ZBA will be the decision-making authority for all Subdivision Plan approvals.
3	Site Plan Approval	Thoroughfare Network; Public Realm: Thoroughfares	13.2.1.a	<p>The general location of all proposed Thoroughfares must conform with official maps and exiting [sic] policy plans of the City of Somerville, and must conform to the specifications set forth in Section 13.2.</p> <p>Termination of a Thoroughfare at a “T” intersection is permitted, provided that the overall connectivity of the Thoroughfare network is maintained and intersections are adequately spaced subject to the Director of Mobility approval. To the extent practicable, proposed Thoroughfares should align with the intersections on adjacent Sites to provide for the continuation of Thoroughfares from adjoining areas.</p> <p>The development of any new Thoroughfare requires Site Plan Approval followed by a Thoroughfare Permit, and must be designed in accordance with the specifications of Section 13.2.</p>	B1; F1; C1; D1; E1; E2; T1; T2; T3	Waiver from separate Site Plan approval.	Internal streets and ways will be developed as shown on the plans approved by the ZBA. Site Plan approvals required will be granted through the comprehensive permit process.
4	Lots	Lots: Through Lots	10.1.6.e.	Through lots are prohibited, except for Lots intended as a Through Block Plaza Civic Space type or a Block Building Type.	C1	Waiver from the Through Lot prohibition for Lot C1.	Lot C1 is a Through lot that is not a Through Block Plaza Civic Space. The Project will be developed in accordance with the plans approved by the ZBA.
5	Lots	Lots: Lot Shape	10.1.6.f.	To avoid creating irregular Lot shapes, Lots must be platted to be generally rectilinear, where the Side Lot Lines are within 45 degrees of perpendicular to the Front Lot Line to the tangent of a curved Front Lot Line or to the tangent of a curved Front Lot Line, and generally straight throughout their length.	B1; F1; C1; D1; E1; E2; T1; T2; T3	Waiver from Lot shape requirement.	None of the lots are rectilinear, as they respond to natural features within the Development Site Area. The Project will be developed in accordance with the plans approved by the ZBA.
6	Apartment Buildings	Building Placement – Building Setbacks	3.2.10.b.(A-D)	<p>(A) The minimum Primary Front Setback is 10 feet, and the maximum is 20 feet.</p> <p>(B) The minimum Secondary Front Setback is 10 feet, and the maximum is 20 feet.</p> <p>(C) The minimum Side Setback is 5 feet; and the Side Setback abutting a Neighborhood Residence District is 20 feet.</p> <p>(D) The minimum Rear Setback is 10 feet, and the Rear Setback abutting a Neighborhood Residence District is 20 feet.</p>	B1; F1; C1	Waiver from Building Setback requirements.	<p>Buildings A/B:</p> <p>Primary Front Setback: 4’-0” on New Street #2</p> <p>Secondary Front Setback: 0’-0” on Alewife Parkway (at Stair)</p> <p>Left Setback: 2’-6” on New Street #1 Curve</p> <p>Right Setback: 7’-10” to property line on Powder House Boulevard</p> <p>Building D:</p> <p>Primary Front Setback: 4’-6” on New Street #1</p> <p>Secondary Front Setback: 74’-0” to North Street Right</p> <p>Setback: 6’-8” to Building E</p> <p>Rear Setback: 16’-6”</p> <p>Building E:</p> <p>Primary Front Setback: 0’-10” on New Street #1 Curve (3’-7” to New Street #1)</p> <p>Secondary Front Setback: 3’-8” to Alewife Parkway</p> <p>Left Setback: 6’-8” to Building D</p> <p>Rear Setback: 9’-0”</p>
7	Apartment Buildings	Massing & Height – Main Mass, Façade Build Out	3.2.10.c.	The minimum Façade Build Out is 80%.	F1	Waivers from Minimum Façade Build Out.	Minimum Façade Build Out for Building D will be 68%.

8	Apartment Buildings	Massing & Height – Main Mass, Floor Plate	3.2.10.c.(A)	The maximum floor plate is 16,000 sf (with a forecourt) and 7,000 sf (without a forecourt).	B1; F1; C1	Waiver from Maximum Floor Plate requirement.	Maximum Floor Plate: Buildings A/B: 40,100 sf Building D: 10,600 sf Building E: 21,300 sf
9	Apartment Buildings	Massing & Height – Main Mass, Ground Story Elevation	3.2.10.c.	The minimum Ground Story Elevation is 2 feet.	B1; F1; C1	Waiver from Ground Story Elevation requirements.	The Ground Story Elevation for Building E is at entrance level at grade, which varies around the buildings.
10	Apartment Buildings	Massing & Height – Main Mass, Story Height	3.2.10.c.(B)	The minimum Story Height is 10 feet, and the maximum is 12 feet.	B1; F1; C1	Waiver from maximum Story Height requirements - Ground level 12' height.	For Buildings A/B: 12'-2 3/4" to Ground Level, Lobby Level up to 12'; For each of Building E: 12'-2 3/4" to Ground Level, Lobby Level up to 12'; For each of Building D: 12'-2 3/4" to Ground Level, Lobby Level up to 12';
11	Apartment Buildings	Massing & Height – Main Mass, Number of Stories	3.2.10.c.(C)	The minimum number of Stories is 2 and the maximum is 4.	B1; F1; C1	Waiver to allow a maximum number of Stories of 7-9.	Buildings A/B: 9 Stories Building D: 7 Stories Building E: 9 Stories
12	Apartment Buildings	Uses & Features – Uses & Occupancy, GFA per Dwelling Unit	3.2.10.d.	The minimum Gross Floor Area per Dwelling Unit for Lot Areas greater than or equal to 5,000 sf is 1,125 sf of GFA.	B1; F1; C1	Waiver from GFA/DU requirements for each of the Apartment Buildings.	Under the GFA/DU calculation, the maximum number of Dwelling Units permitted per Building Type is as follows: Building A/B: 286 maximum units Building D: 57 maximum units Building E: 165 maximum units
13	Apartment Buildings	Uses & Features – Uses & Occupancy, Outdoor Amenity Space	3.2.10.d.	The minimum Outdoor Amenity Space is one per Dwelling Unit. When required for a Building Type, outdoor Amenity Space must be provided as a balcony, deck, patio, porch, roof deck, roof terrace, or yard that is directly accessible by a doorway from a habitable room within the dwelling unit the outdoor amenity space is meant to serve. Each outdoor amenity space must provide an unobstructed area of at least twenty-four (24) square feet that may be used for seating. Buildings with seven (7) or more dwelling units may provide shared outdoor amenity space, provided that the space includes the total seating area required for each dwelling unit that the shared space is meant to serve.	B1; F1; C1	Waiver from outdoor Amenity Space requirement.	Outdoor Amenity Spaces will be provided as indicated on the plans.
14	Apartment Buildings	Affordable Dwelling Units (ADUs)	Table 3.2.10	For Apartment Buildings with four or more units, 20% of the total units must be Affordable Dwelling Units, unless a conflicting provision exists in Article 12 of the Ordinance.	C1	Waiver from building-specific affordability requirement for Buildings A/B.	Buildings A/B will provide 11% ADUs. However, site-wide, the Development will provide approximately 51% affordable units, at various levels of affordability.
15	Row Houses	Lot Standards – Lot Dimensions, Lot Depth	3.2.11.a.(B)	The minimum Lot Depth is 80 feet.	E1; E2	Waiver from minimum Lot Depth requirement.	Townhomes on Lot E1: 50'-80' Townhomes on Lot E2: 50'
16	Row Houses	Building Placement – Building Setbacks	3.2.11.b.(A-D)	(A-B) The minimum Primary Front Setback and Secondary Front Setback is 10 feet, and the maximum is 20 feet. (C) The minimum Side Setback is 5 feet, Party Lot Line is 0 feet and Side Lot Line is 5 feet. (D) The minimum Rear Setback is 20 feet.	E1; E2	Waiver from Building Setback requirements.	Townhomes on Lot E1: Primary Front Setback: 4'-2" to New Street #3 (at curve) Right Setback: 5'-4" to New Street #2 Left Setback: 5'-4" to New Street #1 Rear Setback: 2'-2" to Townhomes on Lot E2 Townhomes on Lot E2: Primary Front Setback: 0'-10" to Powder House Blvd. (5'-4" to back of sidewalk) Secondary Front Setback: 7'-4" to North Street (5'-4" to back of sidewalk) Rear Setback: 10'-0" to Townhomes on Lot E1

17	Row Houses	Massing & Height – Main Mass, Width Per Row House	3.2.11.c.(A)	The minimum Width per Row House is 24 feet and the maximum is 30 feet.	E1; E2	Waiver from Width per Row House requirement.	Width per Row House: 13'-8"
18	Row Houses	Massing & Height – Main Mass, Ground Story Elevation	3.2.11.c.(B)	The minimum Ground Story Elevation is 2 feet.	E1; E2	Waiver from Ground Story Elevation requirement.	The Ground Story Elevation for the Townhouses on each of Lot E1 and E2 varies with grade, with a goal of visibility at rear door.
19	Row Houses	Uses & Features – Uses & Occupancy, Dwelling Units Per Site	3.2.11.d.	The minimum Dwelling Units per Site is 4 and the maximum is 10.	E1; E2	Waivers from the maximum Dwelling Unit per Site requirement.	Per Site, there will be 16 Dwelling Units on Lot E1 (combination of 3-Dwelling Unit, 8-Dwelling Unit, and 5-Dwelling Unit buildings). Per Site, there will be 18 Dwelling Units on Lot E2 (combination of 10-Dwelling Unit and 5-Dwelling Unit buildings).
20	Development Standards	Screening, Mechanical Equipment	10.8.4(c)	Mechanical equipment that is visible from a public Thoroughfare (excluding an Alley) or Civic Space must be screened by landscaping, a fence or a wall constructed of materials that are compatible with the Principal Building in terms of texture, quality and color. Screening must be of a height equal to or greater than the height of the mechanical equipment being screened.	D1; E2	Waiver from screening requirements for ground-mounted mechanical equipment.	Ground-mounted transformers will be sited throughout the Development Site Area, but will not meet screening requirements.
21	Development Standards	Landscaping, Raised Landscaped Areas	10.3.5(f)	All Development involving the construction of a new Principal Building, Site Improvements, or the construction or reconstruction of a Surface Parking Lot or Civic Space with the Landscaping requirements set forth in Section 10.3. Landscape Areas within six (6) feet of a paved vehicular parking area or roadway of a Thoroughfare must be raised or protected by curbing or edging at least six (6) inches in elevation above the finished pavement to protect plantings from traffic, de-icing salts, and snow plowing operations common to the winter season.	D1; T1	Waiver from raised or curbing or edging protection requirement.	The raingardens located at the Civic Space located on Lot D1 and along New Street #1 at the woonerf are not raised or protected by continuous curbing or edging.
22	Parking & Mobility	Motor Vehicle Parking	Table 3.2.17	For all permitted Residential Uses outside of a Transit Area, parking must be provided at a minimum of 1.0 space per Dwelling Unit. Relief from the parking standards of Table 3.2.17 requires a Special Permit.	B1; F1; C1; E1; E2	Waiver from minimum vehicle parking requirements for each building type.	Parking will be provided in the following ratio, all in accordance with the approved site plan: Buildings A/B – No fewer than 0.50 spaces per Dwelling Unit, Building D – no fewer than 0.43 spaces per Dwelling Unit, Building E - no fewer than .35 spaces per Dwelling Unit, Townhomes on Lot E1 & E2 - no parking within the parcel (0.0 spaces per Dwelling Unit). Parking will be provided on New Road 3, which is a private road, so we understand that a condition to Townhouse Certificates of Occupancy may be completion of New Road 3. New Street 3: approximately 25 spaces, per the approved plan Each building will be under the required minimum parking per Dwelling Unit. All Project approvals required will be granted through the comprehensive permit process.

23	Parking & Mobility	Bicycle Parking, General	3.2.17; 11.1.1	<p>Bicycle parking is not required for Residential uses in the Urban Residence District, but if provided, it must conform to the design requirements outlined in Section 11.1. Where provided, each bicycle parking space must be two (2) feet by six (6) feet in size or the minimum required by the manufacturer of a bicycle rack or locker, whichever is more. Areas designed for bicycle parking spaces must have a hard, stabilized surface. Bicycle parking spaces must have at least one (1) Access aisle at least five (5) feet wide to allow room for maneuvering. This Access aisle must be kept free from obstructions. Bicycle parking spaces must be Accessible without moving another bicycle or lifting or carrying a bicycle over any steps or stairs. Outdoor Access routes must be appropriately lighted to allow for safe nighttime Use.</p> <p>Bicycle racks and lockers must conform to the dimensional standards set forth in Section 11.1(e-f).</p>	B1; F1; C1; D1; E1; E2; T1; T2; T3	Waiver from the general bicycle parking dimensional and installation standards.	The provisions of Section 11.1 may be modified by Special Permit to accommodate alternative technologies and methods for providing bicycle parking.
24	Parking & Mobility	Bicycle Parking, Short-Term	3.2.17; 11.1.2	Short-term Bicycle Parking must be provided outside of a principal building and within 50 feet of the principal entrance of the use served by the parking, and must be at the same grade as the abutting sidewalk or at a location that can be reached by an accessible route from the sidewalk that is a minimum of 5 feet wide, without steps and a 6% or less slope.	B1; F1; C1; D1; E1; E2; T1; T2; T3	Waiver from the Short-Term Bicycle Parking location requirements.	All or some of the Short-Term Bicycle Parking may not be located within 50 feet of the required principal entrance and may not be on an accessible route.
25	Parking & Mobility	Bicycle Parking, Long-Term	3.2.17; 11.1.3	Long-Term Bicycle Parking may be provided through any combination of racks or lockers. Where Long-Term Bicycle Parking is located adjacent to Motor Vehicle parking or loading facilities, a physical barrier must be provided to prevent potential damage to bicycles by other vehicles. When twenty (20) or more long term bicycle parking spaces are provided, a minimum of ten percent (10%) of the spaces must be three (3) feet by eight (8) feet in size. Up to twenty five (25%) of long term bicycle parking space may be provided as racks that require bicycles to be hung or lifted off the ground or floor.	B1; F1; C1; D1; E1; E2; T1; T2; T3	Waiver from the Long-Term Bicycle Parking dimensional and installation requirements.	All or some of the Long-Term Bicycle Parking provided across the Development Site Area may not meet the dimensional and installation standards.
26	Parking & Mobility	Driveways; Sidewalk Curb Cuts; Motor Vehicle Parking	3.2.17(c)(i); 3.2.18(a); 11.2.1 Municipal Code Section 11-88	All Curb Cuts, Driveways, Parking Spaces, and Parking Lots must comply with the applicable provisions of Chapter 11, Article II, Sec. 11-33 of the City of Somerville Code of Ordinances, the requirements set forth in § 3.2.17(c)(i); 3.2.18(a); 11.2-3 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, and require approval from the City Engineer.	B1; F1; C1; D1; E1; E2; T1; T2; T3	Waiver from separate City Engineer review for general location of curb cuts.	General approval of location now, final approval later with construction plans
27	Parking & Mobility	Loading Facilities	11.2.5.a.i	Buildings providing space for uses that regularly receive or distribute large quantities of goods must provide loading facilities as required by the Director of Mobility. Loading facilities must be sufficient to adequately serve the intended use(s).	B1; F1; C1; D1; E1; E2	Waiver from separate Director of Mobility review;	
28	Affordable Housing	Affordable Housing	12.1	All Development required to provide one (1) or more Affordable Dwelling Units (ADUs) and to any Subdivision or Lot Split that results in two or more Lots intended for residential use, sale, legacy or development at any time must comply with the Affordable Housing requirements set forth in Section 12.1	B1; F1; C1; E1; E2	Waiver from compliance with affordability provisions and tiers set forth in the Zoning Ordinance.	The Project proposes 51% affordable units: 216 will be affordable to households earning no more than 60% of AMI, 16 will be affordable to households earning no more than 80% of AMI and 64 will be affordable to households earning no more than 110% of AMI. Specific rental, tenancy and development standards for such units shall be in accordance with the requirements of MGL 40B.
29	Public Realm (Civic Space)	Civic Space, Development Review	13.1.1(a)	The Development of any Civic Space requires Site Plan Approval followed by a Civic Space Permit. All Development, excluding Normal Maintenance, requires the submittal of a development review application to the Building Official and the issuance of a Certificate of Zoning Compliance prior to the issuance of a Civic Space Permit.	D1	Waiver from Site Plan Approval for the Civic Spaces proposed at the Development.	The Project will include one Civic Space, the Inner Community Park. The noted Project approvals required will be granted through the comprehensive permit process.
30	Public Realm (Civic Space)	Civic Space, Standards for all Civic Spaces, Hours of Access	13.1.2.d.i	Civic Spaces must be accessible to the public at all times (twenty-four (24) hours per day, seven (7) days per week, three hundred and sixty-five (365) days per year). The review boards may limit the hours of public access when necessary for public health and safety purposes and maintenance of the space by the property owner as a condition of Site Plan Approval.	D1	Request for hours of access requirements reflect other park requirements of dawn to dusk for permit reasonable limitations on access schedule.	The Inner Community Park will be accessible to the public from dawn to dusk.

31	Public Realm (Civic Space)	Civic Space, Standards for all Civic Spaces, Landscape	13.1.2.f.iv.b).	Soil Volume provided under paved surfaces must be provided through Suspended Pavements or Structural Cells. Sand-Based Structural Soil System (SBSS) may be used with approval of the Director of Public Space & Urban Forestry.	D1	Request for SBSS approval.	The Project will include a sand-based structural soil system. All Project approvals required will be granted through the comprehensive permit process.
32	Public Realm (Civic Space)	Civic Space, Standards for all Civic Spaces, Landscape	13.1.2.f.v.	Tree Pits and Planters must have an open soil area centered at the tree trunk that is at least thirty-six (36) square feet (such as 6'x6').	D1	Waiver from minimum open soil requirements.	Tree Pits and Planters will have an open soil area of 3'x6'. The Project will be developed in accordance with the plans approved by the ZBA.
33	Public Realm (Civic Space)	Civic Space, Bicycle Parking	13.1.2.k.	Bicycle parking within Civic Spaces must be provided as required by the Director of Public Space & Urban Forestry and is submit to the provisions of § 12.1 [sic].	D1	Bicycle parking within the Inner Community Park will be provided as shown on the plans approved by the ZBA.	All Project approvals required will be granted through the comprehensive permit process.
34	Public Realm (Civic Space)	Neighborhood Park	13.1.3	Neighborhood Parks must include at a minimum 85% pervious area.	D1	Request a waiver from 85% requirement. Project will achieve at least 70% permeability.	Due to the pathways we need to introduce to provide accessible routes & the plaza we are providing, our permeable percentage will be at least 70%.
35	Public Realm (Thoroughfares)	Standards for Specific Thoroughfare Types	13.2.3.b.ii., Municipal Code Ch 11, Article III Sec. 11-81	The total local Street right of way must be a minimum of sixty (60) feet. Per Municipal Code, streets must be at least 40' wide.	T1; T2; T3	Waiver from minimum width requirements.	The street width as designed is as follows: -New Street #1: Variable 38 feet to 51 feet width -New Street #2: 52 feet width -New Street #3: Variable 58.5 feet to 77 feet width
36	Public Realm (Thoroughfares)	Sidewalks, Walkway Widths	13.2.4.a.ii.a).	Sidewalks for new Thoroughfares must include a walkway and furnishing zone and may include an edge and frontage zone. Walkways must be a minimum of six (6) feet in width.	T1; T2; T3	Waiver from minimum sidewalk walkway width requirements.	The sidewalk walkway width as designed is as follows: - Sidewalks along Civic Space on Lot D1: less than 6 feet - New Street #1: 5 feet - New Street #2: 5 feet - New Street #3: 5 feet Conditions will require we endeavor to meet 6' wherever possible.
37	Public Realm (Thoroughfares)	Sidewalks, Furnishing Zone Widths	13.2.4.a.ii.b).	Sidewalk furnishing zones must be a minimum of six (6) feet in width.	T1; T2; T3	Waiver from minimum furnishing zone width requirements.	The sidewalk furnishing zone width as designed is as follows: Furnishing Zone along Civic Space on Lot D1: less than 6 feet New Street #1: 3 feet New Street #2: 3 feet New Street #3: 3 feet
38	Public Realm (Thoroughfares)	Sidewalks, Tree Spacing	13.2.4.c.ii.	Trees must be planted in a regularly-spaced Allee pattern between 35 and 40 feet on center, as required by the Director of Public Space & Urban Forestry depending on species or Cultivar of tree.	T1; T2; T3	Waiver from minimum tree spacing requirements.	Street Trees within sidewalk furnishing zones will be typically spaced at 25-30 feet.
39	Public Realm (Thoroughfares)	Sidewalks, Sand-Based Structural Soil System	13.2.4.c.iii.b).	Soil volume under paved surfaces must be provided through suspended pavements or structural cells. A sand-based structural soil system may be used with approval of the Director of Public Space & Urban Forestry.	T1; T2; T3	Request for SBSS approval.	The Project will include a sand-based structural soil system. All Project approvals required will be granted through the comprehensive permit process.
40	Public Realm (Thoroughfares)	Sidewalks, Tree Pits	13.2.4.c.iii.	Tree pits must have an open soil area centered at the tree trunk that is at least thirty-six (36) square feet.	T1; T2; T3	Waiver from minimum open soil requirements.	The Project will be developed in accordance with the plans approved by the ZBA.
41	Code of Municipal Ordinances	Demolition Review Ordinance	Municipal Code, Chapter 7, Article II, Sec. 7-28	Significant building or structures, including those at least 50 years old and determined by the Somerville Landmarks Commission to be a significant building or structure, are subject to Demolition Review by the Commission.	B1; F1; C2; D1; E1; E2; T1; T2; T3	Waiver from the requirement for Demolition Review, to the extent applicable.	The Project will involve the demolition of 9 existing low-rise buildings, each dating back to the year on or about 1950 according to assessing records. A Determination of "No Adverse Effect" was issued by the Massachusetts Historical Commission on January 3, 2018. All Project approvals required will be granted through the comprehensive permit process.

42	Code of Municipal Ordinances	Public Works; Division of Highways, Electric Lines and Lights	Municipal Code Chapter 11, Article II, Sec. 11-88	Approval of the location of curb cuts	B1; F1; C2; D1; E1; E2; T1; T2; T3	Approval of the general location of curb cuts.	Approval of the general location of curb cuts as part of the Comprehensive Permit. Final review of curb cut locations will be conducted at the building/thoroughfare permit application stage.
43	Code of Municipal Ordinances	Tree Preservation Ordinance	Municipal Code, Chapter 12, Article VI, as affected by City of Somerville Ordinance No. 2019-15	No person shall cut down or remove any tree on City-owned property without the Tree Warden first holding a public hearing.	B1; F1; C2; D1; E1; E2; T1; T2; T3	Waiver from City-owned tree removal requirements, to the extent applicable.	
44	Code of Municipal Ordinances	Tree Preservation Ordinance	Municipal Code, Chapter 12, Article VI, as affected by City of Somerville Ordinance No. 2019-15	No person may remove any Significant Tree from private property without first obtaining a Tree Permit from the Tree Warden.	B1; F1; C2; D1; E1; E2; T1; T2; T3	Waiver from Tree Permit requirement for private Significant Trees.	

Appendix B: Departmental Comments



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

To: Zoning Board of Appeals

From: Oliver Sellers-Garcia, Director of the Office of Sustainability and Environment

Date: June 19, 2020

RE: 40B #2020-0001, Clarendon Hill

Staff from the Office of Sustainability and Environment have reviewed the Clarendon Hill project application, including the submissions of the Sustainable and Resilient Buildings Questionnaire and the LEED narrative and checklists. Based on information received so far, the Office of Sustainability and Environment (OSE) have the following comments:

- Sustainability Approach - It is very positive to see electrification of heating systems as an integral component to the design and sustainability strategy. As detailed in Somerville Climate Forward, thermal electrification is essential to net-zero emission buildings and it will be transformative to have a project of this size and importance demonstrating the feasibility of widescale efficient electrification. The project also proposes a strategic pathway to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 by focusing on envelope performance and thermal electrification in preparation for a carbon-free electric grid in the future. This approach is in line with OSE's strategy for achieving net-zero emissions in the building sector by 2050.
- LEED Platinum Waiver - The project is seeking a waiver from the LEED Platinum requirement, proposing to meet LEED Gold standards instead. The project team has provided a LEED checklist and narrative to support its progress towards meeting the LEED Gold standard, however the project team has not provided sufficient evidence as to why the LEED Platinum standard is not achievable. More information is needed to understand what it would take to bring the project to the required LEED Platinum standard. In order to properly evaluate this, the project team should provide an expanded LEED narrative that includes how the 11 possible points might be achieved and why other credits with zero points are not achievable. This information should be specific and should detail whether the points are not achievable due to a technical reason, a financial reason, or another reason. In addition, it appears that there are several credit categories that



have not been pursued that could potentially provide additional points. In order to fully evaluate the waiver request, the team would ideally provide a potential pathway to Platinum with potential cost implications and technical barriers clearly identified. See detailed comments on LEED checklist and narrative below for additional feedback on the LEED approach.

- Passive House Design - Given the information received so far, it is difficult to discern the specifics of the envelope and buildings system designs. Each Sustainable and Resilient Building Questionnaire states that the project team is “evaluating Passive House,” but there is no further documentation of what steps have been followed to evaluate Passive House and if any feasibility studies were undertaken or incentives pursued. The Questionnaires are reporting the same building efficiency and performance metrics for each building. Currently reported R-values look too low to meet Passive House standards. If envelope design has progressed, these numbers should be updated. Furthermore, in the waiver request the project team states, “The project is primarily focused on performance-based metrics related to air tightness and energy usage.” However, we currently do not have enough information to evaluate this request. Passive House design could be one pathway to provide evidence of prioritization of envelope and building performance. If Passive House certification is not being pursued, what Passive House design standards are being pursued by the project?
- Solar PV - The Questionnaires say that solar PV is under review but the LEED narrative says “renewable energy systems to offset 10% of the total building annual energy cost.” The project team should clarify status of on-site renewable energy plans.
- EV Charging - The Office of Sustainability and Environment recommends increasing the percent of EV ready spaces to at least 25% in order to better prepare for future demand. Our team has also done extensive research and planning on EVSE and would be happy to discuss potential opportunities with the project team as their electric vehicle strategy evolves.

General comments on LEED Checklist and Narrative

- All prerequisite credits should be included in narrative with description of how the credits will be achieved.
- All potential points should be included in the narrative with description of how the credits might be met and what factors will contribute to the points being achieved or not. This information is particularly important to be able to fully evaluate the LEED Platinum waiver.
- Zoning requires that the project team provide an updated LEED checklist and narrative prior to issuance of the first building permit and the certificate of occupancy. Subsequent narrative should include how compliance is being met, not just stating that the requirement is being met. For example, for the Low -Emitting Materials credit, which two product categories will be used for compliance?
- Are there any credits from LEED v4.1 that may be more favorable for the project than those in v4? Has the team considered using any credits from v4.1? Why or why not?

Comments on specific credits

- Reduced Parking Footprint is included twice on checklist and Bicycle Facilities are missing. Furthermore, Reduced Parking is counting 2 points when LEED v4 BD+C: New Construction only allows for 1 point.
- Why are no Rainwater Management credits being pursued?
- Enhanced Commissioning:
 - Who will serve as Commissioning Authority? Requirements for Commissioning Authority are not documented in narrative.
 - Option 2: Envelope Commissioning. A high performing envelope has been described as a key element of the sustainability approach for this project. Why are these credits not being pursued?
- Optimize Energy Performance: What is the energy performance target? When was this adopted? Please provide calculations. Also, how might the two potential points in this category be achieved?
- Green Power and Carbon Offset: Please share the green power purchase agreements when executed.
- Demand Response: Confirm details required by utility to participate in demand response program. What will the project do to enable participation?
- Heat Island Reduction: The SRI limits set in LEED are required by Somerville's zoning. Does this open up an additional point?



City of Somerville, Massachusetts
Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development
Joseph A. Curtatone
Mayor

June 19, 2020

Mobility Development Submittal Comment Memo for ZBA
Subject: 34 North Street - Clarendon Hill

This memo outlines comments from the Mobility Division regarding the applications Mobility Management Plans, Traffic Impact and Access Study, and Transportation Access Plan. Revisions to these documents were submitted to the city in May and June of 2020.

Mobility Management Plans

Mobility Management Plans (MMPs) serve multiple purposes in the development process including improving available transportation options, reducing negative environmental impacts associated with vehicle travel, reducing the demand for parking facilities, and incorporating transportation planning considerations into development review.

The applicant coordinated with the Mobility Division on the development of the MMPs for this project. In March of 2020, the Mobility Division provided preliminary comments on the MMPs and recommended the addition of several commitments. The applicant agreed to commit to much of the city's initial guidance including funding and installing a larger (19 dock) bluebike station, committing to the SomerVision goals of increasing non-auto mode share, and providing one month of MBTA bus fare on a Charlie Card to each new household, among other commitments to sustainable transportation.

The Mobility Division notes that while parking for this development is proposed to be less than that required by the zoning code (1.0 spaces per dwelling unit), it is critical to consider the local context of the proposed development. The MMP describes the multiple bus routes with stops located approximately one tenth of a mile (3 minutes walking distance) from the proposed housing. Specifically in relation to the bus routes in proximity to the proposed development, the city and the MBTA are planning bus mobility improvements within the next year to roadways in the project area (including stop consolidation and street/signal changes that provide bus priority) that will increase the reliability of these bus routes. In addition to nearby bus routes, the MMP correctly notes the MBTA Red Line stations (Davis Square and Alewife) and a new Green Line Extension Station at College Ave. that are all within approximately 1 mile from the project site.

Research has demonstrated a direct link between parking supply and automobile use. Therefore, when approving new developments in the city in light of our mode share and greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals, it's important to think critically about the amount of new parking that should be supplied and the potential impact of new parking on the city's ability to meet our goals. Given the proximity to transit and existing bicycle infrastructure; the fact that the city is continuously working to improve the safety and efficiency of these mobility options; and, the city's ambitious and critical sustainability and carbon neutral goals, parking at the proposed development could still be provided at a lower ratio to further encourage low-carbon mobility.

The applicant includes 33 parallel on-street parking spaces in their calculation and analysis of parking capacity. Specifically, out of the 358 total parking spaces there are 58 ground-level, on-street spaces (33 of which are proposed to be located on New Streets 1 and 2 which will be under City jurisdiction). The Mobility Division notes that it is critical that these on-street parking spaces remain public street parking subject to the jurisdiction of the city's Traffic Commission. This will ensure that the city is able to maintain flexibility in how this public street space is utilized in the future. In order to further the city's sustainability, mobility, and equity goals, this space could be dedicated to additional bicycle parking, designated pick-up/drop-off areas, and ADA accessible pick-up/drop-off areas.

Traffic Impact and Access Study

The applicant worked with the Mobility Division to update and revise their previously submitted Traffic Impact and Access Study (TIAS) and Transportation Access Plan (TAP). A revised addendum to these plans was submitted on June 2, 2020.

The revised TIAS discusses recent updates to infrastructure in the project area as well as to the proposed project itself. In addition to the mitigation committed to in the MMP to reduce overall vehicle trips, the TIAS includes mitigation measures to adjust signal timing to reduce the traffic impact of the project. The city intends to work with the applicant throughout future phases of development approvals to ensure signal retiming is completed in a way that aligns with the mobility goals of the city.

The Mobility Division also notes that a critical component of future mobility in the project area is the reconstruction of the intersection of Alewife Brook Parkway and Powder House Boulevard. The city secured a MassWorks grant for \$4.9 million to undertake the design, engineering, and construction of a safer intersection at this location in order to improve mobility in the Clarendon Hill neighborhood. The Mobility Division and the Infrastructure and Asset Management Department are working diligently to advance the design of this key infrastructure improvement and to ensure that the project is bid and constructed on a timeline that coordinates with the schedule of the housing redevelopment. The city is grateful to the development team for their commitment of \$600,000 in private financing to support the reconstruction of this intersection.

The Mobility Division notes that while the project's impacts on overall circulation may be relatively unchanged, there will be acute impacts to the immediate neighborhood, some of which

are summarized in the TIAS but some that are not, including traffic impacts and associated increases in traffic noise and emissions, heavy vehicle traffic during construction, etc. The TIAS estimates between 52 and 88 additional vehicle trips during the AM and PM peak hour, respectively; this translates to about 1.16 additional vehicles per minute or about 18 vehicles per 15-minute period; this is a noticeable level of additional traffic to the neighborhood, even if the impacts on area intersections is not significant.

Requested Waivers

Bicycle Parking

The Mobility Division recognizes that the zoning code does not require bicycle parking at this development given the zoning district in which it's located. The city's long- and short-term bicycle parking requirements were written in order to follow best practices for making bicycle parking safe and accessible in order to encourage bicycle mobility.

The Mobility Division notes that buildings A/B and the townhomes are proposed to include long-term bicycle parking that is largely in compliance with the city's zoning. The affordable units in Buildings E and D do not comply with the requirements for bicycle parking in the zoning code. While the applicant did remove one underground parking space in order to provide 13 long-term bicycle parking spaces for Building D, all of these long term bicycle parking spaces are proposed to be vertical racks or bike hooks which do not comply with the city's zoning. The Mobility Division maintains that equity is a key component of this development. One of the city's goals through this redevelopment project is to knit this housing into the fabric of the Clarendon Hill and larger West Somerville neighborhoods. In order to fully accomplish that goal, the low income units should benefit from the same elements of best practice design and construction as the market rate units. A critical aspect of equitable development and the provision of equitable housing and mobility options is to ensure that our low income residents have the same access to high-quality, safe, and accessible infrastructure as do our higher-income residents. It would be a disservice to lower income residents to not provide bicycle parking that complies with the local and national best practices outlined in the city's new zoning code.

Somerville bicycle and pedestrian count data shows that compared to 2010, the average number of bicyclists counted at an intersection during peak commuting hours increased by 103% in 2019. Bicycle parking is an important component to encouraging bicycle transportation and helping to make it an easy mode choice for residents. Accessible bike parking that can accommodate the growing range of bicycle sizes and attachments is key to ensuring bicycle parking is usable and appropriate for multiple types of riders. The bicycle parking racks required in the zoning code are of the type that accommodate all bike sizes, bike attachments, and users. Specifically, vertical racks or bike hooks such as those proposed by the applicant can be appropriate in certain high-density indoor parking situations; however, they are not accessible to all users or all bikes and can create safety concerns that don't arise with on-ground parking.

Sidewalk walkway widths

The applicant requests a waiver from a minimum walkway width of 6 feet. The Mobility Division recognizes the need to maintain the location and layout of the buildings as currently planned in order to construct all of the housing units. With that in mind, the Mobility Division also notes a number of issues that should continue to be thought critically about as design of the project progresses.

The development will house vulnerable populations and communities of concern including elderly, young children, and people of color. In our current context of COVID-19 response, the city is undertaking a major work effort to provide expanded walking space on existing narrow residential sidewalks. Future construction of sidewalks should be considered in light of this current context.

Similar to bicycle infrastructure, walking is a key form of mobility for residents in Somerville, and a transportation choice that we make easier when infrastructure is constructed following best practices of safety and accessibility. Adhering to design principles detailed in the city's zoning should be done wherever possible.

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR
DEPARTMENT of INFRASTRUCTURE & ASSET MANAGEMENT
ENGINEERING DIVISION



RICHARD E. RAICHE, PE, PMP
DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE & ASSET MANAGEMENT

JESSICA FOSBROOK, PE
DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING

ENGINEERING DIVISION COMMENTS

Date: 24 June 2020
To: Somerville Zoning Board of Appeals
From: Brian C. Postlewaite, PE, Assistant Director of Engineering
CC: Jess Fosbrook, Sarah Lewis, Charlotte Leis
RE: 40B Comprehensive Permit, #2020-0001, Clarendon Hill, 34 North Street

We have reviewed the Comprehensive (40B) Permit Application submitted by Preservation of Affordable Housing LLC, Gate Residential Properties, LLC and the Somerville Community Corporation, Inc. for the Clarendon Hill project at 34 North Street. The application is dated 10 February 2020, with subsequent updated documents through 23 June 2020. Below are our comments that we would like the Board to consider.

New Streets

1. The project proposes two new public streets, currently identified as New Street #1 and New Street #2. A third private street is also proposed, currently identified as New Street #3.
2. All three streets will be permitted for construction through the Thoroughfare Permit process, which provides construction level review, analogous to a building permit for the proposed structures. Construction details will be reviewed and approved during the Thoroughfare Permit review. The conceptual layout of streets and utilities is approved in the Comprehensive Permit.
3. Upon approved and issued Thoroughfare Permit, and construction compliant with the permit, the proponent will develop an as-built document that will be submitted to the City Council to accept the New Street #1 and New Street #2 as public ways.
4. The Memorials Committee will recommend street names for the two proposed public streets. This recommendation will conclude prior to the issuance of the Thoroughfare Permit.
5. Based on the grading plans (C1.6 & C1.8), the proposed sidewalk grades of New Street #1 range from 3.2% to 10%. Most of the proposed street exceeds the ADA/MAAB minimum slope of 5%. Based on MAAB regulations, this section will require a variance. The Engineering Division would consider supporting a variance if a non-circuitous and compliant path along a public way, private way or public 24-7 access easement is added to the proposed project.
6. The City secured a MassWorks grant for \$4.9 million to undertake the design, engineering, and construction of a safer intersection and to shift major City sewer and stormwater utilities at this





intersection of Alewife Brook Parkway and Powderhouse Boulevard. Improvements will also be made to the newly created intersections in North Street and Powderhouse Boulevard. The Engineering Division is working in close coordination with the Mobility Division on the redesign. This effort will include a public process to garner input towards making the intersection safer and improve mobility in the Clarendon Hill Neighborhood.

Water, Sewer, and Stormwater Utilities

1. All proposed infrastructure must meet City standards and compliance will be evaluated during the Thoroughfare Permit review. These City standards include:
 - a. Water distribution system,
 - b. Sanitary system collection,
 - c. Storm drain collection and management,
 - d. Street subbase, curbing and pavement,
 - e. ADA/MAAB compliance,
 - f. Street lighting,
 - g. MUTCD traffic/parking signage & striping,
 - h. Etc.
2. All municipal utilities shall be located in the three proposed streets. Municipal utilities located in the proposed private way (New Street #3) require a utility easement to the benefit of the City. The water distribution system shown on sheets C1.6, C1.7, C1.8 & C1.9 appear to be located outside the street right of ways, and should be relocated.
3. The phasing plan (G-202) notes that the Phase 1 Buildings A/B and E will be occupied during Phase 2 construction. Phase 2 includes the construction of the stormwater management system beneath Block D, which supports the entire project, both Phase 1 and Phase 2. At minimum, the portion of the stormwater management system required to support all of Phase 1 must be constructed and operational at the conclusion of Phase 1.
4. The proposed site drainage system discharges from the site at the west corner of the site to an existing on-site manhole. The discharge point of this manhole is not identified or surveyed to its connection to the municipal drainage system. The project will be required to identify a suitable drainage connection to the municipal system.
5. The proposed project, primarily Building A, is located over an existing municipal storm drain and combined sewer main which both serve substantial portions of West Somerville. The Engineering Division is redesigning these utilities via a MassWorks grant to relocate them into Powder House Blvd.
6. The proposed project, primarily Building A, is located within the existing Alewife Brook Parkway right-of-way at the intersection with Powder House Blvd. The Engineering Division is redesigning this intersection via a MassWorks grant.
7. Comments on Detail Sheets (C2.0, C2.1 & C2.2):
 - a. City standard catchbasin sump is 6'.
 - b. Sanitary sewer service connections shall be tee-wye connections where new sanitary mains are installed.
 - c. Water service connections shall be tee connections where new water mains are installed.
 - d. City standard driveway apron transitions use tipped curbs, not granite corner stones.
 - e. Porous pavement/paver section in the public right-of-way is a minimum of 36" deep.





8. The project narrative states that the project will comply with the City stormwater requirements. City stormwater management requirements are found in the Site Construction Permit regulations, and include the following key items (these listed are only a subset of the regulations):
 - a. Reduction of peak runoff rate such that the proposed 10-year storm is equal to or less than the existing 2-year storm.
 - b. Total Suspended Solids (TSS) removal rate of at least 80%.
 - c. Total Phosphorous (TP) removal rate of at least 50%.
 - d. Erosion & Sediment controls that meet NPDES Construction General Permit (CGP) via a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

If the Board has any questions regarding our above comments, or any other element of the project that is in the purview of the Engineering Division, please do not hesitate to contact us.



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



GEORGE J. PROAKIS, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

LUISA OLIVEIRA
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SPACE & URBAN FORESTRY

MEMORANDUM

To: Zoning Board of Appeals
From: Division of Public Space & Urban Forestry (PSUF)
CC: Sarah Lewis, Director of Planning and Zoning
Date: June 25th, 2020
RE: Clarendon Hill 40B Comprehensive Permit #2020-0001

Overview

This memo outlines comments from the Division of Public Space & Urban Forestry (PSUF) following a review of the applicant's project narrative, proposed site plan, sitewide schematic design drawings, sustainability narrative, and draft LEED credit narrative. Revisions to these documents were submitted to the city in May and June of 2020. PSUF is satisfied with the overall schematic-level approach to the site and civic space design, the applicant's responsiveness to feedback through the waiver request process, and generally supports the project. PSUF is committed to ensuring the applicant delivers high-quality landscape and civic spaces that are compliant with the City's zoning requirements as the permitting process proceeds.

Waiver Requests

PSUF was previously asked to review the Comprehensive Permit waiver requests for the project with respect to compliance with the City's zoning ordinance requirements for civic spaces and urban forestry. These waiver review comments were returned to the development team in May 2020 and the development team responded to those comments in a spreadsheet entitled "Clarendon_Waivers_Master" dated 2020-06-02. A 2020-06-12 memorandum addressed the development team's responses to the initial review comments and sought to clarify or seek further information about waiver requests. The applicant should refer to the comments in the 2020-06-12 memorandum as this memorandum will not specifically address waiver requests.

It is PSUF's understanding that upon successfully obtaining a Comprehensive Permit, the development team will be required to submit a Civic Space Permit for the project during which PSUF will review the design in greater detail.





Comments

PSUF is generally supportive of the development team's commitment to deliver a new civic space that better serves the community and is compliant with the civic space and urban forestry requirements in the Somerville Zoning Ordinance. The PSUF team looks forward to further developing the design and programming with the Clarendon Hill development team as they prepare their Comprehensive Permit submission.

The following comments address PSUF's general review of the site and civic space design:

1. PSUF supports the redevelopment of a walkable, urban site for mixed-income affordable housing. The site is well connected to existing transit connections, commercial activity, and nearby playground and park space.
2. PSUF supports the inclusion of structured parking to reduce the heat island effect and maximize the provision of useful civic space.
3. PSUF agrees that extending the surrounding orthogonal grid into the site is an improvement over the existing development circulation and improves the overall vehicular and pedestrian circulation and connectivity to the surrounding community.
4. The variety in typology, scale, massing, and orientation of the proposed buildings is an improvement over the existing development.
5. Considering the topographical variation across the site, PSUF will be paying close attention to how the applicant proposes grading the central civic space so as to maximize useful area for play and recreation while ensuring the site remains universally accessible. PSUF will also be paying close attention to the tree protections and regrading around existing trees that are to be protected.
6. The applicant and design team have carefully considered vehicular and pedestrian circulation and, where possible, connected to existing sidewalk and street connections. The use of bump-outs and placement of crosswalks follows best practices for slowing traffic and ensuring pedestrian safety.
7. PSUF agrees that the use of parallel parking spaces along streets best balances the need for parking while maximizing useful civic space.
8. The courtyard pedestrian plaza terminating in an overlook terrace area (Block C1) between buildings A and B is human-scale and well detailed, but the design team should add a direct pedestrian connection (stairs/sloped walkway) down to the sidewalk on Alewife Brook Parkway to make this space feel more civic in nature.
9. The central civic space provides a good balance between passive and playground uses. Because the play area (intended primarily for younger age children) directly abuts two streets, PSUF will pay close attention to how the design team defines the edge of the play area to ensure the safety of playground users. Given the southern exposure of the proposed playground, the design team should plan to provide appropriate shading.
10. As the design develops, PSUF will pay close attention to the detailed design of the streetscape to ensure the applicant's commitment to providing generous sidewalks, site furnishings, and street trees.





11. PSUF expects that the material quality and landscape character captured in the applicant's site plans and renderings will closely resemble the actual hardscape and landscape materials and site furnishings specified during the design development and construction document phases of the project.
12. PSUF supports the applicant's inclusion of a "woonerf" style street (New Street 1) that prioritizes the needs of pedestrians over vehicles and accommodates LID/green infrastructure best practices
13. PSUF is concerned the proposed long garden beds (Block B2) will not get adequate southern exposure for crop production due to shading from mature trees on the adjacent Veteran's Memorial site.
14. PSUF supports the proposed 100% native planting palette. While it is an aspirational goal to eliminate the need for permanent irrigation, PSUF recommends the use of irrigation to support plant materials through summers that will be increasingly hot and dry due to climate change.
15. PSUF supports the use of full cut-off, energy efficient outdoor luminaires that reduce light pollution and lower energy consumption.
16. PSUF supports the applicants request to use sand-based structural soil instead of silva cells in both the civic space and the thoroughfares.
17. It is expected that the applicant will work with PSUF at the time of Construction Documents to review and approve the planting plans for tree wells that have open soil areas that are smaller than the minimum open soil requirements in the zoning code. Only certain species will be able to thrive in these smaller open soil areas.
18. It is expected that the applicant will work with PSUF at the time of Construction Documents to review and approve the planting plans for trees that do not meet the minimum tree spacing requirements in the zoning code. Selected species must be small enough to thrive in the tighter spacing.
19. The applicant is aware that a Tree Hearing must be completed prior to the removal of any Public Shade Trees. PSUF will work with the applicant and the Tree Warden to schedule a tree hearing.
20. PSUF is in support of the applicant forgoing the standard permit process for removing trees on private property. However, PSUF expects all requirements for removing private trees per the Tree Preservation Ordinance to be met. This includes replanting the same number of combined caliper inches of tree(s) as the significant tree(s) that are being removed. The current plans show that this standard is being met.

Sincerely,

Luisa Oliveira, ASLA

Director, Public Space & Urban Forestry



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



GEORGE J. PROAKIS, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

LUISA OLIVEIRA
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SPACE & URBAN FORESTRY

MEMORANDUM

To: Sarah Lewis, Director of Planning and Zoning
From: Division of Public Space & Urban Forestry (PSUF)
CC:
Date: June 12th, 2020
RE: Clarendon Hill 40B Comprehensive Permit

Background

The Division of Public Space and Urban Forestry (PSUF) was asked to review the Comprehensive Permit waiver requests for the Clarendon Hill 40B development with respect to compliance with the City's zoning ordinance requirements for civic spaces and urban forestry. These waiver review comments were returned to the development team in May 2020 and the development team responded to those comments in a spreadsheet entitled "Clarendon_Waivers_Master" dated 2020-06-02. This memorandum addresses the development team's responses to the review comments and seeks to clarify or seek further information about waiver requests.

It is PSUF's understanding that upon successfully obtaining a Comprehensive Permit, the development team will be required to submit a Civic Space Permit for the project during which PSUF will review the design in more depth.

PSUF Comments

The Division of Public Space and Urban Forestry is generally supportive of the development team's commitment to deliver a new civic space that better serves the community and is compliant with the civic space and urban forestry requirements in the Somerville Zoning Ordinance. The PSUF team looks forward to further developing the design and programming with the Clarendon Hill development team as they prepare their Comprehensive Permit submission.

The comments that follow address the development team's responses to the waiver request review comments and seek to clarify or obtain further information about waiver requests. It should be noted





that waiver request responses from the development team that satisfactorily addressed PSUF's comments are excluded from the table below.

Waiver Request Response Comment from "Clarendon_Waivers_Master", 2020-06-02:

Waiver Request #	Requested Waiver	Development Team Response	PSUF 2020-06-09 Comments
25	Ground-mounted transformers will be sited throughout the Development Site Area, but will not meet screening requirements.	Please see attached plan T-100 (#25). This indicates proposed location and details on screening method. For several, as indicated on the plan, we are not proposing screening because we believe we can more effectively mitigate their visual impact with landscaping and plantings.	Mechanical equipment locations and associated screening shown on plan T-100 raises more questions than it solves. Ground-mounted mechanical equipment locations (and access to that equipment) shall be fully coordinated with the design of site circulation, amenities, and planting. Screening, whether through wall, fence, or planting solutions, should be clearly shown on the plans. On a spatially constrained site like this, screening walls or fences may be more effective and practical than landscape screening.
26	Waiver from raised or curbing or edging protection requirement.	We are fine either way. Our only concern with having curbing with gaps is that it reads less like a woonerf and feels more like road with priority to vehicles. But we are fine with either solution.	PSUF recommends proceeding with curbing with gaps. Curb serves to protect pedestrian and vegetated areas from vehicles. Note section 4, L-107 currently shows curbing.
37/46	Waiver from minimum open soil requirements.	Full planting plans will be included with construction-level drawings. The plant lists included in the provided documents include species that would be fine with these dimensions. We would anticipate working with PSUF at the time of CDs to confirm their acceptance of the selected tree for these tree pits.	PSUF will entertain the waiver from minimum open soil requirements, as long as the species of trees that are selected are appropriate for the smaller tree pit sizes. PSUF will work with the applicant at the time of CDs to confirm acceptance of the selected trees.
39	Waiver from minimum playground size requirement.	Since the project is adjacent to a playground with a large play structure, this 1,500 sf space is intended to be a tot lot (there	PSUF rejects the development team's argument in this regard. There is no special distinction or provision in the zoning ordinance for tot-lots (age 2-5



		doesn't appear to be separate designation for tot lot vs. playground under the zoning). This is an appropriate size for a tot lot and is a needed use in the neighborhood.	playgrounds). Due to the residential nature of the development and anticipated number of children who will live in close proximity to this civic space, a larger/more diverse range of play is appropriate. The design team should consider expanding the playground area to incorporate play features/value that does not exist nearby such as a water play/splash pad.
44	Waiver from minimum tree spacing requirements.	Full planting plans will be included with construction-level drawings. The plant lists included in the provided documents include species that will all be fine with this spacing. We would anticipate working with PSUF at that time to gain their approval on specific plants.	PSUF will entertain the waiver from minimum tree spacing requirements, as long as the species of trees that are selected are appropriate for the reduced spacing. PSUF will work with the applicant at the time of CDs to confirm acceptance of the selected trees.
51	Waiver from City-owned tree removal requirements, to the extent applicable.	See attached (#52), showing public shade/ street trees that are being kept and being removed; agree that removal of public shade trees will follow all applicable state laws.	There are no City-owned trees on the property, so this waiver is not applicable. PSUF appreciates the documents showing the details about Public Shade Trees, and will work with the applicant and the Tree Warden to schedule a tree hearing for the proposed Shade Tree removals.
52	Waiver from Tree Permit requirement for private Significant Trees.	See attached, #52, to indicate which public shade trees are remaining (green), proposed for removal (orange), or dead/dying (not colored in). The Lot plans submitted previously should show by Lot which trees are proposed for removal.	Although detailed information about public shade trees was provided, PSUF did not receive any documents showing the location/DBH/ total count of <u>private</u> trees that are being removed or information about the combined caliper inches of tree replacements. However, PSUF had a phone call with the Landscape Architect who stated that the combined caliper inches of replacement trees far exceeds the combined caliper inches of the trees proposed for removal. PSUF still requires the applicant to submit a document demonstrating the location, count, DBH, and condition of private trees proposed for removal. Once this is received, PSUF agrees to work directly with the



			applicant and ZBA to ensure that the project is meeting requirements of the Private Tree Removal Permit without needing to go through a separate permit process.
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Sincerely,

Luisa Oliveira, ASLA

Director, Public Space & Urban Forestry



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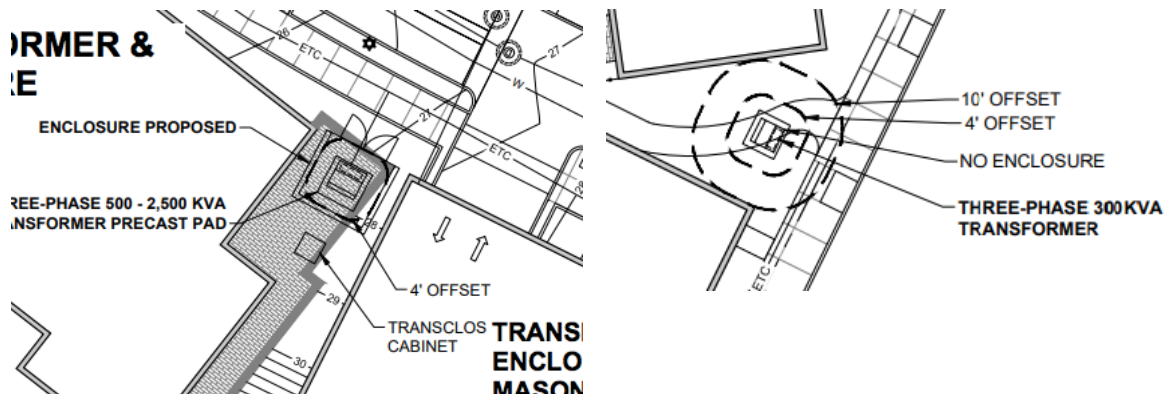
MEMORANDUM

To: Zoning Board of Appeals
From: Division of Public Space & Urban Forestry (PSUF)
CC: Sarah Lewis, Director of Planning and Zoning
Date: July 30th, 2020
RE: Clarendon Hill 40B Comprehensive Permit #2020-0001

This memo responds to the Applicant's final waiver request list dated 7-22-2020. The Applicant has not yet responded to PSUF's waiver request comments in our 6-12-2020 memo or general project comments in our 6-25-2020 ZBA memo.

Waiver Request #21:

PSUF recommends the ZBA deny this waiver request for screening, mechanical equipment. It is telling that the Applicant at first did not show this equipment on their drawings and, after we asked them to show it, did not coordinate it with the site design (see screenshots from T-100 below). This is a constrained site and this equipment is not small, screening is a minor cost in the context of the overall cost of the project. In our 2020-06-12 memo we noted that ground-mounted mechanical equipment locations should be fully coordinated with the site design. We have not seen an updated plan showing this coordination.





Waiver Request #22:

Consistent with our feedback per our 2020-06-12 memo, PSUF recommends the ZBA deny the waiver request vis-a-vis the raised curbing protection requirement. As mentioned previously, rain garden stormwater collection can be achieved through gaps in the curbing as the Applicant previously acknowledged. See example image below.



Waiver Request #35:

New pervious area waiver request. The applicant should provide an updated plan showing these newly proposed accessible routes (including a grading plan) for PSUF to better understand and evaluate this waiver request. Until we have more information/context for evaluating this request, PSUF recommends the ZBA deny this waiver request.

Sincerely,

Luisa Oliveira, ASLA

Director, Public Space & Urban Forestry





City of Somerville

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

ADDRESS: "Clarendon Hill" – 125-153 Alewife Brook Parkway, 24-34 North St, 268-278 Powder House Blvd.

PROPONENT:: Somerville Housing Authority/Preservation of Affordable Housing

DETERMINATION: *NO ADVERSE EFFECT*

DATE: July 31, 2020

DETERMINATION

On behalf of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), Preservation Planning has reviewed the application materials for the proposed project at the above-referenced addresses. The surrounding area of potential impact for this project has also been considered in terms of the potential effect of this project on historic properties.

Based on the materials presented and a study of the area, it has been determined that the proposal for "Clarendon Hill" will have no adverse effect on any historic properties in the surrounding area.

Submitted:

Sarah White, MDS-HP, Planner/Preservation Planner
