



City of Somerville

# URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

City Hall 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

## DESIGN REVIEW RECOMMENDATION

### 3-5 Hawkins Street

March 26, 2021

The Urban Design Commission (UDC) met virtually via GoToWebinar on March 23, 2021 to review the 5-Story Apartment Building proposed for 3-5 Hawkins Street. The purpose of design review, as established by the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, is for peers in the professional design community to provide advice and recommendations during the schematic design phase of the architectural design process. This design review was conducted at the behest of the Somerville Planning Board following a public hearing regarding 3-5 Hawkins held on February 17, 2020. This written recommendation addresses design revisions made by the Applicant following the Planning Board hearing. After review of the submitted plans and a public presentation by the Applicant, the Commission provided the following guidance and recommended modifications:


- The building should have of the appearance of two contemporary facades, rather than a traditional façade next to a contemporary facade.
- The division between the two Lake Street façade designs should occur so that three “townhouses” appear to front Lake Street. The Commission suggested that the rightmost projecting box window be considered for removal so that the design of the right side (11” white siding and sandy ground story brick) could extend leftward.
- The projecting box window facing the abutting civic space should be reconsidered.
- The ground story brick and horizontal cast stone band should create surface relief that provides depth, shadows, or roughness so that the building’s base is visually appealing and does not appear to be coplanar with the materials of the upper stories.
- The recessed corner stoop reads as the principal entrance to the building and the actual lobby entrance should be better defined, and clearly visible.
- The landscape design abutting the civic space should not appear to be a ribbon driveway if it is primarily intended to be for pedestrian access.
- The Commission advocated for the provision of street trees along Lake Street and recommended that the two exterior parking spaces should be replaced with landscaping and additional native tree species.

The Commission voted unanimously (5-0) to recommend the modifications outlined above.

Attest, by the voting membership:

Frank Valdes  
Deborah Fennick  
Andrew Arbaugh  
Heidi Cron  
Tim Talun

Attest, by the UDC Co-Chair:

  
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Sarah Lewis, Director of Planning & Zoning

