# City of Somerville, Massachusetts OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING \& COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT Joseph A. Curtatone Mayor 

Planning Division

August 28, 2012
Brown Fenollosa Architects Inc.
197 Broadway
Arlington, MA
Dear Mr. Brown:
Your application for a de minimis revision to your approved plans at 44 Park St, case number ZBA 2011-83, has been accepted.

The approved revisions are as follows and are shown on the plans SK-23R dated 8/6/12, and A2.0, A2.1, A2.2, A2.3 all dated $7 / 12 / 12$ with an alteration date of $7 / 21 / 12$

1. Reduction in the size of the entry canopy along the rear façade to be over main entry door only and associated changes to windows at that elevation.
2. Information about the play area build-out.
3. Transformer/concrete pad and utility hookups at side of building.
4. Eliminate some screening vegetation at property line as there is a stockade fence at that border.
5. 'Teardrop' turn around at side drive to be edged with concrete pavers and mulched.
6. Signage change - lowered logo (figures only) and vinyl banner at 90 degrees to building.
7. Commitment letter outlining the site planting and fencing for the Fall.

As required by SZO §5.3.8, Staff finds that:

1. Changes would not contravene the legal notice, any finding, or condition of the SPGA in the original approval.
2. Changes would not detrimentally impact matters of substance identified in meeting minutes of original hearings.
3. Changes would not alter the character of the development.
4. Changes would be so insignificant as not to be noticeable to persons generally familiar with the original approval.

Additionally Staff find that the changes do not have a significant negative design impact on the property as seen from the public way or adjacent neighboring properties.

Page 2
Based upon the staff report, decision, and audiotape of the meeting to understand what was discussed and how the project was presented, here were the key issues in the case.
a. There was general discussion and understanding of the upgrades being done to the facade and the need to upgrade the building.
b. The legal ad noted new windows, doors and a canopy on the site, as well as site improvements.
c. Concerns expressed by the neighbors were generally limited to issues about the lease arrangement between the owner and applicant, not the plan itself.
d. Concerns expressed by the ZBA surrounded the site design for parking circulation, pedestrian circulation and ADA accessibility to the entry door.

Regarding the building: The changes that you are proposing to the building will:
a. Remove a decorative wood feature applied to the building
b. Shorten the canopy
c. Group the windows differently

These changes are at the back of the building where they impact your children, teachers \& visitors, but not the public at large. They were not issues raised specifically at the hearing by the staff, neighbors, or ZBA. Therefore, they may be deemed deminimis, approved by staff, and do not need to go back to the ZBA. But, in order for staff to feel comfortable with the final design of these elements, we reviewed the paint color scheme for the siding and retained elements of the site plan, particularly vehicle and pedestrian circulation that was extensively discussed at the meeting. The following items have been retained to keep the intent of the decision in tact.
a. A different texture and color for the pedestrian connection from the front of the building to the sidewalk remains.
b. The center 'teardrop island' in the parking lot will remain with pavers and vegetative material that meets the Fire Department's requirement.
d. A wood fence and gate between play area and HVAC equipment on the side of the building will exist.
e. The overgrowth by the fence along the entire right side of entry driveway will be removed and replaced with vegetation (vines and stones).
f. Feedback from the neighbor about proposed vegetation screening along the southeast property line will be submitted.
g. The berm along the rear of the paved parking area is installed so that vehicles can not leave the paved area. h. Loam and seed the dirt area behind the rear of the parking area. (Received letter of commitment for appropriate growing season.

Please bring the attached stamped plans to Inspectional Services so that they may proceed with your application. If you have not done so already, contact Planning Staff at least five working days in advance of a request for a final inspection by Inspectional Services to ensure the proposal was constructed in accordance with the revised plans and the conditions attached to the approval.


## CC: Inspectional Services Division







