



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

MICHAEL F. GLAVIN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

November 15, 2017

This memo serves the final decision of the Director of Transportation & Infrastructure with respect the mobility management plan submitted by Union Square Station Associates LLC (US2) for the Union Square Redevelopment pursuant to the Union Square Overlay District of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance.

Case Number: PB 2017-21

Development: Union Square Redevelopment
Address: 20-50 Prospect Street

Applicant: Union Square Station Associates (US2)
Contact: Greg Karczewski
Address: 31 Union Square, Somerville, MA 02143

Date of Application: 09/19/2017
Date of Decision: 11/15/2017

Decision: Approval with Conditions

Approval of the submitted mobility management plan is contingent upon the conditions outlined within the attached letter of conditions. Per §6.8.14.D of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, applications are not considered complete and permits may not be approved or issued without an approved mobility management plan. Per §6.8.14.D of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Board must require compliance to the provisions of Section 6.8.14 and the approved mobility management plan as a condition of an approved Coordinated Development Special Permit.



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November 15, 2017

Greg Karczewski
Union Square Station Associates (US2)
31 Union Square
Somerville, MA 02143

Dear Mr. Karczewski,

The attached form indicates the final decision of the Director of Transportation and Infrastructure on the mobility management plan submitted by Union Square Station Associates LLC (US2) for the Union Square Redevelopment pursuant to the Union Square Overlay District of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance. The final decision is an **Approval with Conditions**. This letter details the conditions necessary for the successful implementation of your plan.

Encouraging travelers to change their commute modes from driving to walking, bicycling, taking transit or ride-sharing requires a multi-faceted approach and concerted effort. Extensive research conducted on changing commuter behaviors indicates that both incentives and disincentives are necessary to achieve successful mode-shifts. The most powerful tool to induce travel by non-automobile is to ensure employees, residents, and visitors understand the true cost of parking by 'un-bundling' the price so that spaces are rented or leased as an option rather than a requirement of the rental, lease, or purchase of a dwelling unit or nonresidential floor space. **The Union Square Overlay District requires 'un-bundled' parking on top of requiring the majority of parking to be provided by facilities that are, essentially, equivalent to public parking.** These provisions combine to make the cost of parking readily apparent to the majority of employees, residents, and visitors as they will be renting or leasing spaces from the parking facilities.

Mobility management plans are required for Coordinated Development Plan Special Permit Applications to establish expectations early in the planning process, ensure required programs and services are reiterated through leasing requirements, and to improve the likelihood of successful program implementation as buildings are constructed and occupied by tenants. Most conditions attached to this type of Mobility Management Plan are applied to provide advanced notice, via the Applicant, to future employers, parking facility operators, and property management firms of operational expectations for successful plan implementation or to ensure compliance with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance.

The Applicant has committed to achieve a 60% non-automobile mode share for travel to the development site, which includes multiple buildings that will host a variety of tenants in the future. It is important to note that the majority of the mobility management programs and services necessary to achieve the Applicant's commitment will be implemented by the future employers, parking facility operators, and



property management firms of the new buildings included in the development proposal. Participants will need to establish mode share commitments that meet or exceed the established goal and provide both required and optional programs and services to varying degrees to ensure success. As identified by the Applicant in the submitted Mobility Management Plan for the Union Square Redevelopment, if annual monitoring and reporting identifies a shortfall in meeting this goal, additional mobility management programs and services must be implemented.

Section 6.8: of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance does not permit accessory parking in the Commercial Core or High Rise sub-districts of the Union Square overlay district. Parking facilities in these locations (D1, D2, D3, and D6), must be operated as a Commercial Service Vehicular Parking use – which could be better described as Public Parking. Per the Ordinance, parking in these facilities must be made available for rent or lease to the public (including employees and residents of the proposed development), twenty-four (24) hours per day, seven (7) days per week, three-hundred and sixty-five (365) days per year and may be rented or leased through various offerings including, but not limited to, monthly passes, overnight passes, daily rates (weekday and weekend), and hourly fees at the discretion of the facility operator. In addition to the above, these same parking facilities may provide up to 300 parking spaces in total as ‘reserved’ spaces for the exclusive use of a specific motor vehicle(s) and held unoccupied when not in use by that specific motor vehicle(s), which may include fleet vehicles and the employees of specific tenants. The maximum number of ‘reserved’ spaces may also be exceeded with the payment of a fee.

Subsection 6.8.14 Mobility Management of the Union Square overlay district requires the following programs and services, individually, of the property owner of any building or portion of a building with over 50,000 gross square feet of non-residential uses and any employer with 50 or more employees or students:

- an on-site transportation coordinator;
- an annual mobility management education meeting for employees;
- qualified transportation fringe benefits for employees;
- a guaranteed ride home program for employees;
- posted mobility management information; and
- distributed mobility management information.

The following programs and services are required of the property owner of a residential building or portion of a building with 20 or more dwelling units:

- unbundled parking;
- posted mobility management information; and
- distributed mobility management information.

Lastly, the following programs and services are required for each vehicular parking commercial service use (eg. a parking structure or lot):

- preferential parking locations for carpool/vanpool; and
- posted mobility management information.

The implementation of these specific programs and services will be reviewed and approved through Mobility Management Plans required for Design & Site Plan Approval and the subsequent permitting of individual businesses over time.

Plan Conditions

The following conditions are necessary for approval of the submitted mobility management plan:

Mobility Management Plans are required for development subsequent to CDSP approval per Subsection 6.8.14 Mobility Management of the Union Square Overlay District.

Mobility Management Plans

- **CONDITION:** Mobility management plans submitted for subsequent development review must provide an implementation schedule for programs and services included or conditioned as part of the approved plan.

Mode Shift

The Applicant has committed to a significant 26% mode shift from the existing 34% non-automobile share identified by the U.S. Census journey-to-work data for Union Square to a future 60% non-automobile share. Of the future non-automobile trips, 38% is anticipated to be pedestrian trips, 36% transit trips, and 25% bicycle trips. Dependency on walking and transit to meet this mode split commitment will require significant effort to hire a local workforce that will walk to their place of employment and aggressive incentives to induce transit ridership for those living elsewhere. When a large portion of employees live within the same community where jobs are located, research demonstrates that significant reductions in vehicle miles traveled and daily peak-hour vehicle trips can be achieved.

- **CONDITION:** In any lease agreement for non-residential uses, the Property Owner shall require the leasee to provide their employees with Qualified Transportation Fringe benefits per current U.S. Internal Revenue Code.
- **CONDITION:** In any lease agreement for non-residential uses, the Property Owner shall require the leasee to seek applicants for open positions first from amongst qualified Somerville residents, to every extent practicable.

Financial Incentives:

Approval of this plan is conditioned upon all non-residential uses providing Qualified Transportation Fringe benefits per current U.S. Internal Revenue Code to their employees (see above). Additionally, the Applicant has committed to encourage future owners and employers to provide both employees and new residential tenants with subsidized transit or bike-share passes to assist in establishing new travel patterns. Due to the fact that accessory parking is not permitted for the majority of the development site and that market rate prices will be charged for over 1,400 of the parking spaces provided, there are no additional conditions applied to the approval of this plan as it relates to Financial Incentives.

Shared Vehicle Services

The Applicant has committed to pursue a contract with a car share company (such as ZipCar or Enterprise) to provide car share vehicles on-site. Research indicates that each shared vehicle takes up to 20 personally owned vehicles off the road, improving air quality and reducing traffic. As the build out progresses, demand for car share services will increase as new tenants occupy phases of development. Car share services are an important component in achieving many of the transportation objectives of SomerVision and the Union Square Neighborhood Plan, making the provision of spaces for car share vehicles in parking facilities a necessity.

- **CONDITION:** Each Commercial Service Vehicular Parking use must make at least 2 parking spaces available for car share vehicles at no cost to the care share service provider. Spaces may be brought online at the discretion of the car share service provider. Notification of available spaces to car share service providers must be documented in annual reporting.

Alternative Schedules

The Applicant has committed to encourage future non-residential tenants to offer flexible (off-peak) hours and telecommuting (working at home) at least once a week to reduce travel demand during peak hours and utilize excess capacity during other times of the day. There are no additional conditions applied to the approval of this plan as it relates to Alternative Schedules.

Marketing & Education

As stated in the submitted Mobility Management Plan, awareness of mobility management programs & services and an understanding of how to utilize them is the first step to participation by employees, residents, and visitors. Specific marketing and educational programs required by Subsection 6.8.14 Mobility Management of the Union Square Overlay District have yet to be determined and will be reviewed and approved through Mobility Management Plans required for Design & Site Plan Approval and the subsequent permitting of individual businesses over time. There are no additional conditions applied to the approval of this plan as it relates to Marketing & Education.

Parking Management

All automobile parking within the Union Square Overlay District is required to be ‘un-bundled’ from the cost of housing or commercial space. In other words, it must be rented or leased as an option rather than a requirement of the rental, lease, or purchase of a dwelling unit or nonresidential floor space. In addition to this, the Applicant has committed to market rate pricing of parking spaces to ensure that there is no hidden subsidy within the price of a parking space that would encourage driving rather than walking, biking, or taking transit. Although the Applicant has committed to charging for commercial parking spaces through daily rates when practicable or feasible, pricing should be dynamic and based on an hourly premium that is reduced for employees that need to park for a ‘daily’ time periods, such as an eight hour work day. Furthermore, research indicates that up to 30 percent of traffic in urban centers can be attributed to drivers looking for parking, which makes real-time data on parking occupancy rates in Commercial Service Vehicular Parking facilities a necessity to help reduce local traffic congestion. Real-time data can be provided in its most rudimentary form through simple electronic counting of entry and exit gate activation.

- **CONDITION:** At least 10% of parking spaces provide in each Commercial Service Vehicular Parking facility must be designated and reserved for carpools or vanpools. These spaces shall be located closest to the main pedestrian entrance to the facility (exclusive of spaces designated for handicapped) and are deducted from the total reserved spaces permitted within the district.
- **CONDITION:** Commercial Service Vehicular Parking facilities must be operated by the property owner or a management agency independent from other non-residential uses located on the same site or within the same building.
- **CONDITION:** Each Commercial Service Vehicular Parking facility must provide a sign at the vehicular entrance to the parking structure or lot that identifies, at minimum, the number of spaces available in real time.

On Site Services:



On-site transportation coordinators are required, individually, for each building or portion of a building with over 50,000 gross square feet of non-residential uses and businesses with 50 or more employees or students. Typically, these duties are the responsibility of an employee of a property management firm for residential uses or a human resources representative of a large employer. In circumstances where buildings or businesses are members of a Mobility Management Association or Transportation Management Association, this position is typically filled for all members by an employee from the agency, making participation more efficient.

The Applicant is providing a significant number of bicycle parking spaces distributed throughout the development site and has identified further efforts that they will encourage future non-residential tenants to implement, such as bicycle repair facilities and locker rooms with showers that will further encourage the use of bicycles by employees. Additionally, the Applicant has been required elsewhere to provide additional bike-share docking stations, or the functional equivalent for any future bike share service approved by the City, as mitigation for the development proposal's impact on the transportation system.

Although permitted within the Union Square Overlay District, hotel uses have a substantial number of trips to and from the location that are made by non-employees and non-residents. Hotels that provide on-demand shuttle service for guests traveling to and from major transportation depots can help mitigate these added trips to the transportation system because they frequently drop off and pick up multiple guests per trip.

- **CONDITION:** In any lease agreement for non-residential uses, the Property Owner shall require the leasee to become a participating MassRIDES employer partner worksite that is registered for the MassRIDES Emergency Ride Home (ERH) program or to provide a similar guaranteed ride home service operated by the leasee.
- **CONDITION:** Any Hotel use must provide complimentary guest shuttle services between the hotel and Logan Airport in order to reduce automobile trips between the airport and the hotel. Conceptual plans for the operation of this service must be approved by the Transportation & Infrastructure Division prior to the issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy for the Hotel. Revisions to operations at any time require approval by the Transportation & Infrastructure Division.

Additional Recommendations

In addition to the conditions listed above, I recommend implementation of the following additional programs and services. If the submitted mobility management plan, as conditioned, fails to reach the stated mode split goal, implementing these programs will help to achieve that remedy the situation.

- Regular peak-hour employee shuttle service to the Sullivan Square and Central Square MBTA stations.
- Increased prices for parking spaces
- Provision of on-site amenities to reduce day-time trips by automobile

Monitoring and Reporting

The Applicant has committed to Annual Reporting to track, assess, and report on the implementation of the Mobility Management program as required by the Somerville Zoning Ordinance and the Planning Board's Mobility Management Plan Submittal Standards, which include:

- Annual travel surveys of employees of participating non-residential tenants.

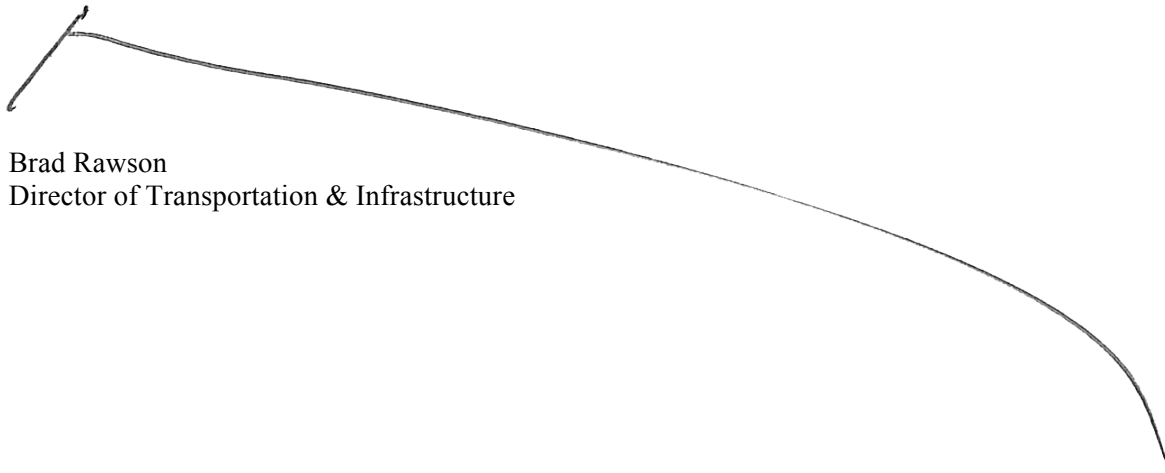
- Annual reporting of parking utilization and operations for any Commercial Service Vehicular Parking facility
- Biennial counts of automobile trips entering & exiting any parking facilities.
- Status update of Mobility Management program & service implementation.

All monitoring must be conducted at the same time each year, as determined by the certificate of occupancy for the first building. If the certificate of occupancy for the first building with a non-residential component is issued between September 1 and February 29, the monitoring shall take place during the months of September or October and be reported to the Transportation & Infrastructure Division no later than November 30. If the certificate of occupancy for the first building with a non-residential component is issued between March 1 and August 31, monitoring shall take place during the months of April or May and be reported to the Transportation and Infrastructure Division no later than June 30. This will ensure that the monitoring captures a realistic assessment of the performance of the project, while giving time to compile the results and report them to the City.

It is important to note that while approved Mobility Management Plans are transferable by and among private parties; this transfer is contingent upon the new owner agreeing to continue to operate in accordance with the previously approved Mobility Management plan, as conditioned. Should the Applicant elect to transfer some portion or all of the development subject to this Mobility Management Plan, commitment to the previously approved Mobility Management Plan is required by the new property owner.

I look forward to working with you in the future as you implement this plan. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (617) 625-6600 or brawson@somervillema.gov.

Sincerely,

A long, sweeping handwritten signature in black ink, starting with a small loop and ending in a long, curved tail that extends across the width of the page.

Brad Rawson
Director of Transportation & Infrastructure