City of Somerville

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

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

DESIGN REVIEW RECOMMENDATION

1153 Broadway

11/9/2021

The Urban Design Commission (UDC) met virtually via GoToWebinar on August 24, 2021, September 14, 2021 and October 5, 2021 to review an **addition to an existing general building** proposed at 1153 Broadway in the Mid Rise 4 (MR4) zoning district in the Teele Square neighborhood of Somerville. 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. In accordance with the UDC's adopted Rules of Procedure and Section 15.1.4 Design Review of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, this recommendation includes, at least, the following:

1. Identification of the preferred schematic design option
2. Identification if applicable design guidelines are satisfied
3. Guidance and recommended modifications to address any design issues or concerns

Design review was conducted over the course of three meetings and the Commission guided the Applicant through various recommendations and suggestions to the applicants preferred façade design concept. The following recommendations were made by the Commission:

- Look for opportunities to create a green roof to address sustainability and resiliency through the addition of vegetation.
- Explore removing the upper story cornice between the third and fourth floors or reducing it in size.
- The materiality of the lintel expression should be furthered examined to help give the building design more integrity.

Following a presentation of the design by the Applicant and review of the design guidelines for the MR4 district, the Commission provided the following final guidance and recommended modifications:

- Upper story façade materiality still needs to be worked out. Applicant should examine the use of hemlock green and Coppertone colors. Commission requests to review a material palette board prior to the issuance of a building permit.
- Reduce the size of the upper story cornice between the third and fourth floor.
- Include a datum at the floor level to break up the massing and to add shadow lines.

The Commission voted unanimously (3-0) to approve modified preferred façade design with integration of datum line between the third and fourth floor in the same material as the building panels, located in a place that makes sense in relation to other building elements, voted unanimously (3-0) that all of the MR4 design guidelines were satisfied and voted unanimously (3-0) to incorporate additional design guidance for a material palate sample board with preferred colors of hemlock green and Coppertone and alternative colors to be review on site prior to the issuance of a building permit.

Attest, by the voting membership: Tim Talun
Deborah Fennick
Andrew Arbaugh

Attest, by the meeting Co-Chairs: Cortney Kirk
Sarah Lewis

Sarah Lewis,
UDC Co-Chair
Director of Planning & Zoning

MR4– Mid-Rise 4			
LANGUAGE	**SATISFIED?**	**PRIORITY?**	**NOTES**
Facades should be visually divided into a series of architectural bays that are derived, in general, from the building's structural bay spacing.	YES (3-0)		
Piers, pilasters, or other features defining each architectural bay should either extend all the way to the ground or terminate at any horizontal articulation defining the base of the building.	YES (3-0)		
Architectural bays should align, in general, with individual or groups of storefronts and lobby entrances.	YES (3-0)		
Piers, pilasters, or other features defining each architectural bay should always project forward and be uninterrupted by any horizontal articulation, excluding any horizontal articulation used to differentiate the base of the building.	YES (3-0)		
The facade of buildings with five (5) or more stories should be visually divided into, at least, a horizontal tripartite division (a base, middle, and top). The horizontal divisions may not shift up or down across the width of the facade.	YES (3-0)		
Vents, exhausts, and other utility features on building facades should be architecturally integrated into the design of the building and should be located to minimize adverse effects on pedestrian comfort along sidewalks and within open spaces.	YES (3-0)		
Buildings at terminated vistas should be articulated with design features that function as focal points.	YES (3-0)		
Fenestration glazing should be inset from the plane of exterior wall surfaces.	YES (3-0)		
Ribbon windows should be avoided.	YES (3-0)		
Monotonous and repetitive storefront or lobby systems, awnings, canopies, sign types, colors, or designs should be avoided.	YES (3-0)		
Storefronts and lobby entrances should include awnings or canopies to provide weather protection for pedestrians and reduce glare for storefront display areas. Awnings should be open-ended and operable.	YES (3-0)		
Lobby entrances for upper story uses should be optimally located, well defined, clearly visible, and separate from the entrance for other ground story uses.	YES (3-0)		
Lobbies should be limited in both width and total area to preserve floor space and frontage for other ground story uses. Buildings should use any combination of facade articulation, a double-height ceiling, a distinctive doorway, a change in wall material, a change in paving material within the frontage area, or some other architectural element(s) to make lobbies visual and materially distinctive.	YES (3-0)		

MR4– Mid-Rise 4			
LANGUAGE	**SATISFIED?**	**PRIORITY?**	**NOTES**
The selection of materials, fenestration, and ornamentation should result in a consistent and harmonious composition that appears as a unified whole rather than a collection of unrelated parts.	YES (3-0)		
The type and color of materials should be kept to a minimum, preferably three (3) or fewer.	YES (3-0)		
Two (2) or more wall materials should be combined only one above the other, except for bay windows.	YES (3-0)		
Wall materials appearing heavier in weight should be used below wall materials appearing lighter in weight (wood and metal above brick, and all three above stone)	YES (3-0)		
Horizontal or vertical board siding or shingles, regardless of material, should be avoided.	YES (3-0)		
Architectural details and finish materials for the base of a building should be constructed of architectural concrete or pre-cast cementitious panels, natural or cast stone, heavy gauge metal panels, glazed or unglazed architectural terracotta, or brick.	YES (3-0)		
Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems (EIFS) should be avoided.	YES (3-0)		

Façade Evolution

8/24/2021

10/5/2021

Remaining Concern(s)
Upper story materiality, reduction of upper story cornice and integration of a datum line