

DEVELOPMENT NARRATIVE SECOND ADDENDUM

Property: 21 Eastman Road
Applicant: 21 Eastman, LLC
Agent: Adam Dash, Esq.
Zoning District: NR

Summary

This is the Second Addendum to the Development Narrative filed with the City Clerk on February 5, 2020, as previously amended by the First Addendum filed on March 11, 2020. The purpose of this Addendum is to revise the relief being sought, and to provide the bases for same, due to changes made to the plans since the March 11, 2020 filing and the July 22, 2020 Neighborhood Meeting.

The property is currently a vacant 11,562 sf lot which used to have a single-family house on it that has been demolished. The property has a steeply sloped grade, and unusual shape, which create many unique development challenges.

The Historic Preservation Commission found the prior dwelling not to be significant, and it was demolished.

Applicant seeks to construct two new single-family structures, each containing a 4-bedroom unit. Unit 1 is approximately 2,370 GSF, and Unit 2 is approximately 2,718 GSF.

This project has been revised from the original application filed under the prior Somerville Zoning Ordinance in order to incorporate comments from the Zoning Board of Appeals, and from the neighbors, to lower the height of the buildings and to significantly reduce the size of the retaining walls by building the structures more into the hillside. To do that, certain dimensional relief is now required under the new Somerville Zoning Ordinance.

Applicant is seeking the following relief:

Special Permit for the following:

1. Steep Slope

Hardship Variances for the following:

1. Front setback
2. Side setback (Southeast side)
3. Building width
4. Ground story elevation
5. Story height
6. Number of stories (1.5 stories of relief)
7. Two principal structures on a single lot (Building Type)

8. Habitable space depth
9. Parking in the frontage area (4 spaces)
10. Driveway in the frontage area
11. Parking space dimensions (two spaces)

Special Permit

Applicant is seeking relief for the lot's Steep Slope, per Section 10.10 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance.

Per Section 15.2.1.e of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance:

In its discretion to approve or deny a Special Permit required by this Ordinance, the review board shall make findings considering, at least, each of the following:

- a). The comprehensive plan and existing policy plans and standards established by the City.*
 - b). The intent of the zoning district where the property is located.*
 - c). Considerations indicated elsewhere in this Ordinance for the required Special Permit.*
- a. The project will improve the existing vacant lot with a residential, compliant two-family use in an NR zone which is fitting for a residential zone such as this on a very large lot. This project meets the goals of the SomerVision strategic plan by creating transit-oriented, mixed-use neighborhood infill which enhances the lively, human-scaled and walkable character of the neighborhood, and by adding diverse housing stock through creating more family-sized units. The proposal is in compliance with SomerVision, such that allowing the special permit will make Somerville a "healthier, more prosperous and more attractive place to live, work, play and raise a family", and "ensure that neighborhood properties can adapt and change to meet the needs of residents". The single family dwelling was demolished after the Historic Preservation Commission found that it was not significant. This project will also provide, at great expense, protection to the abutters from slope-related issues.
 - b. A two-family development in the NR zone is in keeping with the purpose of such zoning district, which is, per Somerville Zoning Ordinance Section 3.1.3, in part "[t]o permit the development of one-, two-, and three-unit detached and semi-detached residential buildings on individual lots", and "[t]o create dwelling unit types, sizes, and bedroom counts ideal for larger households in houses, semi-attached houses, duplexes, and triple deckers."

- c. See below.

Per Section 10.10.4 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance:

In addition to the review criteria for all Special Permits specified in §15.2.1.e. Review Criteria, the review board shall make findings considering the following in its discretion to approve or deny a special permit authorizing development on any lot with a steep slope:

i. Consistency of site disturbance with the intent and purpose of this Section.

ii. Geo-technical, structural engineering, and arboreal best practices for successfully and safely stabilizing steep slopes.

- i. The property is of an unusual shape, contains a steep slope, and relies on retaining walls due to the slope. These hardships make it difficult to construct a project which is both zoning compliant and harmonious with the neighborhood. This project involves introducing water and soil control measures which will improve runoff and safety of the site for surrounding neighborhood. The project will not substantially derogate from the intent and purpose of the NR district because it improves the existing vacant lot with two residential single-family structures in an NR zone, which is fitting for a residential zone such as this on a very large lot. This project will provide, at great expense, protection to the abutters from slope-related issues.
- ii. Please see the engineering reports previously filed regarding the steeply sloped lot for details, which all address the geo-technical, structural engineering and arboreal practices being employed to successfully and safely stabilize the steep slope of the lot. This project will improve the existing geo-technical and arboreal conditions of the property by introducing water and soil controls, and by appropriately landscaping the lot. The new buildings are designed to fit into the steep hillside and act partly as their own retaining walls so as to avoid the need for many large retaining walls which otherwise would be required.

Hardship Variances

Per Section 15.2.3.e of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance:

The Zoning Board of Appeals may only grant a Hardship Variance upon finding all of the following:

a). Special circumstances exist relating to the soil conditions, shape, or topography of a parcel of land or the unusual character of an existing structure but not affecting generally the zoning district in which the land or structure is located;

b). Literal enforcement of the provision of this Ordinance for the district where the subject land or structure is located would involve substantial hardship, financial or otherwise, to the petitioner or appellant due to said special circumstances; and

c). Desirable relief could be granted without causing substantial detriment to the public good and without nullifying or substantially derogating from the intent and purpose of a specific district in this Ordinance or the Ordinance in general.

1. Front Setback

- a. The property is of an unusual shape, contains a steep slope, and relies on retaining walls due to the slope. These hardships make it difficult to construct a project which is both zoning compliant and harmonious with the neighborhood. With respect to the front setback, the lot has an unusual indent where Eastman Road meets the property. Behind where Eastman Road meets the property, the lot has another unusual, irregular indent and has an unusual frontage on Eastman Road which makes the front lot line difficult to utilize and which creates an issue with the front setback as the Somerville Zoning Ordinance requires it to be calculated for siting the buildings. The lot also slopes steeply away from Eastman Road, making construction difficult. There is no other property in the neighborhood of the size, shape, slope and frontage as this one. In addition, there are several two- and three-unit buildings on adjoining lots with extraordinarily large rear retaining walls supporting their building footprints. These hardships regarding the lot require relief. Had the hardships with the lot not existed, then no dimensional relief would have been required.

- b. Literal enforcement of the front setback requirement would involve substantial hardship because it would render the lot essentially unbuildable. The lot has an unusual indent where Eastman Road meets the property. Behind where Eastman Road meets the property, the lot has another unusual, irregular indent which prevents the Applicant from siting a building by the required front setback amount. The lot also slopes steeply away from Eastman Road, making construction difficult. Front setback relief is necessary to reasonably build on this lot and still have access to Eastman Road.
- c. The front setback relief can be granted without causing substantial detriment to the public good or substantially derogating from the intent and purpose of the NR district.

The relief will not cause substantial detriment to the public good because the unique step-down massing of the two buildings is specifically designed to gracefully fit into the steeply sloped landscape and to avoid large building retaining walls. This massing lowers the impact that a large, zoning-compliant building would impose, thereby reducing shadows on the abutting properties and fitting into the neighborhood in a manner not possible with a strict application of the new Somerville Zoning Ordinance.

The project will not substantially derogate from the intent and purpose of the NR district because it improves the existing vacant lot with two residential single-family structures in an NR zone, which is fitting for a residential zone such as this on a very large lot. This project meets the goals of the SomerVision strategic plan by creating transit-oriented, mixed-use neighborhood infill which enhances the lively, human-scaled and walkable character of the neighborhood, and by adding diverse housing stock through creating more family-sized units. The proposal is in compliance with SomerVision, such that allowing the relief will make Somerville a "healthier, more prosperous and more attractive place to live, work, play and raise a family", and "ensure that neighborhood properties can adapt and change to meet the needs of residents". This project will also provide, at great expense, protection to the abutters from slope-related issues.

Allowing the dimensional relief makes the project harmonious with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance and not injurious to neighborhood because lowering the buildings' height and reducing the size of the retaining walls addresses the comments from the Zoning Board of Appeals and reduces the neighborhood impacts of the project as requested by the neighbors. The proposed two single-family dwellings are in harmony with the purpose of the NR zoning district in which the property is located.

2. Side Setback (Southeast Side)

- a. The property is of an unusual shape, contains a steep slope, and relies on retaining walls due to the slope. These hardships make it difficult to construct a project which is both zoning compliant and harmonious with the neighborhood. With respect to the

side setback, the lot actually has four side setbacks due to an unusual indent where Eastman Road meets the property. All comply with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance requirements except for the Southeast setback, which is 1.5' short. At the Southeast side of the property, the lot has another unusual, irregular indent which creates an issue with that side setback as the Somerville Zoning Ordinance requires it to be calculated for siting the buildings. The lot also slopes steeply away from Eastman Road, making construction difficult. There is no other property in the neighborhood of the size, shape, slope and frontage as this one. In addition, there are several two- and three-unit buildings on adjoining lots with extraordinarily large rear retaining walls supporting their building footprints. These hardships regarding the lot require relief. Had the hardships with the lot not existed, then no dimensional relief would have been required.

- b. Literal enforcement of the side setback requirement would involve substantial hardship because it would render the lot essentially unbuildable. The lot has an unusual indent at the Southeast corner which prevents the Applicant from siting a building by the required side setback amount in that location. The lot also slopes steeply away from Eastman Road, making construction difficult. Side setback relief is necessary to reasonably build on this lot and still have access to Eastman Road.
- c. The side setback relief can be granted without causing substantial detriment to the public good or substantially derogating from the intent and purpose of the NR district.

The relief will not cause substantial detriment to the public good because the unique step-down massing of the two buildings is specifically designed to gracefully fit into the steeply sloped landscape and to avoid large building retaining walls. This massing lowers the impact that a large, zoning-compliant building would impose, thereby reducing shadows on the abutting properties and fitting into the neighborhood in a manner not possible with a strict application of the new Somerville Zoning Ordinance.

The project will not substantially derogate from the intent and purpose of the NR district because it improves the existing vacant lot with two residential single-family structures in an NR zone, which is fitting for a residential zone such as this on a very large lot. This project meets the goals of the SomerVision strategic plan by creating transit-oriented, mixed-use neighborhood infill which enhances the lively, human-scaled and walkable character of the neighborhood, and by adding diverse housing stock through creating more family-sized units. The proposal is in compliance with SomerVision, such that allowing the relief will make Somerville a "healthier, more prosperous and more attractive place to live, work, play and raise a family", and "ensure that neighborhood properties can adapt and change to meet the needs of residents". This project will also provide, at great expense, protection to the abutters from slope-related issues.

Allowing the dimensional relief makes the project harmonious with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance and not injurious to neighborhood because lowering the buildings'

height and reducing the size of the retaining walls addresses the comments from the Zoning Board of Appeals and reduces the neighborhood impacts of the project as requested by the neighbors. The proposed two single-family dwellings are in harmony with the purpose of the NR zoning district in which the property is located.

3. Building Width

- a. The property is of an unusual shape, contains a steep slope, and relies on retaining walls due to the slope. These hardships make it difficult to construct a project which is both zoning compliant and harmonious with the neighborhood. With respect to the width of the buildings, the lot has an unusual slope down from Eastman Road, an indent where Eastman Road meets the property, and an unusual frontage on Eastman Road which makes the buildings difficult to site. Behind where Eastman Road meets the property, the lot has another unusual, irregular indent. This all makes it difficult to site a building within the width requirements which will not cause the building to shade the neighbors and will not require extremely tall retaining walls. It is difficult to determine how to measure the building width under the unusual circumstances present at this location, which cause the building's shape to be irregular, with varying widths, however, there is no more than 28 feet of width along any two-story portion of building. There is no other property in the neighborhood of the size, shape, slope and frontage as this one. In addition, there are several two- and three-unit buildings on adjoining lots with extraordinarily large rear retaining walls supporting their building footprints. These hardships regarding the lot require relief. Had the hardships with the lot not existed, then no dimensional relief would have been required.
- b. Literal enforcement of the building width requirement would involve substantial hardship because it would render the lot essentially unbuildable without a tall building and large retaining walls. The lot has an unusual slope down from Eastman Road and an indent where Eastman Road meets the property. Behind where Eastman Road meets the property, the lot has another unusual, irregular indent. The lot also slopes steeply away from Eastman Road, making construction difficult. Building width relief is necessary to reasonably build on this lot, as the building must be irregularly shaped.
- c. The building width relief can be granted without causing substantial detriment to the public good or substantially derogating from the intent and purpose of the NR district.

The relief will not cause substantial detriment to the public good because the unique step-down massing of the two buildings is specifically designed to gracefully fit into the steeply sloped landscape and to avoid large building retaining walls. This massing lowers the impact that a large, zoning-compliant building would impose, thereby reducing shadows on the abutting properties and fitting into the neighborhood in a manner not possible with a strict application of the new Somerville Zoning Ordinance. This unusual massing does require relief for the building width, however.

The project will not substantially derogate from the intent and purpose of the NR district because it improves the existing vacant lot with two residential single-family structures in an NR zone, which is fitting for a residential zone such as this on a very large lot. This project meets the goals of the SomerVision strategic plan by creating transit-oriented, mixed-use neighborhood infill which enhances the lively, human-scaled and walkable character of the neighborhood, and by adding diverse housing stock through creating more family-sized units. The proposal is in compliance with SomerVision, such that allowing the relief will make Somerville a "healthier, more prosperous and more attractive place to live, work, play and raise a family", and "ensure that neighborhood properties can adapt and change to meet the needs of residents". This project will also provide, at great expense, protection to the abutters from slope-related issues.

Allowing the dimensional relief makes the project harmonious with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance and not injurious to neighborhood because lowering the buildings' height and reducing the size of the retaining walls addresses the comments from the Zoning Board of Appeals and reduces the neighborhood impacts of the project as requested by the neighbors. The proposed two single-family dwellings are in harmony with the purpose of the NR zoning district in which the property is located.

4. Ground Story Elevation

- a. The property is of an unusual shape, contains a steep slope, and relies on retaining walls due to the slope. These hardships make it difficult to construct a project which is both zoning compliant and harmonious with the neighborhood. With respect to the ground story elevation, the lot has an unusual slope down from Eastman Road which creates an issue with the ground story elevation as the Somerville Zoning Ordinance requires it to be calculated. This all makes it difficult to site a building within the elevation requirements. Measuring from the ground level to the entry doorway, there is 0.67 feet of ground story elevation where two feet is allowed. There is no other property in the neighborhood of the size, shape, slope and frontage as this one. In addition, there are several two- and three-unit buildings on adjoining lots with extraordinarily large rear retaining walls supporting their building footprints. These hardships regarding the lot require relief. Had the hardships with the lot not existed, then no dimensional relief would have been required.
- b. Literal enforcement of the ground floor elevation requirement would involve substantial hardship because it would render the lot essentially unbuildable. The lot has an unusual slope down from Eastman Road, making construction difficult. Ground floor elevation relief is necessary to reasonably build on this lot.
- c. The ground floor elevation relief can be granted without causing substantial detriment to the public good or substantially derogating from the intent and purpose of the NR district.

The relief will not cause substantial detriment to the public good because the unique step-down massing of the two buildings is specifically designed to gracefully fit into the steeply sloped landscape and to avoid large building retaining walls. This massing lowers the impact that a large, zoning-compliant building would impose, thereby reducing shadows on the abutting properties and fitting into the neighborhood in a manner not possible with a strict application of the new Somerville Zoning Ordinance. This massing on this lot does require relief for the ground floor elevation, however.

The project will not substantially derogate from the intent and purpose of the NR district because it improves the existing vacant lot with two residential single-family structures in an NR zone, which is fitting for a residential zone such as this on a very large lot. This project meets the goals of the SomerVision strategic plan by creating transit-oriented, mixed-use neighborhood infill which enhances the lively, human-scaled and walkable character of the neighborhood, and by adding diverse housing stock through creating more family-sized units. The proposal is in compliance with SomerVision, such that allowing the relief will make Somerville a "healthier, more prosperous and more attractive place to live, work, play and raise a family", and "ensure that neighborhood properties can adapt and change to meet the needs of residents". This project will also provide, at great expense, protection to the abutters from slope-related issues.

Allowing the dimensional relief makes the project harmonious with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance and not injurious to neighborhood because lowering the buildings' height and reducing the size of the retaining walls addresses the comments from the Zoning Board of Appeals and reduces the neighborhood impacts of the project as requested by the neighbors. The proposed two single-family dwellings are in harmony with the purpose of the NR zoning district in which the property is located.

5. Story Height

- a. The property is of an unusual shape, contains a steep slope, and relies on retaining walls due to the slope. These hardships make it difficult to construct a project which is both zoning compliant and harmonious with the neighborhood. With respect to the story height, the lot has an unusual slope down from Eastman Road which creates an issue with the story height as the Somerville Zoning Ordinance requires it to be calculated. This all makes it difficult to site a building within the height requirements. The highest story height is 15 feet, where a maximum of 12 feet is allowed, but this is needed to accommodate the stepping down of the building mass due to the unusually steep topography of the site. There is no other property in the neighborhood of the size, shape, slope and frontage as this one. In addition, there are several two- and three-unit buildings on adjoining lots with extraordinarily large rear retaining walls supporting their building footprints. These hardships regarding the lot

require relief. Had the hardships with the lot not existed, then no dimensional relief would have been required.

- b. Literal enforcement of the story height requirement would involve substantial hardship because it would render the lot essentially unbuildable. The lot has an unusual slope down from Eastman Road, making construction difficult. Story height relief is necessary to reasonably build on this lot.
- c. The story height relief can be granted without causing substantial detriment to the public good or substantially derogating from the intent and purpose of the NR district.

The relief will not cause substantial detriment to the public good because the unique step-down massing of the two buildings is specifically designed to gracefully fit into the steeply sloped landscape and to avoid large building retaining walls. This massing lowers the impact that a large, zoning-compliant building would impose, thereby reducing shadows on the abutting properties and fitting into the neighborhood in a manner not possible with a strict application of the new Somerville Zoning Ordinance. This massing on this lot does require relief for the story height, however. That said, from the street, the buildings will appear as two-story structures which will be lower in height than the house next to it.

The project will not substantially derogate from the intent and purpose of the NR district because it improves the existing vacant lot with two residential single-family structures in an NR zone, which is fitting for a residential zone such as this on a very large lot. This project meets the goals of the SomerVision strategic plan by creating transit-oriented, mixed-use neighborhood infill which enhances the lively, human-scaled and walkable character of the neighborhood, and by adding diverse housing stock through creating more family-sized units. The proposal is in compliance with SomerVision, such that allowing the relief will make Somerville a "healthier, more prosperous and more attractive place to live, work, play and raise a family", and "ensure that neighborhood properties can adapt and change to meet the needs of residents". This project will also provide, at great expense, protection to the abutters from slope-related issues.

Allowing the dimensional relief makes the project harmonious with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance and not injurious to neighborhood because lowering the buildings' height and reducing the size of the retaining walls addresses the comments from the Zoning Board of Appeals and reduces the neighborhood impacts of the project as requested by the neighbors. The proposed two single-family dwellings are in harmony with the purpose of the NR zoning district in which the property is located.

6. Number of Stories (1.5 Stories of Relief)

- a. The property is of an unusual shape, contains a steep slope, and relies on retaining walls due to the slope. These hardships make it difficult to construct a project which

is both zoning compliant and harmonious with the neighborhood. With respect to the number of stories, the lot has an unusual slope down from Eastman Road which creates an issue with the number of stories as the Somerville Zoning Ordinance requires it to be calculated. This all makes it difficult to site a building within the number of stories requirements. While 2.5 stories is allowed, the building is actually only 2 stories, but is 4 stories if the steep slope of the site is not taken into account. This would require 1.5 stories of relief. There is no other property in the neighborhood of the size, shape, slope and frontage as this one. In addition, there are several two- and three-unit buildings on adjoining lots with extraordinarily large rear retaining walls supporting their building footprints. These hardships regarding the lot require relief. Had the hardships with the lot not existed, then no dimensional relief would have been required.

- b. Literal enforcement of the number of stories requirement would involve substantial hardship because it would render the lot essentially unbuildable. The lot has an unusual slope down from Eastman Road, making construction difficult. Relief for the number of stories is necessary to reasonably build on this lot.
- c. The relief for the number of stories can be granted without causing substantial detriment to the public good or substantially derogating from the intent and purpose of the NR district.

The relief will not cause substantial detriment to the public good because the unique step-down massing of the two buildings is specifically designed to gracefully fit into the steeply sloped landscape and to avoid large building retaining walls. This massing lowers the impact that a large, zoning-compliant building would impose, thereby reducing shadows on the abutting properties and fitting into the neighborhood in a manner not possible with a strict application of the new Somerville Zoning Ordinance. This massing on this lot does require relief for the number of stories, however. That said, from the street, the buildings will appear as two-story structures which will be lower in height than the house next to it.

The project will not substantially derogate from the intent and purpose of the NR district because it improves the existing vacant lot with two residential single-family structures in an NR zone, which is fitting for a residential zone such as this on a very large lot. This project meets the goals of the SomerVision strategic plan by creating transit-oriented, mixed-use neighborhood infill which enhances the lively, human-scaled and walkable character of the neighborhood, and by adding diverse housing stock through creating more family-sized units. The proposal is in compliance with SomerVision, such that allowing the relief will make Somerville a "healthier, more prosperous and more attractive place to live, work, play and raise a family", and "ensure that neighborhood properties can adapt and change to meet the needs of residents". This project will also provide, at great expense, protection to the abutters from slope-related issues.

Allowing the dimensional relief makes the project harmonious with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance and not injurious to neighborhood because lowering the buildings' height and reducing the size of the retaining walls addresses the comments from the Zoning Board of Appeals and reduces the neighborhood impacts of the project as requested by the neighbors. The proposed two single-family dwellings are in harmony with the purpose of the NR zoning district in which the property is located.

7. Two Principal Structures on a Single Lot (Building Type)

- a. The property is of an unusual shape, contains a steep slope, and relies on retaining walls due to the slope. These hardships make it difficult to construct a project which is both zoning compliant and harmonious with the neighborhood. With respect to having two principal structures on the lot, the lot has an unusual indent where Eastman Road meets the property and has an unusual frontage on Eastman Road which makes the front lot line difficult to utilize and which creates an issue with having only one structure as the Somerville Zoning Ordinance requires as a building type. Behind where Eastman Road meets the property, the lot has another unusual, irregular indent which prevents the Applicant from siting a single two-unit building. The lot also slopes steeply away from Eastman Road, making construction difficult. There is no other property in the neighborhood of the size, shape, slope and frontage as this one. In addition, there are several two- and three-unit buildings on adjoining lots with extraordinarily large rear retaining walls supporting their building footprints. These hardships regarding the lot require relief. Had the hardships with the lot not existed, then no dimensional relief would have been required.
- b. Literal enforcement of the number of principal structures on a single lot requirement would involve substantial hardship because it would practically prevent the lot from being built in such a way as to have two units without large retaining walls and structure height. The lot has an unusual indent where Eastman Road meets the property. Behind where Eastman Road meets the property, the lot has another unusual, irregular indent which prevents the Applicant from siting a building by the required front setback amount. The lot also slopes steeply away from Eastman Road, making construction difficult. Relief for having more than one structure on the lot is necessary to reasonably build on this lot and still have access to Eastman Road.
- c. The relief for having two principal structures on one lot can be granted without causing substantial detriment to the public good or substantially derogating from the intent and purpose of the NR district.

The relief will not cause substantial detriment to the public good because the unique step-down massing and the breaking up of the project into two buildings is specifically designed to gracefully fit into the steeply sloped landscape and to avoid large building retaining walls. This massing, and having two structures, lowers the impact that a large, zoning-compliant building would impose, thereby reducing

shadows on the abutting properties and fitting into the neighborhood in a manner not possible with a strict application of the new Somerville Zoning Ordinance.

The project will not substantially derogate from the intent and purpose of the NR district because it improves the existing vacant lot with two residential single-family structures in an NR zone, which is fitting for a residential zone such as this on a very large lot. This project meets the goals of the SomerVision strategic plan by creating transit-oriented, mixed-use neighborhood infill which enhances the lively, human-scaled and walkable character of the neighborhood, and by adding diverse housing stock through creating more family-sized units. The proposal is in compliance with SomerVision, such that allowing the relief will make Somerville a "healthier, more prosperous and more attractive place to live, work, play and raise a family", and "ensure that neighborhood properties can adapt and change to meet the needs of residents". This project will also provide, at great expense, protection to the abutters from slope-related issues.

Allowing the dimensional relief makes the project harmonious with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance and not injurious to neighborhood because lowering the buildings' height and reducing the size of the retaining walls addresses the comments from the Zoning Board of Appeals and reduces the neighborhood impacts of the project as requested by the neighbors. The proposed two single-family dwellings are in harmony with the purpose of the NR zoning district in which the property is located.

8. Habitable Space Depth

- a. The property is of an unusual shape, contains a steep slope, and relies on retaining walls due to the slope. These hardships make it difficult to construct a project which is both zoning compliant and harmonious with the neighborhood. With respect to the habitable space depth of the buildings, the lot has an unusual slope down from Eastman Road, an indent where Eastman Road meets the property, and an unusual frontage on Eastman Road which makes the buildings difficult to site. Behind where Eastman Road meets the property, the lot has another unusual, irregular indent. This all makes it difficult to site a building within the width requirements which will not cause the building to shade the neighbors and will not require extremely tall retaining walls. Stepping the building down the steep slope of the site creates unusual circumstances, which cause the building's shape to be irregular, with varying habitable space depths. The building depths are shorter than allowed because of the way the buildings step down the steep hillside, and the slope does not allow for the allowed habitable space depths to be met. There is no other property in the neighborhood of the size, shape, slope and frontage as this one. In addition, there are several two- and three-unit buildings on adjoining lots with extraordinarily large rear retaining walls supporting their building footprints. These hardships regarding the lot require relief. Had the hardships with the lot not existed, then no dimensional relief would have been required.

- b. Literal enforcement of the habitable space depth requirement would involve substantial hardship because it would render the lot essentially unbuildable without a tall building and large retaining walls. The lot has an unusual slope down from Eastman Road and an indent where Eastman Road meets the property. Behind where Eastman Road meets the property, the lot has another unusual, irregular indent. The lot also slopes steeply away from Eastman Road, making construction difficult. Habitable depth relief is necessary to reasonably build on this lot, as the building must be irregularly shaped and steps down the hillside.
- c. The habitable space depth relief can be granted without causing substantial detriment to the public good or substantially derogating from the intent and purpose of the NR district.

The relief will not cause substantial detriment to the public good because the unique step-down massing of the two buildings is specifically designed to gracefully fit into the steeply sloped landscape and to avoid large building retaining walls. This massing lowers the impact that a large, zoning-compliant building would impose, thereby reducing shadows on the abutting properties and fitting into the neighborhood in a manner not possible with a strict application of the new Somerville Zoning Ordinance. This unusual massing does require relief for the habitable space depth, however.

The project will not substantially derogate from the intent and purpose of the NR district because it improves the existing vacant lot with two residential single-family structures in an NR zone, which is fitting for a residential zone such as this on a very large lot. This project meets the goals of the SomerVision strategic plan by creating transit-oriented, mixed-use neighborhood infill which enhances the lively, human-scaled and walkable character of the neighborhood, and by adding diverse housing stock through creating more family-sized units. The proposal is in compliance with SomerVision, such that allowing the relief will make Somerville a "healthier, more prosperous and more attractive place to live, work, play and raise a family", and "ensure that neighborhood properties can adapt and change to meet the needs of residents". This project will also provide, at great expense, protection to the abutters from slope-related issues.

Allowing the dimensional relief makes the project harmonious with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance and not injurious to neighborhood because lowering the buildings' height and reducing the size of the retaining walls addresses the comments from the Zoning Board of Appeals and reduces the neighborhood impacts of the project as requested by the neighbors. The proposed two single-family dwellings are in harmony with the purpose of the NR zoning district in which the property is located.

9. Parking in the Frontage Area (4 Spaces)

- a. The property is of an unusual shape, contains a steep slope, and relies on retaining walls due to the slope. These hardships make it difficult to construct a project which is both zoning compliant and harmonious with the neighborhood. With respect to the parking location, the lot has an unusual indent where Eastman Road meets the property and sits sideways in relation to the street. Behind where Eastman Road meets the property, the lot has another unusual, irregular indent and has an unusual frontage on Eastman Road which makes the side lot lines difficult to utilize for parking and which creates an issue with the parking location as the Somerville Zoning Ordinance does not allow for parking in the frontage area. Due to the configuration of the lot, there is no other place for the four parking spaces to go. The lot also slopes steeply away from Eastman Road, making parking difficult. There is no other property in the neighborhood of the size, shape, slope and frontage as this one. In addition, there are several two- and three-unit buildings on adjoining lots with extraordinarily large rear retaining walls supporting their building footprints. These hardships regarding the lot require relief. Had the hardships with the lot not existed, then no parking location relief would have been required.
- b. Literal enforcement of the no parking in the frontage area requirement would involve substantial hardship because it would prevent parking from being located on the lot. The lot has an unusual indent where Eastman Road meets the property. Behind where Eastman Road meets the property, the lot has another unusual, irregular indent which prevents the Applicant from siting parking on the sides. The lot also slopes steeply away from Eastman Road, making parking difficult. Frontage parking relief is necessary to reasonably park on this lot and still have access to Eastman Road.
- c. The frontage parking relief can be granted without causing substantial detriment to the public good or substantially derogating from the intent and purpose of the NR district.

The relief will not cause substantial detriment to the public good because having parking on site, which has to be located in the frontage area in order to exist at all, benefits the neighborhood by removing motor vehicles from the street.

The project will not substantially derogate from the intent and purpose of the NR district because it improves the existing vacant lot with two residential single-family structures in an NR zone, which is fitting for a residential zone such as this on a very large lot. This project meets the goals of the SomerVision strategic plan by creating transit-oriented, mixed-use neighborhood infill which enhances the lively, human-scaled and walkable character of the neighborhood, and by adding diverse housing stock through creating more family-sized units. The proposal is in compliance with SomerVision, such that allowing the relief will make Somerville a "healthier, more prosperous and more attractive place to live, work, play and raise a family", and "ensure that neighborhood properties can adapt and change to meet the needs of

residents". This project will also provide, at great expense, protection to the abutters from slope-related issues.

Allowing the frontage parking relief makes the project harmonious with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance and not injurious to neighborhood because removing cars from the street reduces the neighborhood impacts of the project. The proposed two single-family dwellings are in harmony with the purpose of the NR zoning district in which the property is located.

10. Driveway in the Frontage Area

- a. The property is of an unusual shape, contains a steep slope, and relies on retaining walls due to the slope. These hardships make it difficult to construct a project which is both zoning compliant and harmonious with the neighborhood. With respect to the driveway location, the lot has an unusual indent where Eastman Road meets the property and sits sideways in relation to the street. Behind where Eastman Road meets the property, the lot has another unusual, irregular indent and has an unusual frontage on Eastman Road which makes the side lot lines difficult to utilize for a driveway and which creates an issue with the driveway location as the Somerville Zoning Ordinance does not allow for a driveway in the frontage area. Due to the configuration of the lot, there is no other place for the driveway to go. The lot also slopes steeply away from Eastman Road, making driving and parking difficult. There is no other property in the neighborhood of the size, shape, slope and frontage as this one. In addition, there are several two- and three-unit buildings on adjoining lots with extraordinarily large rear retaining walls supporting their building footprints. These hardships regarding the lot require relief. Had the hardships with the lot not existed, then no driveway location relief would have been required.
- b. Literal enforcement of the no driveway in the frontage area requirement would involve substantial hardship because it would prevent a driveway and parking from being located on the lot. The lot has an unusual indent where Eastman Road meets the property. Behind where Eastman Road meets the property, the lot has another unusual, irregular indent which prevents the Applicant from siting a driveway on the sides. The lot also slopes steeply away from Eastman Road, making driving and parking difficult. Frontage driveway relief is necessary to reasonably drive and park on this lot and still have access to Eastman Road.
- c. The frontage driveway relief can be granted without causing substantial detriment to the public good or substantially derogating from the intent and purpose of the NR district.

The relief will not cause substantial detriment to the public good because having access to the parking on site, which driveway access has to be located in the frontage area in order to exist at all, benefits the neighborhood by removing motor vehicles from the street.

The project will not substantially derogate from the intent and purpose of the NR district because it improves the existing vacant lot with two residential single-family structures in an NR zone, which is fitting for a residential zone such as this on a very large lot. This project meets the goals of the SomerVision strategic plan by creating transit-oriented, mixed-use neighborhood infill which enhances the lively, human-scaled and walkable character of the neighborhood, and by adding diverse housing stock through creating more family-sized units. The proposal is in compliance with SomerVision, such that allowing the relief will make Somerville a "healthier, more prosperous and more attractive place to live, work, play and raise a family", and "ensure that neighborhood properties can adapt and change to meet the needs of residents". This project will also provide, at great expense, protection to the abutters from slope-related issues.

Allowing the frontage driveway relief makes the project harmonious with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance and not injurious to neighborhood because removing cars from the street reduces the neighborhood impacts of the project. The proposed two single-family dwellings are in harmony with the purpose of the NR zoning district in which the property is located.

11. Parking Space Dimensions (2 Spaces)

- a. The property is of an unusual shape, contains a steep slope, and relies on retaining walls due to the slope. These hardships make it difficult to construct a project which is both zoning compliant and harmonious with the neighborhood. With respect to the parking space dimensions for two of the parking spaces, the lot has an unusual indent where Eastman Road meets the property and sits sideways in relation to the street. Behind where Eastman Road meets the property, the lot has another unusual, irregular indent and has an unusual frontage on Eastman Road which makes the side lot lines difficult to utilize for parking and which creates an issue with the parking space dimensions for two of the parking spaces as the Somerville Zoning Ordinance does not allow for parking in the frontage area. Due to the configuration of the lot, Parking Space 1B requires relief for its size, and Parking Space 2A requires relief for its aisle dimensions. The lot slopes steeply away from Eastman Road, making parking difficult. There is no other property in the neighborhood of the size, shape, slope and frontage as this one. In addition, there are several two- and three-unit buildings on adjoining lots with extraordinarily large rear retaining walls supporting their building footprints. These hardships regarding the lot require relief. Had the hardships with the lot not existed, then no parking dimension relief would have been required.
- b. Literal enforcement of the parking dimensional requirements would involve substantial hardship because it would prevent adequate parking from being located on the lot. The lot has an unusual indent where Eastman Road meets the property. Behind where Eastman Road meets the property, the lot has another unusual, irregular indent which prevents the Applicant from siting compliant parking spaces on the

sides. The lot also slopes steeply away from Eastman Road, making parking difficult. Dimensional parking relief for two of the spaces is necessary to adequately park on this lot and still have access to Eastman Road.

- c. The dimensional parking relief for two of the spaces can be granted without causing substantial detriment to the public good or substantially derogating from the intent and purpose of the NR district.

The relief will not cause substantial detriment to the public good because having parking on site benefits the neighborhood by removing motor vehicles from the street.

The project will not substantially derogate from the intent and purpose of the NR district because it improves the existing vacant lot with two residential single-family structures in an NR zone, which is fitting for a residential zone such as this on a very large lot. This project meets the goals of the SomerVision strategic plan by creating transit-oriented, mixed-use neighborhood infill which enhances the lively, human-scaled and walkable character of the neighborhood, and by adding diverse housing stock through creating more family-sized units. The proposal is in compliance with SomerVision, such that allowing the relief will make Somerville a "healthier, more prosperous and more attractive place to live, work, play and raise a family", and "ensure that neighborhood properties can adapt and change to meet the needs of residents". This project will also provide, at great expense, protection to the abutters from slope-related issues.

Allowing the dimensional parking relief for two of the spaces makes the project harmonious with the Somerville Zoning Ordinance and not injurious to neighborhood because removing cars from the street reduces the neighborhood impacts of the project. The proposed two single-family dwellings are in harmony with the purpose of the NR zoning district in which the property is located.