

## DEVELOPMENT NARRATIVE

Property: 0 Fremont Street  
Applicant: Joe Salamone  
Zoning District: Neighborhood Residential (NR)  
Application Type: Special Permit

The property consists of 5,657 square feet of vacant land located within the Neighborhood Residential (NR) district and is known as 0 Fremont St. The proposal is to construct an attractive duplex style building type that is compatible with the characteristics of the surrounding area and land uses. Site plans, architectural and landscape plans were all thoughtfully created to preserve and enhance the slope of the lot and will greatly enhance the neighborhood. There will be no negative impact on the neighborhood and the surrounding area.

The lot is bounded by 128.6 feet on East Albion Street and 56 feet on Fremont Street. Both streets are listed in Article 1 of the City of Somerville List of Public and Private Streets as having a 40 foot width (an excerpt from the list is included for reference).

Approximately 30% of the frontage on Fremont Street is improved with pavement. There is also public access connecting the Northern section of Fremont Street to the Southern section. The frontage on East Albion Street is also improved with public utilities and access.

It was established that the lot was created prior to any recorded Somerville Zoning and meets the criteria of the grandfather clause under Chapter 40A, Section 6, which provides in part; "Any increase in area, frontage, width, yard or depth requirements of a zoning ordinance or by-law shall not apply to a lot for single and two-family residential use which at the time of recording conformed to then existing requirements and had less than the proposed requirement but at least 5,000 square feet of area and 50 feet of frontage" (see attached legal findings).

Prior to 1925 the City of Somerville did not have any adopted zoning and there were no yard requirements. As a result, many homes were allowed to be built directly out to the lot lines i.e., zero lot line (see attached parcel map). However, the Planning Department determined that this proposal should follow the setback requirements of the 1925 Somerville Zoning Ordinance for corner lots specifically; Section 3 (g), Section 11 (a) and Section 12 (a) which allows Fremont Street to be designated as the front yard (10 feet) and East Albion Street to be designated as the side yard (6-feet) without reference to the building arrangement. This recommendation was followed and is reflected in the current plan set.

This project was originally designed under the previous Somerville Zoning Ordinance and an application for a Special Permit required by the Slope Protection Ordinance was filed on Nov 4, 2019. Since the project did not proceed to a public hearing prior to the enactment of the new Somerville Zoning Ordinance adopted on Dec 12, 2019, it was redesigned and re-filed on Sep 1, 2020 under the new zoning. The Citizenserve Application File No. is: CZC20-000006.

The current design resulted in a substantially smaller footprint (13'-7" shorter in width than the previous design that was filed under the old zoning).

The proposal provides primary access from East Albion Street and secondary access via Fremont Street. The proposed main facade situated on East Albion Street would be setback approximately 20 feet from the existing edge of pavement, the facade on Fremont Street is setback 10 feet from the street lot line and both facades conform to the fenestration and building component requirements in the new zoning.

The proposed landscape architecture and green score of 0.62 versus the minimum score of 0.35 will ensure that the natural topography and drainage patterns of the land are maintained.

A neighborhood meeting was held and the discussion mainly centered on parking. The consensus was that four on street parking spaces versus the three that were being initially proposed was more desirable. The plans were revised to include the additional parking space and are included in the current plan set provided with the application. (Meeting minutes filed with application)

On Feb 3, 2021, the planner for the project arrived at the conclusion that the segment of Fremont Street that fronts the lot does not meet the definition of "Street" and thus cannot be considered a "Corner Lot" as defined in the Dec. 2019 Zoning Ordinance even though the southerly portion of Fremont Street is paved and provides vehicular access to the lot. It was also concluded that the; front yard setback must be on East Albion Street, the side yard on Fremont Street and rear yard on the interior lot line. This would create a non-conforming lot i.e., the lot would not meet a depth of 70 feet required by the Dec. 2019 Zoning.

Since, the current yard setbacks shown on the plans exceed the minimum required dimensions for this lot (zero lot line) as established by the grandfather clause, the definition of "Street" and "Corner Lot" is moot and the setbacks required by the Dec. 2019 zoning should be waived.