

EXHIBIT G

Project Narrative

[See Attached.]

CITY OF SOMERVILLE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT APPLICATION

Pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 40B, §§ 20-23

APPLICANT: Preservation of Affordable Housing LLC, Gate Residential Properties, LLC and The Somerville Community Corporation, Inc.

SUBJECT PROPERTY: 125, 139, 153 Alewife Brook Parkway
268, 268R, 278 Powder House Boulevard
24, 34, 34R North Street

PROJECT NAME: "Clarendon Hill"

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION: M.G.L. Chapter 40B §§ 20-23 (the "Statute") and 760 CMR 56.00 (the "Regulations")

Preservation of Affordable Housing, LLC, Gate Residential Properties, LLC and The Somerville Community Corporation, Inc. (collectively, the "Applicant") is submitting this application pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 40B, §21 for a Comprehensive Permit for a portion of property located at 278 Powder House Boulevard, Somerville (the "Project Site"). The entities that finance, build, and own the proposed buildings will be affiliates of the Applicant. The proposed project entitled "Clarendon Hill" consists of the construction of up to five hundred and ninety-one (591) rental dwelling units, of which 216 will be affordable to households earning no more than sixty percent (60%) of the Area Median Income (AMI), sixteen (16) will be affordable to households earning no more than eighty percent (80%) of AMI, sixty-four (64) will be affordable to households earning no more than one hundred and ten (110%) of AMI, and two hundred and ninety-five (295) will be unrestricted.¹ The 216 units will be considered replacement units for the existing 216 units of state public housing, and the affordability limits for all income-restricted units will be enforced in accordance with applicable state and local regulations and guidelines.

The Statute and the Regulations have established a Subsidized Housing Inventory ("SHI") maintained by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development ("DHCD") that lists each municipality's percentage of low and moderate income units. The most recent SHI listing, dated September 14, 2017, shows the City of Somerville at 9.7%, short of the threshold of 10%. While recent development in the City has brought new affordable units on-line, the local and regional demand for affordable

¹ See Affordability Chart attached below.

housing far outpaces the available supply. In response, the proposed development will bring up to 591 much needed rental units to the community. The Applicant believes, for all the reasons hereinafter set forth, that the project meets all of the requirements for a Comprehensive Permit under the Statute, that it will be a benefit to the City of Somerville, and that a Comprehensive Permit should be issued.

STANDING AND STATUS:

The Applicant meets jurisdictional requirements of the Regulations and has standing before the Zoning Board of Appeals, based on the following:

a) Control of the Land

In 2016, the Somerville Housing Authority issued a Request for Proposals (“RFP”) in connection with the contemplated redevelopment. On June 28, 2016, the Somerville Housing Authority designated Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH), Gate Residential, and Somerville Community Corporation as the designated developer. A Land Disposition Agreement is currently underway and upon execution, the Applicant will enter into a ninety-nine (99) year ground lease with the Somerville Housing Authority, providing control of the land as required by the Regulations, 760 CMR 56.04(1)(c).

b) Project Eligibility

The Applicant has received a Project Eligibility Letter dated 4/6/2018 from the Department of Housing and Community Development (“DHCD”) under the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (“LIHTC”) Program that confirms the project’s eligibility and suitability of the Site. *A copy of the Project Eligibility Letter is submitted herewith.* Therefore, the Applicant fulfills the requirement of 760 CMR 56.04(1)(b), which states: “The project shall be fundable under a subsidizing agency under a low and moderate income subsidy program.” See 760 CMR 54.04(1), which states that compliance with the project eligibility requirements shall be established by issuance of a written determination of Project Eligibility by the Subsidizing Agency.

Since the project details have changed since the issuance of the Project Eligibility Letter, DHCD is preparing an updated letter that will be submitted under separate cover.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY:

The existing property was built in the 1940s and consists of nine brick masonry 3-story buildings. Despite the Somerville Housing Authority’s best efforts, the buildings are distressed and have significant deferred maintenance, and the building systems are well past their useful life. Furthermore, the unit layouts are not adequate for modern requirements. The proposed redevelopment will replace the existing unit mix of 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom apartments with newly constructed units.

PROPOSED PROJECT:

a.) Project Design

i. Site Design

The proposed Clarendon Hill development will replace two hundred and sixteen (216) existing state public housing units with a newly constructed development consisting of up to five hundred and ninety-one (591) rental dwelling units within four (4) buildings and thirty-four (34) townhomes along with related infrastructure, including a community park.

The Applicant, along with the design team, have a demonstrated a commitment to community-responsive architecture. ICON Architecture, a Boston-based firm with extensive local experience in award-winning design, is providing master-planning services with additional design work from Copley-Wolff landscape architects and Davis Square Architects.

The team will redevelop and transform the obsolete Clarendon Hill development into a vibrant mixed-income community, reconnected to its surrounding neighborhood with new streets, parks and a variety of building types. Plans call for a higher density community that gradually transitions from the scale of the surrounding Somerville residential neighborhood into the site. Up to five hundred and ninety-one (591) housing units will replace the existing 216 units, in a range of housing types comprised of 4 highrise buildings and 34 townhouses, envisioned to engage a new public realm.

The orthogonal grid of the bounding neighborhood will be extended onto the site in the new plan, with new streets running perpendicular to the existing Powder House, North and Hamilton Streets. The steeply sloping hillside dropping from North Street down to the Alewife Brook Parkway will be managed with new sloping streets and sidewalks, allowing residents to walk throughout the site, rather than only around it. The enhanced street network will provide improved pedestrian and vehicular access to the new townhouses and apartment buildings. The streetscape character will be defined with parallel parking on both sides of the street, reinforced by comfortably-sized sidewalks at the back of the curb and street tree plantings and gardens. Parking is provided within the neighborhood—in a combination of below grade and on street parking—at a ratio of 0.6 cars per unit.

At the heart of the new community, new parks will be programmed for active and passive recreation to invite all residents. New parks will be connected by the network of sidewalks that link these critical spaces with the greater Somerville community making them destinations as well as providing opportunities for spontaneous meetings with neighbors. Long-term and short-term bicycle parking will be provided throughout the site.

- North Street Park – will be an extension of the existing playground along North Street, providing an inviting, landscaped entry to the site. The community center in Building D will overlook this new park. This new quarter-acre park will be programmed with the community residents, and will include comfortable seating

and gathering spaces to balance the more active uses of the existing adjacent playground. It will also provide a well landscaped garden to buffer the adjacent roadways.

- **The Building A/B Plaza** – features a pedestrian connection between the buildings, allowing resident to overlook the Alewife Brook Park across the Parkway. Common amenity areas will line this plaza, allowing spaces and activities to flow out into the plaza during nice weather. The south facing plaza will provide ample gathering and seating opportunities. The proposed plantings will both provide public areas as well as private patios for the surrounding units.
- **Inner Community Park** – will be centrally located within the site, and may incorporate an amphitheater into its slope. It will provide a central meeting space for residents in Buildings A/B, E and D.

ii. Building and Unit Design

The units have an efficient design. Each apartment home will have a fully equipped kitchen and at least one full bathroom. Each unit will have windows that provide generous lighting and natural ventilation. The unit design ensures acoustic privacy, efficient circulation, and adequate internal storage.

Major new building designs include:

- **Townhouse style three-bedroom units** – will form the block nearest to the North Street and Powder House intersection, to transition the scale of the existing residential neighborhood onto this site. Townhouse units will wrap around a centered landscaped area, where private back yards will be provided for each unit. Located along the new streets, the townhouses will have inviting front door stoops, offering doors and “eyes on the street.” Although building heights vary from two to three stories, the individual townhouse widths are expressed through the use of bays and varying roof forms, and each unit is clearly marked with its own front door off the sidewalk. Cementitious siding is the primary exterior cladding, highlighted by varied bays and differentiated window systems. The design character of the townhouses will work well with the “Craftsman” style of the surrounding neighborhood, with hipped and pitched roofs and dormered forms. The variety allows an individual expression for each residence.
- **Four Highrise apartment buildings** – varying in height from 7 to 10 stories, will step down along Alewife Brook Parkway and the Hamilton Street extension. The placement of these taller buildings on the lower areas of the site will reduce their perceived scale. As requested by the neighbors, the taller buildings along Alewife Brook Parkway help provide a buffer to the traffic for the rest of the site. Elevating these buildings over a parking podium both tucks the parking out of view, and raises the livable floors an appropriate dimension above street level for unit privacy.

The ground levels of Buildings B and D will have new community and amenity spaces lining the street and plaza areas. A plaza between Buildings A & B will incorporate a plaza/breezeway connecting residents to views out over the Alewife Brook Park across the parkway. An open plaza on the southern side of the breezeway will engage residents to sit and relax.

The buildings will be distinguished with a variety of materials, including masonry, siding and metals. Ground floors will highlight entry lobbies, while upper levels of the buildings will be banded with an ornamental cladding, suggesting a visually lighter upper story, and clearly differentiating a base, middle and top for the structures.

iii. Phasing Plan

The new neighborhood will be built in two construction phases. Phase One will edge the Alewife Brook Parkway and include Buildings A, B and E. The second and final phase of construction will complete the build out of the site, extending to North Street with Building D and the Townhouses.

iv. Storm Water Management

Storm water drainage systems would be sized to comply with City of Somerville requirements. Special attention will be given to site surface drainage such that the removal of surface waters will not adversely affect neighboring properties or the public storm drainage system. Storm water shall be removed from all roofs, canopies, and powered area, and routed through a well-engineered system designed with appropriate storm-water management techniques. Skimming devices, oil and grease traps, and similar facilities at the collection or discharge points for paved surface runoff will be used to retain oils, greases, and particles. The project will use best management practices (BMPs) to control storm water quality and quantity.

v. Green/Sustainable Design Features

The development team has a strong track record of incorporating ambitious energy-efficiency and other green and sustainable features into their projects, and they plan to do the same at Clarendon Hill. The team will work closely with the design team to develop high-performing building assemblies and mechanical systems, carry out building envelope testing, and in other ways make the project as green and sustainable as it can be.

The team proposes to implement the following principles and strategies, to the degree they are financially feasible:

vi. Site Design

- Low-impact site development techniques

- On-site infiltration and recharge of storm water runoff with bio-retention drainage systems
- Locally-appropriate low water consumption plantings
- Maximum retention of natural land features such as major tree groupings, open spaces, and site grades
- Community garden space, shared courtyard space and recreational spaces
- Maximum use of east-west oriented buildings and roofs to increase passive solar heat gain and natural daylighting within residential units

vii. Building Design – Green/Sustainable Features

- Roof plans designed and oriented to allow immediate or future installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) system to offset electricity demand
- High performance exterior wall and roof assemblies to reduce heating and cooling loads,
- Advanced fresh air ventilation (intake and exhaust), incorporating continuous exhaust ventilation to promote good indoor air quality
- ENERGY STAR rated windows, appliances, and lighting fixtures
- High-efficiency hot water storage tanks
- Light colored roofing materials to reduce attic heat buildup
- Specialized details to prevent issues of indoor mold
- Use of low VOC paint, sealants, and flooring
- Low water consumption plumbing fixtures
- Building materials with a high degree of recycled content and durability.

b.) Affordability

As referenced above, the new rental dwelling units will include a mix of affordable and unrestricted units. The affordable units are affordable in perpetuity. The proposed mix by building follows:

Unit Type	Building A/B	Building D	Building E	Townhouses	Total
Replacement Public Housing (<60% AMI)	15	43	130	28	216
Affordable (80% AMI)	16				16
Affordable (110% AMI)	5	15	38	6	64
Unrestricted	295				295
Total	331	58	168	34	591

c.) Municipal Impacts

A transportation Impact Assessment prepared by Design Consultants, Inc. dated September 2019 is submitted herewith.

Stormwater Management diagrams prepared by Design Consultants, Inc. dated October 2019 are submitted herewith.

The Applicant does not anticipate any negative impacts. All local boards and departments will have the opportunity to provide comments relating to any impact on town services to the Zoning Board of Appeals and those comments can be addressed during the scope of the hearing process.

d.) Municipal Support

As stated above, the Somerville Housing Authority issued a RFP in connection with the contemplated development of affordable housing on the Project Site and awarded the RFP to the Applicant as the developer of the project.

The Applicant has participated in a community process over the last three years including eleven community-wide public meetings, monthly meetings with resident groups, meetings with City agencies and committees including the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development, Community Preservation Commission, Design

Review Committee, Bike Committee, and others. The Applicant believes that this period of robust outreach has resulted in extensive public support for the proposed project.

Additionally, the Applicant submitted a request for financing in the amount of \$10 million from the City, from various sources likely including the Community Preservation Committee. This local commitment was granted on June 4, 2018 in a letter outlining conditions of funding.

REQUESTED RELIEF FROM LOCAL BY-LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS:

See Requested Waivers submitted herewith.

CONCLUSION:

For all the above reasons, the Applicant respectfully submits that the relief requested should be granted and that a Comprehensive Permit should be issued as requested in the Application.