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Project Summary

In accordance with Article 15 of the City of Somerville Zoning Code (the “Ordinance”), 74M Property Owner, LLC (the “Proponent”), respectfully submits this development review application (DRA) to initiate the site plan review and approval process.

The Proponent proposes to redevelop approximately 1.15 acres of land at 74 Middlesex Avenue in the Assembly Square Mixed Use District (ASMD) of Somerville, Massachusetts (the “Project Site,”), with construction of one building containing up to approximately 494,000 SF of office, research and development (R&D), lab, and retail uses, and construction of a new civic space, (collectively the “Project”, or the “74 Middlesex Project”).

This DRA is specifically to review and approve the new 494,000 SF building that is most consistent with the commercial building typology (the “Building”).¹ The Building will be constructed on a lot along the north edge of the Project Site located between the proposed Civic Space and McGrath Highway. A concurrent DRA has been submitted for the construction of a Neighborhood Park typology civic space immediately south of the Building, referred to herein as the “Neighborhood Park” or the “Kensington Neighborhood Park.”

Recognizing the unique opportunity to enhance the ASMD through the transformation of the Project Site and its current uses, the Proponent proposes a Class A life science building that seeks to raise the bar for sustainable buildings in the City of Somerville. The Project will transform the Project Site into a hub of office/lab/R&D and retail activity, which will help knit together the fabric of Middlesex Avenue and serve as the gateway to the ASMD. Notably, the Project proposes significant improvements to the adjacent lot (the “City Parcels” or “Lot 2”) that extends from the Project Site southeast to the edge of the existing Public Storage facility on Middlesex Avenue. The Proposed site improvements will enhance the connection between the ASMD and the open space, commercial uses and residential neighborhoods of Somerville to the west of the elevated Interstate 93 off-ramp (the “Off-Ramp”, “I-93”) and below the I-93 Kensington Street Underpass (the “Kensington Underpass”). This connection will be further strengthened by an improved streetscape, and new occupants and visitors who will enliven the area on a consistent and daily basis. The Project will also diminish the visual impact of the

¹ Section 7.4 of the Zoning Code does not codify a superseding zoning district for the ASMD. Consistent with the Approved Master Plan Special Permit, the Project is most consistent with the commercial building typology in Section 5.1.8 of the Zoning Code.

elevated roadway and highway ramps from the ASMD. Refer to Figure 1.1 for a neighborhood context diagram.

This chapter describes the existing site conditions, Project review history, the proposed Building, conformance to key requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, the Project schedule, and summarizes the Project-related public benefits.

1.1 Existing Conditions

The 74 Middlesex Project is proposed on a 0.85-acre Project Site that is bounded by McGrath Highway to the north, Middlesex Avenue to the east, Marginal Road and the I-93 off-ramp to the west and Kensington Avenue and the existing Public Storage building to the south. Kensington Avenue cuts through the middle of the Project Site and creates a vehicular and pedestrian connection between Middlesex Avenue and McGrath Highway.

The Building will be located on an approximately 0.85 acre lot that is bounded by Neighborhood Park to the south, Marginal Road to the west, McGrath Highway to the north and Middlesex Avenue to the east. Refer to Figure 1.2 for an existing conditions plan.

Refer to Appendix A for the plot plan.

1.2 Project Site Review History

1.2.1 City of Somerville Review

On February 19, 2020, the Proponent filed a Master Plan Special Permit (MPSP) application with the City of Somerville. On June 11, 2020 the Somerville Planning Board issued a decision approving the Master Plan Special Permit (the “Approved Master Plan”). The Proponent plans to submit simultaneously DRAs to initiate the Site Plan review and approval process for both the building and the Neighborhood Park.

The Approved Master Plan comprised up to:

- › 498,000 SF of office/lab/R&D;
- › 27,000 SF of retail use;
- › Publicly accessible and sustainably designed civic space;
- › Substantial public realm improvements; and
- › Project-related parking (up to 350 below-grade spaces).

1.3 Project Description

The Proponent is proposing a mixed-use redevelopment project consisting of one new office/R&D/lab building with ground-floor retail and restaurant space,

comprising up to approximately 494,000 SF. This transformational development will deliver up to approximately:

- › 489,500 SF of commercial office/R&D use;
- › 4,500 SF of retail use;
- › Project-related parking (up to 350 below-grade spaces); and
- › Loading and service uses.

The final mix of uses depicted in Table 1-1 will vary depending on market conditions at the time the Project is constructed but will not exceed the maximum approved dimensions or the maximum impacts as analyzed throughout the City review process.

The proposed Building rises approximately 16 stories, to a height of approximately 245 feet from grade to the top of the structural beam of the upper most habitable story. Depending on the final mix of uses, the floor-to-floor height and the total number of floors may change slightly; however, the Project will not exceed the maximum approved height.

Refer to Figure 1.4 for an illustrative site plan, and Figures 1.6a to 1.7c for figures detailing significant views and building massing diagrams. Please also refer to Figure 2.1 for a massing diagram.

Table 1-1 Program Table

Use/Element	Approximate Dimensions/Quantity¹
Office/Lab/R&D	489,500 SF
Retail	4,500 SF
Project Subtotal	494,000 SF
Below-Grade Parking	Up to 350 spaces ²
Building Height	245 feet ³

1 Inclusive of all building space, including mechanical spaces. Zoning Gross Floor Area not yet defined.

2 350 Total motor vehicle parking spaces (including 313 accessory motor vehicle parking spaces with up to an additional 37 aisle parking spaces available for valet parking operations).

3 Measured from average finished grade to the top of the structural beam of joists of the upper most habitable story. The Building anticipates two additional mechanical penthouse floors (approximately 40 feet to the top of the mechanical penthouse).

1.3.1 Building Design Summary

The Building is articulated to have a base, middle and top. The lowest two levels express the structural bays and frame storefronts, entries or other zones that are set back from the face of the tower above. The storefront glazing area is maximized along retail, lobby and entry programs. Clear low iron glazing is used to minimize glass opacity and increase transparency for an animated active base. Above the first floor the design incorporates a structural canopy that coordinates with storefronts and provides mitigation for wind impacts on pedestrians. The canopy along the east,

west and north are relatively shallow and help to define the active programming at the base. The southern canopy is proposed to be deeper to provide solar shading along the Neighborhood Park. The underside of the canopy is anticipated to be clad in wood and will taper up towards a thin fascia expression. Columns along the southern side are expressed as free standing and detached from the storefronts along the lobby.

The middle of the tower is expressed as a series of grouped horizontal and verticals. Vertical two-story tall metal panels are bracketed by thin, deep projecting horizontal mullion caps at every other floor. Between the double height vertical metal panels are large, glazed areas made up of highly efficient triple glazed insulating units.

The top of the building proposes a double height mechanical penthouse. The massing of the northern and southern sides are angled in plan to create dynamic form and are clad in painted metal panels in a vertical shingle expression. The east and west sides of the Building top embrace the verticality of the overall massing. Monumental reveals in the building massing continue from grade to the upper most portions. These monumental reveals are wider at the top in an attempt reduce some of the perceived weight of the building massing.

The building is composed of a refined palette of materials in various applications. Metal panels are finished in a bronze-colored decorative paint system with randomized textured splatter to create a natural patinated look. Tower glazing is comprised of low iron units with a slight brown-grey solar tint. Glazing at the base of the building is made up of highly transparent low iron units to maximize transparency. At grade a black granite base with a leathered finish is used under storefronts and for various steps. The aluminum mullions of the tower curtain wall and storefront glazing will be painted in a black-grey paint system. The undersides of the canopy are intended on being clad in real wood boards detailed with shiplap joints. The entry vestibule is expressed as an extrusion and is planned to be clad on the inside and out with natural bronze that will age and develop a patina.

The Proponent is proposing to incorporate a green roof with 10-inch depth on approximately 6,200 SF of roof area not occupied by mechanical systems and another one with 6-inch depth on approximately 2,700 SF at the second-floor canopy.

Active Ground Floor Uses

Great care was taken to locate active programs along Middlesex Avenue and along the Neighborhood Park. We anticipate two active food and beverage-type tenants along the east edge of the Building fronting Middlesex Avenue. Exterior seating/cafe zones are planned to encourage retail tenants to consider active vibrant programs on the inside and outside of their spaces. The southern edge of the Building abutting the Neighborhood Park is planned to be a multipurpose lobby containing various activities intended on maintaining a dynamic environment. Informal café-style seating, bike storage and repair, and a café or juice bar are all imagined to

complement the typical lobby activities of entry, egress and security screening. Additionally, the lobby is planning to project through the base of the building making a connection towards the north and the future development that is anticipated to occur. Internally, we are exploring the potential to accommodate sliding interior partitions along portions of one of the retail tenants to allow for the lobby to be activated by this additional programming.

1.3.2 Zoning Compliance Summary Table

The summary in Table 1-2 below outlines the Project's conformance to key provisions of the Approved Master Plan. Refer to Table 2-1 of Chapter 2, *Zoning Compliance Narrative* for a detailed summary of the Project's compliance with massing and lot standards.

Table 1-2 Master Plan Special Permit Zoning Compliance Summary Table

Requirement	MPSP	Proposed	Compliant
<i>Project Site</i>	0.85 Acres (37,075 SF)	0.85 Acres (36,932 SF)	Yes
<i>Total Buildout SF</i>	498,000	494,000	Yes
<i>Building Type</i>	Commercial	Commercial	Yes
Maximum Height	275 ft.	245 ft.	Yes
Floor Area Ratio	14.2	12.1	Yes
Civic Space (Min) ¹	25%	26% (13,055 SF)	Yes

¹ Consistent with the Approved Master Plan, the Project will construct an approximately 13,055 SF neighborhood park civic space. This will satisfy the 25 percent Civic Space requirement in the ASMD pursuant to Section 7.4.6 of the Zoning Ordinance.

1.4 Public Realm Improvements

Proposed public realm improvements associated with the Project aim to holistically enhance the pedestrian and cyclist experience and promote a safe and active streetscape environment. Improvements to Middlesex Avenue, McGrath Highway, and Marginal Road are being proposed as part of the Project. Along the southern portion of the site, the existing Kensington Avenue will be transformed into a plaza, with emergency vehicle access only, and will be part of a new Neighborhood Park. Proposed improvement for each of the street frontage segments include:

Middlesex Avenue

Public Realm Improvements along Middlesex Avenue are designed to promote pedestrian and cyclist circulation and encourage an active streetscape. Design along Middlesex Ave will incorporate proposed right-of-way improvements currently in development by the City of Somerville. Consistent with the City's design intent, the Project proposes the removal of on-street parking and the introduction of a

protected bike lane along the Project Site's frontage. The streetscape will also provide street trees with below ground silva cell infrastructure, bike racks, a BlueBikes station, benches, and lighting in accordance with City guidelines. Seating areas adjacent to proposed retail will provide outdoor seating opportunities and will further activate the pedestrian zone.

McGrath Highway

Improvements along McGrath Highway include street trees and an extension of the curb line to introduce a wider pedestrian zone to the northern side of the Project Site. A green buffer/furnishing zone will provide landscape area and create a pleasant pedestrian experience. Permeable pavers within the furnishing zone will promote tree root growth and reduce the amount of impervious area associated with the Project. A proposed building entrance and partial retail frontage along McGrath Highway will help to activate this portion of the Project Site.

Marginal Road

Marginal Road public realm improvements along the west side of the Project Site include the introduction of a wide pedestrian zone along the building frontage. Below-grade parking garage access as well as loading and service areas for the Building are located along this portion of Marginal Road. This area is expected to be a low traffic pedestrian zone and largely utilized for service and back of house activities. Access to the interior bike storage room is proposed at the southern end of the Marginal Road frontage.

1.5 Parking Summary

Structured Vehicular Parking

The Project will provide up to 350 below-grade parking spaces that will be available to tenants and the public. The Project proposes approximately 313 accessory motor vehicle parking spaces with up to an additional 37 aisle parking spaces available for valet parking operations. The below-grade parking spaces will be accessed from a ramp located adjacent to the loading bays that service the Project on Marginal Road. Vehicle parking spaces will comply with the dimensional specifications in the City's Zoning Ordinance.

Bicycle Parking

The Project will include short- and long-term bicycle parking storage in compliance with the City of Somerville's guidelines to encourage cycling as a strong alternative transportation mode. Based on the current design, the Project proposes a minimum of 101 interior secured bicycle parking spaces on the first floor (including 11 oversized bike spaces), directly left of the main lobby entrance, as well as short-term bicycle parking spaces. Approximately 8 short-term bicycle parking spaces will be located along the Middlesex Avenue edge of the building, in proximity to the

Building lobby, retail outdoor seating, and protected bike lane. These spaces will comply with the dimensional specifications in the City's Zoning Ordinance.

Please refer to Figure 1.14 of Chapter 1, *Project Summary* for a plan depicting the location of the long-term interior bicycle parking on the first level and the conceptual location for short-term bicycle parking.

1.6 Sustainability Summary

The Building will be designed to comply with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance as shown in Table 1-3.

Table 1-3 Sustainable Development Summary

Building	Required	Code Section	Proposed	Compliant
Building	LEED Platinum Certifiable	10.11.1	LEED Platinum Certifiable	Yes

Refer to Appendix D for the required sustainability documentation, which includes a preliminary LEED scorecard which shows one potential path for the Project to achieve LEEDV4.1 BD+C for Core and Shell Platinum certifiability. Appendix D also provides a preliminary LEED credit narrative, an affidavit signed by a LEED-Accredited Professional (LEED-AP), and the Sustainable and Resilient Building Questionnaire.

1.7 Building Schedule

The Building will be developed and constructed over three to four years. This timeframe may be extended depending on market conditions. The following summarizes associated activities during each phase of construction.

- › Demolition and site enabling work – Q3 2022;
- › Construction commencement – Q3 2022;
- › Substantial completion of the Building (core/shell) – Q1 2024; and
- › Tenant Fit-out work – Market-dependent; likely commencing – Q3 2023.

1.8 Summary of Project Benefits

Urban Design and Public Realm

- › The Project will provide iconic contemporary architecture that will create a memorable gateway to the Assembly Square Neighborhood, and for vehicles traveling north and south along I-93.
- › The Project will revitalize a distressed, underutilized urban site.
- › The Project will create a high-quality continuous street frontage activated by vibrant and engaging ground floor uses, such as retail and restaurant spaces. Through the use of glass facades wherever possible, the Project will provide

transparency and create an inviting and safe ground-level experience for pedestrians.

- › The Project will provide a significantly upgraded streetscape, including new sidewalks, streetlighting, landscaping and other public amenities along Middlesex Avenue, McGrath Highway and Marginal Road.
- › New pedestrian pathways, sidewalks and bicycle connections will improve the connection between Assembly Row, the Project Site and the residential neighborhood to the west of I-93.
- › The Project will repave the portions of McGrath Highway and Kensington Avenue that front the Project Site.
- › The Project will construct an approximately 13,055 SF neighborhood park civic space.
- › The Project proposes a shared bicycle/pedestrian path along the south side of the Project Site abutting the Self-Storage building that will provide a generous pedestrian and bicycle connection from Foley Street across the park area to connect below I-93 to the Stop and Shop and Garfield Avenue neighborhood to the southwest.

Sustainability/Environmental

Sustainable and high-performance building strategies are at the core of the design for the Project.

- › The Project revitalizes an underutilized, distressed urban site, uses land efficiently by increasing density in immediate proximity to public transportation, and encourages the use of non-automotive modes of transportation.
- › The Project will be designed and constructed to be LEEDv4 BD+C Core and Shell Platinum Certifiable and has developed a roadmap to achieve this goal. Preliminary LEEDv4 scorecard is provided in Appendix D.
- › The Project will be designed to reduce vulnerability given future changes in climate scenarios and natural events, such as extreme weather. Potential site and building design strategies are detailed in the Sustainable and Resilient Buildings Questionnaire in Appendix D.

Mobility and Transportation

- › The Project will improve the pedestrian environment significantly through the development of the new pedestrian pathways and sidewalk connections and the creation of a new publicly accessible Neighborhood Park.
- › Consistent with the Approved Master Plan, bicycle facilities along the west side of Middlesex Avenue along the Project's frontage will include a separated bike lane.
- › The Project will incorporate bicycle accommodations in compliance with the City of Somerville's guidelines to encourage cycling as a strong alternative transportation mode.

- › The Project will provide preferred parking for low-emitting fuel-efficient vehicles and will provide electric vehicle charging stations for 12.5 percent of the total parking serving the Project.
- › The Project will implement a robust program of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies to take full advantage of its proximity to multiple mobility options and to reduce vehicles traveling to and from the Development Site. Refer to the Certified Mobility Management Plan (MMP) for a description of specific TDM measures to be implemented for the Project.
- › The Project will create a transit-accessible employment center, where office/lab/R&D and retail employees will have multiple options to commute to work via public transportation.

Social and Economic Benefits

- › The Project will create over 2,500 on-site jobs relating to the office/R&D/lab, life sciences, retail, and parking uses, and over 200 construction jobs in a variety of trades.
- › Based on current projections, the Project will contribute more than \$9.4 million in community benefit contributions including but not limited to contributions to the affordable housing trust, community benefits, and employment linkage.
- › Upon stabilization, the Project will generate approximately \$4.9 million annually in new real estate tax revenues for the City of Somerville and significant State sales and business tax revenue to the Commonwealth.

1.9 Public Process Overview

A pre-submittal meeting was held with the City on March 9, 2021. Prior to and during production of the DRA Application, the Project Team met with City staff from multiple departments to solicit feedback and advance the Project. During production of the DRA Application, neighborhood meetings were held on April 8, 2021 and June 28, 2021. Refer to Appendix B for a summary of the key topics discussed during the neighborhood meeting.

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