

599 Somerville Ave Public Meeting #1
April 5, 2021 6:30pm

Attendees included:

1. A Matthews
2. Alberto
3. Adam Seering
4. A Matthews
5. Andrew Kling
6. Andrew Shulte
7. Annette Lamb
8. Anthony Micela
9. April Dodd
10. Carlos Sainz Caccia
11. Charlotte Morse-Fortier, Au.D.
12. Colin Watters
13. Courtney Kirk
14. Courtney Pollack
15. Dan Bartman
16. Dan Govoni
17. DC
18. Derrick Rice
19. Ed Guitton
20. Edward Ford Fay
21. Elise Naughton
22. Emily
23. Emily Makowski
24. Ian Hunt-Isaak
25. John Bailey
26. Jeff Gentry
27. Jennifer Clark-
28. Jillian Blakely
29. JJ Augenbraun
30. Karal
31. Kelsey LeBeau
32. Keri Pyke
33. Kristin Phelan
34. Lee Thomas
35. Lizzie Lundgren
36. Logan Capone
37. Lou Cicchese
38. Malcolm Cummings

39. Matt Lowes
40. Max Cohen
41. Miguel
42. Mikey
43. Nadine
44. Nicholas Steinkraus (Merritt Chase)
45. Nina Chase (Merritt Chase)
46. Rachel and Jeffrey
47. Riddhi Sanghvi
48. Rob Elfer
49. Ruben
50. Russ Preston
51. Ryan Bellmore
52. Sam A.
53. Sara G
54. Shaily
55. Stephanie MacNeil
56. Steve Pomeroy
57. Suzanne
58. Yangyang Li
59. Chad Morin

599 Somerville Ave Neighborhood Meeting No. 1 Report

Meeting Date: Monday, April 5th, 2021

Time: 6:30 pm

Location: Zoom hosted by Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen

Following the presentation by the development team, these were the concerns raised by the neighbors during the meeting:

1. Containment of traffic coming into the building concerning the neighbors on Pitman street. A neighbor on 40 Pitman asked for more details regarding the relationship of the garage ramp with their property.

R= The development team committed to further conversations regarding the ramp and exploring screening strategies to block traffic noise and visuals from the neighboring properties. As a result, further project iterations enclosed the ramp to shield the neighboring properties from potential noise. Additionally, the landscaped buffer required by zoning was raised to match the abutting properties' higher backyard terrain level (due to Spring Hill's slope).

2. Windows on the back facade, facing the properties on Pitman street.

R= When working on facade alternatives, the design team made sure the window pattern and windows sizes were suited to a neighborhood scale. The final design resulted in an 18% fenestration for the back facade, which is close to the minimum fenestration allowed of 15%. Additionally, an elevated landscape buffer with evergreen trees will block the views from the first two levels of the proposed building. The design and development team has been in close communication with the Pitman street property owners to engage them in the final facade design to minimize privacy concerns.

3. Height of the mechanical equipment and the mechanical penthouse. Neighbors requested more specific details regarding the height of the penthouse.

R= The development team explained that the design of the building was still in an early stage and would share further details during the future UDC meeting and further neighborhood meetings. Further development of the design resulted in a mechanical screen height of 16 feet. This height was the minimum possible to both address the mechanical equipment needs in the building and the proper screening of potential noise.

4. The 2-way traffic allowed on Spring street for only half of the block between Pitman street and Somerville Ave.

R= The team met with the City of Somerville's Mobility department and discussed this topic. It was concluded that the proposed condition is the least impactful to the neighborhood to the north through these conversations. We defer to the City of Somerville's Mobility Department as the directionality of these streets is under their purview.

5. The proposed 44 parking spaces required by zoning seem excessive. Several neighbors asked about the possibility of reducing the parking.

R= The final proposal will seek a special permit to reduce the parking by 25% for a final parking count of 33 spaces. Furthermore, a mobility management plan is being presented as part of the building's proposal which includes several strategies defined in coordination with the city to incentivize alternative modes of transportation other than private vehicles.

6. Noise from the mechanical equipment on the roof.

R= The mechanical roof screening was set at 16 feet, keeping it to the minimum possible to properly shield the neighbors from any potential noise. The building will also follow all the city and state regulations regarding noise in residential areas.

7. Incorporation of sufficient bike parking for visitors.

R= The proposal includes 10 covered bicycle parking spaces in the garage rather than just the 3 required by zoning and will accommodate an additional 6 outdoors with the 3 new proposed bike racks.

8. Concern about the project demolition and construction timeline.

R= The development team committed to staying in communication with the neighbors regarding the construction timeline. The construction team will comply with section 9-116 of the City of Somerville Municipal Code regarding construction noise.

9. The use of the roof for more than just mechanical.

R= The development team confirmed that the roof will only be used for mechanical equipment and the proposal does not include any roof deck space for other uses.

10. Pedestrian crossing @ Spring street and Somerville Ave. This section of Somerville Ave has no pedestrian crossing, and the intersection with Spring street would be ideal for one.

R= The 599 Somerville Avenue project will pay for the design and build costs for creating an elevated crosswalk on Somerville Avenue between Spring Street and Kent Street. The final design will be determined in direct coordination with the City and their guidelines and latest best practices in other parts of Somerville Ave.

11. Neighbor asked for more trees on Somerville Ave.

R= The proposed building is set back 3' 5" on Somerville Ave and 8' 2" on Spring street to guarantee 12' sidewalks on both frontages. Additionally, the proposal includes a parklet space in the corner next to the future new pedestrian crossing. The streetscape design for this proposal includes 5 trees on Somerville Ave (currently there are 4) and one new tree on Spring street (currently there are none).

12. Concern regarding the use of the loading dock for other uses besides loading. Neighbor mentioned other activities like the ones happening at Somernova (A property also owned by Rafi Properties) and their concern that the loading dock would be used for recreational or social activities.

R= No additional uses and events will be included or planned in the loading dock.

13. Severe problem with rats in the area and asked if the development of this property could address it.

R= The construction team will pay close attention to this issue during demolition and construction. It is a shared interest to control any rodent infestation in the neighborhood and as a condition of the building permit will have to have a plan for pest control during construction.

14. Concern about the lab uses and the chance of toxic materials being used and released

R= The project must abide by the regulations, laws, and ordinances set forth by the Massachusetts and Federal regulatory bodies. Additionally, the development team has conducted the environmental due diligence required by the City and State regarding any potential site contamination. The environmental findings did not report anything having recordable levels.

599 Somerville Ave Neighborhood Meeting No. 2 Materials

Meeting Date: Thursday, August 12th, 2021

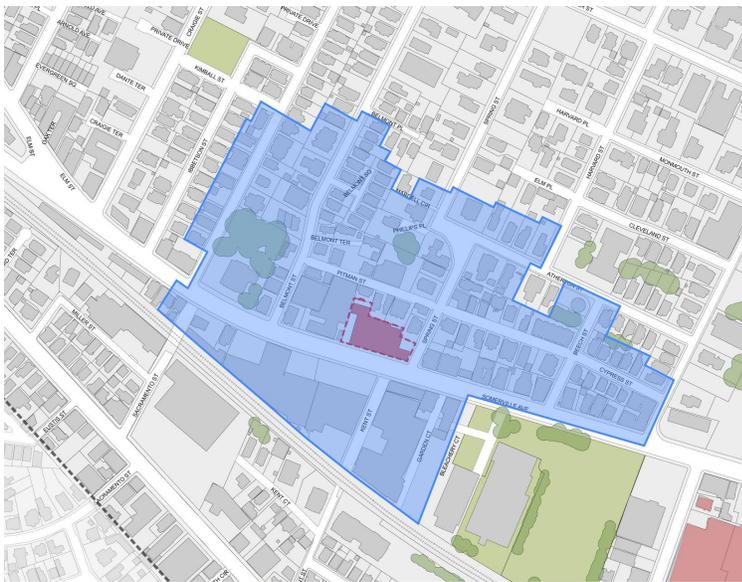
Time: 6:30 pm

Location: Zoom hosted by Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen

Flyer:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/j6sck11doq94h2f/599flyer_FINAL_neighborhoodmeeting2.pdf?dl=0

The meeting flyer was mailed to each property owner and resident within an area that exceeded the 300 abutting radius required by the ordinance per request of the councilor.



Presentation shown to neighbors:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/bdsxt1yw9vuu9v6/599%20Somerville%20Neighborhood%20Meeting%20Presentation.pdf?dl=0>

599 Somerville Ave Public Meeting #2
Aug 12, 2021 6:30pm

1. Lee Thomas
2. Mike
3. Nina Chase
4. Phil Nicholson
5. Riddhi Sanghavi
6. Robert Elfer
7. Steve
8. Thomas Wisnaskas
9. YoonSun Choi
10. Ben Ewen-Campen
11. Russell Preston
12. Adam Seering
13. A Matthews
14. Carlos Sainz Caccia
15. Christa Lucas
16. Cortney Kirk
17. Courtney Pollack
18. Daniel Govani
19. Elise Naughton
20. Emily Morehead
21. Ford Fay
22. Jeff Gentry
23. JJ Augenbraun
24. John Bailey
25. John Piazza
26. Kristin Phelan
27. Andrew Graminski

599 Somerville Ave Neighborhood Meeting No. 2 Report

Meeting Date: Thursday August 12th, 2021

Time: 6:30 pm

Location: Zoom hosted by Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen

Following the presentation by the development team, these were the concerns raised by the neighbors during the meeting:

1. Total height of the building

The proposed building has 3 stories and a height of 42 ft meeting the MR3 zoning requirements. The mechanical penthouse will be 16ft, which is shorter than most similar buildings, as it was recognized by the Urban Design Commission.

2. Abutting neighbors privacy. Rear windows on the second and third floors.

R= The design of the proposed facade facing the abutting residential parcels incorporates small, neighborhood-scale windows. The final design resulted in an 18% fenestration for the back facade, which is close to the minimum fenestration allowed of 15%. Additionally, an elevated landscape buffer with evergreen trees will serve to block the views from the first two levels of the proposed building. The design and development team has been in close communication with the Pitman street property owners to engage them in the final facade design in order to minimize privacy concerns.

3. Maintaining the four current trees on Somerville Ave.

R= The streetscape design for the sidewalk, corner parklet, bus stop and pedestrian crossing was adjusted in order to maintain the current trees in place.

4. Construction noise, working hours and Saturdays.

R= Construction shall not begin before 7 am Monday - Friday to comply with section 9-116 of the City of Somerville Municipal Code (noise ordinance). The project team will install a 6 ft high construction fence around the perimeter of the site with a scrim. Daily clean-up will occur at the construction site. The contractor will have a dust mitigation plan in place. In the event of weather delays, Saturday construction may occur. The development team takes community relations during construction very seriously. The

following programs will be used to communicate information regarding construction activity and address any complaints that may be brought up by the neighbors:

- Pre-construction photo documentation
- Vibration monitoring at adjacent buildings
- Noise monitoring for compliance with City ordinances
- Odor monitoring and mitigation for diesel and/or organic layers of soil
- Pest control services in place prior to demolition
- Multi-lingual and easy to follow signage
- Project bulletin boards and/or weekly email communication with stakeholders

5. Loading dock working hours.

R= We recognize there are some concerns about the noise associated with loading. The Somerville Zoning Code allows loading hours for NR areas between 7am - 10pm but based on the team's experience with loading in other Rafi properties, the proposed loading hours will be between 7am and 7pm, except for trash removal which is determined by the Sanitation Division.

6. Mechanical equipment noise and air quality.

R= The project must follow Massachusetts and Federal regulatory bodies and regulations, laws, and ordinances. Our acoustical engineer has conducted a noise study, and the building's design will take into account the ambient and background noise levels so that any equipment noise is in line with MassDEP community noise policy and the Somerville Noise Control Ordinance (55 Db during day time and 40 Db during night). Sound barriers at the roof level are included in the design to mitigate noise levels.

7. Number of people working in the building and the number parking spaces not being sufficient.

R= There is no tenant defined for the building yet. Per request of the neighbors and the city, the development team is seeking a Special Permit to reduce the parking to 33 spaces. A mobility management plan is being presented as part of the building's proposal which includes several strategies defined in coordination with the City to incentivize alternative modes of transportation other than private vehicles.

8. Parking for workers during construction.

R= The developer will offer spaces for construction workers within other parking lots available in the neighborhood.

9. Landscape buffer trees' height when mature.

R= The trees that will be planted within the buffer area at the Northern perimeter of the site will be a mix of species and are anticipated to reach a maturation height of 20-30 ft, depending on their species.

10. Rats issues during construction.

R= The construction team will pay close attention to this issue during demolition and construction. It is a shared interest to control any rodent infestation in the neighborhood and as a condition of the building permit will have to have a plan for pest control during construction.