



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS**  
**MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**  
**JOSEPH A. CURTATONE**  
**MAYOR**

MICHAEL F. GLAVIN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*PLANNING DIVISION*

**STAFF**

GEORGE PROAKIS, *DIRECTOR OF PLANNING*  
SARAH LEWIS, *SENIOR PLANNER*  
SARAH WHITE, *PRESERVATION PLANNER*  
ALEX MELLO, *PLANNER*  
DAWN PEREIRA, *ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT*

**MEMBERS**

KEVIN PRIOR, *CHAIR*  
MICHAEL A. CAPUANO, *ESQ.*  
JOSEPH FAVALORO  
DOROTHY A. KELLY GAY  
REBECCA LYN COOPER  
GERARD AMARAL, *ALT*

**PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**

A **public hearing** for all interested parties was held by the **Planning Board** on **Thursday, March 8, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.** in the **Visiting Nurse Association (VNA), 3<sup>rd</sup> floor Community Room, 259 Lowell Street, Somerville, MA.** The purpose of the hearing was to receive public comments concerning the following:

<b>374 Somerville Avenue (PB 2017-16)</b>	
Applicant:	374 Somerville Ave, LLC
Property Owner:	374 Somerville Ave, LLC
Agent:	Richard G. DiGirolamo
Legal Notice:	Applicant and Owner, 374 Somerville Ave, LLC, seeks approval of design and site plan review (DSPR) under SZO §6.1.22.D to construct a rear addition to the existing structure. Retail and office space will remain on the first floor and the second and partial third floor will become five dwelling units. A Special Permit under SZO §9.13 is also being sought for parking relief. CCD-55 zone. Ward 2.
Date(s) of Hearing(s):	11/30, 1/4
Staff Recommendation:	Conditional approval.
PB Action:	Opened and continued.
The Applicant submitted a Request for Continuance to March 22, 2018. Michael Capuano made a motion to continue the application to March 22, 2018. Joseph Favaloro seconded the motion. The motion to continue the application to March 22, 2018 passed 4-0 with Kevin Prior and Dorothy Kelly Gay absent.	



<b>845 McGrath Highway &amp; 74 Middlesex Avenue (PB 2017-27)</b>	
Applicant:	845 Riverview LLC
Property Owner:	845 Riverview LLC
Agent:	McDermott, Quilty & Miller, LLP
Legal Notice:	Owner/Applicant, 845 Riverview LLC, is seeking a Planned Unit Development – Preliminary Master Plan (PUD-PMP) under Article 16 and Section 6.4 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance (SZO) for 0.85 acres in the Assembly Square Mixed-Use District (ASMD) to develop a transit-oriented mixed-use development of two buildings. Applicant also seeks relief under Section 6.4.12.A for additional building height. One building will be 147’ to the top of roof containing up to 180 hotel rooms, and the other, 235’ high containing approximately 215 residential units. Both supported by 9,515 square feet of ground floor retail and restaurant space, with parking relief for 293 structured spaces. ASMD zone. PUD-A Overlay District. Ward 1.
Date(s) of Hearing(s):	1/18, 2/13, 3/8
Staff Recommendation:	Conditional approval
PB Action:	---
<p>Joe Hanley commented on conditions language (see attached memo at end of document). Jai Khalsa gave update to mitigation and contributions. Mike Zimmerman gave air quality overview explanation: rooftop intake serves whole building, filters at apartments air recovery/recirculation; will be better than 44 mins to remove 95% of particulates. Khalsa talked about open space and public realm; most elevations primary due to towers; parking allows occupiable floors to be higher than highway for views. Even though DCR requested that parking be reduced, not part of the request at this time.</p> <p>Capuano asked low volatility? Khalsa said volatile organic compounds “creates an off-gassing soup of hydrocarbons.” Proakis said better for indoor air baseline before outdoor particulates factored in. Another discussion was open space in relation to heavy pollution. Off-site space is intended to be a passive space and provide possible thoroughway under highway – pedestrian now, possibly vehicular in future. Improvements to Kensington Underpass are part of benefits and other money will be contributed by other developers. Draw 7 Park improvements are also included as open space off-site and beyond highway particulates.</p> <p>Public comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dave Dahlbach applauded openness to addressing pollution. Height is still much taller than zoning and shouldn’t set this precedent. Side will not sit empty if we stick to the zoning requirements.</li> <li>- Barbara Steiner was impressed with work of pollution control. Height is not major issue but don’t want to “violate zoning as soon as we write it.” Rather than see biotech or R+D on this site. Not happy but appreciate the work.</li> <li>- Ellen Reisner said originally extremely opposed but developer has come up with a plan that she can live with. The City should use this as the new standard for highway adjacent.</li> <li>- Jane North said Somerville is at forefront of conversation about land use, air quality, and health. Should use our own local expertise and keep in mind that the residents will still have to breathe the exterior air. Other needs of City are bigger issues not addressed by this project.</li> <li>- Proakis said height waiver request is in front of board and zoning was written in 2004, not recently. This site is in a 125’ zone but impacts of taller buildings are not great on this site.</li> </ul> <p>Board questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Favaloro said the report says it was a good community meeting but what other topics were addressed? Lewis said air quality and open space. Favaloro was part of the ASMD decision and the momentum was needed in the beginning but now it’s successful. Why are we now still considering a housing development adjacent to a highway? Favaloro thinks the vision is wrong; to spend so much time talking about particles says that this is not the right place. Favaloro is not comfortable with voting more housing on this site.</li> <li>- Cooper said conditions and presentation are well thought out but the Condition #7 gave pause. Private outdoor space is critical to people so residential without operable windows is a fundamental error. Everywhere else we’re trying to undo the 1950’s high-speed high-capacity highways adjacent to housing. Height is not troubling, but requiring a buffer says that residential should not be on this site – agree with Favaloro.</li> </ul>	



- Amaral asked about new parking spaces on Middlesex? Khalsa replied that additional spaces along street are not counted. Amaral asked who will enforce future studies? Proakis said City will help facilitate independent testing and will refine language within the Site Plan approvals of future buildings. Tufts team is working with Stop n’ Shop, and this site will be another data source to improve technology. Saying we’re not building adjacent to highways is not realistic in a 4.5 square mile city if we are to meet our other goals such as affordable housing. Tufts team has not suggested not building housing next to highways. Cooper said residential that is sealed is same as if it’s an office building.
- Capuano asked why propose residential and hotel knowing that the community would push back? Hotel with non-operable windows is understandable but residential of expensive new rents between a highway and a storage building.
- Joe Hanley said mixed-use place-making exercise not just a single building but part of the larger neighborhood. Market didn’t respond to office/R+D but hotel and housing was needed and will provide 43 affordable 2- and 3-bedroom units. Transit oriented development with mix of uses and 5 Middlesex team is contemplating office uses. Said they were asked to do MERV 16 and testing components by Mystic View and have responded by committing to those requests.
- Capuano said Stop n’ Shop was proposed to be residential and was eventually approved but the market demand does not seem to be clamoring for residential. Proakis said community wanted condos so original developer sold it to a condo developer and it is now under construction. Commercial tenants are pickier than residential and require more amenities and surroundings. Lab wants larger building footprints and this site can’t accommodate that use. Original conversations only included half the block but were told whole block would be a better project. The developer did that and has located housing furthest away. Can do a net revenue exercise if necessary to understand difference between housing and office, but the market is prime now so fiscal impacts is worth studying. Is there another space for quality open space for the residents, even as shared space?
- Capuano said preference to continue to 22<sup>nd</sup> with memo answering the questions and issues. Ed Doherty said to answer the ‘why’ – thought about building hotel and office originally but conversations with Boston Realty didn’t show demand. The market demand is for housing and the entire intent of this project was to do the right thing regarding air quality.

Michael Capuano made a motion to continue the case to March 22, 2018. Rebecca Lyn Cooper seconded the motion. Motion to continue the case to March 22, 2018 passed 4-0 with Kevin Prior and Dorothy Kelly Gay absent.

<b>114 Broadway (PB 2017-29)</b>	
Applicant:	116 Broadway LLC
Property Owner:	116 Broadway LLC
Agent:	Richard DiGirolamo
Legal Notice:	Applicant/Owner, 116 Broadway LLC, seeks a Special Permit with Site Plan Review under SZO §5.2 to approve replacement of a one-story building with a new construction 5-story mixed-use building (commercial ground floor and 8 residential units, 1 of which is an inclusionary unit with 0.6 of a unit payment-in-lieu) and §6.1.22.G.7 for payment-in-lieu of parking for 11 spaces. CCD Zone. Ward 1.
Date(s) of Hearing(s):	3/8
Staff Recommendation:	Conditional approval
PB Action:	---
The Applicant submitted a Request for Continuance to March 22, 2018. Michael Capuano made a motion to continue the application to March 22, 2018. Joseph Favaloro seconded the motion. The motion to continue the application to March 22, 2018 passed 4-0 with Kevin Prior and Dorothy Kelly Gay absent.	

**Other Business**

*NOTICE: While reasonable efforts have been made to assure the accuracy of the data provided in these minutes, do not rely on this information as the complete and accurate portrayal of the events in the meeting without first checking with the Planning Division staff. If any discrepancies exist, the decisions filed by the Board serve as*



*the relevant record for each case. The Planning Division also maintains audio recordings of most Board meetings that are available upon request.*

*Plans and reports are available at the City of Somerville website at the following link:*  
<https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/ospcd/planning-and-zoning/reports-and-decisions>