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Zoning Compliance Narrative

This chapter briefly describes how the Project complies with applicable provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.

2.1 ARTICLE 7: SPECIAL DISTRICTS

7.4 Development Review

b. Site Plan Approval

In addition to the review criteria for all Site Plan Approvals specified in §15.3.2.e. Review Criteria, the review board shall make findings considering the following:

a). Consistency with the ASQ Plan.

The Project is consistent with the existing ASD plan adopted in 2000, including the follow objectives: the ASD is designed to promote pedestrian and transit-oriented planning and design, and to encourage the development of a mix of uses including residential, office/lab, research and development, retail/active use, hotels, cinemas, performing arts and institutional uses around new pedestrian-oriented public places. The Project is located within the ASMD, which is characterized by a mix of mid-rise and high-rise buildings, as well as a thoroughfare and open space network that emphasizes walkability and pedestrian connectivity. It 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.

b). Conformance with an approved Master Plan Special Permit and any other Special Permits applicable to the subject lot.

As documented in Table 1-2 of Chapter 1, *Project Summary*, the Project is consistent with the approved MPSP.

7.6 Building Standards

b. Building Design Standards

Section 7.4 of the Zoning Code does not codify a superseding zoning district for the ASMD. Consistent with the approved MPSP, the Project is most consistent with the "commercial building" type as described in Section 5.1.8 of the Zoning Ordinance. The table below provides a summary of the average lot and building dimensions for the proposed building. Refer to Figure 2.1 for an overall massing zoning diagram. Refer

also to Figures 2.3 and 2.4 for a depiction of the Project's compliance with the façade, storefront and entry composition requirements after discussions with the city's Urban Design Commission.

Table 2-1 Dimensional Summary Table

	Permitted	Proposed
Proposed Building Type	Commercial Type	
Lot Dimensions/Coverage		
Lot Width (min) (ft.)	30 ft. min	170
Max. Lot Coverage (%)	100%	80%
Green Score		
Minimum	0.2	0.2
Ideal	0.25	
Open Space (%) ¹	0%	23%
Building Setbacks		
Primary Front Setback (min/max) (ft.)	2/15 ft.	Min. 5' / Max 10'-9"
Secondary Front Setback (min/max) (ft.)	2/15 ft.	Min. 5' / Max 15'
Side Setback (min)	-0-	Min. 4'
Main Massing		
Building Width	200 ft.	167' Middlesex
Min. Façade Build Out (Primary Frontage)	80%	96%
Min. Façade Build Out (Secondary Front)	65%	77%
Max. Floor Plate	30,000 SF	29,995 SF
Min. Ground Story Height	18 ft.	24'
Min. Upper Story Height	10 ft.	15'
Building Height (stories) (min/max)	3/10 stories ²	Max. 17 stories
Max. Building Height (ft.) ¹	150 ft. ²	245'
Façade Composition		
Ground Story Fenestration (min)	70%	75%
Upper Story Fenestration (min/max)	15/70%	58%
Max. Blank Wall	20 ft.	8'-2"
Building Components		
Entry Canopy	Permitted	
- Width (max)		21'-8"
- Depth (max)	3 ft.	2'-6"
- Clearance (min)	8 ft.	16'-2"
- Front Setback Encroachment (max)	100%	0%
Lobby Entrance		
- Width (min/max)	15/30ft.	21'-8"
- Recessed Entrance Width (max)	15 ft.	N/A
- Recessed Entrance Depth (max)	5 ft.	N/A

	Permitted	Proposed
Storefront	Permitted	
- Width (min/max)	15/30 ft.	17'-9" / 20'-9"
- Display Window Height (min)	8 ft.	14'-1"
- Recessed Entrance Width (max)	15 ft.	10'-4"
- Recessed Entrance Depth (max)	5 feet	1'-6"
1	Open space requirement in the high rise commercial district are superseded by ASMD dimensional standard.	
2	Requirements related to the building height are superseded by the dimensional standards of Section Table 7.4.6 of the Zoning Ordinance.	

2.2 ARTICLE 5: HIGH RISE DISTRICT

7.4.7 Use Provisions

The Project proposes uses that are "Permitted Uses" as defined by Table 7.2.7 of the Zoning Ordinance.

7.4.8 Parking & Mobility

b. Type

(i) Motor vehicle parking may be provided as above ground structured parking, or underground structured parking. Surface parking is prohibited.

The Project will comply with this standard. The Project does not propose any surface parking on the Project Site.

(e) Unbundled Parking

(i) Motor vehicle parking spaces must be rented or leased as an option rather than a requirement of the rental, lease or purchase of a dwelling unit, rooming unit or non-residential floor space.

The Project will comply with this requirement. The Proponent will provide unbundled parking with all rental, lease, or purchase agreements of building space so that parking is used as an optional amenity instead of a required/allocated benefit.

(ii) Bicycle parking must be provided at no cost or fee to customers, visitors, employees, tenants and residents.

The Project will include short- and long-term bicycle parking storage consistent with the City's guidelines to encourage cycling as an alternative transportation mode. Based on the current design, the bicycle parking needs for the Project will be accommodated through the provision of long-term secured and short-term bicycle parking within and around the proposed building. Employees will have secure access to a

bike parking storage room with capacity for approximately 101 bicycles, lockers for personal belongings, changing rooms, and showers. Outside the building, parking for 8 bicycles will be installed for the Building's users and visitors.

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.

(f) Loading Facilities

(i). Loading facilities must be located away from major public thoroughfares, the Mystic River, and other highly visible locations. The visual impact of exposed loading facilities should be reduced through creative design solutions.

Loading needs for the Project will be accommodated by a clearly defined loading area on the west side of the building, along Marginal Road. Deliveries will arrive on Middlesex Avenue leading to its intersection with McGrath Highway to access the loading area. The loading areas will not be visible from the Civic Space or the improved off-site open space.

7.4.11 Public Realm

c. Sidewalk Curb Cuts

(i) A curb cut requires a permit from the City Engineer and must be compliant with all City Ordinances.

The Project will comply with all City requirements, as necessary.

2.3 ARTICLE 10: DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

10.3 Landscaping

10.3.5 Site Landscaping

Plant materials will be selected for their tolerance of urban conditions, year-round interest and reduced water usage. As such, the building landscaping (excluding the green roof) will be 100 percent native species that are appropriate for the climate. Additionally, species that offer habitat value and are pollinator-friendly will be given greater priority in planting design.

The Project team is committed to working with the PSUF to advance the landscape plan going forward.

10.4 Green Score

10.4.3 Compliance & Enforcement

a. Real property must comply with the Green Score indicated for each building type. See the standards for each building type in each zoning district for more information.

This Project will comply with this requirement. A preliminary accounting of the Green Score indicates that the Project will achieve a Green Score of 0.20, which equals the required .20 score. Refer to Appendix C for the Green Score Plan and required supporting plans.

10.11 Sustainable Development

10.11.1 Green Buildings

b. New construction or modification of any principal building type greater than fifty thousand (50,000) square feet in gross floor area must be LEED Platinum certifiable.

The Project is being designed to comply with the Ordinance, which requires all new building construction over 50,000 GSF to be LEED Platinum certifiable. This Project will follow the LEEDv4 BD+C Core and Shell (CS) rating system.

In compliance with the Zoning Ordinance, an updated LEED scorecard and narrative description outlining compliance will be submitted prior to the issuance of the Building Permit, and prior to issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy.

Refer to Appendix D for 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, and an affidavit signed by a LEED-Accredited Professional (LEED-AP).

10.11.2 Green Roofs & Storm Water Management

a. To every extent practicable, storm water should be reused on-site for irrigation or other purposes.

The Proponent is committed to collecting roof runoff in a cistern located under the garage and re-using the harvested rainwater for irrigation and toilet flushing. The cistern is sized to provide capacity for peak runoff attenuation and space for a sand filter that will provide phosphorus removal as required by the City's Site Construction Permit Rules & Regulations.

b. The review boards may authorize the City Engineer to grant a credit to properties, against which any storm water impact fees are imposed, equivalent to the quantity of storm water that is removed from entering the system through the use of green roofs or other onsite storm water management practices.

The Proponent is committed to collecting roof runoff in a cistern located under the garage and re-using the harvested rainwater for irrigation and toilet flushing. The cistern is sized to provide capacity for peak runoff attenuation and space for a sand filter that will provide phosphorus removal as required by the City's Site Construction Permit Rules & Regulations.

10.11.3 Heat Island Reduction

a. Roofs and parking covers must have a Solar Reflectance Index as specified on Table 10.11.1 for a minimum of seventy five percent (75%) of the roof area or parking spaces.

Roofing materials will comply by having a Solar Reflectance Index (SRI) at or above the requirement.

(i) Roof area and parking spaces covered by solar collectors and green roofs compliant with the provisions of this Ordinance are exempt.

The Proponent is proposing to incorporate a green roof on approximately 6,100 SF of roof area not occupied by mechanical systems and 2,700 SF on the level 2 canopy. Refer to Figure 1.13 from Chapter 1 for a plan depicting the green roof area.

10.11.4 Environmental Performance

a. The review boards shall establish submittal requirements for development review applications to ensure the following:

(i) That shadows cast by high-rise buildings do not substantially and adversely limit ground level access to sunlight on sidewalks and Civic Spaces.

Refer to Appendix E for the Project's shadow studies. Based on the shadow studies conducted for the Project, the shadows cast will not substantially and adversely limit ground level access to sunlight on sidewalks, the public realm and publicly accessible open spaces. Throughout the year the majority of net new shadows will be cast to the west, northwest, north and northeast, towards the I-93 interchange, parking lots, and the rear of the Assembly Square Mall. During the summer land in the late afternoon, the Civic Space will experience limited shadows from the Building, when the shadows could improve thermal comfort by offering users of the civic space the opportunity to select a location in the park that might offer shade, or direct sunlight.

(ii) That by high-rise buildings pedestrian level wind velocities do not exceed acceptable levels for various activities existing or proposed at particular locations.

Refer to Appendix E for the results of the Project's preliminary pedestrian wind comfort analysis.

The analysis results indicate that pedestrian wind comfort conditions are generally predicted to be comfortable for sitting, standing, and walking throughout the year. Dangerous conditions are anticipated at the northeast and northwest corners of the proposed building, and at an isolated location in the park to the south of the Project Site, a result of the open nature of the site.

The Proponent is committed to designing a pedestrian environment that is generally comfortable for its intended uses. The Proponent has integrated a structural canopy element into the building design that is expected to improve/mitigate dangerous and uncomfortable conditions at the corners of the building and in the civic space immediate to the south of the Building. Additionally, the robust landscaping planned within the Neighborhood Park Civic Space were not included in the baseline study. It is expected that the inclusion of the associated landscape and structural elements will have a material beneficial impact on wind mitigation and pedestrian comfort. As the design advances, the Proponent will continue to explore conceptual wind control measures to reduce these wind speeds to appropriate levels.

(iii) That buildings do not cause visual impairment or discomfort due to reflective spot glare and solar heat buildup in any nearby buildings.

Refer to Appendix E for the results of the Project's preliminary solar glare and heat loading analysis. The results of the solar glare analysis indicate that reflection impacts from the Project on motorists were predicted to be generally confined to within 350 feet of the building, however westbound drivers on McGrath Highway, and southbound drivers on Middlesex Avenue may experience some limited high impact glare events. These impacts are expected to be short in duration, lasting an average of less than 10 minutes, and will occur infrequently (fewer than 50 days per year annually). Additionally, given the slow speed of travel on these streets the reflections should be a nuisance at worst.

At pedestrian level, reflections were predicted to fall most frequently onto the area immediately west and south of the proposed building. The maximum frequency of glare occurrence found at pedestrian level is approximately 29 percent of daytime hours. Reflections from the Building are not anticipated to negatively impact Foss park.

2.4 ARTICLE 11: PARKING AND MOBILITY

11.4 Mobility Management Plan

a. A mobility management plan (MMP) is required for all development and for Master Plan Special Permits.

The MMP was submitted to the Mobility Division on May 13, 2021. A final approval letter was issued on July 28, 2021.

2.5 ARTICLE 15: ADMINISTRATION

15.3 Site Plan Approval

a. Purpose

(ii). The Site Plan Approval process provides an Applicant with the opportunity to submit architectural, site, landscape, and engineering plans so that compliance to the provisions of this Ordinance can be determined prior to preparation of construction documents.

The Project complies with this requirement. Illustrative and scaled site plans are included with this DRA package.

d. Procedure

(ii). The review procedures required for a Site Plan Approval may, at the discretion of the designated review board, be conducted simultaneously with the review procedures required for other discretionary or administrative permits.

A concurrent DRA has been submitted for the construction of the Civic Space.

e. Review Criteria

(i). The review board shall approve a development review application requiring Site Plan Approval upon verifying that the submitted plan conforms with the provisions of this Ordinance and demonstrates consistency to the following:

a). The comprehensive plan and existing policy plans and standards established by the City.

The Project is consistent with the existing Assembly Square District Plan (the "ASD Plan"), adopted in 2000, including the follow objectives: the ASD is designed to promote pedestrian and transit-oriented planning and design, and to encourage the development of a mix of uses including residential, office/lab, research and development, retail/active use, hotels, cinemas, performing arts and institutional uses around new pedestrian-oriented public places.

Additionally, the Project is consistent with SomerVision, which aims to guide future growth and development in Somerville with the primary goals to: enhance existing squares and commercial corridors; emphasize pedestrian and transit-oriented planning and design; transform opportunity areas on the eastern and southern edges of Somerville; and focus development around new pedestrian-oriented public places.

The City, in collaboration with a multi-disciplinary consultant team, has commenced the work of developing a new Neighborhood Plan for the Assembly Square neighborhood and Transit Area. The Proponent and the Project Team will continue to coordinate with City Planning Staff during development production of the Neighborhood Plan.

b). The intent of the zoning district where the property is located.

The Project is located within the ASMD, which is characterized by a mix of mid-rise and high-rise commercial and residential buildings, as well as a thoroughfare and open space network that emphasizes walkability and pedestrian connectivity. Thus, the Project complies with the intent of the ASMD as it proposes a mixed-use commercial high-rise building with multiple preferred uses and an active ground floor with enhanced walkability and pedestrian connectivity.

c). Mitigation proposed to alleviate any impacts attributable to the proposed development.

The Building will be LEED Platinum certifiable using the LEEDv4 BD+C Core and Shell (CS) rating system and will be designed to mitigate stormwater run-off. The stormwater management system will be designed to release flows less than or equal to the existing condition and will integrate BMPS to improve water quality.

The Project's Certified MMP outlines detailed TDM measures to promote alternative modes of transportation and reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips to the Project Site.

d). Considerations indicated elsewhere in this Ordinance for the required Site Plan Approval.

The Project is consistent with all considerations in the Zoning Ordinance required for Site Plan approval.