



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

***DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE***

**STAFF PRESENT**

GEORGE PROAKIS, *DIRECTOR OF PLANNING*  
LORI MASSA, *SENIOR PLANNER*  
ADAM DUCHESNEAU, *PLANNER*

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

JULIE BRADY  
TANYA PAGLIA  
MATTHEW RICE

**RECOMMENDATIONS and MINUTES**

The City of Somerville Design Review Committee held a public meeting on **Thursday, December 8, 2011**, at **6:30 p.m.** in City Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Executive Conference Room (adjacent to the Mayor's Office), 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA.

The purpose of the meeting was to review and make recommendations on the following proposals:

**5 Tower Court**

**Description:** Review of Applicant's plans to convert an existing two-family dwelling to a four-family dwelling with associated parking. RC zone. Ward 2.

**SPGA:** Zoning Board of Appeals

**Next Hearing Date:** TBD

This was the first time the project had come before the Design Review Committee and the Applicant was looking for some direction with regard to the design of the project before they began to move through the Zoning Board of Appeals process. The existing structure is a two-family dwelling to which the Applicant would like to add two dwelling units to create a four-family structure at the corner of Tower Court and Tyler Street. The existing structure is 38 feet high and has been deemed unsafe. As part of the project, the Applicant will be designating the project site's front lot line as Tyler Street. While the proposal that was shown to the DRC had an addition with a roof line that was higher than that of the existing structure, the Applicant indicated that future revised designs would most likely be lowering the roof line of the addition to be more consistent with that of the existing building. The Applicant still needs to figure out the details of the existing parking situation at the site to determine how many parking spaces need to be provided in the new design. Currently the Applicant is proposing five parking spaces at the site with three of them located underneath the proposed addition.

The DRC asked about the following aspects of the project and the Agent/Architect provided the following responses.

- Are you attempting to keep the rear, elongated portion of the building? – (r) This rear addition goes over the property line by 1.5 feet which creates deed and property ownership issues. It



would probably be easier to simply remove this portion of the building and work the bedroom that would be removed as a result of this back into the rest of the structure.

- What is the actual original structure in the renderings? – (r) The existing structure is the portion of the building on the left side of the Tower Court elevation.
- Will the existing siding be retained? – (r) The existing siding would be replaced with clapboard when the structure is redone.
- Will a new fence be installed along the property line that abuts the parking lot on Lot 16? – (r) Yes, a new fence will be installed along this entire length of the property line.
- Will the driveway consist of permeable pavers? – (r) Yes, we would like to install permeable pavers where the driveway will be because there is so much existing pavement at the site already.
- Will there be a bike rack installed at the site? – (r) There is almost always at least one bike rack installed with all of our projects, so most likely there will be one.

Over the entries off of Tower Court and Tyler Street, visually there needs to be some type of awning or canopy to tie into the contextual nature of the neighborhood.

On the Tower Court elevation, the structure presents a long, continuous stretch of siding. Please take a look at the implementation of bays and detail elements to create relief along this façade.

It would be helpful to see the context of this building within the neighborhood and where the existing structures are located on the properties surrounding the project site.

A detailed landscape plan showing the specific types of plantings that will be installed at the site would be appreciated for the next time you come back to the Design Review Committee.

Anything that can be done with the design to add sustainable features would be highly encouraged and appreciated. This would include (but not be limited to) addressing storm run-off with on-site water management, passive sustainable building technologies (high R wall insulation, energy star rated equipment, etc.), and/or active sustainable building technologies (solar hot water, PV, etc.).

