



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
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Case #: PB 2013-02 & PB 2006-59-R0710-AM (1/2013)

Date: February 14, 2013

Recommendation: Conditional Approval

PLANNING STAFF REPORT

Site: Assembly Square Block 2B (74 Foley Street, 100 Foley Street)

SPSR-A Application

Applicant Name: FR Sturtevant Street LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company
Street Retail Inc, a Maryland Corporation
SRI Assembly Row B2, LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company
SRI Assembly Row B3, LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company
SRI Assembly Row B5, LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company
SRI Assembly Row B6, LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company
SRI Assembly Row B7, LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company
SRI Assembly Row B8, LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company
SRI Assembly Row B9, LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company

Applicant Address: 1626 East Jefferson Street, Rockville, MD 20852

Property Owner Name: same

Agent Name: Goodwin Procter LLP

Agent Address: Exchange Place, 53 State Street, Boston, MA 02109

Alderman: Maureen Bastardi

Legal Notice: Applicant/Owner FR Sturtevant Street LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company, Street Retail Inc, a Maryland Corporation, SRI Assembly Row B2, LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company, SRI Assembly Row B3, LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company, SRI Assembly Row B5, LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company, SRI Assembly Row B6, LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company, SRI Assembly Row B7, LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company, SRI Assembly Row B8, LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company, SRI Assembly Row B9, LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company seek a Special Permit with Site Plan Review-A, final level approval of "Block 2B" of the Planned Unit Development Preliminary Master Plan (PUD-PMP) approved by the Planning Board on December 14, 2006 and as revised on August 5, 2010. Applicant and owner seek approval under



SZO Article §16.8.3 and §5.2, to construct an approx 132,708 gsf, 4-story building. The building will have a mix of uses consisting of retail, restaurants and office. Parking will be located on the street and on Blocks 3, 4, 5 and 6. The Applicant and Owner also seek a special permit for signage under §5.1 and §6.4.14 to install signs that are over 35 feet from finished grade and larger than the by-right size. A waiver is required under SZO §6.4.12 and §16.5.5 for fewer loading spaces than required under §9.16.3 and §9.7. Applicant/Owner is also seeking a waiver for the location of the building that within the 150 foot setback from the Mystic River bank through a Planned Unit Development – Preliminary Master Plan application.

PUD Amendment Application

Applicant Name: FR Sturtevant Assembly Square, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company Street Retail, INC, in its individual capacity and under power of attorney on behalf of FR Sturtevant Street, LLC, SRI Assembly Row B2, LLC, SRI Assembly Row B3, LLC, SRI Assembly Row B5, LLC, SRI Assembly Row B6, LLC, SRI Assembly Row B7, LLC, SRI Assembly Row B8, LLC, and SRI Assembly Row B9, LLC and IKEA Property, Inc.

Applicant Address: 1626 East Jefferson Street, Rockville, MD 20852

Property Owner Name: same

Agent Name: Goodwin Procter LLP

Agent Address: Exchange Place, 53 State Street, Boston, MA 02109

Alderman: Maureen Bastardi

Legal Notice: Applicant/Owner FR Sturtevant Assembly Square, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company, Street Retail, INC, in its individual capacity and under power of attorney on behalf of FR Sturtevant Street, LLC, SRI Assembly Row B2, LLC, SRI Assembly Row B3, LLC, SRI Assembly Row B5, LLC, SRI Assembly Row B6, LLC, SRI Assembly Row B7, LLC, SRI Assembly Row B8, LLC, and SRI Assembly Row B9, LLC and IKEA Property, Inc. seek a amendment to the Planned Unit Development Preliminary Master Plan (PUD-PMP) approved by the Planning Board on December 14, 2006 and as revised on August 5, 2010 under SZO Article §16.11.3. The waiver is to construct a building with in the 150 foot setback of the Mystic River bank.

Zoning District/Ward: ASMD / Waterfront Overlay District (WOD) / Ward 1

Zoning Approval Sought: Special Permit with Site Plan Review – A & Amendment to Planned Unit Development Preliminary Master Plan (PUD-PMP)

Date of Application: Jan 22, 2013

Dates of Public Hearing: Planning Board Feb 21, 2013

I. BACKGROUND & PERMITTING PROCESS

On December 14, 2006, the Planning Board granted Planned Unit Development-A-Preliminary Master Plan (PUD-PMP) approval, subject to certain conditions, for a development area that includes the subject property. On August 5, 2010, the Board granted a revision to the PUD-PMP. Subsequent minor amendments and subdivisions have been filed that do not substantially impact this site. The PMP is for a mixed-use, transit-oriented development with approximately 5 million square feet of total development including 1.75 million sf of commercial space (including but not limited to office, research and development, laboratory, medical office, manufacturing, etc.), 512,000 sf of retail space including restaurants and cinema, up to 340,000 sf IKEA store, 2,100 residential units, up to a 200-room hotel, the existing Assembly Square Marketplace and approximately 10,066 parking spaces. The revised PMP

includes the same overall development program as the original with adjustments to improve the urban design relationship of uses, the quality of the open space along the Mystic River, pedestrian and bicycle circulation, and the financial feasibility of the Project. Design Guidelines were adopted to complement the guidelines in §16.7. The guidelines establish façade hierarchies, district gateways, and key building elements to promote a cohesive PUD while still allowing for flexibility and creativity in design. A new scheme for identifying buildings was established.

The Planning Board has issued Special Permits with Site Plan Review-A, the second phase of approvals after the PUD-PMP for the Marketplace (Phase 1AAA), for IKEA (Phase IAA), which will not be developed as planned, for Phase IA Blocks 10, 1, 4, and 3 (in chronological order), and temporary uses for Blocks 5 and 6.

A. Review Requirements under the Somerville Zoning Ordinance

This application is for a Special Permit with Site Plan Review-A (SPSR-A) for a development of a portion parcels 85-A-4 and 85-A-3. As set forth in §16.8 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance (SZO), “Application for PUD is a type of special permit with site plan review [SPSR], requiring two (2) stages of review. A PUD Applicant shall first file a preliminary master plan demonstrating a comprehensive land use plan for the entire PUD tract. Upon approval of this plan, the Applicant may then submit special permit with site plan review applications for definitive plans of each portion or phase of development of the PUD tract.”

The Applicant is seeking SPSR-A final level approval of a planned unit development under the revised Planned Unit Development Preliminary Master Plan (PUD-PMP) approved by the Planning Board on August 5, 2010. The applicant submitted the current application on January 22, 2013. The PUD-PMP conditions and findings provide the basis for the review of this type of application. A subset of the requirements are required findings for each SPSR-A. The fulfillment of the required findings is indicated as such in the attached Appendixes.

B. Organization of Report

The present report includes the following sections:

- Description of the Property;
- Description of the Proposal;
- Department Comments;
- Public Comments;
- Staff Findings for Special Permit with Site Plan Review-A; and
- Staff Recommendation for Board vote, including recommended conditions of SPSR-A approval.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

A. Site

The total land area of the Master Plan is 2.67 million square feet or 61.3 acres and the area of Block 2B is 47,642 square feet or just over 1 acre. Block 2 is located along the Mystic River and west of the Winter Hill Yacht Club boathouse. The land is currently vacant and contains piles of soil and equipment for the construction of Blocks 1, 3 and 4.

B. Surrounding Area

The area surrounding the proposed site contains Draw 7 Park on the opposite side of the MBTA Orange Line tracks and development Blocks 1, 3 and 4 which are under construction. Assembly Square Drive roadwork and landscaping that were part of the Phase IAA approval are complete. The subdivision of land that corresponds to the Blocks approved in the PUD is complete and was recorded on December 28,

2011 and the new streets have names. The street that was previously labeled Main Street is Assembly Row, A- and G-Street are both Great River Road, C-Street is Artisan Way, D-Street is Canal Street, and E-Street/Foley Street will remain as Foley Street.



Approximate location of the Block 2 Proposal

III. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

A. Overall

The plan for Block 2 includes two parcels that are divided by a one-way street and each sub-block contains a building: a small approximately 3,605 square foot pavilion building and an approximately 132,708 square foot building, which is the subject of this report, labeled 2A and 2B respectively. Parcel 2A is 20,922 square feet and 2B is just over an acre at 47,642 square feet. There will be a plaza primarily on parcel 2A at the terminus of Assembly Row and the plaza is named “the point”.

Building 2B will be a 4-story, 132,708 gross square foot building, which will house approximately 39,500 gross square feet of retail and restaurant uses on the ground floor, approximately 93,174 gross square feet of office space on the upper stories and two loading bays. It is anticipated that the project will employ 562 people onsite. The hours of operation are estimated to be 7am to 2am.

Compliance with dimensional standards is shown in the table below.

DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS	PUD-A	Approved PUD	Proposed Project
Minimum lot size	20,000 sf	66.5 acres	47,642 sf (1.09 acres)
Frontage	-	-	290 ft
Front yard setback	No minimum	-	9.7 ft
Side yard setback (left)	No minimum	-	5.3 ft
Side yard setback (right)	No minimum	-	2.1 ft
Rear yard setback	No minimum	-	10.1 ft
Maximum Floor area ratio (FAR)	10.0	2.0	2.42*
Maximum height, feet	70 feet up to 250 feet	Varying up to 250 feet	62 & 70 feet ^o

DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS	PUD-A	Approved PUD	Proposed Project
Minimum lot area/per dwelling unit	No minimum	Approx 1379	N/A
Total open space (%)	25%	25.2%	12.7 %*
Useable open space (%)	12.5%	17.7%	3.9 %*

* The dimensional requirements do not need to be met for each individual SPSR as they contribute to the approved PUD that does comply with the dimensional requirements.

° The Planning Board granted two waivers from requirements of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance during the approval for the PMP-PUD and both were for the development of Block 2. The waivers were to: a) construct a building (underground parking structure) within 150 feet of the Mystic River bank; and, b) allow a building of a height up to 90 feet within the area between 150 and 250 feet of the Mystic River bank. Underground parking is no longer included in the plan for the building on Block 2; however, the proposal does include building within 150 feet of the Mystic River bank. The proposed setback from the River is 141.8 feet. The portion of the building in the 150 foot setback is approximately 850 square feet of the one story portion of the building and 125 square feet of the footprint of the upper floors. The height waiver granted will not be exercised; height of the building will be 70 feet at its tallest at the southwest corner and 62 feet for the rest of the building.

Locating the building within the 150 foot setback will have the following advantages. The building will be able to meet the street with a covered arcade and suspended canopies above the sidewalk. The arcade on Block 2 will be continuation of the arcade on Block 1, creating an interesting pedestrian path for the length of the riverfront park frontage. Having a building in this location does not impact the size of the riverfront park or the way that Great River Road functions.

B. Site Design and Access

The project area is triangular in shape and the building is framed by sidewalks and a larger open space between Blocks 2A and 2B. This larger open space will be plaza with a 20 foot wide right of way for one-way traffic. The right of way is designed to be incorporated in the plaza and function like a woonerf or a shared pedestrian and vehicular space. The street can be blocked off for special events to create a larger plaza space. The roadways that frame the other sides of the project area are Great River Road and Artisan Way. A subdivision plan has been approved; however, the buildings have not yet been assigned addresses.

Pedestrian access will be via sidewalks around the building with varying widths of roughly 12 to 18 feet. There will be an office lobby entrance on Artisan Way and a small doorway to access a staircase to the upper stories on Assembly Row. The retail entrances will be located off of the sidewalk with separate entrances for each retailer. Access to the two loading areas is off of Great River Road. There is no vehicular parking on this Block.

C. Building Shape and Placement

The building was designed to be pedestrian-friendly along all three sides with retail wrapping the ground floor except for the area of the loading dock. The loading dock will be closed by a garage door that will be treated in an attractive way so that the retail connectivity is not interrupted. The form of the building follows the general form anticipated for the Block as part of the Preliminary Master Plan Approval as a podium V-shaped building. This shape allows for significant frontage and views of the water from the upper stories of the building. The acute angle of the building allows for greater views from the street when traveling north on Assembly Row than a typical square shaped building would provide. The PMP contemplated this being a 7-story mixed use building with residential; however, the height of the building

no longer requires a waiver and the uses of the PMP for each block were not established until this SPSR-A phase.

D. Uses

The ground floor use of the building is proposed to be restaurant, retail and other commercial uses as approved in the PUD-PMP. 512,000 square feet of retail space including restaurants was permitted through the PUD-PMP and as the blocks of the plan are developed, the total square feet of each use category will be tracked. A list of specific uses in the use table was approved as part of the PUD-PMP and the commercial first floor could contain a mix of those approved uses. The number of storefronts is not yet known and will likely vary as tenants swap in and out of the building in the future.

The upper stories of the building will contain approximately 93,174 gross square feet of office space. 1.75 million square feet of commercial space was permitted through the PUD-PMP. The commercial space include but is not limited to office, research and development, laboratory, medical office, and manufacturing. The upper stories of this building could be any of these uses and the floor plate may be broken up for multiple tenants. The total number of commercial square footage will be tracked.

E. Linkage

The City, the Somerville Redevelopment Authority, IKEA, and Federal Realty Investment Trust have entered into a development covenant from 2006 that establishes that linkage will be paid after the first 300,000 square feet of space is constructed in the PUD PMP, excluding the existing Mall. Appendix G is a table of the square footage that is built in the PUD to keep track of when linkage payments will be required. Linkage will be required for the square footage of this building.

F. Inclusionary Housing

The provisions of SZO section 13.2 do not apply to this proposal because there will not be a residential component to the development.

G. Landscaping and Open Space

Landscaping: The open space at the site will be hardscape. This building is in an urban context and the build appropriately meets the street to create a walkable environment. Landscaping across Assembly Row is concentrated in publically accessible well programmed public spaces. Baxter Riverfront Park will be adjacent to the site and this park will provide a large amount of landscaped area.

Usable Open Space: The usable open space on the site is around the building adding to the width of the sidewalks. Under §16.6.1 of the SZO, the usable open space must be permanent, made accessible to the public at a minimum from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, and protected through a covenant or other appropriate legal instrument. This site has 3.9% (approximately 1,875 square feet) of usable open space that is counted towards Block 2B. There are other areas at the edges of Block 2B that shape the intersections and plazas that are useable open space but are included in the useable open space figure for the entire PUD. Larger areas of usable open space will be on other parcels were they are consolidated to make larger spaces such as on Block 2A that will connect the Assembly Row development to the waterfront. The overall calculation of useable open space in the PUD is 17.7%.

H. Parking and On-site Circulation

The minimum parking requirements are 1 per 1,000 square feet of retail space, 1 per 500 net square feet of restaurant space, and 1 per 1,000 square feet of office space. The minimum requirement is between 132 and 172 parking spaces (if the entire ground floor was restaurants) for the commercial use depending on the breakdown of retail, restaurant and offices uses.

There will be no parking on Block 2B. The proposal is for 260 shared parking in the garages in Blocks 3 and 4. Other parking spaces available for the building include on-street spaces; there are 9 parallel parking spaces on Great River Road and 9 parallel parking spaces on Artisan Way adjacent to the building; and shared temporary parking lots on Blocks 5 and 6.

The parking garage on Block 4 will house approximately 469 parking spaces - 142 commercial and 327 residential spaces (1.29 spaces per dwelling unit). The commercial parking requirement for this Block was between 43 and 87. There will be a gate dividing the commercial and residential spaces and the Block 2 users will park in the commercial parking area that will have a controlled entry. 140 spaces will be available for the office workers on Monday through Friday, 7am to 5pm.

The parking garage on Block 3 will house approximately 571 parking spaces, and the requirement for that block was only between 183 and 306 parking spaces depending on the breakdown of retail and restaurant uses. These spaces will have a control gate at the entrance to the garage on the second floor. 120 parking spaces will be available for retail and restaurant patrons of Block 2.

Blocks 5 and 6 will temporarily be surface parking lots with 207 and 228 parking spaces respectively. The parking will be free; however, it will be access controlled to ensure that it is not used as a commuter lot or the residents of Assembly Row.

The number of required loading docks varies depending on the mix of retail and restaurant uses. The Applicant has determined that the maximum number of loading docks that would be required is 4. The requirement for retail is 3 for between 35,001 square feet and 50,000 square feet, and 3 for restaurants between 16,001 and 40,000 square feet. The proposed number is 2.

The non-residential use bicycle parking requirements is one space for every 10 required parking spaces. The requirement is for 17 spaces. There is a bike storage room on the ground floor of the building by the elevators. Bike racks outside of the building could also supply space for the required number of spaces. The floor plan includes three shower rooms, which are an important element to allow biking to an office building feasible.

I. Form and Design of the Building

The proposal meets the general form and design guidelines adopted as part of the PMP to address this block. The design of the building was not directly addressed at the PUD-PMP review, as this was left for the more detailed SPSR-A review. The form had a retail podium on the ground floor and a V-shaped building above it with an acute angle. The building was anticipated to be a 7-story mixed-use commercial and residential building with an underground parking garage. The form is similar to the proposed building; except that, the height of the building is 5-stories and no longer requires a height waiver, parking will be shared with garage on other blocks and the uses will be retail, restaurants and office. These details for each block are not established until this SPSR-A phase.

The building conforms to the design guidelines, which ensures that it is built to be consistent with the PUD-PMP. In the design guidelines the facades of the building and corners are assigned hierarchies to help reinforce the importance of a public open space, break down the scale of an elevation and allow for part of the building to be background so that others can be foreground.

The corners of the building were assigned functions to provide a framework of the overall PMP. The northwest corner is supposed to be a significant corner which is highly visible from the plaza on Block 2. It is made up a one-story portion of the building with a roof deck and a trellis structure that terminates the

pedestrian arcade along Great River Road. The southwest corner of the building is supposed to serve as a secondary corner that is less prominent. This corner is fairly prominent as its parapet is taller than rest of the structure and the windows in this area are distinct and reminiscent of large loft/factory building windows. The two corners have switched in importance in the implementation of the design.

The facades of the building were assigned values in the following ways. The first floor along the plaza and Artisan Way is a primary elevation. The first floor of the building will be retail and meet this standard. The PUD-PMP allows for the storefront design to be determined by the retail tenant to reflect the tenant's individual brand identity subject to the Assembly Row Signage and Storefront Standards. The storefronts are not intended to conform to the design of the base building.

The plaza-facing and Artisan Way façades are a primary elevation for the first three floors and a secondary elevation above and the corner of Artisan Way and Assembly Square is a primary elevation for all floors. The façades meet the primary elevation material quality for all 4 stories above the ground floor; they will be hand-laid white brick and large clear glass windows. The plaza-facing façade is also labeled as an iconic building façade. The building, not just along this façade, will be iconic and reminiscent of a loft/factory building. The Great River Road side of the building will also exceed the design guidelines that call for secondary and tertiary elevations. This façade will be primarily a clear glass curtain wall with a mullion pattern that relates to the mullion pattern in the rest of the building.

Access to the building has been altered since the building was designed as a retail and office building. There is no longer a residential entrance off of the plaza. The loading and service entrance is now the entrance for the office building. The plaza will continue to benefit from foot traffic from this building as there will be multiple retail doorways along this side of the building. The office entrance will be in a logical place across the street from the Block 4 parking garage and provide an attractive element to the building on Artisan Way. The loading dock will be on the eastern side of the building and be less prominent than the originally proposed location.

Overall the building has a cohesive identity while providing variety in the street-facing versus the river-facing façade of the building. The ground level detailing will primarily be dictated by the retail tenants, which is allowed in the design guidelines. The pedestrian arcade and second story roof-top terraces allow the building to interact with the river park, which is an asset to the neighborhood that this building should complement.

The building appearance and material choices ensure that it will be distinct from Blocks 1, 2 and 4. The buildings should provide variety in the built environment as is typical and appreciated within an urban context. The Block 2B building will appear as one large building and be comprised of white brick and large windows with simple lines. Blocks 1, 3, and 4 contain a variety of materials and detailing and have the appearance of multiple buildings on the same block. The contrast in the designs will have a positive impact on the neighborhood that is being built around "the point" at Assembly Row.

J. Signage

Signage above the first floor is for office tenants and consists of ten possible locations along the parapet of the building and above the office entrance between each floor. The material and technology of the signs is not indicated.

The retail signage will be located along the first floor. Staff will review and approve first floor retail signage based on the Assembly Row Signage Design Standards. Plans that are inconsistent with the Standards will required review from the Design Review Committee and approval from the Planning Board.

K. Waivers & Other Relief Requests

The Applicant is requesting four waivers from the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance for signage height and size, the number of loading docks, building within the 150 foot setback from the River, and the submission requirement for providing a 3-D model of the site.

The Applicants are seeking a special permit in order to waive the signage requirements related to the 35-foot height limit from finished grade. The type of signage that would be above the 35-foot height limit would be signage for the office tenants along the parapet of the building and above the office entrance between each floor.

The office signs also exceed the size allowance under Section 12.4.4 on all sides. The two office signs on the Assembly Row side of the building total 856 square feet and the allowance is for 420 square feet of signage. The sign at the corner of Assembly Row and Artisan Way is 240 square feet and the allowance is for 60 square feet. The five signs on the Artisan Way side are a total of 1143 square feet and the allowance is for 480 square feet. The two signs on the Great River Road elevations total 1056 square feet and the total allowance is estimated to be 520 square feet.

The second waiver is for the number of required loading docks is dependent on the breakdown of retail versus restaurant space. Since the breakdown has not yet been determined, the Applicant calculated that the maximum number of loading docks required is 4 and 2 will be provided. The rationale for providing less than the maximum number of loading spaces is that allocating less ground floor space to loading results in more square footage for retail and restaurant uses that enliven the district. Moreover, two loading spaces will be sufficient for the proposed uses. Several of the tenants will likely use vans for deliveries and two vans can fit in a loading area designated for a larger truck. Most of the retail and restaurant deliveries will occur in the weekday morning. The site will be managed to minimize conflicts.

The third waiver is related to building within 150 feet of the Mystic River bank. An amendment to the PUD-PMP to waive the dimensional control of construction within this setback is part of this application. A description can be found in the overall description of the proposal section of this report.

The final waiver is for a submission requirement to provide a 3-D model of the site. The renderings submitted give context to the proposal and achieve a similar purpose as a 3-D model. Also, the proposed building is consistent with the conceptual 3-D model that was constructed for the entire PUD. Therefore, the model is waived unless the Planning Board requests it.

IV. CITY DEPARTMENT/COMMITTEE COMMENTS**Design Review Committee**

The Citywide Design Review Committee (DRC) held a public meeting on January 31, 2013 at which they reviewed this proposal. The minutes, as noted by Planning Staff are copied below:

The DRC reviewed a preliminary plan and made the following comments and recommendations.

Overall they liked the composition of the building and called the design a refined historicism that appropriately integrated modern materials. They felt that the corner of the building at Artisan Way and Assembly Square Drive was successful; however, moving down the building to the plaza-side, since the second story terrace in the middle of the building is no longer part of the plan they wanted to see an

element along this façade that created some symmetry with the entrance on Artisan Way. On the opposite side of the building the drawings portrayed the transition between the masonry and glass curtainwall as jarring. The architect should show the inside turn of where these materials meet. The DRC also discussed ways of bringing some of the nuance that is on the masonry side of the building to the glass curtain wall. Some ideas were increasing the mullion size and having consistency in the mullion pattern or bringing some masonry to this side of the building. The DRC did not request to see a redesign in another meeting; however, they did request to see material samples for the building before they were purchased.

The architect made the following changes or comments to respond to the DRC.

The double mullion pattern of the curtainwall was increased from 10' to 30' to reflect the rest of the building. Also, the curtainwall height was reduced and a metal panel band was added along the top to that reflects the datum of the adjacent brick.

The design intent is for the building to be asymmetrical in order to identify and emphasize the entrance to the office on Artisan Way. These are two different facades intended to address two distinct urban conditions and therefore an element was not added to the plaza-side of the building.

A two-story “monumental façade” on northwestern corner of building at Assembly Row and Great River Road, which was included in the design guidelines for the block was excluded two reasons; a monumental façade does not complement the design, and the revised intention is for the focal point of the building to be the southwest corner at the intersections of Artisan Way and Assembly Row.

Traffic and Parking

Traffic and Parking has reviewed the Proposed Block 2 Development Program within Assembly Square. The developer’s Transportation Consultant, Vanasse, Hangen, Brustlin, Inc (VHB) has submitted a Transportation Memorandum relative to a traffic assessment of both proposed developments. This submittal is a professional well prepared document.

Traffic and Parking concurs with the conclusion of both proposed developments that Block 2A and 2B buildings will readily be able to accommodate the traffic generated by this use, as well as the other planned uses of the overall PUD project site.

Another concern was the number of loading bays calculated by VHB for this phase of the project. Traffic and Parking concurs with SPCD staff that a reduction in the number of loading bays is required.

Traffic and Parking has no objections to the submitted proposals concerning the Block 2A and 2B Assembly Square Mixed Used Redevelopment Project.

Office of Sustainability and Environment

Office of Sustainability and Environment has not yet provided comments.

City Engineer

The City Engineer has preliminarily reviewed the plans and does not have concerns at this time.

Fire Prevention

At this time, Fire Prevention's requirements for Block 2B include complete fire sprinkler and standpipe systems, an approved fire alarm system, a radio master box, and 24 hour monitoring by an approved central station company for each building. All of which must be 100% complete before any occupancy is allowed. There may be additional requirements attached to the permits pending review of more specific information that will need to be submitted before Fire Prevention's approval.

Lights & Lines

Lights & Lines has preliminarily reviewed the plans and does not have concerns at this time.

Bicycle Commission Staff

There should be at least one bike rack on each side of the building, especially where there are multiple entrances on each side of the building. In particular, there should be a bike rack at the southern side of the parcel where there is an entrance on Artisan Way.

Seventeen bicycle parking spaces are required based on city code. This would require a minimum square footage of 377 square feet. The plans indicate a bicycle storage room on the first floor of the office building with dimensions of approximately 15' by 12' or 180 square feet. Therefore, this room appears to be undersized for the number of spaces needed and we need additional information on how they will be accommodated.

Conservation Commission Staff

The Applicants have submitted a Notice of Intent (NOI) to the Conservation Commission for the construction of Blocks 2A and 2B because these buildings will drain directly into the 72 inch outfall pipe. The Commission will review the NOI at their meeting on February 26, 2013. The other reason why a NOI would be submitted to the Commission is if work is done within the 100 foot protected buffer of the river, which is not affected by this proposal.

Ward Alderman

Alderman Bastardi is aware of the proposal. She has not submitted comments for the report.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Planning Staff will edit the report to provide any updated public comments should the Planning Board chose not to act on this case on February 21, 2013, thereby allowing public comments to be incorporated into the report and the conditions, if applicable. As of February 14, 2013, the Planning Staff has not received any comments on this project.

VI. STAFF FINDINGS FOR SPECIAL PERMIT WITH SITE PLAN REVIEW-A

A. General Application Requirements

Application requirements are identified in Section 16.8 of the SZO. Section 16.8.2 and 16.8.3 identifies the general information required for a preliminary PUD PMP approval and final level approval. Section

16.8.2.H and 16.8.3 identifies that the Special Permit with Site Plan Review requirements in Section 5.2 are required for both phases of approval. Staff finds the SPSR-A meets the application submittal requirements in the above listed sections. Detailed findings are contained in Appendix A.

B. Required Findings of Fact for PUD

Section 16.10.1 of the SZO indicates that PUD preliminary master plan approval shall be considered preliminary approval that recognizes that the plan is in general accordance with provisions of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance (SZO). Findings are then required under 16.1, 6.4.1, 6.4.3, 16.4, and 16.7 of the SZO. The ASMD further requires findings to meet development standards and design guidelines under 6.4.7 and 6.4.8. The Planning Board determined that the PMP met the required findings for a PUD PMP, but indicated that some issues would require further review at the SPSR-A submittal. The Staff has reviewed these required findings as they relate to the SPSR-A application and find that these findings have now all been met. Detailed findings are contained in Appendix B.

C. Requirements for SPSR and SP (SZO §5.2.5 and 5.1.4)

The SZO requires that the PMP be reviewed to ensure that projects under the PMP can meet the standards required for SPSR-A in the ordinance. Section 6.4.9 requires that the requirements in Section 6.4.9C as well as parts a-h of Section 5.2.5 must be addressed when SPSR-A requests are submitted. The Staff finds that projects submitted for SPSR-A under this PMP meets the findings required as identified in Appendix C.

The SZO requires that the requirements in Section 5.1.4 are addressed when Special Permit requests are submitted. The Staff finds that the special permit for signage meets the findings required as identified in Appendix C.

D. Requirements for Waterfront Overlay District (SZO §6.1.15)

Section 6.1.15 identifies specific standards that are required in the Waterfront Overlay District. Staff finds that the SPSR-A meets these findings, and they are contained in Appendix D.

E. Waiver Standards (SZO §6.4.12, 16.5.4 and 16.5.5)

Section 6.4.12 identifies specific standards that are required for relief from requirements in the ASMD. Section 16.5.4 identifies standards that are required for issuing waivers of dimension standards such as locating within 150 feet with the Mystic River bank. Section 16.5.5 identifies a specific standard that is required for waiver of standards of Article 9 (Off-Street Parking and Loading) and Article 12 (Signs) (Section 6.4.14 also addresses signage in the ASMD). Staff finds that the SPSR-A meets these findings, and they are contained in Appendix E.

Upon written request by the applicant, the SPGA may waive submission of any of the required information for Special Permit with Site Plan Review applications, if the SPGA finds the information is not applicable to the project, per Section 5.2.3. Staff find that the requested waiver from the requirement in Section 6.4.8B for a three-dimensional model is reasonable given the extent of the three-dimensional computer graphic images provided by the Applicant.

VII. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on the materials submitted by the Applicant and the above findings, the Planning Staff finds that

the application for Special Permit with Site Plan Review–A for final level approval of a planned unit development under the Planned Unit Development Preliminary Master Plan approved by the Planning Board on December 14, 2006 and as amended on August 5, 2010 meets the goals of the City for this site, the purposes of the district, and the provisions and purposes of the Ordinance. Therefore, the Staff recommends **CONDITIONAL APPROVAL** of the requested Special Permit with Site Plan Review-A.

Planning staff recommend that the Planning Board grant **APPROVAL** of the Special Permit for signage height and size, the number of loading docks, and constructing within 150 feet of the Mystic River bank based upon the findings in Appendix E. Planning staff recommend that the three-dimensional model is not required.

To mitigate any potential negative impacts and to provide the best project possible, the Staff recommends attaching to the SPSR-A the **CONDITIONS** in Appendix F. In order to complete this project, the attached PMP-PUD conditions in Appendix H need to be satisfied within the designated timeframe for compliance.

This recommendation is based upon the Special Permit with Site Plan Review-A Application stamped in at the City Clerk's Office on January 22, 2013, including plans:

- *Updated* P-100 Perspectives: View from Great River Road, View from Assembly Row and Artisan Way dated Jan 14, 2013 (OSPCD Stamp date Feb 14, 2013)
- *Updated* P-101 Elevations: Artisan Way Elevation, Assembly Row Elevation (OSPCD Stamp date Feb 14, 2013)
- A-010 3D Building Views dated Jan 14, 2013 (as revised by P-100 & P-101)
- A-101 – A-105 floor and roof plans all dated Jan 14, 2013
- A-201 & A-202 elevations dated Jan 14, 2013 (as revised by P-100 & P-101)
- C-2, C-3 Neighborhood Context Map 1 and 2; C-4 Overall Site Plan 1; C-5 Overall Site Plan 2; C-6 Layout and Materials Plan; C-7 Grading, Drainage Plan; C-8 Utility Plan; C-9 Turning Template Plan; all dated Jan 22, 2013;
- Open space Summary for the PUD dated January 22, 2013.

Approval constitutes an approval of the final site plans and building design details for a 4-story, approximately 132,708 gross square foot building, which will house approximately 39,500 gross square feet of retail, restaurant and other commercial uses and approximately 93,174 gross square feet of office space, two loading bays, and service areas. Parking for the uses in this building will be supplied in Blocks 3 and 4, on the street, and temporarily on Blocks 5 and 6.

Appendix G addresses the PUD-PMP thresholds that will adjust as the Assembly Row project is built out.

Approval is also for office signage that is indicated on the elevations. Approval does not include the design of the storefronts or first floor retail signs, which are subject to the Assembly Row Signage and Storefront Standards that are currently before the Planning Board for approval. The storefront design and signage are subject to staff review to ensure that the design is consistent with the standards. Wayfinding signs will be subject to design standards that the Owner submits.

The recommendation is also based upon a technical analysis by Planning Staff of the application material based upon the required findings of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, and is based only upon information submitted prior to the public hearing. This report may be revised or updated with new recommendations, findings and/or conditions based upon additional information provided to the Planning Staff during the public hearing process.

