



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
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Case #: ZBA 2011-62

Date: September 1, 2011

Recommendation: Conditional Approval

PLANNING STAFF REPORT

Site: 1323 Broadway

Applicant Name: Volunteers of America of Massachusetts, Inc.

Applicant Address: 441 Centre Street, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

Property Owner Name: CASCAP Realty, Inc.

Property Owner Address: 678 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139

Agent Name: Peter Caro

Agent Address: Casner & Edwards, LLP, 303 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02210

Alderman: Robert Trane

Legal Notice: Applicant Volunteers of America of Massachusetts, Inc. and Owner CASCAP Realty, Inc., seek a Special Permit with Site Plan Review to establish more than three dwelling units under SZO §7.3 and a Special Permit under SZO §9.13 to modify parking and loading standards to establish a Group Residence and 7 affordable units. RB zone. Ward 7.

Zoning District/Ward: RB Zone / Ward 7

Zoning Approval Sought: Special Permit with Site Plan Review under SZO §7.3 and Special Permits under SZO §9.13

Date of Application: August 9, 2011

Dates of Public Hearing: Zoning Board of Appeals **9/7/11**

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Subject Property: The subject property is a 19,627 square foot parcel at the corner of Broadway and North Street. The structure on the lot is a brick building with 2 stories, not including the basement level, with 15,225 square feet of habitable space. The structure was formerly used as a nursing home but currently houses an emergency shelter/group home called the Wayside Youth & Family Support Network, Inc. (Wayside) that operates seven days per week, 24 hours a day. There are two existing curb cuts to the property, one off of Broadway and one at the opposite corner of the lot off of North Street.



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2. Proposal: The Applicant is proposing to renovate the existing structure to provide transitional housing for homeless veterans in need of support. The renovation of the building would create 22 beds and supportive services on the basement and first floors of the building and 7 permanent affordable apartment units on the second floor (4 one-bedroom units and 3 studio/efficiency units) with 5, round-the-clock staff members in the building. All seven of the units on the second floor will be affordable units as defined in Somerville Zoning Ordinance (SZO) Article 13. The basement would contain five transitional beds (a single room and two doubles), program rooms, a kitchen, a dining/activity room, and storage, mechanical, laundry, and maintenance facilities. The first floor would contain a newly relocated main entrance, 17 transitional beds (7 singles and 5 doubles), and a lounge. The second floor would consist of all the permanent units complete with their own private bathrooms and kitchens. Much of the structure would have new windows installed that are more energy efficient.

There would also be substantial improvements to the property outside of the existing structure. The main entrance to the structure would shift from Broadway to an at-grade entrance off of North Street. Entryway stairs would also be reworked at the old main entrance on Broadway and the secondary entrance on the façade that faces North Street. Additionally, the existing chain link fence that encloses the property will be removed and a new white, ornamental, 4 foot high, black aluminum fence would be installed along Broadway and North Street. The existing 6 foot high wooden stockade fence at the rear of the property would also be replaced with a new one. The landscaping on the site would also be enhanced with increased plantings along the Broadway side of the property and the addition of a new stamped concrete patio at the rear of the structure. Curbs and pavement on the site would also be repaired/improved and the parking area at the rear of the structure would be expanded to accommodate for a few additional spaces. On-site parking would increase from 9 existing spaces to 11. Two of these 11 spaces would only be accessible off of Broadway but the remaining 9 spaces would be accessible via the driveway from North Street.

3. Nature of Application:

Dimensions

The existing structure is currently nonconforming with respect to the front yard and rear yard setbacks. Since this is a corner lot, the owner has the option of choosing which of the two corner lot lines is considered the front lot line (SZO §2.2.93). In this case, the Applicant is choosing to move what is considered the front lot line from Broadway to North Street, thereby making the entire existing structure dimensionally conforming.

The proposed project would move the main entrance of the structure from Broadway to North Street. In doing so, the existing front yard would become the left side yard, the existing right side yard would become the front yard, the existing rear yard would become the right side yard, and the existing left side yard would become the rear yard. This would bring all dimensional requirements for the structure into conformance. The front yard setback would then be 23.3 feet and the minimum required is 15 feet. The rear yard setback would be 57.8 feet while the minimum is only 20 feet. The side yard setbacks would be 12.9 feet and 18.5 feet and the minimum required for the district is 8 feet for a two story structure.

The lot area per dwelling unit would be 2,453 square feet and the minimum required is 1,500 square feet. The ground coverage would remain at 26% and the maximum allowed is 50% leaving space for the landscaping that will make up approximately 74% of the subject lot where the minimum required is 25%. The building envelop is also less than the maximum allowed in the RB District: the floor area ratio (FAR) is 0.78 and the maximum is 1.0, the height of the structure is 30 feet and the maximum is 40 feet. Furthermore, the minimum required frontage is 50 feet and by re-designating the front lot line as being along North Street, the property's frontage will actually increase from 140 feet to 151 feet, both of which are more than compliant.

Use

The project requires a Special Permit with Site Plan Review (§5.2) under §7.3 to allow more than three dwellings on the lot, when 12.5% but no less than one unit is affordable as defined by §2.2.4 and §13. In this case all seven of the proposed dwelling units on the second floor would be affordable.

Parking

The Applicant is proposing to provide 11 off-street parking spaces at the site, while the SZO requires 13 spaces (6 parking spaces for the four one-bedroom units, 3 spaces for the three studio/efficiency units, 2 spaces for the Community/Group Residence, and 2 spaces for visitors). Therefore, the Applicant is applying for a special permit under §9.13.f which states that the number of required parking spaces can be reduced by 20% where it can be demonstrated that a use or establishment needs a lesser number of parking spaces. Furthermore, the Applicant is also applying for a Special Permit under §9.13.b to modify parking and loading standards because the driveway off of North Street is only approximately 14 feet wide at its narrowest point and two-way driveways are required to be 18 feet wide per SZO §9.9.b.

4. Surrounding Neighborhood: Most of the structures to the north, east, and south are two-, three-, and multi-family dwellings between 2 and 3 stories in height, including a mix of commercial uses along Broadway. To the west, only a short distance down Broadway however are three, large, multi-family buildings that are 12 stories in height and directly across the street from them is a super market. Immediately to the north of the subject property is a small park and adjacent to the west is a cemetery that separates the subject property from the super market.

5. Impacts of Proposal: The largest impact of the proposal would be the potential increase in the number of people at the site compared to the existing emergency shelter/group home. The Applicant has estimated that the existing use, Wayside, houses 12 to 15 residents that are supported by 2 or 3 staff persons per shift. This would equate to approximately 18 people on the premises at one time, but this number could potentially be higher or lower depending upon the number of residents occupying the group home at a particular time. The proposed transitional housing for homeless veterans use, at its highest possible capacity, would be 34 people including the 5 round-the-clock staff members if all 22 beds of transitional housing were taken and all 7 affordable housing units were occupied. This means that there would be approximately 15 more people on average on the site than the existing emergency shelter/group home use. However, having this many occupants in an area where there are several multi-family dwelling units would not be that noticeable of an impact to the area. This is especially the case because of the three, 12 story multi-family buildings that are located only a short distance away from the subject property. The proposed transitional housing use is not that much different from the existing use on the site.

The traffic and parking situation resulting from the proposed use would most likely not negatively impact the area. Most of the residents of the proposed transitional housing use would be former homeless veterans and would not own or have access to a car. This is one reason why the proposed Group Home would provide a van to residents to assist them with appointments and connections. Additionally, the location of the subject property sits directly on an MBTA bus route and is a reasonable walk to the Red Line. A Traffic Analysis was submitted by the Applicant which indicated that the proposed transitional housing use would generate 106 total vehicle trips on a weekday and between 8 and 10 trips total during critical peak hours. The Traffic Analysis indicated that “this increase in traffic will not have any noticeable effect on traffic operations along Broadway or North Street.”

6. Green Building Practices: The Applicant indicated in their application “that the building will be renovated in conformance with the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development standards with energy star appliances, windows, insulation and green materials will be in accordance with

Exhibit H of the One Stop on file with the city and the state.” The Applicant has also indicated that new mechanical systems will be more efficient and the windows, roof and walls will be insulated to LEED silver standards which will decrease negative emissions.

7. Comments:

Fire Prevention: Has been contacted but has not yet provided comments.

Ward Alderman: Alderman Trane stated in an email to Planning Staff that he supports the project as outlined.

Historic Preservation: Historic Preservation Planner, Kristi Chase, stated in an email to Planning Staff that “The building permit records show that the building was constructed in 1959 for the Clarendon Hill Nursing Home on part of what had been the Veteran's Cemetery. The plans do not appear to make any changes beyond landscaping and the rearrangement of entry stairs and ADA ramps to the exterior of the building. These changes would not significantly alter the appearance of the building.”

Traffic & Parking: Stated in an email to Planning Staff that “The Applicant seeks a Special Permit to establish more than 3 dwelling units and to modify parking requirements. Per the Somerville Zoning Ordinance (SZO) 13 off street parking spaces are required. The Applicant is providing only 11 off street parking spaces.

The Applicant has hired a professional Traffic and Consulting Engineering Firm, Ron Muller and Associates. This Traffic Consulting Firm has submitted a professional and well prepared Traffic Memorandum. This document states that the number of vehicles accessing and exiting this site will have minimal impact on the existing traffic patterns on local streets. Traffic and Parking concurs with this analysis. This document further states with supporting documentation that the number of parking spaces provided by the Applicant will be sufficient for the proposed development. Traffic and Parking does not object to this analysis.

Traffic and Parking does not object to this application.”

Housing: Conditional commitment letters has been executed by the City and the Volunteers of America, and the Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Fund and the Volunteers of America. A copy of the two commitment letters is attached hereto for consideration and review. Pursuant to HOME funding requirements and the Trust Fund requirements, an Affordable Housing Restriction will be recorded at the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds outlining a term of years for which the units must be affordable.

Lights and Lines: Has been contacted but has not yet provided comments

Conservation Commission: Has been contacted but has not yet provided comments

Engineering: Has been contacted but has not yet provided comments.

Wiring Inspector: Has been contacted but has not yet provided comments.

Public Comment: Alderman Trane held a neighborhood meeting for the project on Thursday, August 18, 2011 that was attended by three or four members of the public. Alderman Trane indicated that no one voiced opposition to the project and the Applicant, who was also in attendance, stated that everyone seemed comfortable with the proposal.



Existing Conditions



II. FINDINGS FOR SPECIAL PERMIT with SITE PLAN REVIEW (SZO §5.2 & §7.3) for Maximum Dwelling Units per Lot:

In order to grant a special permit with site plan review, the SPGA must make certain findings and determinations as outlined in §5.2.5 of the SZO. This section of the report goes through §5.2.5 in detail.

1. Information Supplied: The Staff finds that the information provided by the Applicant conforms to the requirements of §5.2.3 of the SZO and allows for a comprehensive analysis of the project.
2. Compliance with Standards: The Applicant must comply “with such criteria or standards as may be set forth in this Ordinance which refer to the granting of the requested special permit with site plan review.”

SZO §7.3 states that in RB districts, where developments include a minimum of 12.5% affordable housing units on-site, the maximum dwelling units per lot can be waived through SPSR application. In all cases minimum lot size, minimum lot area per dwelling unit and other dimensional and parking requirements of Article 8 and Article 9 shall be met. Seven affordable units will be provided on site through an AHIP. The project complies with the lot area and lot area per dwelling unit requirements for the 8 total units (7 residential units and the Community/Group Residence). This proposal meets all of the dimensional requirements, but not all of the parking requirements.

With regard to parking, in considering a special permit under §9.13 of the SZO, Staff finds that the alterations proposed would not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing parking situation. The proposed transitional housing use would provide living space for formerly homeless veterans. Many of these people will not own a vehicle nor have access to one. The Group Home would also provide a van service to residents for appointments and connections. Further, the subject property sits right on an MBTA bus line and the property is also a reasonable walk to the Red Line. All of these items mean that residents will have less of an incentive to obtain or use a vehicle. With regard to the modification of parking and loading standards under SZO §9.13, the Applicant is not proposing to change any of the existing driveway widths and therefore is just asking for a Special Permit with regard to conditions that already exist at the site. Vehicles have been operating in a two-way manner on the driveway off of North Street and the Applicant is proposing that this traffic pattern be allowed to continue.

3. Purpose of District: The project must be “consistent with the intent of the specific zoning district as specified in Article 6.”

The proposal is consistent with the purpose of the district (6.1.2. RB - Residence Districts), which is, “To establish and preserve medium density neighborhoods of one-, two- and three-family homes, free from other uses except those which are both compatible with and convenient to the residents of such districts.” While this particular proposal is not a one-, two-, or three-family residential structure, it is compatible with these types of uses and the proposed transitional housing use for homeless veterans is very similar to the previous use at the site, an emergency shelter/group home.

4. Site and Area Compatibility: The project must be “designed in a manner that is compatible with the existing natural features of the site and is compatible with the characteristics of the surrounding area, and that the scale, massing and detailing of buildings are compatible with those prevalent in the surrounding area.”

The project was designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the built environment and the existing land uses of the area. The form and massing of the existing building are not being changed and only minor

modifications are being made to the exterior. The building is only 2 stories in height which fits into the context of the surrounding neighborhood which consists of predominately 2 to 3 story structures. The proposed site plan for the project respects the existing topography at the site and would essentially maintain the existing site layout. The biggest change in the proposal is to the structure in the relocation of the main entrance from Broadway to North Street. This relocation would actually be an improvement from the existing entrance which is situated up an entire story from the Broadway streetscape. The new entrance would provide an at-grade entryway and would help the structure to interact more appropriately with pedestrians along the streetscape.

5. Functional Design: The project must meet “accepted standards and criteria for the functional design of facilities, structures, and site construction.”

The site meets the accepted standards for a functional design. The project would be maintaining the existing curb cuts on North Street and Broadway, as well as the turning radii in the parking areas. The parking area at the rear of the structure has sufficient area for vehicles to maneuver and exit the site in a forward direction. The Applicant will need to confirm with the City Engineer that the drainage system is acceptable, as conditioned.

6. Impact on Public Systems: The project will “not create adverse impacts on the public services and facilities serving the development, such as the sanitary sewer system, the storm drainage system, the public water supply, the recreational system, the street system for vehicular traffic, and the sidewalks and footpaths for pedestrian traffic.”

The approval of the SPSR shall be contingent upon the City Engineer’s determination that no adverse impacts on public systems will result from the proposed renovation. The previous use of an emergency shelter/group home at the site was very similar to the proposed use of a group home and 7 affordable housing units. The same amount of impact on the City’s public systems can most likely be anticipated from the proposed use. Curb cuts at the site would remain the same and this should in turn not impact the street system for vehicular traffic. The proposed relocation of the main entrance may slightly alter the primary pedestrian path to enter the building but the new entrance will be an improvement over the existing main entrance with an at-grade entrance off of North Street.

7. Environmental Impacts: “The proposed use, structure or activity will not constitute an adverse impact on the surrounding area resulting from: 1) excessive noise, level of illumination, glare, dust, smoke, or vibration which are higher than levels now experienced from uses permitted in the surrounding area; 2) emission of noxious or hazardous materials or substances; 3) pollution of water ways or ground water; or 4) transmission of signals that interfere with radio or television reception.”

No adverse environmental impacts are anticipated from this project. No new noise, glare, smoke, vibration, nor emissions of noxious materials nor pollution of water ways or ground water are anticipated as part of the proposal. The structure will remain a 2 story building used for residential and group home purposes. The project has a Phase 1 Environmental Report from Nobis Engineering dated April 15, 2011 and a Phase 2 Report from Nobis dated June 17, 2011. These reports indicated the absence of any UST’s or pollution at the property. An Asbestos Report and Radon Report dated April 25, 2011 indicated the presence of asbestos at the site, but not radon. The Applicant has indicated that the limited asbestos has been identified and it will be removed or encapsulated in the building. Further environmental investigation is not recommended.

8. Consistency with Purposes: The Applicant has to ensure that the project "is consistent with (1) the general purposes of this Ordinance as set forth in Article 1 and Article 5; and (2) the purposes, provisions, and specific objectives applicable to the requested special permit with site plan review which may be set

forth elsewhere in this Ordinance, such as, but not limited to, those purposes at the beginning of the various sections.”

The proposal is consistent with the general purposes of the Ordinance as set forth under §1.2, which includes, but is not limited to promoting “the health, safety, and welfare of the inhabitants of the City of Somerville; to provide for and maintain the uniquely integrated structure of uses in the City; to protect health; to secure safety from fire, panic and other dangers; to conserve the value of land and buildings; to encourage the most appropriate use of land throughout the City; and to encourage housing for persons of all income levels.”

9. Preservation of Landform and Open Space: The Applicant has to ensure that “the existing land form is preserved in its natural state, insofar as practicable, by minimizing grading and the erosion or stripping of steep slopes, and by maintaining man-made features that enhance the land form, such as stone walls, with minimal alteration or disruption. In addition, all open spaces should be designed and planted to enhance the attractiveness of the neighborhood. Whenever possible, the development parcel should be laid out so that some of the landscaped areas are visible to the neighborhood.”

The building will remain in the same location as it currently sits and would not disrupt the grading or existing land forms on the site. The landscaping along the Broadway side of the property would be greatly enhanced and a new concrete stamped patio will be put in place just off of the expanded parking area in the rear of the building. Further, the existing trees in the new front yard would also be trimmed to open up views to the building.

10. Relation of Buildings to Environment: The Applicant must ensure that “buildings are: 1) located harmoniously with the land form, vegetation and other natural features of the site; 2) compatible in scale, design and use with those buildings and designs which are visually related to the development site; 3) effectively located for solar and wind orientation for energy conservation; and 4) advantageously located for views from the building while minimizing the intrusion on views from other buildings.”

The project would not alter the form or massing of the existing building. The primary changes to the building would be the relocation of the main entrance and the reconfiguration of entry stairways in various locations. The site plan also respects the existing topography of the site and while it does call for the expansion of the rear parking area, the landscaping on the site would remain ample and would actually be enhanced in many areas. The existing trees in the new front yard would also be limbed up to open up views to the building.

11. Stormwater Drainage: The Applicant must demonstrate that “special attention has been given to proper site surface drainage so that removal of surface waters will not adversely affect neighboring properties or the public storm drainage system. Storm water shall be removed from all roofs, canopies, and powered area, and routed through a well-engineered system designed with appropriate storm water management techniques. Skimming devices, oil, and grease traps, and similar facilities at the collection or discharge points for paved surface runoff should be used, to retain oils, greases, and particles. Surface water on all paved areas shall be collected and/or routed so that it will not obstruct the flow of vehicular or pedestrian traffic and will not create puddles in the paved area. In larger developments, where practical, the routing of runoff through sheet flow, swales or other means increasing filtration and percolation is strongly encouraged, as is use of retention or detention ponds. In instances of below grade parking (such as garages) or low lying areas prone to flooding, installation of pumps or other devices to prevent backflow through drains or catch basins may be required.”

While additional review is required of drainage plans, any approval of the SPSR should be conditional upon the City Engineer's approval of such plans and determination that no adverse impact will result to the drainage system from the project's design.

12. Historic or Architectural Significance: The project must be designed "with respect to Somerville's heritage, any action detrimental to historic structures and their architectural elements shall be discouraged insofar as is practicable, whether those structures exist on the development parcel or on adjacent properties. If there is any removal, substantial alteration or other action detrimental to buildings of historic or architectural significance, these should be minimized and new uses or the erection of new buildings should be compatible with the buildings or places of historic or architectural significance on the development parcel or on adjacent properties."

As is noted above in the comments from the Historic Preservation Commission, the plans for the project do not make any changes beyond landscaping and the rearrangement of entry stairs and ADA ramps to the exterior of the building. These changes would not significantly alter the appearance of the building.

13. Enhancement of Appearance: The Applicant must demonstrate that "the natural character and appearance of the City is enhanced. Awareness of the existence of a development, particularly a non residential development or a higher density residential development, should be minimized by screening views of the development from nearby streets, residential neighborhoods of City property by the effective use of existing land forms, or alteration thereto, such as berms, and by existing vegetation or supplemental planting."

The improved appearance of the building and the site would help to enhance the neighborhood. On the structure itself, windows would be replaced and entrances would be reworked to provide a more inviting appearance. The on-site landscaping would also be greatly improved from its existing state. Extensive plantings would occur along Broadway and at the rear of the building a new, stamped concrete patio would be created with enhanced landscaping surrounding it. The existing trees in the new front yard of the structure would also be pruned up to open up views to the building itself.

14. Lighting: With respect to lighting, the Applicant must ensure that "all exterior spaces and interior public and semi-public spaces shall be adequately lit and designed as much as possible to allow for surveillance by neighbors and passersby."

The lighting will be residential in nature and conditioned to not interfere with neighboring properties.

15. Emergency Access: The Applicant must ensure that "there is easy access to buildings, and the grounds adjoining them, for operations by fire, police, medical and other emergency personnel and equipment."

Emergency vehicles would have access to the building via the parking areas off of Broadway and North Street. The main entrance to the building would be accessible on foot from the North Street streetscape, but there would also be secondary entrances on the other three sides of the building which would all be very close to the parking areas.

16. Location of Access: The Applicant must ensure that "the location of intersections of access drives with the City arterial or collector streets minimizes traffic congestion."

The Applicant is not proposing to create any new curb cuts for the project and would continue to use the two existing ones for the site. The parking spaces that would be added to the parking area that is accessed

off of North Street would increase the potential traffic coming in and out of this curb cut, but North Street is not nearly as busy as Broadway and any increase in traffic congestion from these additional parking spaces in this area should be minimal. The Traffic Analysis the Applicant submitted as part of their application indicates that the increase in traffic would not have any noticeable effect on traffic operations along Broadway or North Street.

17. Utility Service: The Applicant must ensure that “electric, telephone, cable TV and other such lines and equipment are placed underground from the source or connection, or are effectively screened from public view.”

The Applicant is proposing to tie into the existing City services for electric, telephone and cable. Any new lines would be placed underground in accordance with the SZO and the policies of the Superintendent of Lights and Lines.

18. Prevention of Adverse Impacts: The Applicant must demonstrate that “provisions have been made to prevent or minimize any detrimental effect on adjoining premises, and the general neighborhood, including, (1) minimizing any adverse impact from new hard surface ground cover, or machinery which emits heat, vapor, light or fumes; and (2) preventing adverse impacts to light, air and noise, wind and temperature levels in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development.”

Minimal negative impacts are anticipated as a result of the proposed transitional housing use for homeless veterans. No new impacts with regard to light, air, noise, wind, etc. are anticipated from this proposal. The Applicant is proposing to expand the rear parking area to accommodate additional parking spaces, but landscaping on the site would remain robust and the actual impervious area on the site would only increase by about 8%. Furthermore, as the subject property directly abuts a park to the north, a cemetery to the west, and multi-family dwellings and office space across the street to the east and south, minimal negative impacts are anticipated from a use which is very similar in nature to the previous use.

19. Signage: The Applicant must ensure that “the size, location, design, color, texture, lighting and materials of all permanent signs and outdoor advertising structures or features shall reflect the scale and character of the proposed buildings.”

Due to the residential nature of the building, signage is not anticipated on the site. Any signage in the future would have to conform to the sign standards for residential districts.

20. Screening of Service Facilities: The Applicant must ensure that “exposed transformers and other machinery, storage, service and truck loading areas, dumpsters, utility buildings, and similar structures shall be effectively screened by plantings or other screening methods so that they are not directly visible from either the proposed development or the surrounding properties.”

The proposed location of the dumpster would be within a fenced-in enclosure area. Furthermore, Staff has included a condition which requires that outdoor trash and recycling bins shall be stored in a location where they are screened from view by plantings or fencing. The same is true for transformers located on the site in which a condition requires that transformers be fully screened and located as to not impact the landscaped areas.

21. Screening of Parking:

All eleven parking spaces would be located behind the existing building. Nine of the spaces would be located in the lot off of North Street and the remaining two spaces could be accessed off of Broadway. The building, the

wooden stockade fence along the rear property line, and the combination of the elevation change and the proposed landscaping would screen the nine spaces in the lot accessed off of North Street almost entirely from both streets. The two parking spaces which could be accessed from Broadway would only be somewhat screened from the streetscape by the building and the landscaping on either side of the spaces. However, the spaces are setback over 20 feet from the sidewalk which greatly helps to reduce their visibility from an approaching view in either direction. While this is not the most ideal location or screening of the parking spaces, this is the existing situation at the site.

III. FINDINGS FOR SPECIAL PERMIT (SZO §5.1 & §9.13) to Modify Parking and Loading Standards:

In order to grant a special permit, the SPGA must make certain findings and determinations as outlined in §5.1.4 of the SZO. This section of the report goes through §5.1.4 in detail.

1. Information Supplied: The Staff finds that the information provided by the Applicant conforms to the requirements of §5.1.2 of the SZO and allows for a comprehensive analysis of the project with respect to the required Special Permits.
2. Compliance with Standards: The Applicant must comply "with such criteria or standards as may be set forth in this Ordinance which refer to the granting of the requested special permit."

Please see item 2 in Section II for the compliance with standards finding which are the same for the SP and SPSR.

3. Consistency with Purposes: The Applicant has to ensure that the project "is consistent with (1) the general purposes of this Ordinance as set forth in Article 1, and (2) the purposes, provisions, and specific objectives applicable to the requested special permit which may be set forth elsewhere in this Ordinance, such as, but not limited to, those purposes at the beginning of the various Articles."

Please see items 3 and 8 in Section II for the consistency with purposes finding which meet the finding for this item in the SP.

4. Site and Area Compatibility: The Applicant has to ensure that the project "(i)s designed in a manner that is compatible with the characteristics of the built and unbuilt surrounding area, including land uses."

Please see item 4 in Section II for the site and area compatibility finding which is the same for the SP and SPSR.

5. Adverse environmental impacts: The proposed use, structure or activity will not constitute an adverse impact on the surrounding area resulting from: 1) excessive noise, level of illumination, glare, dust, smoke, or vibration which are higher than levels now experienced from uses permitted in the surrounding area; 2) emission of noxious or hazardous materials or substances; 3) pollution of water ways or ground water; or 4) transmission of signals that interfere with radio or television reception.

No adverse environmental impacts are anticipated from this project. No new noise, glare, smoke, vibration, nor emissions of noxious materials nor pollution of water ways or ground water are anticipated as part of the proposal. The structure will remain a 2 story building used for residential purposes.

6. Vehicular and pedestrian circulation: The circulation patterns for motor vehicles and pedestrians which would result from the use or structure will not result in conditions that create traffic congestion or the potential for traffic accidents on the site or in the surrounding area.

The traffic and parking situation resulting from the proposed use would most likely not negatively impact the area. Most of the residents of the proposed transitional housing use would be former homeless veterans and would not own or even have access to a car. This is one reason why the proposed Group Home would provide a van to residents to assist them with appointments and connections. Additionally, the location of the subject property sits directly on an MBTA bus route and is a reasonable walk to the Red Line. A Traffic Analysis was submitted by the Applicant which indicated that the proposed transitional housing use would generate 106 total vehicle trips on a weekday and between 8 and 10 trips total during critical peak hours. The Traffic Analysis indicated that “this increase in traffic will not have any noticeable effect on traffic operations along Broadway or North Street.”

IV. RECOMMENDATION

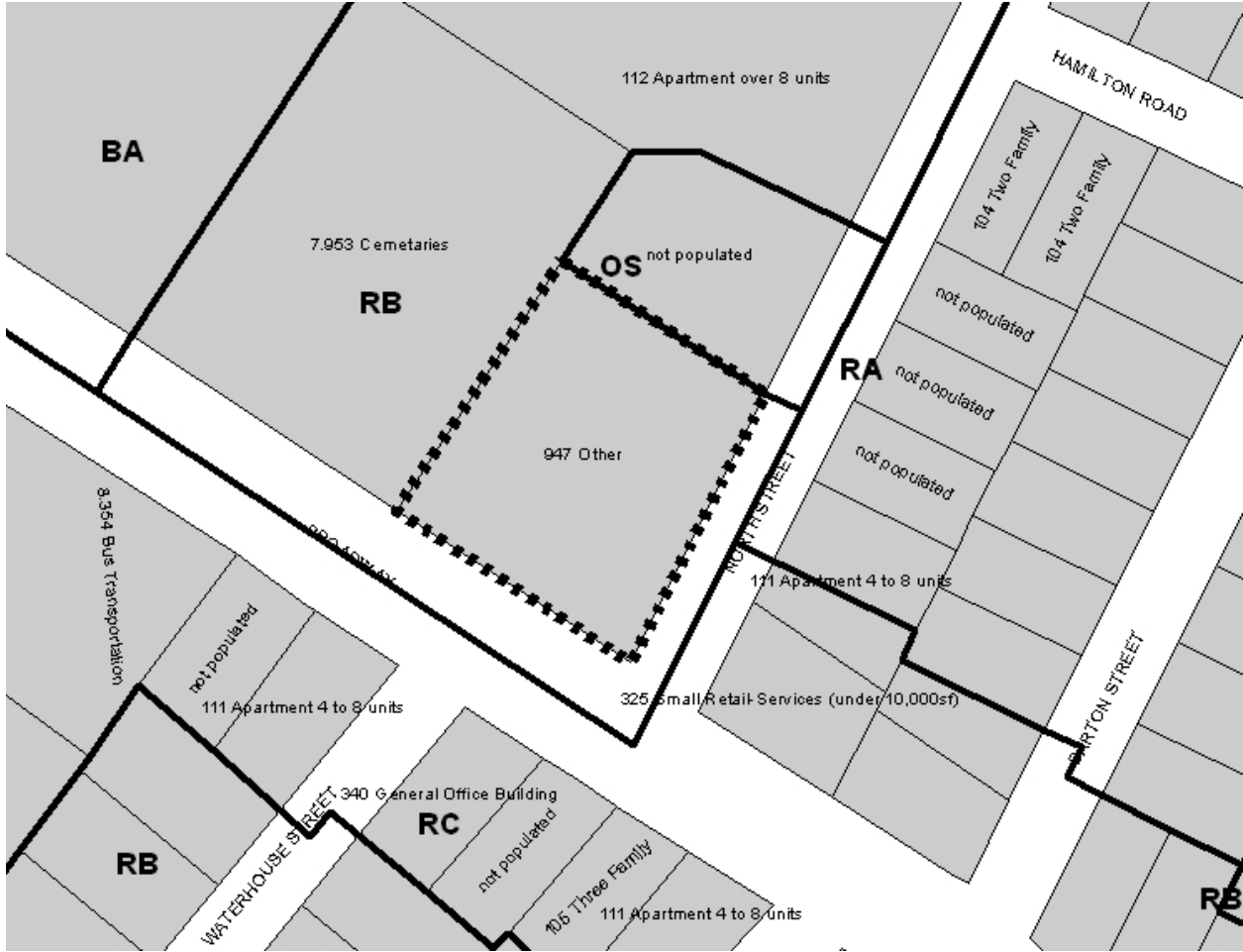
Special Permit with Site Plan Review under §7.3 and Special Permit under §9.13

Based on the above findings and subject to the following conditions, the Planning Staff recommends **CONDITIONAL APPROVAL** of the requested **SPECIAL PERMIT WITH SITE PLAN REVIEW and SPECIAL PERMIT**.

The recommendation is 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.

#	Condition	Timeframe for Compliance	Verified (initial)	Notes								
1	Approval is to establish more than three dwelling units under SZO §7.3 and to modify parking and loading standards to establish a Group Residence and 7 affordable units. This approval is based upon the following application materials and the plans submitted by the Applicant:	BP/CO	ISD/PIng.									
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date (Stamp Date)</th> <th>Submission</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>(August 9, 2011)</td> <td>Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office</td> </tr> <tr> <td>August 9, 2011 (August 26, 2011)</td> <td>Layout & Materials Plan, Grading, Drainage, & Utilities Plan, Landscape & Lighting Plan, and Site Details (Sheets 1 – 5)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>August 9, 2011 (August 26, 2011)</td> <td>Building Elevations and Floor Plans (Cover Sheet, A3.01, A3.02, A2.03, A2.04, A2.05, and A2.06)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Date (Stamp Date)	Submission	(August 9, 2011)	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office	August 9, 2011 (August 26, 2011)	Layout & Materials Plan, Grading, Drainage, & Utilities Plan, Landscape & Lighting Plan, and Site Details (Sheets 1 – 5)	August 9, 2011 (August 26, 2011)	Building Elevations and Floor Plans (Cover Sheet, A3.01, A3.02, A2.03, A2.04, A2.05, and A2.06)
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Any changes to the approved plans or elevations that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive SPGA approval.												
2	The Applicant will be required to demonstrate that the project meets the current City of Somerville stormwater policy. Utility, grading, and drainage plans must be submitted to the Engineering Department for review and approval.	BP	Eng.									
3	All construction materials and equipment must be stored on-site. If occupancy of the street layout is required, such occupancy must be in conformance with the requirements of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and the prior approval of the Traffic and Parking Department must be obtained.	During Construction	T&P									
4	The Applicant or Owner shall meet the Fire Prevention Bureau's requirements.	CO	FP									
5	The Applicant shall at his expense replace any existing equipment (including, but not limited to street sign poles, signs, traffic signal poles, traffic signal equipment, wheel chair ramps, granite curbing, etc.) and the entire sidewalk immediately abutting the subject property if damaged as a result of construction activity. All new sidewalks and driveways must be constructed to DPW standard.	CO	DPW									

6	The Applicant, its successors and/or assigns, shall be responsible for maintenance of both the building and all on-site amenities, including landscaping, fencing, lighting, parking areas and storm water systems, ensuring they are clean, well kept and in good and safe working order.	Perpetual	ISD	
7	Landscaping should be installed and maintained in compliance with the American Nurserymen's Association Standards.	Perpetual	Plng. / ISD	
8	Any transformers should be located as not to impact the landscaped area and shall be fully screened.	CO	Plng.	
9	Trash and recycling bins that are kept outside shall be screened by fencing or vegetation that blocks any view of them.	Perpetual	Plng.	
10	To the extent possible, all exterior lighting must be confined to the subject property, cast light downward and must not intrude, interfere, or spill onto neighboring properties.	Perpetual	Plng.	
11	The fence at the corner of Broadway and North St shall not be taller than 3 ½ feet within 20 feet of the corner street line intersection (SZO §8.6.5.c).	Perpetual	Plng.	
12	The Applicant shall contact Planning Staff at least five working days in advance of a request for a final inspection by Inspectional Services to ensure the proposal was constructed in accordance with the plans and information submitted and the conditions attached to this approval.	Final Sign Off	Plng.	



1323 Broadway