



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE
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Recommendations

**Somerville High School Library
March 13, 2008**

Design Review Committee

Richard Graf
Beatriz Gomez Mouakad
Peter Wiederspahn

OSPCD

Chris DiIorio
Lori Massa

The City of Somerville Design Review Committee reviewed the following projects on Thursday, March 13, 2008 at 6:30 p.m.

The Applicants and Agents presented their projects.

The DRC made the following comments and recommendations (underlined):

42 Craigie Street: (Applicant: Felix Consilvio, Jr; Owner: Craigie Street, LLC; Agent: Richard Di Girolamo) The Applicant seeks Special Permit with Site Plan Review approval under SZO §7.2 and §7.3 in order to construct five dwelling units in two separate structures. Residence B (RB) / Ward 3.

Density/Bulk

The density of eight units on a 15,335 square foot is a similar density to the surrounding area and this lot has more open space than most. The massing is desirable because from the street building heights are consistent. The full three stories and tight proportions between the buildings are only visible from deeper within the site. There are many vertical elements to the buildings. Horizontal elements would help to reduce the appearance of height; however, the consensus was that the vertical nature of the design would only be seen internally for the people that live in the units. This is a good example of a common architectural typology in the area.

Site Plan

The stormwater management system is a good precedent to set for development in the City. The movement of the cars into the garages works well.

Screening

The trash enclosure will also have space for recycling. Concerns about too many trash barrels on the sidewalk during collection days were alleviated because the association will most likely hire a company to haul away trash. There will be a fence between the surface parking and the abutter. The side yards act as the backyards and the patios in these yards would have vegetative screening.

221-7 Beacon Street: (Applicant: Dedic Andrade Development, LLC; Owner: Robert Fortini; Agent: Richard Di Girolamo) The Applicant seeks Special Permit with Site Plan Review approval under SZO §7.3. Residence B (RB) / Ward 2.

Building Design

The image of the building is reflective of a civic building with the arch, portal and symmetry. Two civic buildings near the property are the Durrell School that was recently converted to condominiums and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. The building is very symmetrical; however, there are very different conditions on each side of the site. On one side is a community garden and the other is a house. There would be doors opening onto the community garden to relate to this space. The side facing the residences does not need to be monumental. To reduce the scale on this side the roofline that projects up could have a common spine with dormers.

The Applicant should work with the roofline to relate the building to the neighbors on the right and left.

Site Plan

Screen the driveway so that the headlights of cars coming in and out of the garage do not affect the neighbors and install quiet garage doors.

39 Endicott Avenue: (Applicant/Owner: Endicott Partners, LLC; Agent: Richard Di Girolamo) The Applicant seeks Special Permit with Site Plan Review approval under SZO §7.3 in order to construct an eight unit apartment building (including one affordable unit) on a 12,504 s.f. parcel. Residence B (RB) / Ward 7.

Building Design

It is typical to have a multi-unit building in a Residence-B district. There are many vertical elements to the building. It does not look like two separate buildings. The recessed portion would need to be at least six to eight feet in depth to achieve the intended effect. The bays are not doing their job to break up the façade. The right side of the building should turn the corner.

The DRC would not advocate for the historically referential design; however, it has elements that work well. The two sides of the building are distinct from one another and the roofline breaks up the massing. One side has strong horizontal elements and other has strong vertical elements. With the contemporary design, one is trying to make sense of the building as a whole. Adapt the traditional design elements with the contemporary architecture.

Site Plan

The way the cars tuck under the building works well. Seeing the context of the neighborhood and street wall would help in evaluating if this building would improve the area. The building would anchor the large field that is located across the street from the building.

Redesign the building for the DRC to review at another meeting.