



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

MICHAEL F. GLAVIN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING DIVISION

***PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS***

KEVIN PRIOR, *CHAIRMAN*  
JOSEPH FAVALORO, *CLERK*  
DOROTHY A. KELLY GAY  
MICHAEL A. CAPUANO, ESQ.  
REBECCA LYN COOPER  
GERARD AMARAL, (ALT.)

**Case #: PB 2016-20**  
**Site: Northpoint Dawes Street (DSPR)**  
**Date of Decision: December 8, 2016**  
**Decision: *Petition Approved with Conditions***  
**Date Filed with City Clerk: December 9, 2016**

---

**PLANNING BOARD DECISION**

---

<b>Applicant Name:</b>	DW NP Property, LLC
<b>Applicant Address:</b>	One Kendall Square, Suite B3201, Cambridge, MA 02139
<b>Property Owner Name:</b>	DW NP Property, LLC
<b>Property Owner Address:</b>	One Kendall Square, Suite B3201, Cambridge, MA 02139
<b>Agent Name:</b>	Mark Johnson

<u>Legal Notice:</u>	NorthPoint Dawes Street - Design & Site Plan Review: (Case # PB 2016-20) Applicant/Owner DW NP Property LLC requests an Design & Site Plan Review under §6.6.5 for a section of Dawes Street within Somerville city limits of the overall project area.
----------------------	---

<u>Zoning District/Ward:</u>	North Point Special District (NPSD). Ward 1.
<u>Zoning Approval Sought:</u>	§6.6.5
<u>Date of Application:</u>	November 3, 2016
<u>Date(s) of Public Hearing:</u>	December 8, 2016
<u>Date of Decision:</u>	December 8, 2016
<u>Vote:</u>	5-0

---

Appeal #PB 2016-20 was opened before the Planning Board at Somerville High School Library on December 8, 2016. Notice of the Public Hearing was given to persons affected and was published and posted, all as required by M.G.L. c. 40A, sec. 11 and the Somerville Zoning Ordinance. After one hearing of deliberation, the Planning Board took a vote.



CITY HALL • 93 HIGHLAND AVENUE • SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02143  
(617) 625-6600 EXT. 2500 • TTY: (617) 666-0001 • FAX: (617) 625-0722  
[www.somervillema.gov](http://www.somervillema.gov)

**DESCRIPTION:**

DivcoWest proposes to transform an existing unproductive area of Somerville into an integral part of a new and vibrant work-live-play urban community consistent with the goals identified in SomerVision for Transformational Mixed-Use areas. The Somerville portion of the project, which has land parcels both partially and wholly within Somerville, will incorporate a diverse mix of commercial uses including high-end office space, a grocery store, fitness center, and commercial parking balanced with an appropriate amount of ground-level retail.

Dawes Street is a thoroughfare completely internal to the NorthPoint Development. The alignment is primarily in Cambridge with only a short section passing through Somerville. This proposal continues the street section design and details of the Cambridge portions through Somerville for streetscape consistency along the full length of the street.

**FINDINGS FOR DESIGN & SITE PLAN REVIEW (SZO §6.6.3.B & 6.6.9):**

Based on review of the submitted Design & Site Plan Review Application, the Board finds that the proposal meets all of the requirements outlined in §6.6.3 of the SZO. This section of the report goes through the findings required by §6.6.3.B in detail.

***1. Submittal and Review.***

The submission includes all the required elements for a complete application. The alignment, connectivity, and/or lane geometry of the thoroughfares are consistent with the previously approved Amendment to the Neighborhood Development Plan (NDP). A Design & Site Plan application for building types has been submitted simultaneously but will be reviewed separately.

***2. Scope.***

This application is for the Somerville portion of Dawes Street only but the submission includes the length of the thoroughfare, regardless of municipal boundaries, as required

***3. Findings and Compliance.******a. Thoroughfares.***

The Board finds that the proposal is;

- In conformance to the adopted master plan of the City of Somerville, existing policy plans and standards established by the City, or to other plans deemed to be appropriate by the Planning Board;
- Exhibits consistency with the purpose of the NPSD and of this Ordinance in general;
- Meets the alignment, connectivity, and lane geometry of thoroughfares approved as part of a neighborhood development plan for the development site; and
- Is in compliance with the provisions set forth in Section 6.6.5 Thoroughfares.

***b. Civic Spaces.***

This section is not applicable to this application.

***c. Lots.***

This section is not applicable to this application.

This section of the report goes through the findings required by other sections of the NPSD in detail.

**6.6.4. Urban Design.*****A. Thoroughfare Network.***

Dawes Street intersects with other thoroughfares forming a network throughout the NDP and aligns wherever possible to those on adjacent sites. The Somerville length is consistent with the alignment of the Cambridge lengths on either side.



**B. Block Structure.**

This particular length of Dawes Street does not intersect with other thoroughfares. However, the design of the overall thoroughfare network meets the requirements for block structure to the extent possible.

**C. Lots.**

As with comments above, this particular length of Dawes Street is only forms a partial frontage of Parcel JK. However, this application also provides the full frontage of future Parcel EF which does meet the lot width requirement.

**6.6.5. Thoroughfares.**

**A. & B.** Thoroughfares shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the City of Somerville's adopted thoroughfare design standards and coordinated with the thoroughfare section at the Cambridge portions at either end.

**C. Vehicular lanes and sidewalks****1. Motor Vehicle Travel Lanes.**

Motor vehicle travel lanes are the minimum width of ten (10) feet with one lane in each direction.

**2. Motor Vehicle Parking Lanes.**

Motor vehicle parallel parking lanes are shown at 7' wide including the gutter pan which meets the requirement of eight (8) feet wide or narrower. Gutter seams, drainage inlets, and utility covers shall be flush with the pavement surface and catch basins will have cascade grates to prevent conflicts with bicycle tires.

**3. Bike Lanes.**

The bike lanes shown on the Pavement Marking and Signage Plan meet the minimum requirements specified by the NPSD. However, there are some recommended adjustments to the information shown on the drawing package:

- The westbound bike lane could potentially be widened from 5.5' to 6' and the eastbound bike lane could be narrowed from 5.5' to 5' along this section, which could help mitigate the dooring hazard for westbound cyclists.
- Shared lane markings could be added within the two decision point zones going North to South across the Dawes/North First Street intersection (adjacent to crosswalks crossing Dawes)

**4. Sidewalks.**

All new sidewalks are shown in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rules and Regulations of the Massachusetts Access Board (521 CMR). Sidewalks include a walkway and furnishing zone, and meet the minimum combined dimension of 10'. In areas with on-street loading or drop-off, the furnishing zone is eliminated and the walkway remains a width of 7', which is still over the 6' minimum.

Street trees planted within the furnishing zone in a regularly-spaced pattern no greater than thirty (30) feet on center and will be a minimum height of ten (10) feet and/or two (2) inches in caliper when planted. A waiver was recently granted with the Amendment to the Approved NorthPoint Neighborhood Development Plan (case # PB 2014-29-MA-0916) for the street tree grating and fencing requirements contained in Section 6.6.5.C.4.e to allow the planting condition to remain consistent along Dawes Street through both Somerville and Cambridge.

The Urban Forester reviewed the landscape layout. In Somerville, there are currently only 2 *Gymnocladus dioicus* trees indicating that the species may not be hardy in an urban environment in this planting zone. The Board recommends, and will add a condition to this approval, that the species not be included along the Somerville portion of Dawes Street and should be replaced with one of the other listed species on the Planting Schedule of Sheet L1.01.

**5. Sidewalk Extensions.**

Somerville requires that sidewalk extensions occupy the full width of the parking lane they extend into and when a bike lane is present, sidewalk extensions shall be set back so that the gutter does not extend into the bike lane. This is a different detail than the standard section used by the City of Cambridge.

As shown on Sheet 4.0 "Pavement Marking and Signage", the western connection of the Somerville portion of Dawes Street (at the end of North First Street) shows a 2.5' offset occurring at the apron for a future driveway access. This condition will appear as a construction mistake and may create drainage problems due to awkward geometry. Staff recommends that the alignment to the west (in the City of Cambridge) be maintained across the concrete driveway apron and the pedestrian crosswalk to match the condition at the east end of the Somerville portion of Dawes Street. Staff recommends conditioning this minor change as part of the approval.

**6. Pedestrian Crosswalks.**

The crosswalk design should be consistent throughout the intersections for streetscape consistency. The application shows the pedestrian crosswalks on Dawes Street as meeting the Somerville pavement marking standards. However, the details of the crosswalks in Somerville should be changed to match the other crosswalks throughout the neighborhood and meet the standards specified by the City of Cambridge. Staff recommends including a condition for matching crosswalks to any approval.

**7. Driveway and Alley Crossings.**

The wide driveway at the four loading docks cross the sidewalk on the southside of Dawes Street. The grade and clear width of the walkway area will be maintained, along any with any walkway scoring pattern or special paving. It is difficult to determine from the information supplied if sloped flares will be provided on either side of the driveway apron as shown in Figure 6.5: Driveway and Alley Crossings. Staff recommends conditioning any approval to include the flared detail and retaining the sidewalk design details across the vehicular drive.

**D.** This length of Dawes Street does not include any thoroughfare designed as a close.

**E.** All water and sewer utilities, storm water management infrastructure, public lighting, and public furniture will be consistent in design and constructed according to criteria established by the City of Cambridge for Dawes Street.



**DECISION:**

Present and sitting were Members Kevin Prior, Joseph Favaloro, Dorothy Kelly Gay, Rebecca Lyn Cooper and Gerard Amaral with Michael Capuano absent. Upon making the above findings, Kevin Prior made a motion to approve the request for a Design and Site Plan Review. Rebecca Lyn Cooper seconded the motion. Wherefore the Planning Board voted **5-0** to **APPROVE** the request. In addition the following conditions were attached:

#	Condition	Timeframe for Compliance	Verified (initial)	Notes				
1	<p>Approval is for the NorthPoint Dawes Street Design &amp; Site Plan application. This approval is based upon the following application materials and the plans submitted by the Applicant:</p> <table><tr><th>Date (Stamp Date)</th><th>Submission</th></tr><tr><td>November 3, 2016</td><td>Initial application submitted to the City Clerk’s Office including all appendices</td></tr></table> <p>Any changes to the approved special permit that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive approval from the Planning Board.</p>	Date (Stamp Date)	Submission	November 3, 2016	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk’s Office including all appendices	DSP/BP/CO	Planning/ISD	
Date (Stamp Date)	Submission							
November 3, 2016	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk’s Office including all appendices							
Design								
2	The details of the crosswalks shall match other crosswalks throughout the neighborhood and, therefore, meet the standards specified by the City of Cambridge.	BP	Planning/Engineering					
3	Sloped flares shall be provided on either side of the driveway apron as shown in Figure 6.3: Driveway and Alley Crossings.	BP	Planning/Engineering					
4	Sheet 4.0 “Pavement Marking and Signage”, and subsequent detailed engineering drawings, shall be changed to eliminate a 2.5’ offset occurring at the apron for a future driveway access at the western connection of the Somerville portion of Dawes Street (at the end of North First Street). The alignment to the west (in the City of Cambridge) shall be maintained across the concrete driveway apron and the pedestrian crosswalk - similar to the condition at the east end of the Somerville portion of Dawes Street.	BP	Planning/Engineering					
5	The 4 <i>Gymnocladus dioicus</i> trees listed species on the Planting Schedule of Sheet L1.01 shall be changed to one of the other 4 listed species.	BP/perpetual	Planning/Engineering					



Attest, by the Planning Board:



Kevin Prior, Chairman



Joseph Favaloro

  
Dorothy A. Kelly Gay

Rebecca Lyn Cooper



Gerard Amaral

Copies of this decision are filed in the Somerville City Clerk's office.  
Copies of all plans referred to in this decision and a detailed record of the  
SPGA proceedings are filed in the Somerville Planning Dept.

**CLERK'S CERTIFICATE**

Any appeal of this decision must be filed within twenty days after the date this notice is filed in the Office of the City Clerk, and must be filed in accordance with M.G.L. c. 40A, sec. 17 and SZO sec. 3.2.10.

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 40 A, sec. 11, no variance shall take effect until a copy of the decision bearing the certification of the City Clerk that twenty days have elapsed after the decision has been filed in the Office of the City Clerk and no appeal has been filed, or that if such appeal has been filed, that it has been dismissed or denied, is recorded in the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds and indexed in the grantor index under the name of the owner of record or is recorded and noted on the owner's certificate of title.

Also in accordance with M.G.L. c. 40 A, sec. 11, a special permit shall not take effect until a copy of the decision bearing the certification of the City Clerk that twenty days have elapsed after the decision has been filed in the Office of the City Clerk and either that no appeal has been filed or the appeal has been filed within such time, is recorded in the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds and indexed in the grantor index under the name of the owner of record or is recorded and noted on the owner's certificate of title. The person exercising rights under a duly appealed Special Permit does so at risk that a court will reverse the permit and that any construction performed under the permit may be ordered undone.

The owner or applicant shall pay the fee for recording or registering. Furthermore, a permit from the Division of Inspectional Services shall be required in order to proceed with any project favorably decided upon by this decision, and upon request, the Applicant shall present evidence to the Building Official that this decision is properly recorded.

This is a true and correct copy of the decision filed on \_\_\_\_\_ in the Office of the City Clerk, and twenty days have elapsed, and

FOR VARIANCE(S) WITHIN

\_\_\_\_\_ there have been no appeals filed in the Office of the City Clerk, or  
\_\_\_\_\_ any appeals that were filed have been finally dismissed or denied.

FOR SPECIAL PERMIT(S) WITHIN

\_\_\_\_\_ there have been no appeals filed in the Office of the City Clerk, or  
\_\_\_\_\_ there has been an appeal filed.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ City Clerk Date \_\_\_\_\_

