



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

**Memorandum**

To: ZBA Members

From: Planning Staff

Date: June 13, 2008

**RE: 308 BEACON STREET**

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The applicant has revised this proposal following several meetings with the City and community, subsequent to the Planning Board Recommendation. Due to the substantial nature of the revisions, the project is being renoticed. Therefore, the ZBA will not be able to vote on this proposal at the June 18th meeting. The applicant and community have requested that no more continuances be requested and that the hearing proceed. The ZBA will be able to vote on this proposal at the July 9th hearing.

Site Plan:

The applicant has agreed to reduce the bulk of the plan by proposing two, three-story buildings on the lot instead of a single three-story building that extended the length of the property. The total net square footage proposed for the lot is being reduced from 8,976 to 6,114. The buildings will have addresses 308 Beacon Street and 31 Harris Street. Each of these buildings has been designed in a more traditional style with front doors on their respective streets.

The central elevator has been removed and there will now be a 28' 6" separation in the center of the lot between buildings. As with the original plan there are no rear yard requirements since there are no rear yard lot lines on this property (see SZO 2.2.94 definition of rear lot line). All balconies facing side yards have been removed under the current proposal.

308 Beacon: Under SZO 4.4.1 the applicant is proposing to reduce the existing front yard set back to five (5) feet. The existing structure's front wall is set back 11.4 feet from Beacon Street, with a two-story covered deck that projects 6.4 feet from the structure. The façade of the proposed building would be aligned with the present location of the deck. The side yards for the new proposal will be slightly increased from the original proposal and would still conform with the SZO requirements. The applicant is proposing a three-story open, uncovered deck extending 11' 9" from the rear of the 308 Beacon which will extend above one of the parking spaces.

31 Harris: Within the RC district two principal structures are allowed on a lot. The new building will have a twenty (20) foot front yard setback. Side yard setbacks and the height of the building will be same as the dimensions of the 308 Beacon building. The proposal includes a 9' 4" open, uncovered deck that will project into the front yard and above one of the parking spaces.

Height: The applicant is proposing a reduction in the height of the buildings from the original 39' 6" height. The average building height above the average finished grade is approximately 35' 8" a reduction of almost 4 feet. The building height above the average sidewalk grade is 35' which is comparable to the adjacent building heights on Beacon Street and below the adjacent building heights on Harris Street.

Parking:

The proposed six units have been described as studios by the applicant, requiring six (6) parking spaces and one (1) visitor space. The applicant is proposing the seven (7) spaces required under the SZO on ground level instead of underground as in the previous proposal. This surface parking will not be visible from Beacon Street and will be screened from Harris Street (see conditions).

The parking required is based on the six units being classified as studios ("efficiency" §2.2.49 under the SZO). It appears from the floor plans that these units may be one bedroom units as defined by the SZO. Floor plans are not reviewed for zoning purposes, except to verify the number of bedrooms for parking compliance. The applicant is responsible for designing and construction actual studio units as defined by the SZO or a variance will be required for parking.

Landscaping:

Ground coverage of the proposed construction on the site has been reduced from 54% to 36% and now includes parking on ground level. The proposed landscaped area is 25%, which meets the requirements of the SZO, however, Planning Staff will require an additional landscaping plan that will depict the landscaping components.

Staff finds that the applicant has addressed many of the concerns the community has had regarding the proposal and designed a project that will better reflect the built context of the neighborhood. The Planning Staff recommends approval of the revised plans and adoption of the conditions as amended below.

**(Revised Conditions as of June 13, 2008, new conditions in bold)**

#	Condition	Timeframe for Compliance	Verified (initial)	Notes
1	<b>Approval is for the alteration of a non-conforming structure at 308 Beacon Street and to build six (6) studio units, in two, three-story residential buildings, on the lot.</b> This approval is based upon the following application materials and the plans submitted by the applicant and/or contractor:		Plng.	
	<b>Date</b>	<b>Submission</b>		
	January 7, 2008	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office		
	<b>June 13, 2008</b>	<b>Revised plans submitted to OSPCD (V1.0, Z1.0, V1.1, V1.2, A1.0, A1.1, A1.2, A2.0, A2.1, A2.2, A2.3, A2.4)</b>		

	Any changes to the approved site plan or elevations that are not de minimis must receive ZBA approval.			
2	Landscaping shall be installed and maintained in compliance with the American Nurserymen's Association.	Perpetual	Plng. / ISD	
3	<b>Applicant must design and construct each unit as a studio as defined by the SZO, or a parking variance will be required.</b>	<b>Building Permit</b>	<b>ISD</b>	
4	<b>Applicant will submit a detailed landscaping plan depicting the components of the landscaping to be approved by the Planning Staff.</b>	<b>Building Permit</b>	<b>Plng.</b>	
4	The applicant shall provide a fire alarm detection system and automatic fire suppression system compliant with all applicable codes, standards, laws, etc.	CO	FP	
5	Any transformers shall be located as not to impact the building or landscaped area, and shall be fully screened.	Electrical permits & CO	Plng.	
6	Applicant will supply one bicycle parking space, which can be satisfied with a "U" type bicycle rack.	CO	Plng.	
7	The Applicant, 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.	Cont.	ISD	
8	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 of concrete subject to DPW approval.	CO	DPW	
9	All construction materials and equipment must be stored onsite. 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	
10	To the maximum extent feasible applicant will utilize strategies during demolition and construction to mitigate dust and control air quality, to minimize noise and to implement a waste recycling program for the removed debris.	During Demolition & Construction	OSE/ISD	
11	The applicant shall develop a demolition plan in consultation with the City of Somerville Inspectional Services Division. Full compliance with proper demolition procedures shall be required, including advance notification to abutters of demolition date and	Demolition Permitting	ISD/OSE	

	timing, animal control measures, minimization of dust, noise, odor, and debris outfall, and sensitivity to existing landscaping on adjacent sites;			
12	<p>Before demolition/building permits are issued, soil tests must be conducted. If soil contamination is observed by soil test results, the Applicant shall, prior to issuance of any foundation permit and/or any building permit for the project, provide to the Planning and the Inspectional Services Divisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a copy of the Response Action Outcome (RAO) Statement, signed by a Licensed Site Professional (LSP) and filed with DEP, verifying that a level of no significant risk for the proposed residential use has been achieved at the site; or</li> <li>b) if remediation has not reached the RAO stage, a statement signed by an LSP describing (i) the management of oil and hazardous materials/waste at the site, including release abatement measures intended to achieve a level of no significant risk for residential use at the site, treatment and storage on site, transportation off-site, and disposal at authorized facilities, (ii) a plan for protecting the health and safety of workers at the site, and (iii) a plan for monitoring air quality in the immediate neighborhood.</li> </ul>	Demolition /Building Permitting	ISD/Plng.	
13	Notification must be made, within the time period required under applicable regulations, to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) if there is any release of oil, hazardous materials, or regulated hazardous substances at the site. The City's OSE office and the Board of Health shall also be notified.	CO	OSE /BOH	
14	The Applicant shall contact Planning Staff at least five working days in advance of a request for a final sign-off on the building permit to ensure the proposal was constructed in accordance with the plans and information submitted and the conditions attached to this approval.	CO	Plng.	