

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

PLANNING DIVISION STAFF

GEORGE PROAKIS, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING LORI MASSA, SENIOR PLANNER DAN BARTMAN, SENIOR PLANNER ADAM DUCHESNEAU, PLANNER AMIE SCHAEFFER, PLANNING INTERN DAWN PEREIRA, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT Case #: ZBA 2007-03-R5-04/2012

Date: May 10, 2012

Recommendation: Conditional Approval

PLANNING STAFF REPORT

Site: 16 Butler Drive / 100 Temple Street – St. Polycarp's Village

Applicant Name:Somerville Community Corp, Courtney KoslowApplicant Address:337 Somerville Ave, Somerville MA 02143Property Owner Name:The St. Polycarp Redevelopment LLC

Property Owner Address: The St. Polycarp Redevelopment c/o Somerville Community Co.

337 Somerville Ave, Somerville Ma 02143

Agent Name: n/a **Agent Address:** n/a

Alderman: Tony Lafuente

<u>Legal Notice:</u> Applicant, Somerville Community Corporation & Owner, St.

Polycarp Redevelopment, LLC, seek a revision to Special Permit ZBA 2007-03 (SZO§5.3.8). The revision is to modify the site plan and building design (elevations) for Phase 3 of the development project consisting of 31 residential units.

Zoning District/Ward: NB / 4

Zoning Approval Sought: Revision to Special Permit (SZO §5.3.8)

Date of Application: April 4, 2012

Dates of <u>Public Hearing:</u> Zoning Board of Appeals 05-16-2012

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Subject Property:

The 3.5 acre property is located in the Winter Hill neighborhood and bordered by Mystic Avenue, Temple Street, Memorial Road, and the Mystic View Apartments (Somerville Housing Authority). The





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property was formerly occupied by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston, and used by the Saint Polycarp Parish until 1999 for religious and educational purposes.

In 2007 the Zoning Board of Appeals issued a Special Permit with Site Plan review for the site to be developed into a mixed-use village with 84 affordable rental units and 6,000 square feet of commercial space. There are several buildings on the site; the church and rectory will remain and the school, convent, and library/garage will be demolished. The Somerville Community Corporation recently completed the first of three phases of new construction on the site. Phase I included 24 units of affordable rental housing units and 6000 square feet of ground floor commercial space. Ground floor tenants now include Just-AStart, Central Convenience, and Avalon Dental. Phase II is anticipated to begin in Spring 2011, which includes 29 affordable rental housing units, a community room and a playground.

Permit History:

In March 2007, the Applicant received a Special Permit with Site Plan Review to redevelop the Saint Polycarp Parish into a mixed-use village with 84 affordable rental units and 6,000 square feet of commercial space. The approval included the demolition of four of six existing buildings (a school, convent, library, and garage) and the construction of an infill mixed-use project in two phases. The St. Polycarp church and rectory were retained on the site.

The ZBA has granted the Applicant approval for a number of revisions to the original plans including:

- April 2008 (2007-03-R1-03/08) to add 3 parking spaces and locate the parking for 100 Temple Street on a separate lot at 8 Butler Drive;
- June 2009 (2007-03-R2-04/09) to establish a sub-phasing plan for the 60 residential units in Phase II and to modify building dimensions, elevations, parking layout, and landscaped areas;
- August 2010 (2007-03-R3-07/10), to modify the elevations and materials of buildings in Phase II;
- March 2011 (2007-03-R4-02/11) for modifications to the site plan and elevations and reduction in the number of parking spaces provided by 15 for Phase III.

2. Proposal:

In general, proposed revisions to the previously approved plans include modifications to the elevations that result in a more balanced design, a more energy efficient building, with more universally accessible entrances. Some windows were removed to either meet building code requirements or provide more flexible interior layouts for bedrooms and, in both cases, increase the energy efficiency of the building by removing locations for the potential leakage of heated or cooled air. The following contains a description of the design changes proposed for Phase III and reflects recommendations provided by the Design Review Committee:

- 1. On the Memorial Road elevation (A200-1), a 2'0" roof parapet was added across the total width of the central section of the building (where the main entrance and stairs are located) to contribute to a more prominent entrance.
- 2. On the Memorial Road elevation (A200-1), a penthouse covering an Energy Recovery Ventilator was added on the roof.
- 3. On the Memorial Road elevation (A200-1), a parapet was removed from a portion of the building between the redesigned central area and the far left extent of the building to create a more balanced but differentiated elevation. As a result, the parapets cause the front elevation to read as three towers (left, central, and right) connected by two wings in between.
- 4. Related to the Mystic Avenue elevation (A201-1), the Site Plan of the courtyard was revised to reflect grade re-design that permitted at-grade handicap access to all units, resulting in the removal of an unneeded retaining wall, stairs, and hand rails.

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5. On the Mystic Avenue elevation (A201-1), the garage level windows were adjusted to align with the design of siding on the elevation and decreased in size from 12'5" to 11'0".

- 6. On the Mystic Avenue elevation (A201-1), the area of the common rear/corner entrance to the building (the rear of the central tower and common main entrance to the front of the building) was redesigned to include more siding and less aluminum paneling.
- 7. On the Mystic Avenue elevation (A201-1), a rear entrance to the management office was removed.
- 8. On the SHA elevation (A201-2), six balconies looking out over the parking lot were removed. Former doors were replaced by windows.
- 9. On the SHA elevation (A201-2), parapets were adjusted to help alleviate the apparent mass of the building and imply multiple individual sections of vertical massing attached at the side instead of a single horizontal massing.

3. <u>Nature of Application:</u>

The Applicant is applying to make revisions to the SPSR under SZO §5.3.8 to modify the site plan and elevations of Phase III (Case #ZBA 2007-03-R5 04/12).

SZO §5.3.8 states: "Revisions that are not *de minimis* shall be subject to the full [legal] notice and hearing provisions of §5.3.2 of this Ordinance, but shall not be subject to review by additional boards, departments, city agencies or commissions except as requested by the SPGA or upon the recommendation of the Planning Director. Applicable findings shall be made in accordance with the type of permit(s) being revised."

The Planning Director referred the revisions to the Design Review Committee for comment.

4. Surrounding Neighborhood:

Reflective of the underlying Neighborhood Business (NB) zoning, the surrounding neighborhood is a mix of commercial and residential uses. The site is adjacent to a Somerville Housing Authority development. Previous Phases of St. Polycarp Village include both commercial and residential uses.

5. <u>Impacts of Proposal:</u>

Revisions to the design of the site and building are an improvement over the design that was initially approved. Grade re-design of the site has permitted an increase in the number of handicap accessible units and the removal of an unneeded retaining wall, stairs, and hand rails. Input from the Design Review Committee has led the proposal to include reorganization and redesign of siding and paneling schemes and the inclusion of new roof parapets for different areas of the building so that the building reads as multiple individual bays of vertical massing attached at the side instead of large areas of horizontally designed massing.

6. Green Building Practices:

Many of the proposed revisions to the approved plans were done out of consideration for creating a more energy efficient building and included strategic removal of windows, redesign of balconies to limit heat transfer, and the inclusion of a penthouse over the Energy Recovery Ventilator on the roof to increase its efficiency.

7. Comments:

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

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Ward Alderman: Has been contacted but has not provided comments.

Housing: Has been contacted but has not provided comments.

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

Engineering: Has been contacted but has not provided comments.

Design Review Committee: The Design Review Committee reviewed the proposal at their meeting on Thursday, April 26, 2012 and provided the following comments:

April 26, 2012:

We would like to see what you are actually going to be doing with the final design. It would be better if we had a proposal that was more detailed. It is hard for the Committee to direct you because it feels like anything could happen with regard to the aspects of the final design.

The penthouse is less of a design concern for the Committee because it will have less of an impact when someone is standing on the ground looking at the building since the roof line will remain the same. We would like to see the penthouse retained in the design as it will have a positive impact on the energy efficiency of the building. It would also be preferable if the penthouse could have the same roofing materials as the low awnings on the building because the penthouse has a similar geometry. Since the penthouse would be so unique to the overall design it would be good to give it some connection to the rest of the building.

If the balconies are going to be retained, most of the proposed changes seem very reasonable in terms of why they are being done and visually the proposed changes have improved the overall look of the project.

On sheet A 200-2, switching the sliders to a window and a door is good, but it would be better if it was aligned with the sliders up above on the façade. Also, taking the same details that are used in the unit entries below and matching those elements or the panel configuration higher up on the façade would be preferred as it would bring some commonality to all levels of the façade and the other side of the building.

The spacing or sizing on the new proposed siding design is helpful to the overall design. On the larger spaces of the facade it is more appropriate to have the siding at a larger spacing or sizing.

The balconies are a much more critical component to focus on and attempt to preserve as the budget for the project becomes clearer. The penthouse is not as much of an issue or a concern with regard to the design of the building because it will not have a large view impact on someone looking up at the building from the ground.

The balconies on the side of the building that face the SHA building help to reduce the massiveness of that façade. If these balconies were to be removed it would be a good idea use the existing trim on the façade more frequently to give this elevation some more definition and interest.

The Committee feels that the balconies that face the courtyard are extremely important to the overall design and they should be retained. The Committee would prefer the balconies to remain on the

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north and west elevations, but the Committee is more flexible on whether they are retained in the final design or not.

II. FINDINGS FOR SPECIAL PERMIT REVISION (SZO §5.3.8)

There are no specific required findings for a Revision to a Special Permit. Rather, Staff review the original findings for the specific zoning relief requested and identify any findings that have changed as a result of the proposed revision.

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. <u>Compliance with Standards:</u> 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."

The proposal complies with the standards for issuing revisions. The Certificate of Occupancy has not yet been issued, the proposal otherwise is in accordance with the originally approved plans and conditions, and notice has been given for the public hearing.

3. <u>Consistency with Purposes:</u> 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."

The original finding of consistency with the purpose of the NB - Neighborhood Business District, "to establish and preserve areas for small-scale retail stores, services and offices which are located in close proximity to residential areas," has not changed. The Site Plan for St Polycarp Village incorporates ground floor commercial space into Phase I of the project, which is already built and occupied by Just-AStart, Central Convenience, and Avalon Dental.

4. <u>Site and Area Compatibility:</u> 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."

The original finding that the proposal is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood in terms of the proposed uses and that the building is also compatible in terms of height, scale, massing and detailing with surrounding buildings has not changed due to the proposed revisions to the plans.

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III. RECOMMENDATION

Revision to Special Permit under SZO §5.3.8

Based on the materials submitted by the Applicant, the above findings and subject to the following conditions, the Planning Staff recommends **CONDITIONAL APPROVAL** of the requested **REVISION TO 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.

(Updated Recommendations for 05/16/2012 meeting – next page. Deletions struck, additions underlined.)

#	Condition		Timeframe for Compliance	Verified (initial)	Notes
1	Approval is for the phasing plan and revised master plan. This approval is based upon the following application materials and the plans submitted by the Applicant:				
	Date (Stamp Date)	Submission	BP and CO for Phase I, II, & III	Plng.	
	January 25, 2007	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office			
	February 8, 2007	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (site utility plan and topographic plan)			
	February 9, 2007	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (additional elevations)			
	March 1, 2007	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (supplemental traffic study report)			
	March 28 2009 (May 15, 2009)	Plans submitted to OSPCD (Phasing Plan)			
	May 19, 2009 (May 29, 2009)	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (revised site plan)			
	August 5, 2010	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (revised elevations A201D-F)			
	March 3, 2011	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (A100-104: phase 3 floor/roof plans)			
	March 9, 2011	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (L001: Site Plan A, 200-201: Phase 3 elevations)			
	April 3, 2012 (May 9, 2012)	Modified plan submitted to OSPCD (C-2)			
	May 9, 2012 (May 9, 2012)	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (A200-1&2, A201-1&2: Phase 3 elevations)			
	are not de minimis must recei				
2	units, any fractional payment	creation of affordable housing required, or alternative be obtained from the Housing	CO for Phase I, II, & III	Housing	

3	The granting of this permit shall be subject to the building being completed in accordance with plans filed, in accordance with the requirements of the Fire Prevention Bureau and fire safety code, and as evidenced by a Certificate of Compliance being granted prior to the issuance of an Occupancy Permit.	CO for Phase I, II, & III	Fire Preven- tion	
4	The Applicant shall provide colored material samples of the fiber cement panels, trim, and lap siding for Buildings D, E, and F to the Planning Director for review and approval prior to issuance of building permit.	Building Permit for Phase II	Plng.	Complete
5	The Applicant shall install audible warning devices at all signalized intersections (Temple at Mystic, Temple at Jacques, Temple at Broadway, and Broadway at School) and replace older audible devices with newer, updated versions.	CO for Phase II	T&P	
6	The Applicant shall reapply with thermoplastic, all pavement markings (including, but not limited to the following: double yellow center lines, stop lines, edge lines, arrows, etc.) along the Temple Street corridor from Mystic Avenue to Broadway at School Street.	CO for Phase II	T&P	
7	The Applicant shall replace all City installed warning, regular, and guide signs (approximately 15 'street cleaning', 12 street name blades, 11 'no parking anytime', 3 'no turn on red', 2 'loading zone', 1 'pedestrian crossing', 1 'no u turn') with similar signs with high intensity prismatic sheeting.	Where applicable for CO for Phase I, II, & III	T&P	
8	The Applicant shall provide three pedestrian impact recovery systems along or adjacent to the Temple Street corridor to be installed by Traffic and Parking at the discretion of the Ward Alderman.	CO for Phase II	T&P	
9	That the Applicant, its successors and/or assigns, shall be responsible for maintenance of both the building and all onsite 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	
10	That 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.	CO for Phase I, II, & III	ISD	
11	To the extent possible, all exterior lighting must be confined to the subject property and must not intrude, interfere or spill onto neighboring properties.	CO for Phase I, II, & III	ISD	
12	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.	Construction of Phase I, II & III	ISD / T&P	

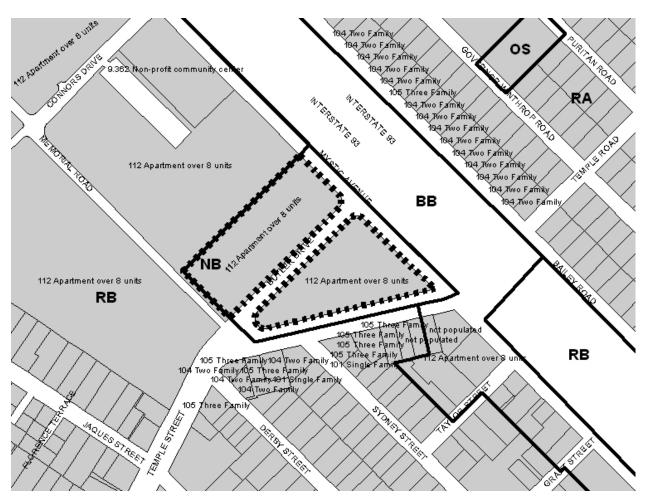
13	Interim plan for Butler drive shall be developed, subject to Plng and T&P staff approval and implemented as outlined below.	BP for Phase II	Plng / T&P	Complete
14	The following site improvements shall be completed before final COs are issued for Phase 1; a. parking, landscaping within boundaries of phase 1 as shown on phasing plan dated 3.28.09 and stamped into the OSPCD on May 15, 2009	Final COs for Phase 1	Plng / T&P	
15	The following site improvements shall be completed before Certificate of Occupancy is issued for Phase 2; a. interim Butler Drive Plan	CO for Phase II	T&P	
16	The following site improvements shall be completed before final COs are issued for Phase 2; a. parking, landscaping within boundaries of phase 2 as shown on plan dated 3.28.09 and stamped into the OSPCD on May 15, 2009 b. improvements to the intersection of Temple Street and Memorial Road as outlined in original permit c. completion of all Butler Drive work as shown on the Master Plan site plan dated 4.28.09 d. completion of access way onto Memorial Road	CO for Phase II	Plng / T&P	
17	The following site improvements shall be completed before final COs are issued for Phase 3; a. parking, landscaping within boundaries of phase 3 as shown on phasing plan dated 3.28.09 and stamped into the OSPCD on May 15, 2009	CO for Phase III	Plng / T&P	
18	Applicant will screen the dumpster with fencing that blocks view of the dumpster itself.	СО	Plng.	
19	Applicant shall reevaluate the price and maintenance costs of the asphalt shingle walkway roofs and is encouraged to replace these with metal standing seam roofs. The Applicant may change these to metal standing seam roofs with approval from the Planning Director.	BP for Phase II	Plng.	
20	Applicant shall evaluate whether Buildings E and F can be modified so that the walkways presently planned for the courtyard can instead face the parking lot and is encouraged to make this modification, if feasible. The Applicant may revise these facades accordingly with approval from the Planning Director.	BP for Phase II	Plng.	
21	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.	Final sign off	Plng.	
22	The Applicant shall present building material and color samples as well as a planting schedule to Planning Staff and the Design Review Committee for review and comment prior to construction.	BP for Phase III	Plng.	
23	The Applicant shall present the pavement materials/markings for the cul-de-sac and surrounding walkway to Planning Staff for review and comment prior to construction.	BP for Phase III	Plng.	
24	The Applicants shall make best efforts to work with the Church to make the improvements to the plaza in front of the church as shown on the site plan.	CO for Phase III	Plng.	

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25	The Applicant shall evaluate the cost of adding balconies to the SHA elevation (A-201-2) of the filed and approved plans and is encouraged to include the balconies if financially feasible. Any balconies added shall require approval from the Planning Director and shall be designed in similar fashion to the balconies located on the Bulter Rd. elevation (A-200-2) of the filed and approved plans.	BP for Phase III	Plng.	
26	If the Applicant deems inclusion of the penthouse covering the Energy Recovery Ventilator on the roof is cost prohibitive, the Applicant may revise plans accordingly with approval from the Planning Director.	BP for Phase III	Plng.	

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