

2021 MAY -3 P 5:00

Dear Councilors of the City of Somerville,

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
SOMERVILLE, MA

The following signatures represent a group of residents who would like to propose changes to the Somerville Zoning Map and the Somerville Zoning Ordinance. The changes involve a Zoning Map Amendment and a Zoning Text Amendment, which we ask the City Council to consider jointly. This letter is for the Zoning **Text** Amendment.

This petition is initiated by residents at 80 Webster Ave, a 46-unit 4-story condominium building, with support from multiple neighborhood residents. As context: numerous members of our building and neighborhood, including but not limited to those who have signed this petition, tried to carefully follow the Somerville rezoning process over the last three years, but we were unaware that the Boynton Yards overlay (introduced very late in the zoning revision process in 2019, and not fully interpretable from the proposed versions of the Somerville Zoning Atlas on its own) rezoned property immediately to the east of the residential building at 80 Webster Ave (the eastern half of the block to the west and south of Columbia Street) as high-rise. Indeed, we have had a difficult time finding anyone in the neighborhood who was aware of the implication of the rezoning. We learned about it only in October 2020 at the first neighborhood meeting presentation of the Boynton Gateway project, after all the properties around 80 Webster Ave had been sold. The proposed Boynton Gateway project at present involves a 12-story high-rise lab building (190 feet high plus 40 feet of mechanicals on top) at 495 Columbia Street, to our north and east; and a 5-story mid-rise component of this building at 64 Webster Ave, to our north. Since then we have been engaging in months of organizing, internal discussion, consultations with our Ward Councilor JT Scott and with the Somerville planning staff, and in dialogue with CV Properties, the developer for the Boynton Gateway project. This process has led to the present petitions.

Our proposed zoning text amendment would revise the Boynton Yards sub-area overlay so as to reduce material adverse impacts on residents within and adjacent to the overlay district, while allowing the Boynton Gateway developers to pursue a project of the same general scope as they have been proposing.

Our amendment proposes adding the following to the Boynton Yards sub-area overlay district superseding dimensional standards: for all Mid-Rise and High-Rise districts, a minimum 20 foot side and rear setback for 1st–3rd stories abutting any Local Historic District (LHD), Neighborhood Residence (NR), or Urban Residence (UR) property, and a minimum 30 foot side and rear setback for 4th story and up abutting any Local Historic District, Neighborhood Residence, or Urban Residence property. These setbacks match the standard rear setback for Mid-Rise and High-Rise buildings abutting LHD or NR properties, but we are proposing that these standards apply to abutters of Urban Residence, since Urban Residences are negatively impacted by larger buildings in close proximity in the same way as LHD and NR residences; and to side as well as rear setbacks, since rear setbacks technically do not apply to buildings on corner lots, which will abut the Urban Residence building 80 Webster on this block. This affects 64 Webster Ave, 495 Columbia Street, 481 Columbia Street, 84–98 Webster Ave, and 29 Harding Street, which are the only properties in the Boynton Yards overlay district that abut a

Local Historic District, Neighborhood Residence, or Urban Residence property. Regarding the effect for 29 Harding Street, however, we note that green space is presently planned for this location, as can be seen for example in the Boynton Yards Planning Board Hearing of September 17, 2020 (slides 12, 20, 21, 22, accessible at <https://www.somervillema.gov/sites/default/files/20200917%20Planning%20Board%20Presentation.pdf>), which would satisfy the setback requirements we are proposing, so the current Boynton Yard plans are harmonious with the implications of our petition for 29 Harding Street. Indeed, we see the plans for 29 Harding Street, to create green space next to residential properties abutting new developments within the Boynton Yards overlay district, as exemplifying the way that Boynton Yards *should* serve abutting residents—in stark contrast to the situation that 80 Webster and our residential neighbors to the immediate west are put in by the current overlay zoning.

The accompanying Zoning Map Amendment proposes changes to the Boynton Yards overlay district zoning for the block to the south and west of Columbia Street (and to the east of Webster Ave) so that the part of the block to the north of Beach Ave is zoned as High-Rise, and the rest of the block is zoned as Mid-Rise 5, to avoid the adverse impact of high-rise construction immediately abutting a residential property to the west (80 Webster Ave) without a street in between, while preserving overall viability of planned commercial development on the block. Please consult the accompanying Zoning Map Amendment for details.

Overall, we believe that residents of our neighborhood would have been better served if the entire block to the west and south of Columbia Street (and to the east of Webster Ave) had been zoned as mid-rise with generous setbacks where there is abutment to residential properties. However, we recognize the interest of the developers of the Boynton Gateway project (64 Webster and 495 Columbia Street) whose planning is already underway. Therefore, our petition seeks to preserve the general viability of this project while mitigating material adverse impacts on the residents of 80 Webster Ave and residential neighbors. Based on numerous discussions with a wide range of stakeholders over the past months, we believe that our present proposal is the best way forward to preserve liveability for the residents of 80 Webster and the surrounding neighborhood.

Complete zoning amendment petition materials at <https://tinyurl.com/BGZoningAmendment>



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CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
SOMERVILLE, MA

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
ELECTION DEPARTMENT
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

May 4, 2021

John J Long
City Clerk
Somerville City Hall
93 Highland Avenue
Somerville, Ma 02143

Dear Mr. Long:

We hereby certify that the 2 pages of the zoning petition given to us by your office contains the names of Thirteen (13) registered Somerville voters designated as such by a red check mark to the left of the name.

• Check thus ✓ against the name of each qualified voter to be certified. For names not certified use the following code.
Draw a line through any blank spaces not containing signatures.

N - no such registered voter at that address, or address is illegible.

S - unable to identify signature as that of voter because of form of signature, or signature is illegible.

T - already signed

BOARD OF ELECTION COMMISSIONERS

Anthony Alibonile
[Signature]
Louise A. McCarthy
Christina P. Salerno



CITY HALL • 93 HIGHLAND AVENUE • SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02143
(617) 625-6600 EXT. 4200 • FAX: (617) 625-5643
EMAIL: ELECTIONS@somervillema.gov • www.somervillema.gov



CITY OF SOMERVILLE

Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development

ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT • APPLICATION FORM

Per Article 15.6.2 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance (SZO), an individual property owner or ten (10) registered voters of the City of Somerville may petition the Somerville City Council to amend the provisions of the SZO in response to changes in City policy or real-world conditions. To submit a text amendment petition to the City Council, the following must be provided:

1. A completed Zoning Text Amendment Application Form.
2. The proposed change(s) to the ordinance language. Identify the proper Article and Section number(s) of the ordinance. Text to be removed must be ~~crossed-out in red~~ and new text must be underlined in red.
3. A letter addressed to the City Council including a description of the proposed changes and the purpose for the petition.

Submit all required documents to:

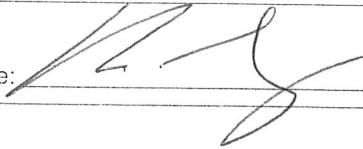
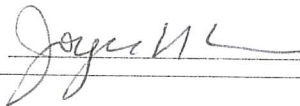
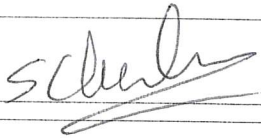
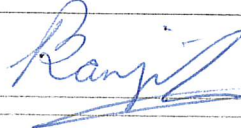
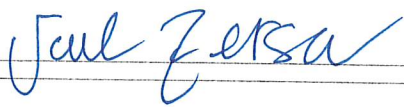
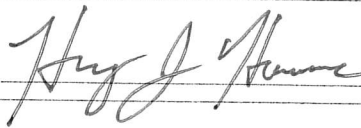
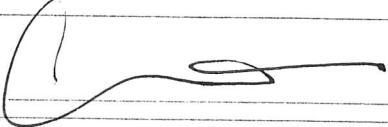
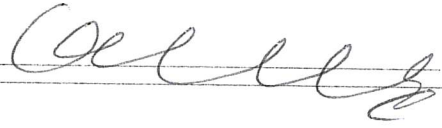
City Clerk's Office
1st Floor, City Hall
93 Highland Avenue
Somerville, MA 02143

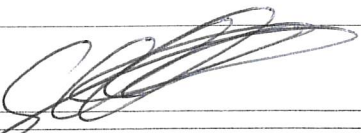
2021 MAY -3 P 4:59
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
SOMERVILLE, MA

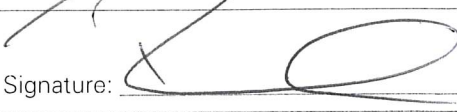
For an individual property owner:

Name:	Signature: _____
Address:	

See next page for ten (10) registered voters.
For ten (10) registered voters:

✓ Name: Roger Levy 2/1	Signature: 
Address: 80 Webster Ave Unit 3A	
✓ Name: Stephanie Smith 2/1	Signature: 
Address: 80 Webster Ave #3A	
✓ Name: Joyce Wu 2/1	Signature: 
Address: 80 Webster Ave #4G	
✓ Name: SYRISON CHALIAS 2/1	Signature: 
Address: 80 WEBSTER AV #3C	
✓ Name: Brazeer Ranjit 2/1	Signature: 
Address: 80 Webster Avenue #1L	
✓ Name: Sarah Zeiser 2/1	Signature: 
Address: 80 Webster Ave #25	
✓ Name: Henry Hannon 2/1	Signature: 
Address: 80 Webster Ave #4H	
✓ Name: Paige Pettoruto 2/1	Signature: 
Address: 80 Webster Ave #4H	
✓ Name: Christine Liu 2/1	Signature: 
Address: 80 Webster Ave 4J	
✓ Name: Katherine Huang 2/1	Signature: 
Address: 80 Webster Ave 4L	

✓ Name: Seth B. Wood 2/1	Signature: 
Address: 80 WEBSTER AVE. #2#	

✓ Name: Brian Culla 2/1	Signature: 
Address: 80 Webster Ave 3B	

✓ Name: Rebecca Fischer 2/1	Signature: 
Address: 80 Webster Ave #4B	

Name:	Signature: _____
Address:	

Name:	Signature: _____
Address:	

Name:	Signature: _____
Address:	

Name:	Signature: _____
Address:	

Name:	Signature: _____
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Name:	Signature: _____
Address:	

Name:	Signature: _____
Address:	

8. OVERLAY DISTRICTS

Master Planned Development (MPD)

2021 MAY -3 P 5:00

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
SOMERVILLE, MA

12. Boynton Yards (BY) Sub-Area

- a. Intent
 - i. To implement the Boynton Yards Urban Design Framework adopted by the Planning Board.
- b. Purpose
 - i. To permit denser DEVELOPMENT than would otherwise be permitted in the Mid-Rise district.
 - ii. To permit taller and denser DEVELOPMENT than would otherwise be permitted in the HIGH-RISE district.
 - iii. To require a minimum percentage of developed floor space to be set aside for occupancy by non-residential PRINCIPAL USES.
 - iv. To constrain the supply of motor vehicle parking spaces to encourage the USE of public transit, bicycles, and walking in lieu of driving.
- c. Applicability
 - i. The section is applicable to all real property shown on Map 8.3.12 (a).
 - ii. Zoning districts shown on map 8.3.12 (a) supersede those shown on the maps of the Official Zoning Atlas of the City of Somerville for DEVELOPMENT complying with the provisions of the BY sub-area.
- d. THOROUGHFARE Network
 - i. Required and recommended THOROUGHFARES are shown on Map 8.3.12 (b).
- ii. The center line of any required THOROUGHFARE may be moved up to twenty (25) feet, so long as:
 - a). the center line of West Ward STREET is at least one hundred and forty (140) feet from both reference points along the MBTA right-of-way;
 - b). West Ward STREET intersects with Webster Avenue in the west and Harding STREET in the east;
 - c). the center line of South STREET is at least one hundred and forty (140) feet from both reference points along the municipal boundary with Cambridge;
 - d). South STREET intersects with Webster Avenue in the west;
 - e). all required THOROUGHFARES intersect with other THOROUGHFARES, forming a network; and
 - f). all intersections are at least one hundred (100) feet from any other intersection, unless granted a WAIVER by the Planning Board.
- e. Master Plan Standards
 - i. At least five percent (5%) of the total commercial floor area included in the proposed build out or twenty thousand (20,000) square feet, whichever is less, and at least ten thousand (10,000) square feet must be dedicated to a Community Center PRINCIPAL USE.

Map 8.3.12 (a) BY Sub-Area Boundary and Superseding Zoning Districts



8. OVERLAY DISTRICTS

Master Planned Development (MPD)

f. Build Out Standards

i. General

- a). DEVELOPMENT SITES subject to approved Master Plan Special Permit may comply with the following standards in aggregate rather than for each individual LOT by Master Plan Special Permit.

ii. CIVIC SPACE

- a). At least twenty percent (20%) of each DEVELOPMENT SITE, excluding THOROUGHFARES, must be provided as one or more CIVIC SPACES.
- b). A CIVIC SPACE, of at least fifty-two thousand (52,000) square feet, must be provided, ABUTTING both West Ward STREET and South STREET, within the required CIVIC SPACE area indicated on Map 8.3.12 (b) and may be developed as a public common or a public square CIVIC SPACE type. See Article 11 PUBLIC REALM for more information.

iii. Commercial Floor Area

- a). At least seventy-five percent (75%) of the floor space of any building must be dedicated to non-residential USES, excluding Auto-Oriented PRINCIPAL USES.
- b). At least ten percent (10%) of the total commercial floor area required by §8.3.11.f.iii

must be dedicated to Arts & Creative Enterprise PRINCIPAL USES.

- c). At least three hundred and seventy five (375) square feet of commercial space must be provided for each DWELLING UNIT.

- d). Any DEVELOPMENT site that includes lot MBL 96/A/6 must provide at least one hundred thousand (100,000) leasable square feet of commercial space dedicated to Arts & Creative Enterprise PRINCIPAL USES.

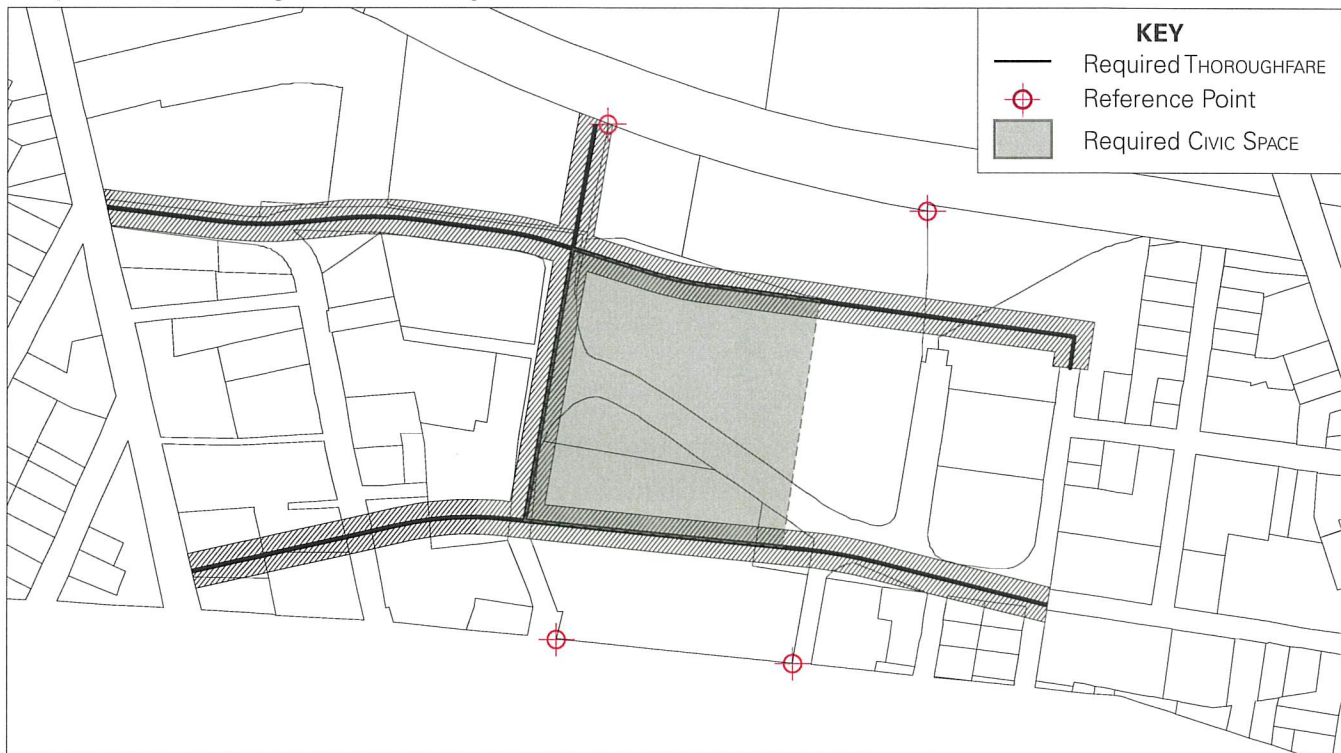
g. Building Standards

- i. The standards of Table 8.3.12 (a) supersede specific dimensional standards for BUILDING TYPES permitted by the zoning district shown on the regulating maps of this Section.

h. Use Provisions

- i. The standards of Table 8.3.12 (b) supersede the table of permitted uses for the High-Rise district for development subject to an approved Master Plan Special Permit.
- ii. Accessory motor vehicle parking for customers of retail sales or food & beverage service uses is prohibited for real property in any MR district shown on Map 8.3.12 (a), but may be provided for employees.
- iii. In addition to the review criteria for all Special

Map 8.3.12 (b) Thoroughfares & Civic Spaces



8. OVERLAY DISTRICTS

Master Planned Development (MPD)

Table 8.3.12 (a) Superseding Dimensional Standards

	MR5	HR
LOT Standards		
OPEN SPACE (min)	none	none
Massing & Height		
Building Height, Stories (min)	--	6 stories
Building Height, Stories & Feet (max)	--	--
General Building	--	none
Commercial Building	--	none
Lab Building	--	none
Mid-Rise Podium Tower	--	--
POINT TOWER	--	none
BLOCK Building	--	--
TOWER(S)	--	none
Building Height, Feet (max)	--	--
General Building	--	none
Commercial Building	--	none
Lab Building	--	none
Mid-Rise PODIUM TOWER	--	--
POINT TOWER	--	none
BLOCK Building	--	--
PODIUM	--	--
TOWER(S)	--	none
USES & FEATURES		
GROSS FLOOR AREA per DU (min)	none	none

Add to Table 8.3.12(a) (Zoning Ordinance Section 8.12):

	MR5	HR
BUILDING SETBACKS:		
Side setback:		
1st-3rd story abutting NR, LHD, or UR:	20 ft	20 ft
4th story and above abutting NR, LHD, or UR:	30 ft	30 ft
Rear setback:		
1st-3rd story abutting NR, LHD, or UR:	20 ft	20 ft
4th story and above abutting NR, LHD, or UR:	30 ft	30 ft

Table 8.3.12 (b) Superseding Permitted Uses

Use Category Specific Use	HR
Industrial	
Dry Cleaning or Laundry Services	SP
Manufacturing	SP

P - Permitted SP - Special Permit Required N - Not Permitted

Permits specified in §15.2.1.e. Review Criteria, the review board shall make findings considering the following in its discretion to approve or deny a special permit authorizing a manufacturing PRINCIPAL USE:

- a). Capacity of the local THOROUGHFARE network providing ACCESS to the SITE and impact on pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular traffic and circulation patterns in the neighborhood.
- b). Methods or techniques for noise mitigation to limit noise for other users of the building and ABUTTING properties.
- i. Parking & Mobility
 - i. The maximum number of OFF-STREET PARKING SPACES in the BY sub-area may not exceed one thousand five hundred (1,500) spaces.
 - ii. Up to three hundred (300) OFF-STREET PARKING SPACES may be provided as RESERVED PARKING SPACES.
 - a). CAR-SHARE PARKING spaces are exempt.
 - iii. Off-STREET motor vehicle parking spaces may be provided as SURFACE PARKING on a revolving two (2) year basis for real property in any HR district shown on Map 8.3.12 (a) by Special Permit.
 - a). In addition to the review criteria for all Special Permits specified in §15.2.1.e. Review Criteria, the review board shall make findings considering the following in its discretion to approve or deny a special permit authorizing an interim SURFACE PARKING LOT:
 - i). Documented un-met demand for parking;
 - ii). The DEVELOPMENT schedule and phasing for DEVELOPMENT subject to a Master Plan Special Permit;
 - iii). The capacity of the local THOROUGHFARE network providing ACCESS to the SITE; and
 - iv). The impact of the PARKING LOT on pedestrian, bicycle, and motor vehicle traffic and circulation patterns in the neighborhood.