



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Housing Division

Date: September 22, 2025

CONDOMINIUM REVIEW BOARD FY24 ANNUAL REPORT

As per Somerville Condominium Conversion Ordinance (SCCO) Section 7-70, this document serves as an annual report of the business of the Somerville Condominium Review Board (CRB) for Fiscal Year 2024 (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024).

Board Membership and Organizational Information

The Condominium Review Board experienced a few changes in membership during FY24. Board Chair Patrisha Paul stepped down at the September 2023 meeting because she was moving out of state, Vice-chair Zasloff was voted in as Chair during the October 2023 meeting with Board Member Kate Byrne voted in as Vice-chair. New Board Member Elizabeth Champion was welcomed onto the Board during the August 2023 meeting and Alternate Member Jennifer Tsolas took her seat at the October 2023 meeting which was rescheduled to early November due to conflicts. Board Staff Morena Zelaya went on parental leave as of the August 2023 meeting and Interim Staff Cecelia Kelly took over duties through the December 2023 meeting. The Board thanks Cecelia for her hard work and assistance during this period!

The City transitioned all Boards & Commissions meetings onto Zoom for a more user friendly experience. Hearings continued to be held in accordance with Open Meeting Law and continued to follow the standard hearing schedule. Applications were primarily submitted via email and attendees joined hearings either virtually or by phone.

Condominium Conversion - Process Overview

The administrative process for applying for a conversion continues to be the same since the 2019 overhaul of the ordinance. After a completed application for conversion is submitted, the application is scheduled for a board meeting where the board, and public, has the opportunity to ask questions and have discussion on the conversion. Generally, the board then votes on the issuance of a preliminary permit. Properties receive a Preliminary Rental Conversion permit (PRCP) or a Preliminary Non-rental Conversion permit (PNRCP), depending on if the property was previously a rental or owner-occupied. The granting of a Final permit is usually contingent

on the tenant receiving a first right of refusal, followed by the submission of a master deed, property condition report, and proof of payment of any applicable relocation fees to a tenant, and the elapsing of any applicable waiting period. A Final permit is issued once all requirements are met and the application goes before the Board for a second time. Occasionally applicants for Non-rental Conversion permits are well prepared and can be issued a Final permit after a single Board meeting.

Application Data Summary

There were 48 new applications for conversion, which encompassed 117 units, submitted in FY24 and in total 72 applications, which includes the new submissions and carryover from the previous FY, totaling 167 units received permits. Fig. 1 below shows historical trends for the number of new applications submitted in the last five years, the time period in which the major 2019 ordinance overhaul has been in full effect.

Fig. 1 Number of New Applications FY20-FY24

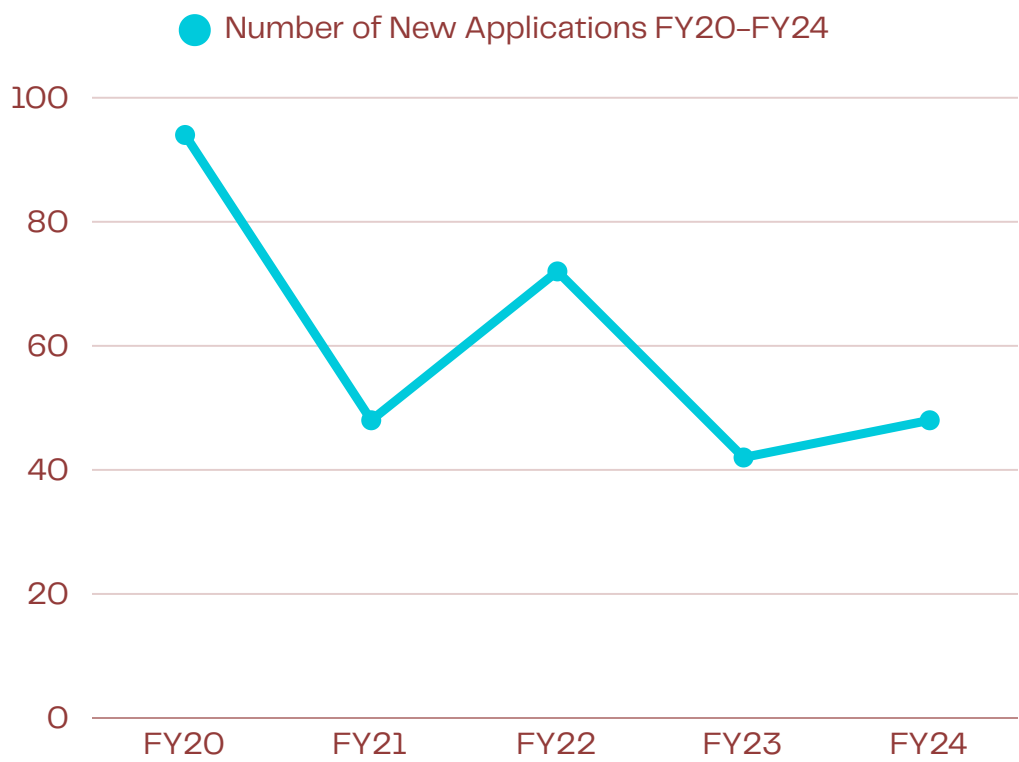


Fig. 2 Number of Permits Issued by Type FY24

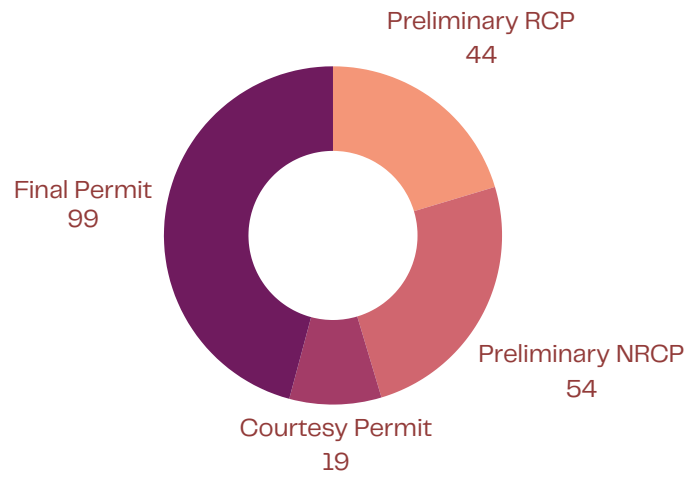


Fig. 2 above shows the number of permits the Board issued by type. 39 of the 99 Final Permits issued were carryovers from the prior FY.

Fig. 3 Number of Units per Property in New Applications This FY

# Of Apps for 1-Unit Prop	# Of Apps for 2-Unit Prop	# Of Apps for 3-Unit Prop	# Of Apps for 4-Unit Prop
9	29	9	1

The majority of applications before the board continue to be for vacant properties. Thirty seven (37) of the 48 new applications the Board heard in FY24 were for properties vacant at the time of purchase by the converting owner. There were just five applications where tenants were entitled to receive permanent relocation payments, and at two of those applications tenants waived their right to the relocation payment. The economics of buying and selling properties continues to favor selling while the property is vacant.

The table below details, by ward, where in the city conversions occurred during FY23 and the use of the unit being converted at each application (Fig. 4). Each row represents a different application. As shown by the table, wards 2 and 4 saw the highest level of conversion activity, 10 applications each. While wards 1 and 3 saw the lowest, with 4 applications each.

Fig. 4 Applications per Ward

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