



**PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION FOR DETERMINATION OF
AN AREA IN NEED OF REDEVELOPMENT**

**BLOCK 124.01, LOTS 2.01, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 & 14
BLOCK 130, LOTS 1, 2, 4 & 5**

**By the
SOMERVILLE PLANNING BOARD**

**Prepared By
Cole and Associates, LLC
September, 2025**

Draft

The original of this report was signed and sealed by

Michael Cole, P.P.

New Jersey Licensed Planner # 5620

Mayor

Brian Gallagher

Council

Theresa Bonner
Andrew Conte
Glen Denys
Rand Pitts
Gina Stravic
Roger Vroom

Planning Board Members:

Brian Gallagher, Mayor
Lisa Werner, Chairman
Jason Kraska, Vice Chairperson
Andrea Adair
Christopher Adickes,
Arthur Akins, Alt. #2
Larry Cleveland
Giovanni Manilio
Barry Van Horn
Roger Vroom

Prepared by;

Cole & Associates, LLC
3986 Princeton Pike
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648
609-306-2877

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I. BACKGROUND

In October 2003, the Somerville Planning Board recommended to the Borough Council that the area located at the western end of Main Street (Block 117, Lot 1 and Block 118, Lot 21) be designated as an “Area in Need of Redevelopment”, according to the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL).

The Borough Council approved this recommendation at its November 3, 2003, meeting and requested that the Planning Board prepare a Redevelopment Plan for the area, in accordance with the LRHL.

On March 24, 2010, the Somerville Planning Board recommended to the Borough Council that properties known as Block 117, Lots 1.01 and 2 bounded by Division Street, South Street and Veterans Memorial Drive and located adjacent to Block 117, Lot 1 and Block 118, Lot 21 be designated as an “Area in Need of Redevelopment”, according to the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL). The Borough Council approved this recommendation by adopting a resolution at its April 5, 2010 meeting.

In 2014, the Borough Council instructed the Borough Planning Board to undertake an investigation of the area to the north side of West Main Street for possible inclusion in the West Main Street RD area. The parcels in question are bound by South Doughty to the west, Davenport Street to the east and Hunterdon Street to the north. Block 115 Lots 6 and 8 located on West High Street were later added to this study at the request of the Borough Council.

In August 2014 the Planning Board made a recommendation to the Borough Council that the study area met the criteria for an area in need and should be declared an area in need of redevelopment and added to the existing West Main Street Redevelopment Area by an amendment to that plan.

On November 3, 2014 the Borough Council designated Block 115 Lots 6, 8, 17, 18, 19, 20, 20.01, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 32, and 32.01 as a Non-Condensation Redevelopment Area, thus the Borough Council or its designated redevelopment entity cannot acquire or condemn property by exercising the power of eminent domain.

The Somerville Borough Council authorized the Planning Board, to undertake a preliminary investigation to determine whether Block 120, Lots 1, 10, 11 & 12, Block 119 Lots 8.01, 14 & 16, is an “area in need of redevelopment” pursuant by resolution adopted on February 18, 2020, and be included in the West Main Street Redevelopment Area. The resolution adopted by the Borough Council is for a “non-condemnation redevelopment area” pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law.

On December 14, 2022, the Planning Board recommended to Borough Council that Block 120, Lots 1, 10, 11 & 12, Block 119 lots 8.01, 14 and 16 be included within the West Main Street Redevelopment Area as non-condemnation redevelopment lots. The Borough Council designated the above referenced lots as area in need of redevelopment, specifically a non-condemnation redevelopment area in January 2023.

in July, 2025, the Borough Council, directed the Planning Board to examine whether Block 124.01, Lots 2.01, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, and Block 130, Lots 1, 2, 4 and 5 meets the statutory criteria for an area in need of redevelopment. Specifically, a non-condemnation redevelopment area, pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, and included in the West Main Street Redevelopment Area.

The study, authorized by the Planning Board, was conducted by Cole and Associates, LLC, in accordance with the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL), N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1, et seq.

II. STUDY AREA DESCRIPTION

The study area consists of Block 124.01, Lots 2.01, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, and Block 130, Lots 1, 2, 4 & 5 and consists of the properties fronting on South Doughty Avenue, Somerset Street, New Street, or Veterans Memorial Drive. The lots contain buildings (in various forms) and/or parking lots; thus, the study area does not contain vacant land. The criteria used to evaluate including the description of each parcel is as follows:

1. Block 124.01, Lot 2.01 (35 Somerset Street)

Criteria “H”

The parcel consists of a three (3) story group home (Volunteers of America) which is located at the intersection of Somerset Street & Veterans Memorial Drive and is occupied by more than five (5) residents. The building was built as a group home over 20 years ago. The building consists of vinyl siding, asphalt shingle roof and vinyl windows. An exterior staircase is used as a 2nd means of egress on the 2nd and 3rd floor. The lot does not contain onsite parking.

2. Block 124.01, Lot 4 (31 Somerset Street)

Criteria "D" & "H"

The property consists of a nineteen (19) car parking lot and that has a driveway entrance on Somerset Street and on Veterans Memorial Drive. The parking spaces are angled and encourages vehicles exiting the parking lot onto Somerset Street. The parking lot was constructed over 30 years ago and is not associated with the adjoining group home (35 Somerset Street). The parking lot is underutilized and typically has less than two (2) vehicles using it.

3. Block 124.01, Lot 5 (29 Somerset Street)

Criteria "H"

This parcel consists of a 2.5 story Georgian style masonry block building that is used as a professional office on the ground and 2nd floor with storage located in the basement. The building was built in 2001/2002. The building has frontage on Somerset Street and has an eight (8) car parking lot located behind the building. The parking lot is adjacent to Veterans Memorial Drive. The parking lot has an entrance from Somerset Street and an exit/entrance from Veterans Memorial Drive. There is construction material and a sea box in the parking lot.

4. Block 124.01, Lot 6 (25-27 Somerset Street)

Criteria "H"

The property consists of a two (2) family colonial style, 2.5 story dwelling that was built in 1920s. The dwelling faces Somerset Street and has a driveway located east of the dwelling that leads to an eight (8) car parking lot located behind the dwelling, in the rear yard. The parking lot and driveway are shared with the two (2) family dwelling that is located to the east (21-23 Somerset Street). The two (2) family dwelling is approximately 1,950 square feet and its façade consists of white vinyl siding with an asphalt shingle roof.

5. Block 124.01, Lot 7 (21-23 Somerset Street)

Criteria "H"

The site consists of a 2,500 square foot two (2) family Gable-ell style duplex dwelling. The dwelling was built in the 1920's and has a detached garage located in the rear. The dwelling has two (2) tone aluminum siding with an asphalt shingle roof. The duplex shares a driveway which is located to the west of the dwelling and a common parking lot. The parking lot contains eight (8) parking spaces.

6. Block 124.01, Lot 8 (17-19 Somerset Street)

Criteria "H"

The dwelling is a two (2) family American Foursquare style house that is approximately 2,900 square feet. The 2.5 story two (2) family dwelling faces Somerset Street and has a detached two (2) car garage located to the east of the dwelling. The driveway connects the detached garage to Somerset Street and can accommodate four (4) vehicles. The dwelling has brown aluminum siding, asphalt roof and was constructed in the 1920s.

7. Block 124.01, Lot 9 (15 Somerset Street)

Criteria "H"

The site consists of a 2.5 story professional office building that is approximately 2,600 square feet. The building was built in 1989 and has a brick façade. The lot is located on the corner of Somerset and New Street and has a ten (10) car parking lot that is accessed from New Street. The current building is Georgian/Federal style that was constructed after the previous building was demolished.

8. Block 124.01, Lot 10 (14 New Street)

Criteria "H"

The property contains a two (2) family, 2.5 story, 2,200 square feet (approximately) dwelling. The building façade consists of off-white vinyl siding with asphalt shingle roof. The lot has a driveway located to the north of the dwelling and has a four (4) car parking lot located at the rear of the lot (behind the dwelling). The structure was built in the 1920s. It is a Georgian style dwelling with the 2nd floor apartment entrance recessed on the southern façade.

9. Block 124.01, Lot 11 (18 New Street)

Criteria "H"

A two (2) family dwelling is located at 18 New Street. The structure is approximately 1,900 square feet, has a front porch on both the ground and 2nd floors. The porch on the 2nd floor is a three (3) season room. The dwelling was built in the early 1900s. The site contains a detached two (2) car garage located behind the dwelling and a driveway is located to the north of the two (2) family residence. Near the detached garage is a parking area. It appears that the parking area can accommodate four (4) vehicles. The façade consists of grey vinyl siding with an asphalt shingle roof.

10. Block 124.01, Lot 12 (22 New Street)

Criteria “H”

The site contains a 2,250 square foot (approximate) two (2) family dwelling. The lot contains a driveway located to the south of the structure and it appears the driveway can accommodate one (1) full size vehicles or two (2) stacked compact vehicles.

11. Block 124.01, Lot 14 (Veterans Memorial Drive West)

Criteria “H”

The site consists of an irregularly shaped surface parking lot. The parking lot contains fourteen (14) parking spaces and was constructed prior to 1970. The lot is owned by the same entity that owns the Granetz building (Block 130, Lot 1). The parking lot has an entrance on New Street and one-way circulation thru the irregularly shaped parking lot. The parking lot exits on to Veterans Memorial Drive. The parking lot is seldomly at a capacity (full) and typically has less than four (4) vehicles using it.

12. Block 130, Lot 1 (201-217 West Main Street)

Criteria “A”, “B”, & “H”

The site contains a four (4) story, 45,000 square foot mixed use building that is currently vacant. The ground floor had retail tenants, and the upper floors were used as offices. The building has brick façade and was built using timber frame construction. The building was built in the 1880’s and is locally referred to as the “Granetz Building”. The site contains a 23-space surface parking lot which is located behind the four (4) story building. The surface parking lot is accessed from New Street and has a cross-access parking agreement with the owners of Block 130, Lot 2 (Warehouse apartments). The layouts of the offices and retail spaces are outdated.

13. Block 130, Lot 2 (11 New Street)

Criteria “H”

The lot contains a factory building that was converted to apartments in the 1980’s. The three (3) story brick building contains 41 apartments: 2 studios, 31 one-bedroom, and 8 two- bedroom units. The site contains a surface parking lot that contains 45 spaces. A portion of the parking lot is on adjoining Lot 1, and the parking lot is accessed from New Street and contains 45 spaces. As previously stated, the tenants can use the portion of the parking lot on the adjoining Lot 1 (201-217 West Main Street) after work hours during the week and on the weekends.

14. Block 130, Lot 4 (28 South Doughty Avenue)

Criteria “H”

The site consists of a 2.5 story two (2) family Foursquare style dwelling. The building was constructed around 1900 and is approximately 2,200 square feet. The two (2) family dwelling has a front porch with access to the upper apartment located on the southern façade. The site does not contain offsite parking.

15. Block 130, Lot 5 (30 South Doughty Avenue).

Criteria “D” & “H”

The lot contains a mixed-use four (4) story building which has twenty-one (21) apartments on the upper floors. Each floor contains seven (7) apartments. The ground floor is used as retail and primarily consists of restaurants. The retail space is approximately 11,600 square feet. The building(s) were built prior to 1963. It appears that the original building was the four (4) story structure, and a single-story structure was added to the southern and eastern facades of the existing building. It appears, based on aerial photos that the four (4) story building was constructed prior to 1930 and the addition constructed prior to 1963.

The site contains four (4) parking spaces which are accessed from South Doughty Avenue and a trash pickup area which is adjacent to New Street.

III. Conclusion

Based upon the criteria set forth relating to smart growth principals associated with SDRP’s promotion of redevelopment activity within defined Metropolitan Planning Area and Regional Centers, this Investigation concludes that a lawful basis exists for declaring Block 124.01, Lots 2.01, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, Block 130, Lots 1, 2, 4 & 5 in need of redevelopment. The criteria that are applicable to all the properties located within the study area is the smart growth principal(s) criteria is Criteria “H” in the LRHL. Other criteria are also applicable those being: “A”, “B” and “D”.

The criteria that is applicable to some of the properties and reinforces the conclusion that the area in need of redevelopment is as follows:

Criteria “A” which states “The generality of buildings is substandard, unsafe, unsanitary, dilapidated, or obsolescent, or possess any of such characteristics, or are so lacking in light, air, or space, as to be conducive to unwholesome living or working conditions”.

Criteria “B” is as follows: “The discontinuance of the use of buildings previously used for commercial, manufacturing, or industrial purposes; the abandonment of such buildings; or the same being allowed to fall into a so great a state of disrepair as to be untenable”.

Criteria “D” which states “Areas with buildings or improvements which, by reason of dilapidation, obsolescence, overcrowding, faulty arrangement or design, lack of ventilation, light and sanitary facilities, excessive land coverage, deleterious land use or obsolete layout, or any combination of these or other factors, are detrimental to the safety, health, morals, or welfare of the community”

In addition, based upon the LRHL definition of “Redevelopment Area” or “area in need of redevelopment” (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-3) which states the following; “A redevelopment area may include lands, buildings, or improvements which of themselves are not detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, but the inclusion of which is found necessary, with or without change in their condition, for the effective redevelopment of the area which they are a part”. This Investigation concludes that a lawful basis exists for declaring Block 124.01, Lots 2.01, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, Block 130, Lots 1, 2, 4 & 5 as an area in need of redevelopment.

We recommend that the Planning Board and Borough Council take the action necessary to declare that Block 124.01, Lots 2.01, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, Block 130, Lots 1, 2, 4 & 5 as an area in need of redevelopment.

Additionally, we recommend that with the exception of Block 124, Lot 14, the properties located on the west New Street only be redeveloped if the property owner wants to redevelop the property. These properties are identified as Block 124, lots 2.01, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, & 12.

IV. BOROUGH SETTING/OVERVIEW

Somerville is in the center of Somerset County and is the County Seat. With more than 12,958 people recorded in the 2023 US Census Bureau American Community Survey, or 5,491 people per square mile living within the 2.36 square mile community. The Borough is designated Planning Area 1 or Metropolitan Planning Area (except for the land located along the Raritan River, west of Route 206). In addition, the Borough is a part of the regional center. The Somerset County Regional Center consists of Somerville, Raritan Borough and part of Bridgewater Township and was designated by the State Planning Commission on May 29, 1996. The entire Borough is within the Regional Center designation.

The NJ State Planning Act, established in 1986, created the NJ State Planning Commission and required the Commission to prepare the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP). The SDRP is to be revised and readopted every three years through a process called “cross acceptance”. The initial SDRF was adopted in 1992, and the Borough of Somerville was designated as Metropolitan Planning Area (PA1). The SDRF was last adopted in 2001 and the draft SDRP prepared in 2011-2012 was supposed to be adopted in November 2012. However, due to Hurricane Sandy the 2012 SDRP adoption was delayed allowing for more public comment and to incorporate disaster planning goals.

A draft SDRP was prepared in December 2024 and the draft SDRP is in the process of “cross acceptance”. An Impact Assessment of the 2024 NJ State Development and Redevelopment Plan was released early this month. The Impact Assessment was prepared on behalf of the NJ State Planning Commission & NJ Office of Planning Advocacy.

Since the draft 2024 SDRF plan is currently not adopted, the analysis below is referenced to the SDRF adopted in 2001.

The criteria for Metropolitan Planning Area- PA1 are as follows:

Metropolitan Planning Area- PA1

1. Densities of more than 1,000 persons per square mile;
2. Existing public water and sewer systems, or with physical accessibility to said system, and with access to public transit systems;
3. Adjacent to the Suburban Planning Area;
4. Land Area greater than one square mile;
5. A population of not less than 25,000 people or areas surrounded by land meeting the criteria of a PA1, are geographically interrelated with the Metropolitan Planning Area and meet the intent of that Planning Area.

These criteria fairly describe the Borough of Somerville and therefore its designation as part of the Metropolitan Planning Area is appropriate. In the Metropolitan Planning Area, the State Plan's intention is to:

- provide for much of the state's future redevelopment;
- revitalize cities and towns;
- promote growth in compact forms;
- stabilize older suburbs;
- redesign areas of sprawl; and
- protect the character of existing stable communities.

The SDRP identifies the following policy objectives for the Metropolitan Planning Area:

1. Land Use

Promote redevelopment and development in Cores and neighborhoods of Centers and in Nodes that have been identified through cooperative regional planning efforts. Promote diversification of land uses, including housing where appropriate, in single-use developments and enhance their linkages to the rest of the community. Ensure efficient and beneficial utilization of scarce land resources throughout the Planning Area to strengthen its existing diversified and compact nature.

2. Housing

Provide a full range of housing choices through redevelopment, new construction, rehabilitation, adaptive reuse of nonresidential buildings, and the introduction of new housing into appropriate nonresidential settings. Preserve the existing housing stock through maintenance, rehabilitation, and flexible regulation.

3 Economic Development:

Promote economic development by encouraging innovative land use, site preparation and infill development, public/private partnerships and infrastructure improvements that support an identified role for the community within the regional marketplace. Encourage job training and other incentives to retain and attract businesses. Encourage private sector investment through supportive government regulations, policies, and programs, including tax policies and expedited review of proposals that support appropriate redevelopment.

4. Transportation

Maintain and enhance a transportation system that capitalizes on high-density settlement patterns by encouraging the use of public transit systems, walking and alternative modes of transportation to reduce automobile dependency, link Centers and Nodes, and create opportunities for transit-oriented redevelopment. Facilitate efficient goods movement through strategic investments and intermodal linkages. Where appropriate, encourage community economic development and promote complementary uses for airport property such as business centers.

5. Natural Resource Conservation

Reclaim environmentally damaged sites and mitigate future negative impacts, particularly to waterfronts, scenic vistas, wildlife habitats and to Critical Environmental Sites, and Historic and Cultural Sites. Give special emphasis to improving air quality. Use open space to reinforce neighborhood and community identity, and protect natural linear systems, including regional systems that link to other Planning Areas.

6. Agriculture

Use development and redevelopment opportunities wherever appropriate and economically feasible, to meet the needs of the agricultural industry for intensive agricultural production, packaging and processing, value-added operations, marketing, exporting and other shipping. Provide opportunities for farms, greenhouses, farmers markets and community gardens.

7. Recreation

Provide maximum active and passive recreational opportunities and facilities at the neighborhood, local and regional levels by concentrating on the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing parks and open space while expanding and linking the system through redevelopment and reclamation projects.

8. Redevelopment

Encourage redevelopment at intensities sufficient to support transit, a broad range of uses and efficient use of infrastructure. Promote design that enhances public safety, encourages pedestrian activity, and reduces dependency on the automobile.

9. Historic Preservation

Encourage the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic or significant buildings, Historic and Cultural Sites, neighborhoods and districts in ways that will not compromise either the historic resource or the area's ability to redevelop. Coordinate historic preservation with tourism efforts.

10. Public Facilities and Services

Complete, repair or replace existing infrastructure systems to eliminate deficiencies and provide capacity for sustainable development and redevelopment in the region. Encourage the concentration of public facilities and services in Centers and Cores.

11. Intergovernmental Coordination

Regionalize as many public services as feasible and economical to enhance the cost-effective delivery of those services. Establish multi-jurisdictional policy and planning entities to guide the efforts of state, county, and municipal governments to ensure compatible and coordinated redevelopment.

The Somerset County Regional Center Strategic Master Plan was adopted by all three of the regional center municipalities (Somerville Borough, Raritan Borough, and a portion of Bridgewater Township) and communication and coordination of planning efforts is a policy of said Master Plan.

Regional Center Designation

In May 1996, the Boroughs of Somerville and Raritan and an adjacent portion of Bridgewater Township were designated a regional center. Regional Centers are defined, (on page 241 of the SDRP) as the following:

- A. It functions as the focal point for the economic, social and cultural activities of its region, with a compact, mixed-use (for example, commercial, office, industrial, public) Core and neighborhoods offering a wide variety of housing types;
- B. It has access to existing or planned infrastructure sufficient to serve projected growth;
- C. It has, within the Center Boundary, an existing (or planned) population of more than 10,000 people in Metropolitan and Suburban Planning Areas;

- D. It has (or is planned to have) a gross population density of approximately 5,000 persons per square mile excluding water bodies (or approximately three dwelling units per acre) or more within the Center Boundary;
- E. It has (or is planned to have) within the Center Boundary, an employment base of more than 10,000 jobs in Metropolitan and Suburban Planning Areas;
- F. It is near a major public transportation terminal, arterial intersection or interstate interchange capable of serving as the hub from two or more modes of transportation; and
- G. It has a land area of one to 10 square miles.

A Regional Center is a mix of residential, commercial, and public uses serving a large surrounding area and developed at an intensity that makes public transportation feasible. Centers are the location where much of the growth in New Jersey will occur. "Centers promote community, protect the environment, provide cultural and aesthetic experiences and offer residents a superior quality of life" (SDRP, page 230). The Borough fully endorses the goals and policies of Regional Centers.

Regional Center Design Policies

The Center Design Policies are as follows:

A. Cores:

Design Cores to be the commercial, cultural, and civic heart of a Center, with multi-story and mixed-use buildings, shared parking, higher intensities, and a high proportion of internal trips on foot or by transit. Focus on Cores activities, such as restaurants, retail and services, which will generate pedestrian traffic.

B. Neighborhoods:

Design neighborhoods with a distinct identity as the fundamental building block of Centers, with a central focus (shopping, transit service, school or green) and an edge marking transitions. Neighborhoods are characterized by short walking distances from edge to center

C. Streets and Blocks: Design streets and blocks to:

- Maximize connectivity;
- Establish a comfortable pedestrian environment;
- Function as high-quality public spaces as well as means of circulation;
- Balance the needs of different transportation modes, with an emphasis on pedestrian and bicycles;
- Serve the needs of everyday users (pedestrians, cars), rather than of occasional users (fire trucks, snow plows);
- Minimize cartway width and impervious coverage, while maximizing energy-efficient building sites;
- Maximize the use of traffic calming and traditional traffic control devices (roundabouts, T-intersections);
- Maximize the sense of enclosure, using continuity of building walls and appropriate building height-to-street-width ratios to reinforce street space in ways appropriate to the block and the neighborhood; and
- Reflect adjacent land-use conditions as well as the volume of traffic which the street is expected to carry.

D. Public Spaces:

Provide within each Center for at least one centrally located, easily accessible and well-designed public space that creates a focal point for the community, along with an appropriate variety of other, smaller public and semi-public spaces to address more limited or neighborhood needs.

E. Streetscapes:

Encourage quality streetscape treatments that adequately reflect public commitment to the community and its built environment, with trees and other appropriate plant material, statuary, fountains, and other features that animate the public and semi-public realm, along with appropriate street furniture.

F. Integrating Large and Small Buildings and Facilities:

Encourage neighborhoods that integrate both large and small buildings and facilities. To achieve a seamless integration of larger facilities into the surrounding neighborhood:

- Consider complementary uses to soften transitions from residential to nonresidential;
- Design large facilities to resemble a series of smaller buildings;
- Calm vehicular access and egress to avoid disruption to pedestrian circulation and to neighborhood activities;
- Develop and enforce performance standards to maintain desirable quality of life features;
- Provide incentives, where appropriate, for multi-story buildings with smaller footprints, instead of single-story buildings with vast floorplates;
- Schedule activities to minimize disruptions to the surrounding neighborhood; and
- Maintain a constant dialogue between the neighborhood and the large user and require public involvement in every step of decision making.

G. Building Orientation:

Orient buildings and main building entrances to face streets or other important public spaces and clearly mark and frame these entrances architecturally with columns, lintels, pediments, canopies, or other architectural features. Avoid orienting buildings toward parking lots.

H. Building Height:

Encourage taller buildings to acknowledge the height of neighboring buildings and to echo important horizontal lines by way of setbacks, recesses or other design devices.

I. Building Elevations:

Create visual interest in facade design with rhythms, patterns, and decorative elements and by using a variety of modular components. Avoid blank walls, particularly if visible from the public realm.

The purpose of stating all the goals and policies of Regional Center and Metropolitan Planning Area is to demonstrate the Somerville is a smart growth zone by being designated as a PA1 and a Regional Center. The Borough's Master Plan and Land Use Ordinance are in concert with these goals and policies.

V. Applicability of Statutory Criteria

The study area was compared to the statutory criteria stated in Section III. The condition of buildings greatly varies throughout the study area. The buildings in the study area are generally well maintained. Except for the buildings group home (35 Somerset Street), professional office buildings located at 29 & 15 Somerset Streets, all the buildings were constructed before WWII and the facades and materials of construction are consistent with that architecture found between 1880's and WWII. Photographs of each lot are included in Appendix A. The statutory criteria, stated in Section III, that is relevant to all these properties, are as follows:

Criteria 'h' states the following criteria:

The designation of the delineated area is consistent with the smart growth planning principles adopted pursuant to law or regulation.

The study area is within a Metropolitan Planning Area (PA1) and a Designated Regional Center. The intent and policy objectives enumerated under the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) is included in Section IV. Much of the State's future development and redevelopment activity is expected to occur in Regional Centers and Metropolitan Planning Areas.

The Borough endorses the SDRP goals and policies for a Metropolitan Planning Area and Regional Center. The Borough, through the Master Plan and Land Use Ordinance, promotes a compact mix of residential, commercial and retail uses (in the Central Business District) at an intensity that allows public transportation feasible and furthers the CBD as a place of destination. Declaring the study area to be an area in need of redevelopment would advance the themes of the Regional Center and PA1 designations. Therefore, we conclude that the threshold for satisfaction of criteria 'h' is reached for all properties in the study area.

The definition of "Redevelopment Area" or "area in need of redevelopment" states the following:

A redevelopment area may include lands, buildings, or improvements which of themselves are not detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, but the inclusion of which is found necessary, with or without change in their condition, for the effective redevelopment of the area which they are a part.

As evidenced by the evaluation of the properties in the study area, including the photographs, while the structures are not necessarily detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare of the Borough, the inclusion of these properties into the West Main Street Redevelopment Area is expected to foster redevelopment for infill development of vacant properties, redevelopment of existing structures individually and with multiple properties, including rehabilitation and new development with the use of economic incentives. These economic incentives, such as tax abatements

and state funding programs such as Economic Development and Growth Grants (ERG), encourage redevelopment by providing financial support to redevelopers to address project funding gaps.

The criteria that are applicable to some of the properties are as follows;

Criteria “A” which states “The generality of buildings are substandard, unsafe, unsanitary, dilapidated, or obsolescent, or possess any of such characteristics, or are so lacking in light, air, or space, as to be conducive to unwholesome living or working conditions”.

Criteria “B” which is as follows: “The discontinuance of the use of buildings previously used for commercial, manufacturing, or industrial purposes; the abandonment of such buildings; or the same being allowed to fall into a so great a state of disrepair as to be untenable”.

These criteria are applicable to the following properties;

1. The Granetz building, 201-217 West Main Street

The building is currently vacant and the layout of both the offices and retail space is obsolescent given the current technology and migration of retailers to online web-based shopping.

Criteria “D” which states “Areas with buildings or improvements which, by reason of dilapidation, obsolescence, overcrowding, faulty arrangement or design, lack of ventilation, light and sanitary facilities, excessive land coverage, deleterious land use or obsolete layout, or any combination of these or other factors, are detrimental to the safety, health, morals, or welfare of the community” applies to some of the commercial properties regarding their layout. Specifically, this criterion is met by the following sites;

1. The surface parking lot located at 31 Somerset Street

The parking lot is seldomly used for decades and thus is an obsolete use.

2. The surface parking lot located Block 124.01, Lot 14.

The parking lot is located at the intersection of New Street and Veterans Memorial Drive and does not have a street address. It is seldomly used for decades and is irregularly shaped. The irregular shape creates an inefficient layout. In addition, given that parking lot is seldomly used, it is an obsolete use.

3. The mixed-use building located at 30 South Doughty Avenue.

The four (4) story building which contains 21 apartments and 11,600 square feet of retail on the ground floor contains a total of four (4) parking spaces for the entire facility. A ground floor addition was added to the four (4) story building (constructed prior to 1963) and the site has faculty layout.

VI. ESTABLISHING AND/OR AMENDING A REDVELOPMENT AREA

The process for amending or establishing a redevelopment area is as follows:

1. No area of a municipality shall be determined a redevelopment area unless the governing body of the municipality shall, by resolution, authorize the planning board to undertake a preliminary investigation to determine whether the proposed area is a redevelopment area according to the criteria set forth in N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5. Such determination shall be made after public notice and public hearing as described below. The governing body of a municipality shall assign the conduct of the investigation and hearing to the planning board of the municipality. The resolution authorizing the planning board to undertake a preliminary investigation shall state whether the redevelopment area determination shall authorize the municipality to use all those powers provided by the Legislature for use in a redevelopment area other than the use of eminent domain (hereinafter referred to as a "Non-Condensation Redevelopment Area") or whether the redevelopment area determination shall authorize the municipality to use all those powers provided by the Legislature for use in a redevelopment area, including the power of eminent domain (hereinafter referred to as a "Condensation Redevelopment Area").
2. Before proceeding to a public hearing on the matter, the Planning Board shall prepare a map showing the boundaries of the proposed redevelopment area and the location of the various parcels of property included therein. There shall be appended to the map a statement setting forth the basis for the investigation.
3. The planning board shall specify a date for and give notice of a hearing for the purpose of hearing persons who are interested in or would be affected by a determination that the delineated area is a redevelopment area. The hearing notice shall set forth the general boundaries of the area to be investigated and state that a map has been prepared and can be inspected at the office of the municipal clerk.

4. If the government body resolution assigning the investigation to the planning board, as described above, stated that the redevelopment determination shall establish a Non-Condensation Redevelopment Area, the notice of the hearing shall specifically state that a redevelopment area determination shall not authorize the municipality to exercise the power of eminent domain to acquire any property in the delineated area.
5. A copy of the notice shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the municipality once each week for two consecutive weeks, and the last publication shall be not less than ten days prior to the date set for the hearing. A copy of the notice shall be mailed at least ten days prior to the date set for the hearing to the last owner, if any, of each parcel of property within the area according to the assessment records of the municipality. A notice shall also be sent to all persons at their last known address, if any, whose names are noted on the assessment records as claimants of an interest in any such parcel. The assessor of the municipality shall make a notation upon the records when requested to do so by any person claiming to have an interest in any parcel of property in the municipality. The notice shall be published and mailed by the municipal clerk, or by such clerk or official as the planning board shall otherwise designate. Failure to mail any such notice shall not invalidate the investigation or determination thereon.
6. At the hearing, which may be adjourned from time to time, the planning board shall hear all persons who are interested in or would be affected by a determination that the delineated area is a redevelopment area. All objections to such a determination and evidence in support of those objections, given orally or in writing, shall be received and considered and made part of the public record.
7. After completing its hearing on this matter, the planning board shall recommend that the delineated areas, or any part thereof, be determined, or not be determined, by the municipal governing body to be a redevelopment area. After receiving the recommendation of the planning board, the municipal governing body may adopt a resolution determining that the delineated area, or any part thereof, is a redevelopment area. Upon adoption of the resolution, the clerk of the municipality shall, forthwith transmit a copy of the resolution to the Commissioner of Community Affairs for review. If the area in need of redevelopment is not situated in an area in which development or redevelopment is encouraged pursuant to any State Law or regulation promulgated pursuant thereto, the determination shall not take effect without first receiving the review and the approval of the commissioner. If the commissioner does not issue an approval or disapproval within 30 calendar days of transmittal by the clerk, the determination shall be deemed approved. If the area in need of redevelopment is situated in an area in which development

or redevelopment is to be encouraged pursuant to any State law or regulation promulgated pursuant thereto, then the determination shall take effect after the clerk has transmitted a copy of the resolution to the commissioner. The determination, if supported by substantial evidence and, if required, approved by the commissioner, shall be binding and conclusive upon all persons affected by the determination. Notice of the determination shall be served, within 10 days after the determination, upon record holders of property located within the delineated area, those names are listed on the tax assessor's records, and upon each person who filed a written objection thereto and stated, in or upon written submission, an address to which notice of determination may be sent.

8. No municipality or redevelopment entity shall exercise the power of eminent domain to acquire property for redevelopment purposes within a Non-Condensation Redevelopment Area.
9. If a municipal governing body has determined an area to be a Non-Condensation Redevelopment Area and is unable to acquire property that is necessary for the redevelopment project, the municipality may initiate and follow the process set forth herein to determine whether the area or property is a Condensation Redevelopment Area. Such determination shall be based upon the then-existing conditions and not based upon the condition of the area or property at the time of the prior Non-Condensation Redevelopment Area determination.
10. A property owner who has received notice pursuant to this section who does not file a legal challenge to the redevelopment affecting his or her property within 45 days or receipt of such notice shall thereafter be barred from filing such a challenge.
11. The municipality shall, for 45 days next following its determination, take no further action to acquire any property by condemnation within the redevelopment area.
12. If any person shall within 45 days after adoption by the municipality of the determination, apply to the Superior Court, the court may grant further review of the determination by the procedure in lieu of prerogative writ; and in any such action the court may make any incidental order that it deems proper.

VII. AREA IN NEED OF REDEVELOPMENT; CRITERIA

A delineated area may be determined to need redevelopment if, after investigation, notice and hearing as provided in section 6 of P.L. 1992, c.79 (C.40A:12A- 6), the governing body of the municipality by resolution concludes that within the delineated area any of the following conditions is found:

- a. The generality of buildings is substandard, unsafe, unsanitary, dilapidated, or obsolescent, or possess any of such characteristics, or are so lacking in light, air, or space, as to be conducive to unwholesome living or working conditions.
- b. The discontinuance of the use of buildings previously used for commercial, manufacturing, or industrial purposes; the abandonment of such buildings; or the same being allowed to fall into so great a state of disrepair as to be untenable.
- c. Land that is owned by the municipality, the county, a local housing authority, redevelopment agency or redevelopment entity, or unimproved vacant land that has remained so for a period of ten years prior to adoption of the resolution, and that by reason of its location, remoteness, lack of means of access to developed sections or portions of the municipality, or topography, or nature of the soil, is not likely to be developed through the instrumentality of private capital.
- d. Areas with buildings or improvements which, by reason of dilapidation, obsolescence, overcrowding, faulty arrangement or design, lack of ventilation, light and sanitary facilities, excessive land coverage, deleterious land use or obsolete layout, or any combination of these or other factors, are detrimental to the safety, health, morals, or welfare of the community.
- e. A growing lack or total lack of proper utilization of areas caused by the condition of the title, diverse ownership of the real properties therein or other similar conditions, which impeded land assemblage or discourage the undertaking of improvements resulting in a stagnant and unproductive condition of land potentially useful and valuable for contributing to and serving the public health, safety and welfare, which condition is presumed to be having a negative social or economic impact or otherwise being detrimental to the safety, health, morals, or welfare of the surrounding area or the community in general.

- f. Areas, more than five contiguous acres, whereon buildings or improvements have been destroyed, consumed by fire, demolished or altered by the action of storm, fire, cyclone, tornado, earthquake or other casualty in such a way that the aggregate assessed value of the area has been materially depreciated.
- g. In any municipality in which an enterprise zone has been designated pursuant to the "New Jersey Urban Enterprise Zones Act," P.L. 1983, c.303 (C.52:27H-60 et seq.) the execution of the actions prescribed in that act for the adoption by the municipality and approval by the New Jersey Urban Enterprise Zone Authority of the zone development plan for the area of the enterprise zone shall be considered sufficient for the determination that the area is in need of redevelopment pursuant to sections 5 and 6 of P.L. 1992, c.79 (C.40A:12A-5 and 40A:12A-6) for the purpose of granting tax exemptions within the enterprise zone district pursuant to the provisions of P.L. 1991, c.431 (C.40A:20-1 et seq.) or the adoption of a tax abatement and exemption ordinance pursuant to the provisions of P.L. 1991, c.441 (C.40A:21-1 et seq.). The municipality shall not utilize any other redevelopment powers within the urban enterprise zone unless the municipal governing body and planning board have also taken the actions and fulfilled the requirements prescribed in P.L. 1992, c.79 (C.40A:12A-1 et al.) for determining that the area is in need of redevelopment or an area in need of rehabilitation and the municipal governing body has adopted a redevelopment plan ordinance including the area of the enterprise zone.
- h. The designation of the delineated area is consistent with the smart growth planning principles adopted pursuant to law or regulation.

In addition to the above stated criteria, the statute (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-3) defines a redevelopment area or area in need of redevelopment as an area determined to need redevelopment pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5 & 6 or determined heretofore to be a "blighted area" pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55-21, repealed by this act. A redevelopment area may include lands, buildings, or improvements which of themselves are not detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare, but the inclusion of which is found necessary, with or without change in their condition, for the effective redevelopment of the area which they are a part (herein referred to as the Section 3 Criteria).

Appendix A



35 Somerset Street - Block 124.01/Lot 2.01



31 Somerset Street - Block 124.01/Lot 4



29 Somerset Street - Block 124.01/Lot 5



25-27 Somerset Street - Block 124.01/Lot 6



21-23 Somerset Street - Block 124.01/Lot 7



17-19 Somerset Street - Block 124.01/Lot 8



15 Somerset Street - Block 124.01/Lot 9



14 New Street - Block 124.01/Lot 10



18 New Street - Block 124.01/Lot 11



22 New Street - Block 124.01/Lot 12



Veteran's Memorial Drive West - Block 124.01/Lot 14



201-217 W Main Street - Block 130/Lot 1



11 New Street - Block 130/Lot 2



28 S Doughty Ave - Block 130/Lot 4



30 S Doughty Ave - Block 130/Lot 5

Appendix B

RESOLUTION 25-0707-182

AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE PLANNING BOARD OF THE BOROUGH OF SOMERVILLE TO EXAMINE WHETHER BLOCK 124.01 LOTS 2.01, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 AND 14 AND BLOCK 130, LOTS 1, 2 4 AND 5 AS SHOWN ON THE OFFICIAL TAX MAP OF THE BOROUGH MEETS THE STATUTORY CRITERIA FOR AN AREA IN NEED OF REDEVELOPMENT, SPECIFICALLY A NON-CONDEMNATION REDEVELOPMENT AREA, PURSUANT TO THE LOCAL REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING LAW, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 ET SEQ. AND INCLUDED IN THE WEST MAIN STREET REDEVELOPMENT AREA

WHEREAS, the Borough Council of the Borough of Somerville (the "Borough") has identified certain properties located on Somerset Street, New Street, Veterans Memorial Drive West and South Doughty Avenue, also known as Block 124.01 Lots 2.01, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 14 and Block 130, Lots 1, 2 4 and 5 as delineated on the tax map attached hereto and made part of this resolution (the "Properties"), which it desires to be considered for designation as an area "in need of redevelopment", pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq. and to add same to the West Main Street Redevelopment Area; and

WHEREAS, before an area may be declared in need of redevelopment, it is legally necessary for the adoption of a resolution authorizing the Planning Board of a given municipality to undertake a preliminary study to determine whether the Property meets the criteria for designation as a redevelopment area pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-6; and

WHEREAS, the Borough desires that the Planning Board undertake an examination as to whether the Property, may be deemed "an area in need of redevelopment"; and

WHEREAS, the Borough hereby states that any redevelopment area determination shall authorize the municipality to use all those powers provided by the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law for use in a redevelopment area, except the use of eminent domain (hereinafter referred to as a "Non-Condensation Redevelopment Area"); and

WHEREAS, the notice of any hearing to be conducted by the Planning Board with regards to this Resolution shall specifically state that a Non-Condensation Redevelopment Area determination shall not authorize the municipality to exercise the power of eminent domain to acquire the Property.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Somerville being the governing body thereof, that the Borough Planning Board is hereby directed and authorized to examine whether the properties located at Block 124.01 Lots 2.01, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 14 and Block 130, Lots 1, 2 4 and 5 as shown on the official tax map of the Borough of Somerville, meet the criteria for designation as a non-condemnation "area in need of redevelopment" pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-6,

and in accordance with the investigation and hearing process set forth in N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1, et seq.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Borough hereby states that any Non-Condernation Redevelopment Area determination shall not authorize the municipality to use all those powers provided by the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law for use in a redevelopment area, except the use of eminent domain.

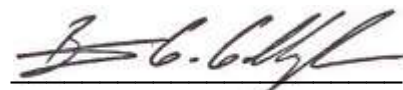
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the notice of any hearing to be conducted by the Planning Board with regard to this Resolution shall specifically state that a Non-Condernation Redevelopment Area determination shall not authorize the municipality to exercise the power of eminent domain to acquire any property in the delineated area.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Planning Board shall submits its findings and recommendations to the Borough Council in a form of a Resolution with supportive documentation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Borough Clerk is hereby directed to forward a certified copy of this Resolution to the Planning Board and Planning Board Secretary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall take effect immediately and be forwarded to the Planning Board.

Adopted by Borough Council on July 7, 2025




Mayor



Clerk/Administrator

I, Kevin Sluka, Borough Clerk of the Borough of Somerville, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, hereby certify this to be a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Borough Council on July 7, 2025.



Kevin Sluka, Clerk/Administrator

