

16.0 DEFINITIONS

1-100

100% Affordable Building

Any building that is deed restricted so that all dwelling units are rented or sold to households with incomes at or below one hundred and twenty percent (120%) of the Median Family Income for the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH HUD Metro FMR Area.

A

Abut or Abutting

To physically touch or share a contiguous boundary or border, such as a common lot line, or to be separated only by an alley or shared driveway.

Access

The way or means to enter and leave.

Accessory Structure

Any structure designed, arranged, used, or occupied per the provisions of [Article 6.B](#).

Accessory Use

A use(s) of a lot, structure or portion thereof that is incidental and related to a principal building or use of land and located on the same lot as the principal building or use of land.

Affordable Dwelling Unit

A dwelling unit sold or rented at a price affordable to a specific income. Affordable dwelling unit is abbreviated as ADU. (See Article 13)

Agricultural

A use principally engaged in raising, harvesting and storing crops; feeding or managing livestock; or producing plants, trees, fowl, and other animals for ultimate disposition in the form of a product for human use.

Agriculture, Urban

An umbrella term that describes a range of food growing practices that may include apiculture (bee keeping) and /or aviculture (raising chickens), but does not include raising other kinds of livestock.

Albedo

The amount of solar radiation reflected by a surface.

Allee

Objects placed in a straight line.

Alley

A thoroughfare, located internal to a block and providing access to the rear of buildings, loading facilities, service areas, trash storage, motor vehicle parking, and usually containing easements for dry utilities.

Amenity Space

A feature of a lot or building that provides outdoor social, recreational, and/or leisure space for the comfort and/or convenience of the residents of a building.

Amenity Space, Private

Features of a building and outdoor areas designed for the comfort and convenience of residents.

Amenity Space, Shared

Rooms and facilities designed for the comfort and convenience of residents of a multi-unit building.

Ancillary

Providing necessary support for the operation of a principal use.

Antenna

Equipment for wireless communication, including but not limited to panel antennas, whip antennas, and satellite dishes that may be freestanding, mounted inside a structure (such as a steeple, belfry, cupola, or other tower or rooftop element), or side-mounted to the face of a building, penthouse, smokestack, or chimney, to conceal its presence and reduce its visual impact.

Applicant

A person or entity who has submitted a development review application under applicable provisions of this Ordinance; a petitioner in accordance with M.G.L. 40A. The legal or beneficial owner(s) of a lot or land included in a proposed development, including the holder of an option or contract to purchase, or any other person having an enforceable proprietary interest in such land.

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Aquaculture	The farming of aquatic organisms such as fish, crustaceans, molluscs, and aquatic plants.
Aquaponics	The production of food using conventional aquaculture with hydroponics in a symbiotic environment.
Arbor	A structure with an open frame, freestanding or attached to another structure, with horizontal or vertical latticework often used as a support for ornamental vines and/or climbing plants.
Arts Center	A multi-purpose facility dedicated to the expansion and practice of the arts by providing recourses such as theatre space, gallery space, musical performance venues, workshop areas, educational facilities, or access to equipment to members of the community.
Assembly Square Plan	The following documents, as amended, constitute the Assembly Square Plan: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Assembly Square Planning Study: A Vision and Implementation Plan for the Future, prepared for the Somerville Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD), dated October 2000;2. Assembly Square Revitalization Plan: 2002 Major Plan Change, prepared by the Somerville OHCD, dated May 2002;3. Assembly Square: Design Guidelines for the Public Realm, prepared for the Somerville OHCD, dated March 2002;4. Assembly Square Transportation Plan (ASTP), prepared for the Somerville OHCD in conjunction with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Highway Department and the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction, dated May 2003.
Automatic Sprinkler System	As defined by the MA State Building Code.
Average Daily Trips	The number of vehicles passing a point on a traffic way during a 24-hour period, usually calculated as the average of two (2) or more measured days of traffic. Average daily trips is abbreviated as ADT.
Average Grade	The mean (average) of the finished ground level of a civic space at the corners of the lot.
Average Ground Level	The mean (average) of the finished ground level next to a building at the exterior walls.
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B	
Basement	Any story, in whole or in part, below the ground story of a building.
Bay, Architectural	An area of a façade between two buttresses, pilasters, columns, piers (flat wall), curtain wall mullions, vertical spandrel glass, or other equivalent architectural features.
Bedroom	A private room for sleeping, however named, planned, intended or used, which is separated and can be closed off from other parts of the dwelling by walls and a door.
Bicycle Parking, Long-Term	Accommodations for the parking of a bicycle for two (2) or more hours.
Bicycle Parking, Short-Term	Accommodations for the parking of a bicycle for two (2) hours or less.
Blank Wall	A portion of any façade of a building that does not include a substantial material change; windows, doors, columns, pilasters or other articulation.

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Block	The aggregate land area circumscribed by thoroughfares or other rights-of-way.
Block Face	The aggregate of all front lot lines, and alleys, if present, on one side of a block.
Boarding House	A residential use that provides four (4) or more rental boarding rooms for four (4) or more unrelated individuals, for occupancy longer than a 14-day period, and which is duly licensed by the Board of Aldermen. A boarding house shall include a lodging house, rooming house, and single room occupancy (SRO) dwelling.
Build-to Line	A maximum, parallel distance recessed from a front lot line where a building façade must be built and established as the maximum front setback.
Building	Any structure, either temporary or permanent, having a roof or other covering, and designed or used for the shelter or enclosure of any person, animal, or property of any kind, including tents, awnings, or vehicles situated on private property and used for purposes of a building.
Building Components	Accessory features that increase the habitable square footage or enhance the usefulness of a building.
Building Line	A line that parallels the lot line and is equivalent to the setback of the yard lines, beyond which a building or other structure, or portion thereof, cannot extend except as otherwise provided in this Ordinance.
Building Official	The Superintendent of Inspectional Services, Senior Building Inspector, Local Building Inspector, Zoning Officer, or other person designated to enforce this Ordinance.
Building Type	A classification or kind of structure characterized and differentiated by its placement on a lot, massing, composition, use, and features.
Building Width	The length (feet) of the Main Body a building measured parallel to the front lot line.
Buttress	A projecting structure of masonry or wood for supporting or giving stability to a wall or building.
By Right (or “As of Right”)	Uses and structures that are permitted in a zoning district.
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C	
Caliper	A measurement of the diameter of a tree trunk. For trees less than four (4) inches in diameter, caliper is measured six (6) inches from the ground. For trees between four (4) inches and twelve (12) inches in diameter, caliper is measured twelve (12) inches from the ground.
Canopy, Entry	A permanent structure or architectural projection of rigid construction over which a covering is attached that provides weather protection, identity or decoration, and shall be structurally independent or supported by attachment to a building on one end and by not less than one stanchion on the outer end.
Canopy Density	The general permeability of a tree canopy to light as a characteristic of branch number and structure. Canopy density can either be full (> 50%) or open (< 50%).
Canopy Shape	The general shape of the outer layer of leaves of an individual tree as structured by the tree’s branches.
Carriage House	A detached outbuilding originally constructed to house horse-drawn vehicles and related equipment, or horses, or used to

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	store grain or shelter animals incorporates a hay loft, second story or half-story, or open interior space under a pitched roof in excess of 15 feet from the floor to the roof peak. The structure must be within a designated contributing building within the Local Historic District in which it is located.
Carport	A roofed structure, unenclosed on two (2) or more sides, used or designed for the off-street parking of motor vehicles.
Cellar	See "Basement."
Change in Use	A change in the use of real property, whether temporary or permanent, from one use subcategory to a different use subcategory as defined by Article 9. Use Provisions.
Chicken	A common domestic chicken (<i>Gallus gallus domesticus</i>).
Civic Space	A lot designed as an outdoor open space to support social and recreational activities. Civic space types are defined by the combination of certain characteristics, including the interrelationship between intended use, size, landscaping, and abutting uses.
Cladding	The exterior material that covers or overlays another material or structure.
Clearance	The height above the sidewalk or other surface, as specified, of the bottom edge of an object or building component.
Close	A one-way thoroughfare surrounding a civic space providing vehicular access to abutting lots.
Commercial	A term collectively defining permitted uses from all non-residential use categories, excluding parking.
Corner Board	Flat vertical exterior casings framing siding or shingles at inside and outside corners.
Cornice	the molded and projecting horizontal member that crowns an architectural composition.
Corridor Building	A residential building consisting of dwelling units arranged on one or both sides of a central hallway.
Cost Burden	When a household pays more than thirty percent (30%) of its income for housing.
Court	An open, uncovered space, unobstructed to the sky, bounded on three or more sides by exterior building walls or other enclosing devices.
Creative Incubator	An organization providing startup and early-stage arts and creative enterprises with shared facilities and often providing business planning, access to finance, mentoring, and other business or administrative support services.
Culinary Incubator	An organization providing start-up catering, retail, and wholesale food businesses with shared kitchen facilities and often providing business planning, access to finance, mentoring, and other business or administrative support services.
Cultivar	A cultivated variety of tree; deliberately selected for its desirable physical characteristics.
Curb Cut	A section of sidewalk curbing removed to facilitate vehicular access to a driveway or vehicular entrance to a structure.
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Deck	A roofless, raised platform accessible from a secondary entrance to a building that provides outdoor amenity space.
Design & Fabrication Center	A facility providing individuals and small firms access to professional manufacturing tools & equipment; classes &

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Desire Line	training; lab, workshop, and studio space; and storage for tools and supplies. A route that pedestrians prefer to take to get from one location to another.
Development	The construction or modification of any building or structure; excavation, land fill, or mining; the establishment of any use or change in use of any structure or land; or any expansion in the use of land.
Development Site	The land area encompassed in a development proposal irrespective of the number or configuration of lots, land ownership, and/or municipal boundaries.
Diameter at Breast Height	A standard measurement of the diameter of a tree trunk of an existing tree measured four and one-half (4.5) feet above ground. Diameter at breast height is abbreviated as DBH.
Driveway Apron	A ramp that slopes down from the edge of the walkway of a sidewalk to the roadway surface of an abutting thoroughfare.
Dwelling Unit	One (1) or more rooms providing separate, independent living space with lawful cooking and sanitary facilities for the exclusive use of the occupants.

E

Easement	A liberty, privilege, or advantage without profit, which a person(s) may have in the lands of another person(s).
Educational Purposes	Those activities related to education and educational purposes which are governed by M.G.L., Chapter 40A, Section 3, and which are further defined in Article 9.
Efficiency	A dwelling unit consisting of not more than one (1) habitable room together with kitchen or kitchenette.
Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment	Conduit, panels, and other equipment that supplies electric energy for the recharging of electric vehicles. Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment is abbreviated EVSE.
Employer	A person or business that employs one (1) or more people for wages or salary.
Encroach	To break the plane of a vertical or horizontal regulatory limit with a structural element, so that it extends into a setback or over the sidewalk of a public right-of-way.
Encroachment	Any structural element that encroaches.
Erect	To construct, reconstruct, excavate, fill, drain, or conduct physical operations of any kind in preparation for or in pursuance of construction or reconstruction, or to move a building or structure upon a lot.

F

Fabrication Laboratory	A high-tech workshop that fosters innovation and invention by providing individuals with access to tools and machinery for “do-it-yourself” (DIY) digital fabrication.
Façade	The exterior wall of a building oriented in whole or in part toward a front lot line, or civic space.
Façade Build-out	The minimum width a façade must be built within a setback area or in relation to a build-to line along the primary frontage.
Fascia	A flat, usually horizontal, member of a building used as molding to cover the joint between the top of a wall and projecting eaves. Also called a fascia board and often used as a signage band over

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Farm/Greenhouse, Community Farm Stand

a storefront.

Urban agriculture or greenhouse operated by a non-profit agency. A temporary structure for the display and sale of clean, whole, unprocessed produce, eggs, or honey cultivated on site.

Farm, Roof

Urban agriculture on a roof of a principal residential or accessory structure.

Fenestration

The openings in the façade of a building, including windows and doors, but excluding entrances for parking, loading, and service facilities.

Floor Area, Gross

The sum area of all stories of a building as measured to the perimeter of the faces of the exterior walls with no deduction for corridors, stairs, closets, thickness of walls, columns or other features.

Floor Area, Leasable Floor Plate

Gross floor area included in a commercial lease.

The total gross floor area of a single story of a building, excluding balconies.

Frontage Area

The area of a lot between the façade of a principal building and any front lot line(s), extending fully to each side lot line(s).

Furniture Area

An area of an amenity space that allows for the placement of furniture without restricting the movement of pedestrians.

G

Generating Site

A building that generates a required amount of floor area dedicated to arts & creative enterprise principal uses, or a required number of affordable dwelling units.

Green Score

An environmental performance-based landscape standard measured as a ratio of the weighted value of all landscape elements to the total land area (in square feet) of a lot. See Section 10.4 Green Score for more information.

Green Space

Areas covered by plant materials, including areas of grass and other organic ground covers; trees, inclusive of the tree pit or planting bed; and areas of bushes, shrubs, vines, flowers, and other horticultural materials, inclusive of the planting bed.

H

Habitable

Spaces in a building for living, sleeping, eating or cooking. Bathrooms, toilet rooms, closets, halls, storage or utility spaces and similar areas are not considered habitable spaces.

Heat Island

The higher average air temperatures of the local micro-climate due to the absorption, retention, and generation of heat by buildings, pavements, and human activities.

Hen

A female domestic chicken.

High-Rise

Any building taller than seventy (70) feet above average ground level.

Honeybee

A common domestic honeybee (*Apis mellifera*).

Hydroculture

The growing of plants in a soilless medium or an aquatic based environment.

Hydroponics

A method of growing plants using a mineral-nutrient solution, without soil.

I

(none)

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J	Junk	Any worn-out, cast-off, or discarded article or material, including two or more unregistered vehicles, which is ready for destruction or has been collected or stored for salvage or conversion to some use. Any article or material which, unaltered or unchanged and without further reconditioning, can be used for its original purpose as readily as when new shall not be deemed to be junk.
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K	(none)	
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L	Lamp	The source of illumination in a lighting fixture.
	Land Conveyance	The transfer of legal title of real property from one person to another.
	Landscape Area	The area of a lot covered by turf and other ground covers; planting beds; permeable, pervious, or porous pavements; and inorganic surfacing such as stone, gravel, and and other similar materials.
	Large Tree	A woody plant with an expected mature height of thirty (30) feet or more.
	Level 2 EVSE	EVSE capable of charging at thirty (30) amperes or higher at 208 or 240 volts AC power.
	Level of Service	A qualitative measure describing operational conditions within a vehicle traffic stream, generally described in terms of such factors as speed and travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, comfort and convenience, and safety. Level of service is abbreviated as LOS.
	Light Source	The lamp and all refractive, reflective, and translucent light transmitting parts of an outdoor light fixture.
	Local Historic District	Real property designated by the Board of Aldermen as historically or architecturally significant in accordance with the Historic Districts Ordinance of the City of Somerville. Local historic district is abbreviated as LHD.
	Lot	A bounded area of land undivided by a public way intended for use, sale, legacy, or development at any time.
	Lot Area	The horizontal measurement of a lot in square feet, exclusive of any area in a private way that is open to public use.
	Lot, Corner	A lot fronting two (2) or more thoroughfares at their intersection.
	Lot Depth	The horizontal distance from the midpoint of the front lot line to the midpoint of the rear lot line of a lot.
	Lot, Flag	A lot in the approximate configuration of a flag pole or sign post, with the pole or post functioning primarily as an access way to the main area of the lot from the thoroughfare providing access.
	Lot, Interior	A lot fronting one thoroughfare and abutting other lots at both sides.
	Lot, Key	A lot with a side lot line abutting the rear lot line of another lot.
	Lot, Landlocked	A lot without frontage.
	Lot, Pork Chop	See Lot, Flag.
	Lot, Through	A lot fronting on two (2) or more thoroughfares, including parallel thoroughfares and thoroughfares that do not intersect at the boundaries of the lot.
	Lot Line	A boundary that legally and geometrically demarcates a lot.
	Lot Line Adjustment	Reconfiguration of the boundary line between two abutting lots,

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	<p>whether they are commonly owned or not, and whether the resulting shift of ground from one parcel to another is minor or substantial.</p>
Lot Line, Front	<p>Any lot line abutting a civic space or thoroughfare, other than an alley.</p>
Lot Line, Party	<p>A side lot line shared between two attached or semi-detached Building Types.</p>
Lot Line, Primary Front	<p>Any front lot line abutting a pedestrian street.</p>
Lot Line, Rear	<p>Any lot line which is parallel to or within forty-five (45) degrees of being parallel to a front lot line, unless that lot line is a side lot line of an abutting lot.</p>
Lot Line, Side	<p>Any lot line other than a front or rear lot line.</p>
Lot Merger	<p>The consolidation of two (2) or more adjacent lots by eliminating the lot line that previously separated them.</p>
Lot Split	<p>The division of a lot into two (2) smaller lots.</p>
Lot Width	<p>The length of the front lot line of a lot.</p>
Lumen	<p>The unit of measure used to quantify the amount of light produced by a lamp or emitted from a luminaire (as distinct from watt, a measure of power consumption).</p>
Luminaire	<p>A light unit or fixture including any bulb(s), tube(s), housing, reflective shield, lens and/or ballast. The complete lighting unit (fixture), consisting of a lamp, or lamps and ballasts, when applicable, together with the parts designed to distribute the light (reflector, lens, diffuser), to position and protect the lamps, and to connect the lamps to the power supply.</p>
Luminaire, Fully Shielded:	<p>A luminaire constructed and installed in such a manner that all light emitted by the luminaire, either directly from the lamp or a diffusing element, or indirectly by reflection or refraction from any part of the luminaire, is projected below the horizontal plane through the luminaire's lowest light emitting part.</p>
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M	
Market Rate Unit	<p>A dwelling unit developed and sold or rented on the open market.</p>
Master Plan	<p>A document providing a basis for decision making regarding the long-term community development of the City of Somerville, as approved by the Planning Board per MGL 41, 81D.</p>
Main Body	<p>The primary massing of a Principal Building Type, excluding building components.</p>
Medical Marijuana Facility	<p>A facility in which a non-profit entity acquires, cultivates, possesses, processes (including development of related products such as edible MIPs, tinctures, aerosols, oils, or ointments), transfers, transports, sells, distributes, dispenses, or administers marijuana, products containing marijuana, related supplies, or educational materials to registered qualifying patients or their personal caregivers. The entity may not sell any products at the facility other than marijuana, marijuana-infused products (MIPs), marijuana seeds, and other products such as vaporizers that facilitate the use of marijuana for medical purposes. The entity may, however, conduct a patient education program in compliance with state regulations.</p>
Mezzanine	<p>An intermediate floor level between the floor and ceiling of a story.</p>
Mobility Management	<p>A broad range of strategies intended to reduce automobile trips. The alteration of travel behavior through a program of</p>

Mobility Management Association	incentives, services, and policies, including encouraging the use of alternatives to single-occupant vehicles such as public transit, cycling, walking, car-pooling/ van-pooling and changes in work schedule that move trips out of the peak period or eliminate them altogether.
Mounting Height	Organizations formed to help individual uses and property owners collectively implement and administer the Mobility Management programs and services.
Mixed-Use	The height of the center of a luminaire above ground level.
Modification	A multi-story building type with ground floor commercial uses and upper story residential with six or more dwelling units.
Monopole	Any alteration, expansion, reconstruction, extension, or structural change to a structure.
Mulch, Ground Cover	A free-standing (or wire-supported) tower for wireless telecommunications facilities.
Mystic River Bank	A protective above-ground dressing consisting of organic, non-recycled wood or bark used for moisture control, weed control, erosion control, temperature control, or other similar purposes.
Mystic River Bank	The portion of land surface abutting and confining the Mystic River, as defined by 310 CMR 10.54.2.C, as amended.

N

Net Zero Building	Any building that 1) has no on-site combustion for heating and cooking (all electric systems) and 2) has an energy use intensity that is at least twenty-five percent (25%) below ASHRAE 90.1 2010, meets the requirements of Zero Carbon Certification or higher from the International Living Future Institute, or achieves PHIUS+ Certification from the Passive House Institute US.
Normal Maintenance	Improvements intended to keep an existing structure in good physical conditions including, but not limited to, painting, roof replacement, re-siding, window replacement, and other improvements that are deemed to be cosmetic or de minimus in nature by the Building Official.
Nonconformity	As defined by Article 14.
North-Facing	Within 45 degrees of due north.
Nuisance	That activity which arises from unreasonable, unwarranted, or unlawful use by a person of their own property, which creates an obstruction or injury to the rights of another, or to the public, or which produces annoyance, inconvenience, disruption of work, and/or discomfort to an individual or the public.

O

Off-Site	Not on or within the area specified in any application under the terms of this Ordinance or not within other areas which, pursuant to this Ordinance, may be included in defining a site's purpose and boundaries.
Open Space	Land area accessible to and designed for public use or gathering.
Open Space, Usable	Open space accessible to and designed for use by the public and limited to use as landscaped area and/or non-profit recreational uses. Landscaping, plazas, sidewalks, decks, arcades and loggias, landscaped boulevard medians of minimum fifteen (15) feet width, swimming pool, basketball and tennis courts and other sports facilities, boat launches, and similar uses, all of which are

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open to public use and, whether dedicated to such public use in fee or by easement, deed restriction, covenant or comparable legal instrument enforceable by the City of Somerville or other public entity, shall constitute usable open space for purposes of this Ordinance. Usable open space shall exclude all enclosed interior space, unless such space is associated with and integral to an accepted recreational use. (Also see "Landscaping"; "Landscaped Area (Minimum)"; and "Open Space"; and refer to Article 11, Public Realm, for additional definitions and information).

Outdoor Cafe Seating	Outdoor seating located in a frontage or on a public sidewalk that is provided with table service.
Outdoor Display	The outdoor exhibition or presentation of products and merchandise available for sale.
Outdoor Light Fixture	Outdoor artificial illuminating devices, outdoor fixtures, lamps, and other devices, permanent or portable, used for illumination or advertisement.
Outdoor Storage	The storage of merchandise or material in boxes, in crates, on pallets or other kinds of shipping containers, garden supplies, building supplies, plants, vehicles, and other similar equipment, inventory, materials, merchandise, or supplies not normally brought indoors overnight.
Overlay Districts	Zoning districts which modify or replace the provisions of one (1) or more underlying districts.
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P	
Parcel	An area of land.
Parking Lot	An uncovered area used or designed for the off-street parking of seven (7) or more motor vehicles.
Parking, Shared	A parking facility that serves multiple destinations.
Parking Space, Off-street	A storage area, meeting the requirements of Article 12, located in a parking lot or driveway, for one (1) automobile, van, light truck, or other similar vehicle.
Parking Space, On-street	A storage area located within the street right-of-way, for one (1) parked automobile, van, light truck, or other similar vehicle.
Parking Structure	Any structure used or designed for the off-street parking of motor vehicles, excluding an accessory garage and carport.
Parking, Tandem	The parking of two (2) motor vehicles, one directly behind the other.
Parties in Interest	As defined by MGL 40A Section 11.
Patio	A hard-surfaced amenity space having no permanent roof coverings, usually directly adjacent to a building, and constructed such that its finished walking surface is laid or poured directly on finished grade.
Paver	A masonry block of various material or size.
Peak Hour Traffic	The number of vehicles passing a point on a traffic way during the highest volume hour of the day.
Pedestrian Street	Any thoroughfare designated as a pedestrian street on the Pedestrian Streets Map of the Somerville Zoning Atlas.
Pervious Area	The area of a lot covered by mulch, vegetation, and permeable, pervious, or porous paving or materials that reduce or eliminate the amount or rate of storm water runoff directed into the sewer or storm system.
Pier	A section of a wall between windows or other adjacent openings.

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Pilaster	An upright rectangular architectural member that is structurally a pier, but architecturally treated as a column, and usually projects a third of its width or less from the wall.
Planter	A three (3) foot deep recessed soil bed provided for the planting of trees and kept open to air and water flow through the use of landscaping or permeable or pervious pavers.
Planting Bed	A soil area planted with grass and other ground covers, trees, bushes, shrubs, vines, flowers, and other horticultural materials with the remaining area covered by mulch.
Podium	The lower portion(s) of certain high-rise buildings, limited in height and designed to minimize the impact of wind flows redirected by adjoining towers and to spatially define the public realm of nearby thoroughfares, private-owned public spaces, and civic spaces.
Point Tower	The upper stories of a high-rise building, composed of apartments surrounding a central elevator core.
Principal Building	A building or structure designed, used, or occupied for the principal use(s) of a given lot or site.
Principal Entrance	The main point of access for pedestrians into a building, upper story use, or ground floor tenant space.
Principal Structure	See "Principal Building."
Principal Use	The main or primary purpose for which a structure, building, or lot is designed, arranged, licensed or intended.
Private Frontage	The area of a lot between the façade of a principal building and the primary front lot line, extending fully to each side lot line and including all built and landscape components.
Property Owner	An owner of land as identified on the most recent tax list maintained by the Assessor's Office of the City of Somerville.
Public Realm	The urban environment visible and accessible to the public, inclusive of both spaces and the building walls that frame them.
Public Way	Any street, alley or other parcel of land open to the outside air leading to a public street, deeded, dedicated or otherwise permanently appropriated to the public for public use (or a private way intended or used for or by the public) which has a clear width and height for emergency access.

Q (none)

R	Rail Right-of-Way	The way for any rail service, including, but not limited to, the rail tracks, guideways, overhead power lines, and shoulder.
	Receiving Site	Any lot or building that provides off-site compliance for arts & creative enterprise space and/or affordable housing requirements of a generating site.
	Retaining Wall	A structure designed to resist the lateral displacement of soil or other materials in order to protect property or prevent erosion.
	Ribbon Driveway	A driveway with two parallel strips of concrete, mortar-set stone or brick, or solid or turf pavers with an open, unpaved space in between.
	Roof Line	The highest point on any building or structure where an exterior wall or parapet wall encloses roof or floor area, including floor area provided for housing mechanical equipment.
	Roof, Flat	A roof with no slope greater than 2:12.

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Roof, Gable	A roof sloped on two sides from a central ridge with an exterior wall (gable) enclosing each end.
Roof, Gambrel	A compound, gabled roof with two slopes on each of its sides, where the lower has a steeper slope or pitch than the upper, inclusive of English, Dutch, and Jerkin Head gambrel roofs.
Roof, Hip	A roof with four uniformly pitched or sloping sides, inclusive of kicked hip (witch's hat) and Hawaiian hip roofs.
Roof, Mansard	A compound, four sided roof where each side has two slopes, where the lower has a very steep, almost vertical, slope or pitch, dormer windows, and eaves extending with a radius or kick, rather than a flat projection.
Rooming House Rooming Unit	See "Boarding House." One (1) or more rooms providing separate, independent living facilities for use by one (1) or two (2) human beings living together as a single household without both lawful cooking and sanitary facilities for the exclusive use of the occupants inside the rooming unit.

S	Sand-Bases Structural Soil System	A soil system of open graded crushed stone over Sand-Bases Structural Soil.
	Setback	A horizontal distance from a particular lot line to the location of structures or uses of a lot that is maintained clear and is measured perpendicularly from the lot line.
	Shrub	A multi-stemmed, woody plant with a five-gallon container size when planted.
	Sign	Any permanent or temporary name, identification, description, emblem, logo, structure, or device, that is illuminated or non-illuminated; visible or intended to be visible from any public place; and directs attention to a person, product, place, activity, institution, business, organization, activity, or service including any letter, numeral, character, figure, emblem, painting, illustration, banner, pennant, placard, or temporary sign designed to advertise, identify, solicit, or convey information. Signs include devices designed to attract the eye by intermittent or repeated motion and any permanently installed or situated merchandise, including any banner, pennant, placard, or temporary sign, with the exception of window displays. Flags of the United States and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are not signs.
	Sign Band	The area of a storefront intended for the placement of a wall sign.
	Site	A lot or parcel and the improvements thereon.
	Slope	The ratio of vertical to horizontal distance.
	Small Tree	A woody plant with an expected mature height of less than thirty (30) feet.
	Soil Volume	An amount of soil provided for a tree, calculated as the horizontal area of open or covered soil multiplied by three (3) feet of depth.
	Step-back	The recess of an upper story façade a set distance behind the façade of the story below.
	Stallriser	A section of wall below a storefront display window.
	Story	The portion of a building located between the surface of a habitable floor and the surface of the habitable floor or roof next above.
	Story, Ground	The lowest story of a building with a finished floor at or above the finished ground level next to a building at the facade.

Story, Upper Street	Any story above the ground story of a building.
Street Tree	A thoroughfare, avenue, road, highway, boulevard, parkway, driveway, lane, court or private easement for use by vehicular and pedestrian traffic and providing access to lots and civic spaces.
Structure	A tree planted within the furnishing zone as a element of a thoroughfare.
Solar Reflectance	Any constructed, erected or placed material or combination of materials in or upon the ground, including, but not by way of limitation, buildings, mobile units, radio towers, sheds, signs, storage bins and swimming pools, but excluding sidewalks and paving on streets, driveways, parking areas, and patios.
Solar Reflectance Index	A measure of how strongly an object reflects sunlight. Solar reflectance is measured on a scale of 0 to 1: from not reflective (0) to 100% reflective (1.0).
Structured Parking	A combined measure of how well a surface reflects (reflectance) and releases absorbed solar radiation (emittance). Solar reflectance index is measured on a scale of 0 to 100: where a standard black surface (reflectance 0.05, emittance 0.90) is zero (0) and a standard white surface (reflectance 0.80, emittance 0.90) is one hundred (100). Solar reflectance index is abbreviated as SRI.
Structural Cells	Motor vehicle parking spaces located within a building, whether above-ground or underground.
Subdivision	A subsurface system that supports the weight of sidewalks and other paved surfaces and is filled with uncompacted soil.
Surface Parking	The division of a lot, tract, or parcel of land into two (2) or more lots, building sites, or other divisions for the purpose of sale, legacy, or development at any time, where a new thoroughfare or way is needed to provide access to the lots which would otherwise be landlocked.
Suspended Pavement	Motor vehicle parking spaces provided at ground level, whether in a driveway, a parking lot, under a carport, or sheltered by overhanging upper stories of a building.
Terminated Vista Thoroughfare	Pavement slabs spanning supports that allow soil under sidewalks and other paved surfaces to remain uncompacted.
Tower	A location at the axial conclusion of a thoroughfare.
Transit Area	A public or private way for use by vehicular and pedestrian traffic and providing access to lots and civic spaces.
Transit Station	Any portion of a high-rise building above seventy (70) feet.
Transom	All lots within one-quarter (1/4) mile of a transit station for commercial uses and all lots within one-half (1/2) mile of a transit station for residential uses.
Tree Guard	Any existing or planned station of the MBTA's light rail and heavy rail rapid transit lines within the City of Somerville.
Tree Pit	A horizontal crossbar in a window, over a door, or between a door and a window or fanlight above it.
Trip Reduction	A metal fence installed around the perimeter of a tree pit to protect a street tree.
	A three (3) foot deep pit filled with soil for the planting and growth of a tree. Tree pits have surface area open to air and water flow.
	Reducing in the number of work-related trips made by single-

T

16. DEFINITIONS

U	Upper Story Setback	occupant vehicles.
	Urban Agriculture Use	The horizontal distance that a designated portion of a building is set back from a lot line. See "Agriculture, Urban"
	Use, Accessory	The purpose or activity for which land or structures thereon is designed, arranged or intended to be occupied or used, or for which it is occupied, maintained, rented, or leased.
	Use, Principal	See Accessory Use. See Principal Use.

V	Visible Light Reflectance (VLR)	The percent of total visible light that is reflected by a glazing system. The lower the number, the less visible light reflected.
	Visible Light Transmittance (VLT)	The percent of total visible light that is transmitted through a glazing system. The lower the number, the less visible light transmitted.

W	Waiver	A predetermined type of deviation, within specific limitations, from the block, lot, and/or thoroughfare provisions for of a specific district in this Ordinance.
	Wireless Communications	The provision of the following types of services: cellular telephone service; personal communications; and extended specialized mobile radio service. Such essential services will be provided via wireless communications facilities, which shall include monopoles, rooftop antennas, satellite dishes, and cell sites.
	Wireless Communications Antenna	An antenna, dish, or cell site attached to a wireless communications tower, principal building, or other accessory structure that is used to transmit or receive wireless communications signals.
	Wireless Communications Tower	A structure or structures intended to support equipment that is used to transmit and/or receive wireless communications signals including towers, monopoles, cell sites, and other guyed and lattice construction steel structures that are freestanding and not attached to an principal building type or accessory structure.

X	(none)	
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Y	Yard	A landscaped amenity space, other than a court, open and unobstructed from the ground to the sky, on the same lot as a building.
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Z	(none)	
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