

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
ORDINANCE NO. 2020-27  
In City Council December 10, 2020**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE SOMERVILLE ZONING ORDINANCE  
TO CREATE AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING OVERLAY DISTRICT**

Be it hereby Ordained by the City Council of the City of Somerville that the City of Somerville Code of Zoning Ordinances is hereby amended as attached.

Approved:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
President, City Council

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

# Proposed Amendments to the SZO related to Affordable Housing

Text to be removed is ~~crossed-out~~ and new text is underlined.

#	Page	Article	Subsection	Change
1	385	8. Overlay Districts	8.1 Affordable Housing	See attachment. Insert new Section 8.1 Affordable Housing into Article 8 and renumber existing Sections accordingly.
2	9	2. Glossary & Overview	§2.1 Glossary	<del><b>100% Affordable Housing</b> — 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.</del>
2	9	2. Glossary & Overview	§2.1 Glossary	<b>Affordable Dwelling Unit</b> A dwelling unit sold, leased, or rented at a price affordable to a specific household income <u>specified by this Ordinance or other Federal, State, or local affordable housing program</u> . Affordable dwelling unit is abbreviated as ADU. (See Article 12)
3	32	2. Glossary & Overview	§2.4.5.b.vii.a.i	i). The GFA/DU permitted for each BUILDING TYPE is different for buildings on different sized lots <u>and</u> NET ZERO READY BUILDINGS, <del>and 100% affordable housing.</del>

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4	75	3.2 Urban Residence (UR)	§3.2.3.e	e. To permit increased residential density for apartment buildings meeting the definition of a NET ZERO READY BUILDING or 100% affordable housing.														
5	91	3.2 Urban Residence (UR)	§3.2.10 Apartment Building	<table><tr><th colspan="2">Use &amp; Occupancy</th></tr><tr><td>GROSS FLOOR AREA per D'U (min)</td><td>—</td></tr><tr><td>LOT AREA &lt; 5,000 sf</td><td>1,500</td></tr><tr><td>LOT AREA &gt;= 5,000 sf</td><td>1,125</td></tr><tr><td>100% Affordable Housing</td><td>875</td></tr><tr><td>NET ZERO READY BUILDING</td><td>875</td></tr><tr><td>Outdoor AMENITY SPACE (min)</td><td>1/DU</td></tr></table>	Use & Occupancy		GROSS FLOOR AREA per D'U (min)	—	LOT AREA < 5,000 sf	1,500	LOT AREA >= 5,000 sf	1,125	100% Affordable Housing	875	NET ZERO READY BUILDING	875	Outdoor AMENITY SPACE (min)	1/DU
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6	112	4.1 Mid-Rise 3 (MR3)	§4.1.3.e	e. To permit increased residential density for apartment buildings meeting the definition of a NET ZERO READY BUILDING or 100% affordable housing.														
7	115	4.1 Mid-Rise 3 (MR3)	§4.1.7 Apartment Building	<table><tr><th colspan="2">Use &amp; Occupancy</th></tr><tr><td>GROSS FLOOR AREA per DU</td><td>—</td></tr><tr><td>LOT AREA &lt; 5,000 sf</td><td>1,500</td></tr><tr><td>LOT AREA &gt;= 5,000 sf</td><td>1,125</td></tr><tr><td>NET ZERO READY BUILDING</td><td>850</td></tr><tr><td>100% Affordable Housing</td><td>850</td></tr><tr><td>Outdoor AMENITY SPACE (min)</td><td>1/DU</td></tr></table>	Use & Occupancy		GROSS FLOOR AREA per DU	—	LOT AREA < 5,000 sf	1,500	LOT AREA >= 5,000 sf	1,125	NET ZERO READY BUILDING	850	100% Affordable Housing	850	Outdoor AMENITY SPACE (min)	1/DU
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21	489	2. Development Benefits	\$12.1.2.d	d. <del>100% affordable housing buildings are exempt.</del>																		



## 8.1 AFFORDABLE HOUSING (AH)

### 1. Intent

- a. To implement recommendations of SomerVision for affordable housing.
- b. To increase the supply of AFFORDABLE DWELLING UNITS in the City of Somerville.

### 2. Purpose

- a. To permit the development of buildings that provide all dwelling units as AFFORDABLE DWELLING UNITS.
- b. To permit additional residential use intensity, additional building height, and additional tolerance for dimensional standards to incentivize the development of AFFORDABLE DWELLING UNITS.

### 3. Applicability

- a. This Section is applicable to real property located in the Residential Districts (Article 3) and Mid-Rise Districts (Article 4), as specified for each zoning district.
- b. The provisions of this Section supplement or supersede the provisions of the districts upon which it is superimposed.
- c. Development may choose to comply with all of the applicable provisions of this Section in lieu of complying with those same provisions of the underlying zoning district.
- d. Where the provisions of this Section conflict with those found elsewhere in this Ordinance, the provisions of this Section apply.
- e. Development subject to this Section is exempt from Section 12.1 Affordable Housing.

### 4. Neighborhood Residence

- a. Building Types
  - i. The following building types are permitted by right:
    - a). Cottage (§3.1.7)
    - b). Detached House (§3.1.8)
    - c). Semi-Detached House (§3.1.9)
    - d). Duplex (§3.1.10)
    - e). Detached Triple Decker (§3.1.11)
    - f). Backyard Cottage (§3.1.12)
  - ii. Within the 1/2 Mile Transit Area, the following additional building types are permitted by right:
    - a). Semi-Detached Triple Decker (§3.2.8)
    - b). Multi-Plex (§3.2.8)
    - c). Apartment House (§3.2.9)
    - d). Rowhouses (§3.2.11)
- b. Dimensional Compliance
  - i. Development may deviate by up to five percent (5%) from any maximum lot coverage, minimum green score, minimum open space, front and side building setbacks, minimum facade build out, and maximum floor plate specified for each building

type elsewhere in this Ordinance.

### c. Use Provisions

- i. Development is exempt from any maximum number of dwelling units and maximum number of dwelling units per lot specified elsewhere in this Ordinance.
- ii. All dwelling units must be AFFORDABLE DWELLING UNITS.

### 5. Urban Residence

#### a. Building Type

- i. The maximum number of stories permitted for each building type is specified on Table 8.1.5.

**Table 8.1.5**

	Semi-Detached Triple Decker	Multi-Plex	Apartment House	Apartment Building	Row houses
Number of Stories (max)	4	4	4	4	4

### b. Dimensional Compliance

- i. Development of any building type permitted by this Section may deviate by up to five percent (5%) from any maximum lot coverage, minimum green score, minimum open space, front and side building setbacks, minimum facade build out, and maximum floor plate specified for each building type elsewhere in this Ordinance.

### c. Use Provisions

- i. Development is exempt from any maximum number of dwelling units, maximum number of dwelling units per lot, and minimum gross floor area per dwelling unit specified elsewhere in this Ordinance.
- ii. All dwelling units must be AFFORDABLE DWELLING UNITS.

### 6. Mid-Rise Districts

#### a. Building Types

- i. The following building types are permitted by right:
  - a). Apartment Building
  - b). General Building
- ii. ~~The maximum number of stories and the maximum building height permitted for each building type is specified on Table 8.1.6. The~~

# 8. OVERLAY DISTRICTS **ATTACHMENT**

Affordable Housing (AH)

standards of Table 8.1.6 supersede or supplement the dimensional standards for the specified building types permitted by the underlying zoning district.

- b. Dimensional Compliance
  - i. Development of any Apartment Building or General Building may deviate by up to five percent (5%) from the numeric value of the following dimensional standards of the underlying zoning district:
    - a). Lot coverage (max)
    - b). Green score (min)
    - c). Open space (min)
    - d). Front building setbacks (min & max)
    - e). Side building setbacks for lots abutting any non-NR or LHD lot (min)
    - f). Facade build outs (min)
    - g). Floor plate (max)
- c. Use Provisions
  - i. Uses from the following principal use categories are permitted by right:
    - a). Household Living
  - ii. Development is exempt from any minimum gross floor area per dwelling unit specified elsewhere in this Ordinance.
  - iii. The use of any upper story of a general building is limited to the following principal use categories and specific uses:
    - a). Community Center
    - b). Library
    - c). Public Service
    - d). Religious & Educational Uses Protected by M.G.L. 40A. Sec. 3
    - e). Day Care Services
    - f). Health Care Services
    - g). Household Living
    - h). Group Living
  - iv. At least forty percent (40%) of the gross floor area of any general building must be occupied by uses from the Residential principal use categories.
  - v. All dwelling units must be AFFORDABLE DWELLING UNITS.
- d. Parking & Mobility
  - i. Development may deviate by up to five percent (5%) from the minimum number of bicycle parking spaces required per dwelling unit.

**Table 8.1.6 Dimensional Standards**

	Apartment Building	General Building
<b>Building Setbacks</b>		
<u>Side Setback (min)</u>	=	=
4th - 7th Story abutting NR or LHD	30 ft	30 ft
<u>Rear Setback (min)</u>	=	=
4th - 7th Story abutting NR or LHD	30 ft	30 ft
<b>Main Massing</b>		
Number of Stories (max)	-	-
Mid-Rise 3 abutting NR	4	4
All other MR3-MR6 lots	7	7
<u>Step-Back, 5th - 7th Story (min)</u>	10 ft	10 ft
Building Height, Feet (max)	-	-
Mid-Rise 3 abutting NR	50 ft	52 ft
All other MR3-MR6 lots	86 ft	88 ft