



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

April 24, 2012

REPORT OF THE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Tony Lafuente	Chair	Present	
Rebekah Gewirtz	Vice Chair	Present	
Dennis M. Sullivan	Alderman At Large	Present	
John M Connolly	Alderman At Large	Present	
Bruce M. Desmond	Alderman At Large	Present	
Sean T. O'Donovan	Ward Five Alderman	Present	
Thomas F. Taylor	Ward Three Alderman	Present	
Omar Boukili	Administrative Assistant	Present	
Michael Glavin	Exec. Director, OSPCD	Present	
George Proakis	OSPCD - Planning	Present	
Dana LeWinter	OSPCD - Housing	Present	
Stan Koty	Commissioner of Public Works	Present	
Hayes Morrison	OSPCD - Transportation & Infrastructure	Present	

189727 - That the Director of SPCD Report in Writing to the Committee on Housing and Community Development on the Results of the Meeting with the Magoun Square Business Owners and the Ward Five Alderman, to Discuss Parking and Other Issues Affecting the Decline in Business in Magoun Square.:

Mr. Glavin reported on the meeting and told the members that much of the discussion focused on parking issues in the square. The concerns of the business owners will be reviewed with the Traffic and Parking Department to determine what may be done to alleviate the situation. A follow-up meeting will be held with all concerned parties. Alderman O'Donovan asked that the committee invite the Traffic and Parking Director to its next meeting.

Chairman Lafuente's motion that the Administration and the Director of Traffic and Parking consider using parking ticket and meter fine receipts for the economic development of Magoun Square, was approved.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

190783 - Requesting that this Board accept this report on the update to the Comprehensive Plan and provide comments on it to SPCD staff.:

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

190955 - That the Director of SPCD, in conjunction with the manager of the Union Square Post Office, update the Ward 3 and Ward 2 Aldermen on the pending sale and relocation of the Union Square Post Office.:

Mr. Glavin reported that he asked to be kept apprised of the Postal Service's plans for this building. Should the Postal Service decide to sell the building as surplus property, the city might be interested in purchasing and disposing of it as a means of having some leverage on future development of the site.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

191456 - That the Library Director create a plan within the scope of the current budget to make the West Branch Library accessible for at least part of a weekend day.:

Mr. Boukili reported that because of budget and collective bargaining constraints, the plan would not be presented until the FY-13 budget deliberations.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

191925 - That the Director of SPCD arrange a meeting with the Union Square business community to discuss the proposed Union Square roadway/streetscape improvement design plan.:

The committee was informed that the contract for the design has expired and that OSPD would like to arrange a meeting to possibly get it up and running again.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

191926 - That the Director of SPCD provide this Board with an analysis of the recommendations of the MIT Peer Review Study and the Howard/Stein-Hudson Study for Union Square.:

MIT has recommended some changes to make the plan more pedestrian friendly and Mr. Glavin suggested that, henceforth, this item be discussed in conjunction with item 191925, (above).

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

192369 - That the Director of SPCD notify the Committee on Housing and Community Development of the impact of cuts to the Housing Dept. budget.:

Ms. LeWinter stated that entitlement funding has been cut back, nationally, and that Somerville would be experiencing a funding reduction of 44%. The city will have approximately \$470,000 to use towards its housing programs and OSPCD will shift other available funds, when possible, to continue its programs.

RESULT:**WORK COMPLETED****192479 - That this Board's Committee on Housing and Community Development meet with the Director of SPCD and the Director of Housing to develop an appropriate Senior Housing Ordinance.:**

Ms. LeWinter stated that a study was performed to determine the needs of the city's senior citizen population. A consultant has been hired to examine zoning changes that might be needed to effectuate the proposed ordinance. The goal is to look at different types of housing, assisted living and nursing residences and to incorporate the best practices among them.

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE****192480 - That the Director of SPCD update this Board on initiatives to rectify the lack of economic growth in Magoun Square.:****RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED****192483 - That the Commissioner of Public Works provide an update on the Somerville Avenue reconstruction project and the City's acceptance of it, including the restrictions the City is under regarding traffic, parking and streetscape changes because the project is incomplete and still under State jurisdiction.:**

Mr. Koty informed the members that there are problems with the traffic signals at Park Street and Somerville Avenue due to some parts wearing out and that there is a major sinkhole at Central Street and Somerville Avenue.

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE****192484 - That the Director of SPCD provide this Board with the status of the lots on South Street and plans for an alternate location for an off leash dog park in Ward 2.:**

The DPW is using the larger of the lots at the present time. There is \$6,000 available for the design of a dog park, however a designer has yet to be selected.

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

192485 - That the Director of SPCD update this Board on planned bridge repairs by Mass DOT and plans for alerting the public, diverting traffic and providing assistance for access to affected businesses.:

Ms. Morrison told the members that the following bridges are scheduled for repairs over the next couple of years:

Cross Street, Medford Street, McCarthy Overpass, Gilmore Overpass and Washington Street. The DPW, OSPCD and Traffic and Parking will do everything possible to minimize the disruption of traffic during the repairs.

RESULT:**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**