



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

October 27, 2016

REPORT OF THE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Mark Niedergang	Chair	Present	
Tony Lafuente	Vice Chair	Absent	
Katjana Ballantyne	Ward Seven Alderman	Present	

Others present: Michael Glavin - OSPCD, George Proakis - OSPCD, Melissa Woods - OSPCD, Tim Snyder - Mayor's Office, Annie Connor - Legislative Liason, Rositha Durham - Clerk of Committees.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:30 PM by Alderman Niedergang and adjourned at 8:05 PM.

Approval of the September 19, 2016 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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196221: That the Director of SPCD provide SomerVision updates twice a year, broken down by ward, showing progress made in residential, affordable units, jobs, public space, trips via transit, bike and walking, and development in transformative areas.

Mr. Proakis and Ms. Woods addressed this item and distributed a draft SomerVision Progress Report. Mr. Proakis would like to complete the historic information by January. Alderman Ballantyne asked for clarification between historic and actual data on the report, since all of the data appears to be actual.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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196368: That the Director of SPCD submit a plan on the use of city owned properties as it relates to projected growth identified in the SomerVision Plan.

Mr. Snyder stated this item is actually with Capital Projects and is going through a process to determine the space needs of the city. Mr. Glavin said that OSPCD and Capital Projects are working together on the city's needs and uses to find opportunities for development.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

202148: That the Director of SPCD and the Administration discuss pre-planning and planning processes and requirements for private developers and city infrastructure projects, identifying differences and similarities.

Alderman Ballantyne spoke about an example of the West Branch Library where the community did not receive any leaflets alerting them of the zoning plan. She said the city should use the same process that is expected of developers, even if the property is owned by the city. There was a discussion on putting policy and procedures in place and reaching out to community members and including direct abutters.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

201837: That the Director SPCD report to this Board on the process to notify the public of late changes to Zoning Board of Appeals agendas including the agenda posted on the city's website.

Mr. Proakis said that he had a prior conversation with Alderman Davis on this matter. OSPCD staff will try their best to get developers to the ZBA and in front of the community to explain the reasons for changes. It was noted that any interested party could call the Planning Board the Monday or Tuesday before the Wednesday Board meeting to find out if a project is moving forward.

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

201772: That the Administration provide this Board with an update on the Winter Hill Star Market site and the associated lawsuit.

Mr. Snyder and Mr. Proakis provided an update on the lawsuit, informing the members that a portion of the case is back in Land Court. There will be a status conference in the future. There was a discussion about a neighborhood plan that includes an urban revitalization strategy. Mr. Glavin stated that Mr. Proakis is working with students from MIT on a project for this property.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

202190: That the Administration work with this Board's Committee on Housing and Community Development to respond to the Tufts Residential Strategy Working Group's recommendation to convert nonresidential buildings to residential uses.

Representatives from Tufts were unable to attend this meeting. Mr. Snyder talked about the Institutional Master Plan and how important it is to the City of Somerville, adding that Tufts is encouraged to develop a master plan that includes dorms. Chairman Niedergang believes there is a need for more housing for undergraduates. Alderman Ballantyne stated that last year, she requested that the Mayor's office provide information about Tufts housing and found out that

they have housing in wards 4, 5, 6 and 7. Alderman Ballantyne would like a pre-planning community discussion with Tufts.

Residents James Monagle spoke about the university zoning of 30 years ago and said that there should be an enrollment cap for Tufts. He noted that 30 years ago, there were 4,000 students at Tufts and now there are 5,200. Resident James Bossi spoke about the housing issue in the city and said that Tufts has purchased properties, for student housing, that are not adjacent to Tufts. Resident Edward Beuchert spoke about the housing issue and read an article from the president of Tufts from 1988. Mr. Beuchert pointed out that Tufts continues to increase the student enrollment without increasing housing. He suggested reading the Tufts Daily for additional information about the institution.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

202257: Tufts submitting comments responding to Agenda Items 24 (#202190) and 25 (#202191) re: converting nonresidential buildings to residential uses.

Mr. Proakis spoke about the benefits of having an Institutional Master Plan, very similar to that of the City of Boston. Mr. Snyder spoke about the concerns with Tufts and the importance of working of together. Mr. Snyder believes the city should give Tufts a chance to inform the city about where they are with the Institutional Master Plan. One resident suggested that the city go through the university accountability report to cross check the number of persons living in the apartments. He gave an example of a student who no longer lives at a particular address, and who is the owner of the property, who is still claiming residential status even though other students are living in the house.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

200771: That the Administration provide this Board with an opinion relating to housing compliance, following the review of each University Spring Accountability Report, as recently submitted.

Chairman Niedergang would like ISD to look at the fall 2016 reports and provide an analysis. Mr. Snyder will follow up on this request to determine when this analysis can be done. Chairman Niedergang would also like Tufts to provide the same information as Harvard does and he would like the reports coming from all of the institutions to be standardized.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

200840: Tufts University submitting its Spring 2016 University Accountability report.

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

201086: Harvard University submitting its Spring 2016 University Accountability report.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200514: That the Director of SPCD inform this Board of a timeline and communication plan for the Union Square roadway and streetscape reconstruction, inclusive of changes to Webster Avenue and Prospect Street.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200515: That the Director of SPCD update this Board on the impending reconstruction of Beacon Street, including the contractor, staging, residential communication, and design changes.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201420: That the Commissioner of Public Works replace the grass in front of the East Somerville Library and ensure that the sprinklers are operational.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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198508: That the Director of SPCD (Transportation and Infrastructure) schedule with the Ward 5 Alderman a follow-up community meeting for March or April to report on safety improvements planned for the Lowell Street bridge area, since the Community Path Extension will open onto the Lowell Street bridge in the spring.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201571: DPW Commissioner responding to various Board Orders submitted 5/12/16.

RESULT:	PLACED ON FILE
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Handouts:

- SomerVision Progress Report - Draft (with 196221)