



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

Land Use Committee

Meeting Minutes Dispositions

Thursday, June 5, 2025

6:30 PM

Virtual

Joint Meeting with the Planning Board

This meeting was held via Zoom and was called to order by Chair McLaughlin at 6:30 pm and adjourned at 10:36 pm on a roll call vote of 5 in favor (Councilors Davis, Sait, Wilson, Ewen-Campen, and McLaughlin), 0 opposed, and 0 absent.

Others present: Daniel Bartman – Director of Planning and Zoning, Brad Rawson – Director of Mobility, Justin Schreiber – Senior Planner, Emily Hutchings – Senior Planner, Josh Eckart-Lee – Sustainability Planner, Yasmin Raddassi – Legislative Liaison, Michael McNeeley – Planning Board Member, Lynn Richards - Planning Board Member, Luc Shuster - Planning Board Member, Michael Capuano - Planning Board Member, Amelia Aboff - Planning Board Member, Johan Habib - Planning Board Member, Madalyn Letellier – Legislative Services Manager.

The committee went into recess at 6:33pm and returned at 6:34pm on a roll call vote of 5 in favor (Councilors Davis, Sait, Wilson, Ewen-Campen, McLaughlin), 0 opposed and 0 absent.

The committee went into recess at 6:43pm and returned at 6:44pm on a roll call vote of 5 in favor (Councilors Davis, Sait, Wilson, Ewen-Campen, McLaughlin), 0 opposed and 0 absent.

The committee went into recess at 8:53pm and returned at 8:58pm on a roll call vote of 5 in favor (Councilors Davis, Sait, Wilson, Ewen-Campen, McLaughlin), 0 opposed and 0 absent.

Roll Call

Present: Ward One City Councilor Matthew McLaughlin, Ward Three City Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen, City Councilor At Large Jake Wilson, Ward Five City Councilor Naima Sait and Ward Six City Councilor Lance L. Davis

1. Approval of the Minutes of the Land Use Committee Meeting of May 1, 2025. [25-0904](#)

Accepted

Aye: Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Five City Councilor Sait and Ward Six City Councilor Davis

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Land Use Committee Joint Meeting with the Planning Board of May 15, 2025. [25-0970](#)

Accepted

Aye: Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Five City Councilor Sait and Ward Six City Councilor Davis

3. Public Hearing

- 3.1. Requesting ordainment of an amendment to Article 8 of the Zoning Ordinance to update Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) references. [25-0907](#)

Recommended to be approved

Aye: Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Five City Councilor Sait and Ward Six City Councilor Davis

4. Planning Board conveying recommendations for items #25-0200, #25-0457, and #25-0590. [25-0921](#)

Recommended to be marked work completed

5. 16 residents submitting comments re: item #25-0200, a Zoning Text Amendment to amend Sections 3.1.8c, 3.1.9c, 3.1.10c, 3.1.13k, 3.1.13l, 3.2.12l. and 3.2.12m. [25-0894](#)

Recommended to be marked work completed

6. Planning Board conveying recommendations for items #25-0269, #25-0129, #25-1460, #25-0128, and #25-0131. [25-0829](#)

Recommended to be marked work completed

7. Requesting ordainment of an amendment to Article 2 and Article 10 of the Zoning Ordinance to revise definitions and the green score calculation of columnar trees. [25-0737](#)

Recommended to be approved

Aye: Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Five City Councilor Sait and Ward Six City Councilor Davis

8. Senator Jehlen and 61 residents submitting comments re: items #24-1460, #25-0128, #25-0129, and #25-0131, amendments to the Zoning Ordinance for laboratory, research and development, and arts uses. [25-0725](#)

Recommended to be marked work completed

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9. Eight residents submitting comments re: item #25-0269, a Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning district of 295-297 Medford Street and 93 Walnut Street from Mid-Rise 3 (MR3) to Mid-Rise 4 (MR4). [25-0724](#)
- Recommended to be marked work completed
10. Requesting ordainment of an amendment to Article 2 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow the Building Official to waive certain dimensional standards for means of egress. [25-0590](#)
- Recommended to be discharged with no recommendation
- Aye:** Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Five City Councilor Sait and Ward Six City Councilor Davis
11. Planning Board conveying recommendations for item #24-1584. [25-0516](#)
- Recommended to be marked work completed
12. Requesting ordainment of an amendment to Articles 2-5 and 10 of the Zoning Ordinance to remove conflicts with the State Building Code. [25-0457](#)
- Recommended to be approved
- Aye:** Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Five City Councilor Sait and Ward Six City Councilor Davis
13. That the Director of Planning, Preservation and Zoning provide the Committee on Land Use with an opinion as to whether the City Council may dictate standards and materials used for outdoor bike facilities. [25-0338](#)
- Sponsors:** Councilor McLaughlin
- Kept in committee
14. That the Director of Inspectional Services and the Director of Planning, Preservation and Zoning discuss with this Council, Type IV heavy timber construction now permitted in the 10th edition of Massachusetts State Building Code 780 and potential impacts on inspections, development, and the Zoning Ordinance. [25-0246](#)
- Sponsors:** Councilor Wilson and Councilor Mbah
- Kept in committee
15. 15 registered voters requesting a Zoning Text Amendment to amend the Zoning Ordinance sections 3.1.8c, 3.1.9c, 3.1.10c, 3.1.13k, 3.1.13l, 3.2.12l. and 3.2.12m. [25-0200](#)
- Kept in committee
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16. Requesting ordainment of an amendment to Articles 8 and 12 of the Zoning Ordinance to establish a new Arts & Innovation sub-area of the Master Planned Development Overlay District. [25-0131](#)

Kept in committee

17. Requesting ordainment of an amendment to Articles 2, 3-6, and 9 of the Zoning Ordinance to revise the regulations for arts and creative enterprise, office, and residential uses. [25-0129](#)

Recommended to be approved

Aye: Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Five City Councilor Sait and Ward Six City Councilor Davis

18. Requesting ordainment of an amendment to Articles 6, 9, and 10 of the Zoning Ordinance to establish a new Research & Development zoning district. [25-0128](#)

Recommended to be approved

Aye: Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Five City Councilor Sait and Ward Six City Councilor Davis

19. That the Director of Planning, Preservation and Zoning draft an amendment to the Zoning Ordinances for transit oriented height and density bonuses for additional affordable housing and other enumerated community benefits. [25-0085](#)

Sponsors: Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Davis and Councilor Wilson

Kept in committee

20. Requesting ordainment of an amendment to Articles 2, 4-6, 8, and 9 of the Zoning Ordinance to revise the regulations for laboratory uses and buildings. [24-1460](#)

Recommended to be approved

Aye: Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Five City Councilor Sait and Ward Six City Councilor Davis

Referenced Documents:

- Land Use - 2025-06-05 TOD Upzoning Updates (with 25-0085)
- Land Use - 2025-06-05 Floodplains 2025 Update (with 25-0907)
- Land Use - 2025-06-05 Sustainability Amendments Update (with 25-0457)
- Land Use - 2025-06-05 Means of Egress Amendment Update (with 25-0590)
- Land Use - 2025-06-05 Arts and Innovation OSPCD Presentation (with 25-0131)
- Land Use - 2025-06-05 Arts and Innovation SomerNova Presentation (with 25-0131)