



# CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

## CLERK OF COMMITTEES

December 15, 2011

### REPORT OF THE LAND USE COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
William A. White Jr.	Chair	Present	
Thomas F. Taylor	Vice Chair	Absent	
Sean T. O'Donovan	Ward Five Alderman	Absent	
John M Connolly	Alderman At Large	Present	
George Proakis	Director of Planning	Present	
Members of the Planning Board		Present	
Bruce M. Desmond	Alderman At Large	Present	

Alderman Connolly was appointed to the committee, for this meeting only, to effectuate a quorum.

The committee met in Joint Session with the Planning Board to conduct Public Hearings on items 192255 and 192256. Following the Public Hearings, the committee met in regular session to consider other item before it.

- Public Hearing: 192255

Mr. Proakis reviewed the proposed amendment which, if approved, would establish zoning regulations whereby property owners would not be allowed to pave driveways without authorization/approval from the city. The proposal includes a provision for a waiver to the pervious area requirement to be granted by the Special Permit Granting Authority. The proposal would apply to both new construction and exisiting lots and there could be issues in cases where additional paving is desired on non-conforming lots. Chairman White requested that OSPCD examine the matter, further. The Committee and the Planning Board will leave the record open until noon on December 30, 2011, to receive written comments.

- Public Hearing: 192256

The areas under consideration in this propsal are located where there is good public transportation, major commercial property and access to college communities. There is a \$340 million retail market within a ½ mile radius of these areas as well as a large pedestrian and bicycle riding population. The process for this initiative began at the request of Aldermen Heuston and O'Donovan in an effort to create an economic development vision for the areas in question. After several organizational meetings, six key principles were agreed upon to move the process forward.

The city decided to continue the use of B (RB) districts and neighbors wanted adaptive use, requiring that the RC district on Elm Street be extended. Neighbors also wanted mixed use in Wilson Square. Community members were comfortable with development over the railroad tracks but neighbors were not. Members of the public questioned the purpose of the proposed changes and asked what businesses the city was trying to attract. Additionally, neighbors inquired about the traffic impact study and also requested that the Planning Board examine the impact of accidents resulting from additional commercial development. There was a feeling that the quality of life in the area would be negatively impacted.

There was one person who spoke in favor of the proposal. The Committee will leave the record open until the close of business on January 31, 2012, to receive written comments.

**190766 - That the Director of SPCD provide this Board with an update of the zoning study preserving RA and RB zoned districts.:**

The study has been delayed due to changes in personnel at SPCD. A draft is in the process of being completed.

**RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**190780 - Requesting an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to establish minimum pervious area requirements on lots in certain zoning districts.:**

This item was placed on file since the time limit for acting on it has expired.

**RESULT: PLACED ON FILE**

**191830 - That this Board's Committee on Land Use review the zoning for the block bordered by Mystic Avenue, Fellsway West, and Wheatland Street.:**

**RESULT: WORK COMPLETED**

**191873 - Susan Walsh submitting comments re: Main St. Video, 372 Mystic Ave.:**

**RESULT: WORK COMPLETED**

**192005 - Requesting an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to establish minimum pervious area requirements on lots in certain zoning districts.:**

This item was placed on file since the time limit for acting on it has expired.

**RESULT: PLACED ON FILE**

**192255 - Requesting an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to establish minimum pervious area requirements on lots in certain zoning districts.:**

**RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**192256 - Requesting an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance amending Zoning Districts for the areas consisting of Somerville Avenue from Wilson Square to the Somerville-Cambridge line at Porter Square, White Street, and Elm Street from White Street to Wilson Square, and amending the Floodplain Overlay District.:**

**RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE**