



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING &
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Deval L. Patrick, Governor ♦ Timothy P. Murray, Lt. Governor ♦ Aaron Gornstein, Undersecretary

November 19, 2012

Hon. Joseph A. Curtatone, Mayor
City of Somerville
City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue
Somerville, MA 02143

RE: Union Square Revitalization Plan - Approved

Dear Mayor Curtatone:

The Department of Housing and Community Development (the Department) is in receipt of the City of Somerville's urban renewal plan titled, the "Union Square Revitalization Plan (USRP)," submitted on October 9, 2012. Additional information was submitted on October 18 and 25, 2012. The Plan proposes to revitalize the Union Square area, which includes areas of commercial/retail, residential, industrial, institutional, and public space uses.

Under the proposed USRP, the Somerville Redevelopment Authority (SRA) will acquire 70 parcels (approximately 14 acres of privately owned land and 3.4 acres of publicly owned land); demolish 12 buildings; carry out clearance and site preparation work; create public improvements; create seven disposition parcels to facilitate the extension of the MBTA's Green Line to Union Square; and support transit oriented development that will revitalize the Union Square neighborhood. The USRP will also alleviate problems of flooding, environmental contamination and industrial blight; construct infrastructure that encourages walking, biking and public transportation; improve traffic circulation and reduce automobile congestion; create quality open space; increase the commercial tax base; leverage \$450 million in private investment; and provide employment and housing opportunities that will generate 4,300 new jobs and 850 new housing units. The USRP has a 20-year duration.

Pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 121B, § 48 the Department has reviewed the Urban Renewal Plan submission and makes the following findings:

- The project area would not by private enterprise alone and without either government subsidy or the exercise of governmental powers be made available for urban renewal.
- The proposed land uses and building requirements in the project area will afford maximum opportunity for privately financed urban renewal consistent with the sound needs of the City of Somerville as a whole.
- The financial plan is sound.
- The project area qualifies as decadent.
- The Urban Renewal Plan is sufficiently complete.

- The SRA must request designation of a Relocation Advisory Agency and submit a Relocation Plan for approval to the Bureau of Relocation prior to the commencement of any relocation activities pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 79A and 760 CMR 27.00.

The Department concurs with the finding of the City of Somerville's Planning Board that the Union Square Revitalization Plan is based upon a local survey and conforms to a comprehensive plan for the locality as a whole.

Please be advised that pursuant to 760 CMR 12.04, "Land Acquisition," two recent, independent appraisals must be submitted to the Department prior to any actual land acquisition.

The Department approves the Union Square Revitalization Plan urban renewal plan submission. On behalf of Governor Patrick, I congratulate the City of Somerville and the Somerville Redevelopment Authority on your efforts to date and look forward to working with you in the future on the successful implementation of this urban renewal project. Please contact John Fitzgerald, Urban Development Coordinator, at (617) 573-1446 or at John.Fitzgerald@state.ma.us if you have any questions or need assistance.

Sincerely,



Aaron Gornstein
Undersecretary

cc: Senator Sal N. DiDomenico
Senator Patricia D. Jehlen
Representative Denise Provost
Representative Carl M. Sciortino, Jr.
Representative Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.
Nancy Busnach, Chairman, Somerville Redevelopment Authority
Michael Glavin, Executive Director, Somerville Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development