



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

City Council Land Use Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 21, 2023

6:30 PM

This meeting was held via Zoom and was called to order by Chair McLaughlin at 6:30 pm and adjourned at 7:15 pm with a roll call vote of 4 in favor (Councilor Wilson, Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Davis, and Chair McLaughlin), 1 absent (Councilor Gomez Mouakad), and none opposed.

Others present: Neha Singh – Mayor’s Office, Sarah Lewis – PPZ, Adam Dash – Adam Dash Law, Brendan Salisbury – City Clerk’s Office, Stephanie Widzowski – Clerk of Committees.

Roll Call

Present: Chairperson Matthew McLaughlin, Vice Chair Lance L. Davis, Ben Ewen-Campen and Jake Wilson
Absent: Beatriz Gomez Mouakad

1. Committee Minutes (ID # [23-0840](#)) Approval of the Minutes of the Land Use Committee Meeting of May 18, 2023.

RESULT: ACCEPTED
AYE: Chairperson McLaughlin, Vice Chair Davis, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen and City Councilor At Large Wilson
ABSENT: Ward Five City Councilor Gomez Mouakad

2. Committee Minutes (ID # [23-1254](#)) Approval of the Minutes of the Land Use Committee Joint Meeting with the Planning Board on September 7, 2023.

RESULT: ACCEPTED
AYE: Chairperson McLaughlin, Vice Chair Davis, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen and City Councilor At Large Wilson
ABSENT: Ward Five City Councilor Gomez Mouakad

3. Public Communication (ID # [23-0940](#)) NRL WSC 200 Inner Belt Prop, LLC requesting a Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning district of 200 Inner Belt Road from Commercial Industry (CI) to High-Rise (HR).

Chair McLaughlin announced that he and the applicant will be holding a community meeting to discuss the petition on September 27th at 6:00 pm, and therefore left the item in committee to take up after that meeting. Councilor Ewen-Campen said that members of the public had concerns that the section on Joy St would be turned into a parking garage, and asked for a

clearer answer from the applicant on these concerns.

RESULT: **KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

4. Public Communication (ID # [23-1070](#))

Daniel C. and Lieba R. Savitt requesting an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance Map to change the zoning district of 113 Prospect Street from Urban Residence (UR) to Neighborhood Residence (NR).

Chair McLaughlin passed on a message from Dir. Bartman that the Planning Department has no objections to the amendment, and Councilor Ewen-Campen said that this item is on the Planning Board’s agenda tonight. Multiple councilors expressed that this solution, though likely necessary for the Savitts, should not be the norm and a better long-term, more general approach should be explored. Multiple councilors also asked to hear from Dir. Bartman. Dir. Lewis said that sometimes the originally assigned building type for a property does not reflect the way the structure actually functions, and that area could be something to explore. She stressed that ISD should be involved in interpretations of the ordinance, though.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED**

AYE: Chairperson McLaughlin, Vice Chair Davis, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen and City Councilor At Large Wilson

ABSENT: Ward Five City Councilor Gomez Mouakad

5. Public Communication (ID # [23-1033](#))

David Einis requesting the adoption of an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance Map to change the zoning district of 0 White Street Place from Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) to Urban Residential (UR) and 14 White Street Place from Neighborhood Residential (NR) to UR.

Chair McLaughlin said that neither Dir. Bartman nor Dir. Lewis had objections to the amendment. The Land Use Committee did not want to move forward without Councilor Gomez Mouakad’s support as the Ward councilor, and since committee members were not able to determine clear support from the last meeting’s minutes, Chair McLaughlin moved to discharge the item without recommendation.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE DISCHARGED WITH NO RECOMMENDATION**

AYE: Chairperson McLaughlin, Vice Chair Davis, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen and City Councilor At Large Wilson

ABSENT: Ward Five City Councilor Gomez Mouakad

6. Zoning Ordinance (ID # [23-0791](#)) By Councilor Ewen-Campen and Councilor Wilson Amending the Zoning Ordinances Section 10.3, Development Standards, and Table 10.4.1. to include vegetated roofs.

Councilor Ewen-Campen said that he and staff had not reached a consensus on how to move forward, and he requested that thorough discussion be saved for a future meeting. He said that he requested written opinion from the Solicitor’s Office earlier today.

Councilor Ewen-Campen made a motion: That the Administration advise the Land Use Committee on the process to seek permission from the BBRs to require vegetated roofs. Councilor Wilson added that he would like to see a formalized process for seeking written opinion from the Law department. Councilor Davis asked if the Administration thinks that vegetated roofs fall outside City Council jurisdiction based on the building code, and Councilor Ewen-Campen said that was his understanding. Councilor Davis said that the Solicitor’s Office has been said to represent the City Council and that he wants to hear from them if there is an argument to be made in support of this. Councilor Ewen-Campen agreed that there is merit in approaching the Solicitor’s Office first and withdrew his motion.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE