

Madalyn Letellier

From: Branden Kornell [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 11:20 AM
To: Mayor; Planning Board; Lance Davis; Public Comments; Willie Burnley, Jr.; Jake Wilson; [REDACTED]; Wilfred Mbah; Naima Sait
Subject: Support for Copper Mill Project in Davis Square

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I am writing to express my support for the Copper Mill Project in Davis Square. I tried to attend the meeting last night, but was turned away at 6:00 PM because the church had reached capacity. I've been able to read the minutes from last night and the prior meetings compiled by the Davis Square Neighborhood Council.

I'm fortunate to be a condo owner in Somerville for the last 18 years, but I am very aware of the housing shortage and associated high rents. The city of Somerville is often unaffordable to low- and middle-income people. The only reasonable solution is to build more housing: increase the supply of housing to ease demand.

I'm thrilled that this project will include standard affordable housing requirements. The affordable requirement in large buildings is the best way to increase the total number of affordable units. My sister was fortunate to win an affordable unit in Assembly Square, and she loves it there, but the demand far outstrips the supply.

The market-rate units will also have a big impact. My street is heavily populated with students who crowd into triple deckers as roommates. New studios and 1-2 bedroom units in Davis would provide great options for them, and open up 3+ bedroom units in the triple deckers for families.

In addition to being near multiple transit options, this project is also ideally located to support convenient car-free living, with the lovely new H-Mart supermarket across the street, and many other businesses nearby to fulfill most daily life needs.

I also appreciate that the developer is working with the local businesses. My run club, Davis Square Runners, goes to Dragon Pizza every Tuesday night, so of course I want to see that business return. And I love the Burren and talked with Tommy McCarthy about the new McCarthy's and returning Toad. Everyone wants The Burren back, and the developers clearly support that. I'm also aware that that block is graffitied and papered over; apparently tenants are unwilling to come back given the uncertainty and/or the existing building itself has structural issues. We need a new structure to be built to revitalize it.

I encourage you to give your full support to this project and the developer.

Regards,
Branden Kornell

[REDACTED] Ward 6)

Madalyn Letellier

From: Simona Gokhin <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 1:47 PM
To: Mayor
Cc: Planning Board; Lance Davis; Public Comments; Willie Burnley, Jr.; Jake Wilson; [REDACTED]; Wilfred Mbah; Naima Sait
Subject: Support for Copper Mill Project in Davis Square

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I am writing to express my support for the Copper Mill Project in Davis Square. This transit-friendly, ideally located residential tower is exactly the kind of smart development we need more of.

I would like to emphasize that the 20% affordable requirement in large buildings is the best way to increase the total number of affordable units in Somerville. It is also possibly the only way to ensure a large number of high-quality affordable units.

There are some who still advocate for government-sponsored public housing that is 100% affordable. While this is noble in intent, you must remember the history of such ventures. I grew up in the NY area. In the 1960's and 1970's, many thousands of units of public housing were built. Contrary to popular belief, these buildings were not built cheaply; they were quite nice at first. But because they were neglected over time, underfunded, and not maintained, they deteriorated into what we now refer to as "the projects." People living there were stuck there with no other affordable options.

On the other hand, wealthy residents of market-rate units can advocate for improvements and they can move out if they don't get what they want. Management is incentivized to provide for these residents. Residents of affordable units in these same buildings then benefit from these improvements. The result is sustainable quality housing.

Housing should not be left at the mercy of government funding. As we see with the new federal administration, the government can capriciously decide to defund whatever operations they want.

The best way to serve the interests of poor people is to tether them to the interests of rich people. And in this case everyone wants the same thing: a nice place to live.

Regards,
Simona Gokhin
[REDACTED] (Ward 6)