WHEREAS: There is an enormous shortage of housing in Greater Boston and across the Commonwealth, with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Liveable Communities (EOHLC) estimating a need of 140-180,000 new homes in Greater Boston and ~220,000 statewide over the next 10 years (https://www.mass.gov/a-home-for-everyone); and

WHEREAS: Addressing the housing shortage is a key component of addressing housing affordability; and

WHEREAS: The Massachusetts Building Code requires two exit staircases on all buildings over 3 stories, which restricts of the construction of certain types of "missing middle" apartment buildings on smaller lots; and

WHEREAS: Many states and countries now allow "Single Stair" buildings, based on modern advances in modern fire suppression technology, which unlock the ability to build many new types of medium-size apartment buildings; and

WHEREAS: A 2024 study from Boston Indicators concluded that single stair construction could unlock ~130,000 new homes in Greater Boston alone (https://www.bostonindicators.org/-/media/indicators/boston-indicators-reports/report-files/20241022_ss-report_digital.pdf); and

WHEREAS: In February of 2026, Governor Maura Healey signed an Executive Order "Facilitating Safe and Affordable Single-Stair Multifamily Residential Buildings" (https://www.mass.gov/doc/eo-651/download) that would convene technical experts to review fire safety data and ultimately advise the State on whether changes to the Building Code are recommended; and

WHEREAS: This Technical Advisory Group is tasked with analyzing fire safety data comparing single and multi-stair buildings and making recommendations to update the building code based on these findings; **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT**

RESOLVED: That the City of Somerville supports a rigorous, fact-based analysis of the safety of single stair buildings, and pursuing appropriate changes to the building code based on that analysis; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED: That a copy of this Resolution be shared with Somerville's State Delegation.