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Somerville, MA 02144
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Urban Forestry Committee
City of Somerville
City Hall
93 Highland Ave.
Somerville, MA 02143

November 23, 2019

Dear Dr. Vanessa Boukili,

I write to express my interest in becoming a youth member of the City of Somerville's Urban Forestry Committee. I am currently a junior at Somerville High School (age 16), and I have long been fascinated by how cities become livable spaces that are welcoming and useful for all kinds of people. As a life-long resident of Somerville, I am committed to advocating for urban canopy of my hometown.

Throughout my life, I have always been enthusiastic about environmental issues and urban agriculture. I enjoy growing vegetables and have always admired the ability Somerville residents have for growing incredibly productive gardens within small spaces. Through gardening in the city, I have made lifelong friendships with diverse citizens I might not have otherwise met. Urban agriculture and forestry bring citizens together in meaningful ways.

My fascination with urban design is also reflected in scientific research I've conducted at Somerville High School. My recent project, "The Evolution of Buses: Optimizing Bus Routes Using Genetic Algorithms," won the City's Science Fair last year and brought me to the state science Fair at MIT. The project attempts to increase the efficiency of public transportation by using a data-driven approach. The project culminated in an internship at Tufts University's Physics Department under Professor Timothy Atherton. I am enthusiastic about using data and computer science approaches to help make densely populated areas more livable. I hope to contribute to the Urban Forestry Committee using this developing skill set.

I hope to offer my perspective to the work of the Urban Forestry Committee.

Sincerely,

Henry Ayanna