

Dear Mr. Sellers-Garcia,

I am enthusiastic about the opportunity to serve on Somerville's Commission on Energy Use and Climate Change. I believe that my professional expertise on energy and climate policy, dedication to community service, and facilitation and project and stakeholder management experience would all make me an asset to the CEUCC.

I recently moved to Somerville from Washington, DC, where I was a climate and energy analyst for the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a non-profit think tank. I was fortunate to work for several years on a diverse set of federal and state energy policy issues, but my primary focus was the intersection of electricity policy and climate mitigation. I drafted technical research and policy publications and advised policy makers on many local, state, national, and international policy and regulatory developments across the energy sector, including issues that touched on local energy use and planning policy, ranging from electric vehicle charging infrastructure, wholesale power market design, upstream methane regulations, and the EPA's Clean Power Plan. I believe that this knowledge and advisory experience will be useful to the City as it considers sustainability issues such as community aggregation, electric vehicles, transportation decarbonization, community solar, time of use pricing, energy efficiency MRV, and distributed generation.

In addition, I have a demonstrated passion for community outreach, education, and engagement in general, and on climate change and energy in particular, that I think will make be a strong asset to the Commission. I have been engaged in some form of direct community engagement in every community in which I have lived since high school, including Baltimore, Washington DC, and Zambia, among others. While serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in rural Zambia, my entire job was to engage the community on a broad range of public health, environmental, and agricultural issues in the local language. This included grassroots programming such as HIV education and testing, as well as demonstration gardening. My time in Zambia has made me particularly attuned to the need for community support before embarking on projects. While at CSIS, I consistently prioritized the public education aspect of my position and led the development of a broad range of community education products on climate change and energy. For example, I developed an Apple iTunesU course on energy and climate change, called "[Energy 101](#)," which enrolled over 5,000 subscribers and was selected by Apple as one of its "Top Courses" of 2015. In addition, I pushed for and led the development of a [glossary and guide](#) for the public on the international climate change negotiations process. I believe that this experience and passion for community outreach and education will allow me to quickly contribute to the crucial community engagement work of the Commission.

I recently started at Harvard Law School in order to pursue a professional career in environmental law. Being a new student in Somerville offers several advantages to the commission. As a student, my schedule relatively flexible, allowing me to attend daytime meetings; I am also able to dedicate considerable time to the CEUCC's work, as I do not have the obligations that a full-time professional might. In addition, I have access to the extensive environmental law and policy network at Harvard to address any potential legal questions or issues that may arise in the course of the commission's work. Finally, I would also be able to engage and speak as a peer to Somerville's large, transient student population about their role in creating a sustainable Somerville.

In addition to my qualifications, I am also a polished professional and reliable person who takes commitments seriously, and am excited to serve a three-year term. Moreover, across my professional life, I have engaged with diverse individuals, ranging from rural farmers and Zambian clinical staff to CEOs of major international oil companies and cabinet-level federal government officials. These experiences give me confidence that I would serve all members of the Somerville community as a courteous, fair, and diligent representative.

Thank you very much for your consideration. I am drawn to the diversity and scope of the commission's work and look forward to contributing to the considerable efforts already underway in Somerville, if not as a Commissioner than as an interested member of the public.

Sincerely,
Michelle Melton