



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE, MAYOR

MEMORANDUM

Office of the Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Joseph A. Curtatone, Mayor

FROM: Monica Lamboy, Executive Director *ML*

DATE: February 10, 2011

SUBJECT: Appointments and Reappointments to the Historic Preservation Commission.

The Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD) respectfully requests that you forward to the Board of Aldermen (BOA) this memo recommending new appointments and reappointments to the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). As the BOA is aware, the HPC is a 14-member commission and each of the seats on the commission are designated for specified groups or skills, with a three year term.

BACKGROUND

During the past year the Historic Preservation Commission has acted upon one hundred and eighteen (118) cases, involving alterations to locally designated historic properties, review of building demolition applications, and comments on Planning Board cases and projects using federal or Massachusetts state funds. The Commission has continued work on expanding the number and size of local historic districts in Somerville by revising informational materials and distributing it to all eligible property owners to ensure that they are fully aware of the proposed designation. Thirty-nine (39) properties within twelve new local historic districts have been approved over the past year by the Board of Aldermen and additional properties are under review.

The Commission also actively participated in drafting amendments to the Somerville Zoning Ordinance related to converting historic carriage houses to new uses. Many properties in Union Square have been surveyed to determine their historical merit and recommendations regarding new districts will be forthcoming. Recent improvements to the historic Milk Row Cemetery were celebrated in May, and attention is now being turned to ways to both stabilize and enhance

the Prospect Hill Tower and surrounding site. In addition, the Commission has continued to sponsor events and programs throughout the year that both market the City's historic assets and helps inspire Somerville pride in the community. Public outreach projects have included the annual Preservation Awards Program with the Somerville High School, historic walking tours and bike rides, videotaped events for cable television, and re-enactments of the January 1st Flag Raising and Patriot's Day Ride.

HPC RECOMMENDATIONS

The following individuals are recommended for new appointment to the Historic Preservation Commission to fill the seats as noted:

- Architect (#2) – Kelly Speakman, 21 Sargent Avenue – Kelly is a registered architect, teaches at the Boston Architectural College, and owns an 1870's Mansard style house with her husband. She works for a local architectural office in Union Square that has won several Preservation Awards for projects completed in Cambridge.
- Realtor (#2) and Historic District Resident – Todd Zinn, 45 Tennyson Street – Todd has a BA in History, a Master of Science degree in Elementary Education, and has taught history, as well as other subjects, in grades 5 and 6 in several local schools. He co-owns a historically designated home in Winter Hill, and has been working as a realtor in a local firm for the past year.
- Contractor (#2) and Historic District Resident – Alan Bingham, 30 Day Street – Alan has a computing background in civil engineering, healthcare, and administration, with a strong interest in history and preservation of heritage buildings. He has restored older houses in several communities, and is currently working on his own historically designated 1870 home in Davis Square; and,
- Realtor (#3) – Natasha Burger, 9 Gilson Terrace, Unit #1 – Natasha has a BA in American Civilization and prior work experience in urban brownfield research, education, and redevelopment. She grew up in a historic home, is a resident owner of a condominium in an older building, and has been working as a realtor in a local firm for over 6 years.

Each of these individuals has attended several meetings of the Commission over the past few months and is now familiar with its responsibilities and operations. A resume and "Application Form for Membership" is attached for each of the proposed new members.

In addition, the following individuals are recommended for re-appointment as their terms expired in May 2010:

- Real Estate Lawyer - Dick Bauer, 58 Berkeley Street
- Architectural Historian – Kevin Allen, 92 Newton Street
- City Planner - Ryan Falvey, 27 Dane Avenue

Each of these three members have served for several years and would like to continue to volunteer as they have found their work on the Commission to be very meaningful and satisfying on behalf of the long-term interests of Somerville.

These appointments will keep the composition in compliance with the membership requirements for the Commission under the Historic Districts Ordinance of 1985 as amended, and for the Commission to remain a “Certified Local Government” authorized by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board of Aldermen appoint Kelly Speakman, Todd Zinn, Alan Bingham and Natasha Burger, and reappoint Dick Bauer, Kevin Allen, and Ryan Falvey to the Historic Preservation Commission for the seats as noted.