



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

April 28, 2014

REPORT OF THE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Mark Niedergang	Chair	Present	
Tony Lafuente	Vice Chair	Present	
Katjana Ballantyne	Ward Seven Alderman	Present	

Others present: Omar Boukili, George Proakis, Amanda Maher, Ed O'Donnell, Michael Glavin, Dana LeWinter, Eileen McGettigan

**Approval of the Minutes of February 25, 2014**

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**Approval of the Minutes of March 31, 2014**

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**196370 – That the Director of SPCD and the City Solicitor submit to this Board a proposal to impose institutional master plans.:**

OSPCD has provided information to the solicitor's office for their review.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**196437 - That the Director of SPCD (Economic Development) report on the development of and funding for the local hiring and workforce development First Source program, and report on the outcome of FRIT's recent job fairs for Assembly Square, including Somervillians getting jobs.:**

Ms. Maher reviewed the city's 2-year, \$100,000 workforce development contract with the Somerville Community Corporation (SCC). To date, Federal Realty Investment Trust (FRIT) has held 5 job fairs, with the first two being for Somerville residents. Four hundred Somerville residents attended those 2 events. The next 2 job fairs attracted 600 people, 200 of whom were Somerville residents. According to OSPCD, "...Assembly Row is on pace to achieve at least a 40% local hire rate...".

Ms. Maher also spoke about the Working Cities Challenge (WCC), a partnership comprised of the City of Somerville, SCC, the Career Place of Woburn, employers and local organizations. The goal of the WCC is to provide a tailored program for underserved youth. Mr. O'Donnell reported that feedback from businesses has been positive. Ms. Maher spoke about efforts to secure support from the private sector.

The committee questioned how many of the 4,500 jobs at Partners Healthcare would actually be available and asked about what happens after the Assembly and Union Square projects. Alderman Lafuente requested that demographics for Assembly Square be provided, if possible.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**196188 - That the Administration work with this Board to revise the Somervision Plan to provide more detailed goals with regard to affordable housing and the creation of a mix of housing units, especially those with more than 2 bedrooms, for long-term residents of all ages.:**

Ms. LeWinter distributed and reviewed a data sheet on the city's Inclusionary Housing Program. The current area mean income (AMI) for a family of 4 is \$90,000. If a person is not in the 140%-150% of AMI range, it's difficult to be able to purchase a home in Somerville. Unfortunately, there are several funding sources that may NOT be used for middle class families because of regulations.

There is an effort to raise the inclusionary percentage level in target areas where there is density, going from 12.5% to 15%, (or 17% in TOD). Alderman Niedergang stated his concern that there is an afford housing crisis in the city and that Somerville isn't even close to what MACP and SomerVision say we should have. The committee requested a list of the projects now in the pipeline.

Alderman Lafuente believes that affordable housing is 2 prong problem, i.e., 1) can't keep up with demand and 2) zoning flaws, etc are forcing people out of the city. Although it may be "wonderful to play up that city is in 18th place for real estate", there are adverse effects, also. He questioned how affordability would maintain itself and said that policies need to change so people don't have to move out.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**196287 - That the Director of SPCD, the Planning Director, and the Housing Director appear before this Board for an update on raising the inclusionary housing ordinance to promote development of more affordable housing.:**

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**196366 - That the Director of SPCD submit a plan to create "Middle Class" housing.:**

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**