

Madalyn Letellier

From: Chris Dwan [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 6, 2026 2:13 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: Public comment for the city council on doubled utility poles.
Attachments: 2026 04 Double utility poles.pdf

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Please find attached a letter that I would like to have submitted as public comment for an upcoming meeting of the city council.

Thank you.

-Chris Dwan
[REDACTED] (Ward 2)

To: The Somerville City Council
Re: Doubled Utility Poles
Date: April 6, 2026

Honorable Councilors,

I have followed the ongoing conversation about doubled utility poles in Somerville with interest since at least 2020. In January of that year, I wrote to ask that a Grant of Location on Ivaloo Street (Agenda Item [209559](#)) be conditioned on Eversource maintaining their equipment to avoid further damage to a city tree in front of 33/35 Ivaloo. As I shared at that time, the power lines were pressed up against the trunk and would spark and smoke – particularly when it rained.

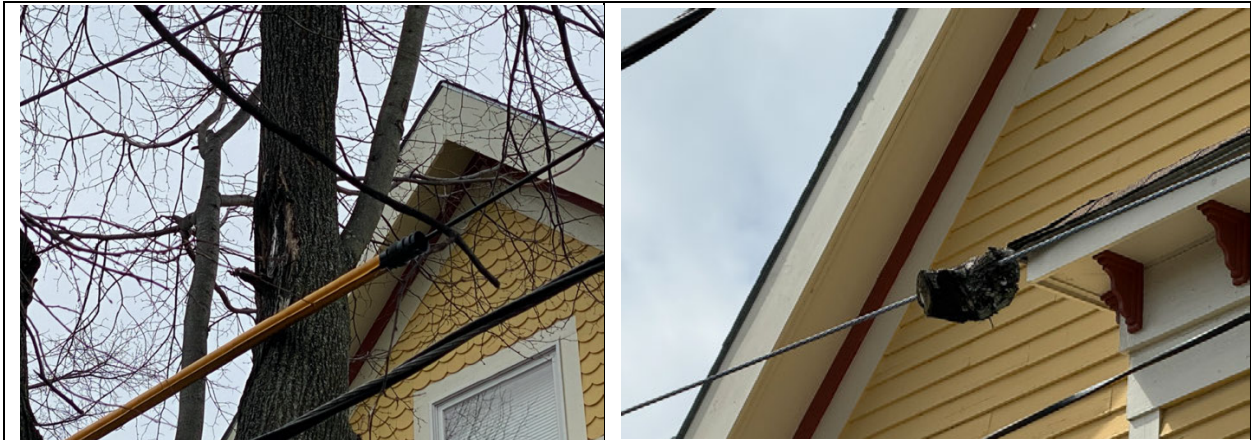


Figure 1: A picture from January, 2020 showing utility lines contacting and damaging a tree in front of 33/35 Ivaloo Street. The tree has subsequently been removed, leaving the piece of wood shown, which had grown around the support cable.

Despite verbal assurances from the Eversource representative at the time, no care was taken. The tree eventually suffered enough damage that it had to be removed. In the years since then, I have appreciated the efforts by various Councilors - however ineffective those efforts have been - to encourage Eversource to perform timely maintenance of their equipment, including accelerating the removal of doubled utility poles. While I understand that several companies must coordinate to move all the wires, Eversource clearly feels no urgency about this unsightly and occasionally dangerous situation.



Figure 2: Medallions on pole 179/3 indicating that it was inspected in 2015 and again in 2023.

If a person were curious how long a given double pole has been in place, the metal inspection medallions on the newer of a pair of double poles can serve as a rough-and-ready indication of the age of the “temporary”

situation. Using the example of the two doubled poles on the block where I live: pole 179/6 (near Ivaloo and Beacon) dates from 2023, and pole 179/3 (at the intersection of Harrison and Ivaloo) dates from 2015. Even three years seems like a long time for a “temporary” solution to persist. At eleven years, referring to a doubled pole as “temporary” is frankly insulting.



Figure 3: The doubled poles at either end of Ivaloo Street.

Below, I share a couple more images of doubled poles near the intersection of Beacon and Somerville Ave, as well as the comical lean of the row of the pole at Kent and Somerville Ave.



Figure 4: Doubled poles near the intersection of Somerville Ave and Beacon Street, and the leaning pole at Somerville and Kent

Unfortunately, I think that you will need to insist. My observation is that the representative that Eversource sends to city council meetings has no power to deliver on the promises they make, and no qualms about saying whatever they think the council needs to hear to get a “yes.” I encourage you to put any requirements in writing and to double check whether promised work has been completed.

We need to demand that Eversource treat our city with the respect, care, and consideration that we deserve.

Respectfully,

Chris Dwan

Chris Dwan

