

Madalyn Letellier

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 6, 2025 12:29 PM
To: All City Council; Mayor
Cc: Public Comments
Subject: RE: Concerned Citizen of Somerville Concerns

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Hello,

Very discouraged and unacceptable that not one person has not responded yet even acknowledged my email of ~ 1 month ago.

Angela

From: Angela DiTucci [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2025 8:40 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Concerned Citizen of Somerville Concerns

Hello Mayor and City Council. Want to make sure that everybody got my email haven't heard any acknowledgment of it or any type of dialogue so that to me is very discouraging kind regards Angela.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 7, 2025, at 4:18 PM, [REDACTED] wrote:

Hello Mayor and City Council,

I am writing this email because I am so appalled at the incivility and aggression of this city's people, my city, to the point I have unfollowed Somerville MA Community page, a post I had previously very much enjoyed.

The issue is bicycling vs driving vs walking vs public transportation.

So going into 2025...

I am asking each elected official to self-reflect and have self-awareness in possibly enabling and fostering this aggression in your communications whether it be in public meetings, separate private

groups, or individually. How are you approaching the public? Is there a bias? Are you representing all of Somerville?

I am also asking every elected official to make the change and be proactive in bringing the community together, no one group of the bicycling vs driving vs walking vs public transportation group is more privileged or entitled than the other.

Not sure if the city has been good at transparency of the entire bike project unless one is truly invested in it- this is based on information from me talking to business owners, residents. Recommend city officials canvas areas that have had major bike infrastructure changes and get feedback. Communication with all should have been a priority initially and was needed throughout the entire process. All residents receive City of Somerville Vote by Mail Application and Census Postcard- effective mode of communication. This should have been for this Bicycle Network Plan. Timing is everything. The city “hosted a virtual public meeting in November 2021”. From Fall 2021 to Spring 2022, we hosted group bike rides, an online survey, virtual community meetings, virtual mapping workshops, street pop-ups and community event tables connecting with over 1,000 people”. Where is the connection to other residents of Somerville. It was to a select group. There was no “broad diversity community input.”

I met Ben and Brad several years ago with a lengthy meeting going over the extensive Bike Plan with red flags and concerns on 95% of the document. My perspective was not only a citizen but 1st and foremost as a healthcare professional focusing on our vulnerable citizens. It is great people can bike, and I hope those who bike can bike for a long time. Many of our residents can't for many reasons. Also using public transportation- reliability so questionable and I would never recommend to any of my vulnerable and/or immunocompromised patients to ride the public transportation

There has been a **lot of money invested** in the bike infrastructure.

Obviously, the city wants to do away with cars. Limiting parking. Is there a change coming with the parking passes? I understand fossil fuel and clean energy, Interesting one of the referenced commenters from Somerville Bike Safety is with a clean energy and energy efficiency organization which appears to be a personal agenda. I get it from the climate point, but again not all can use other modes of transportation. If our vulnerable Somerville people who drive to places are unable to park- that is forcing them with unrealistic options to access. It can also lead to isolation if people visiting them have a difficult time parking. “Growth with less parking” I question the validity of this statement. Look at when events are held in the city- Events at the Armory- people come from all over with cars to support this. As a homeowner who pays taxes, my friends and family should not have to look for parking several blocks away.

Somerville is a city who promotes IDEA, and I am very well versed on this topic since my work currently involves IDEA and Civility among healthcare professionals. Every decision that is made by elected officials needs to reflect the values of IDEA, Inclusion, all Somerville residents are and feel respected, represented, supported, and valued. Diversity, all the way Somerville residents differ which includes, age, physical abilities and geography of where one lives in Somerville. Equity encompasses the policies and practices for all Somerville residents. If we truly are looking at equity- if a car pays for parking a bicyclist must. If a car owner pays for insurance, registration, excise tax, Somerville parking permits- bicycle owners must. Access, all abilities of Somerville residents. I truly hope, which I have many doubts, this was the approach used with the Bike Infrastructure Plan.

There should be no bias in decision making. That would be ethically unsound or appropriate.

SomerVision:

- Increase Transportation Equity Across the City - Feel contrary to equity- not fair or just for all.
- Prioritize Vulnerable Road Users: Does not focus on truly vulnerable the aging/impaired mobility /immunocompromised
- Prioritize Walking, Biking, and Transit Access – realistic for whom?

“Future neighborhood plans” Why were all concerned residents not involved from the beginning, not just a select group?

When best practices or evidence-based guides are stated- ensure that it is research based on quality studies without bias.

“Selective paving” is very bothersome. Pave the entire streets. What is calming or tranquil about that? It looks terrible and I question the impact on our streets.

“We are committed to connecting our residents and workers to economic opportunity.” - to a select group!!!! Not sure what economic opportunities are.

“Improved streets and added bicycle parking will ensure that biking as transportation will be an attractive and convenient option for the workers, residents” NOT TRUE. Not realistic for all.

Ben Ewen Campen had “close calls with reckless drivers while biking on Highland Ave with his young children. I can state many times there are also have been close calls with reckless bicyclists.

We want to support businesses in Somerville. We all don’t bike or public transportation to events, stores, or restaurants. I have previously read on a Facebook page on Somerville Community some stating I will take an Uber or Lyft to events. Taking an Uber/Lyft, how is that helping with the city’s climate goals? Also, there are safety concerns of Uber/Lyft dropping people off with this new approach.

I will end with this

The city “hosted a virtual public meeting in November 2021”. From Fall 2021 to Spring 2022, we hosted group bike rides, an online survey, virtual community meetings, virtual mapping workshops, street pop-ups and community event tables connecting with over 1,000 people”.

We had the start pandemic 3/2020, but still had time for this type of meeting. Where are the city’s priorities? This outreaching was done during the Pandemic, when people were faced with food insecurity, job changes, inability to pay rent, landlords and businesses faced with the many challenges, Somerville residents dying from COVID and / or admitted to hospitals faced with hospital bed crunches. **I find this so incomprehensible.**

Kind regards

Angela DiTucci