



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

September 19, 2016

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: Michael Glavin - OSPCD, Brad Rawson - OSPCD, Michael Feloney - OSPCD, Thomas Galigani - OSPCD, Tim Snyder - Mayor's Office, Charles Sillari - Clerk of Committees.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:34 PM by Alderman Niedergang and adjourned at 8:08 PM.

Approval of the March 28, 2016 Minutes

Text for item 196221 should be removed and placed with item 202186.

RESULT:	ACCEPTED AS AMENDED
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Approval of the May 4, 2016 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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201892: That the Administration and the Director of Capital Projects reactivate the West Branch Library renovations project ASAP to inform the community of the latest information available, including informational meetings and the likelihood of the start of renovations.

Mr. Snyder discussed the original plan for a community room and the concerns raised by the neighborhood, resulting in a plan for a smaller room. The plan needs to be approved by the Historic Commission. Alderman Ballantyne asked for a legal opinion regarding the abutters' concerns having an impact on the project. She wants the city to notify abutters, just a private developers are required to do. Chairman Niedergang inquired about the project's time line and funding. Mr. Snyder will report back to the committee with a response.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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201698: That the Director of Capital Projects update this Board on the West Branch Library and on any other capital projects that may be of concern to this Board.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200700: That the Director of SPCD report to this Board on the plan and timeline for implementing the recommendations in the recent report of the Sustainable Neighborhoods Working Group.

Mr. Feloney distributed an update and discussed SomerVision's estimates of units being built and spoke about working on a market analysis tool with other municipalities, linkage fees and housing studies. He also spoke about tracking vacancy rates and said that owners not being able to raise rents year after year isn't a bad thing. Alderman Ballantyne questioned the goal of 6,000 units and spoke about the efforts of the BOA to meet the goal. Mr. Glavin spoke about growth projections, adding that the entire region must embrace growth. Alderman Lafuente spoke about a possible downturn in the rental market.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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196366: That the Director of SPCD submit a plan to create "Middle Class" housing.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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199725: Updating this Board on the shortfall in Green Line Extension funding.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200517: That the Mayor or his designee report at this Board's January 14, 2016 meeting on the status of the Green Line Extension into Union Square and beyond.

Mr. Rawson stated that the MBTA and MassPort outsourced too much work. Formal discussion will commence this fall or during the coming winter. No decisions have been made yet. Chairman Niedergang expressed concern about the community path ending at McGrath Highway and he questioned the inflation of construction financing. Mr. Rawson said that the city would continue to fight for the extension of the community path.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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202007: That the Director of SPCD appear before this Board's Committee on Housing and Community Development to apprise this Board of the disposition of the Homans Building and any related rights-of-way involved with the Green Line Extension.

Mr. Rawson reported that GLX engineers determined that the structural integrity of the Homans building will be impacted. Work at the site is currently on hold. The city's position is that the MBTA is responsible for the demolition of the building and that the city retains ownership of the land.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201508: That the Director of SPCD communicate with state authorities the need for sound proof windows at 240 Pearl Street, which were previously promised as part of the Green Line Extension.

Mandatory mitigation by the MBTA will be required. Chairman Niedergang asked Mr. Rawson to respond, via email, regarding the wall and window treatments.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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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.

Mr. Galigani discussed a contract with the Somerville Community Corporation and reported that 61 of the 209 positions filled went to Somerville residents. An RFP has been sent out for a contractor for 2 years at \$50,000 per year, and it was noted that not many vendors provide the services being sought. Other job training programs, grants, participation by private companies, Partners Health and Federal Realty, and upcoming job fairs were discussed. Chairman Niedergang would like to see additional funding for the program and wants the city to invest its own money. Mr. Glavin explained that other efforts being taken add to the original \$100,000 price tag.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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200521: That the City Solicitor brief Housing Department staff and Condominium Review Board members to ensure they are implementing the Condominium Conversion Ordinance to the fullest extent possible, and report back to this Board.

Mr. Snyder stated that there isn't a lot of clarity regarding the legality of the ordinance. A meeting will be scheduled to determine the correct course of action. Mr. Snyder stated that the city wants to protect tenants.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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196221: That the Director of SPCD provide SomerVision updates twice a year, broken down by ward, showing progress made in residential, affordable units, jobs, public space,

trips via transit, bike and walking, and development in transformative areas.

Mr. Glavin will send a report to the committee by this Friday, September 23rd.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

Handouts:

- Sustainable Neighborhoods Update (with 200700)