

Madalyn Letellier

From: Alan Dickens [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 9:05 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]; Ellen Waylonis
Subject: Please protect FAB Districts in Somerville

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Alan Dickens; I have been a part of the Somerville community for more than 25 years. I currently live on [REDACTED]

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am writing to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

The space that Esh occupies and the other FAB spaces around the city, these are what make Somerville fun, weird and funky, and help differentiate us from our neighbors.

Somerville has already lost many valuable arts spaces. This City says that it values the arts and artists, so please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help us preserve and grow Somerville's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Alan Dickens
[REDACTED]

Somerville, MA 02143

Madalyn Letellier

From: Allison Pomeroy [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 1:05 PM
To: All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Public Comments; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt
Subject: Somerville FAB districts

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Allison Pomeroy.

I've been a part of the Somerville community for the last 10 years, and I currently live on [REDACTED]

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I'm writing to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Part of what I love about Somerville is the access to art spaces and events. When art spaces leave it becomes harder to meet other artists and find community.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and the unique culture of our city depends on maintaining the spaces we have. The City of Somerville has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Thank you for your consideration.
Allison Pomeroy

Madalyn Letellier

From: Anne Randolph [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 6:18 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
Subject: Somerville City Council's Land Use Committee Joint Meeting with the Planning Board, 2/15/24

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Dear Land Use Committee and Planning Board,

Here I am writing you once again, this time in support of the Washington Street Artists. I am an artist tenant at 86 Joy Street and as you know we have been concerned for some time about the fate of our building. I was therefore deeply disheartened to hear that another artist's building is now under threat.

And as I look at the agenda of your meeting I see that the Washington Street Arts Center is only one of many FAB zoned properties being targeted for change.

FAB zoning exists precisely to protect these kinds of vital working artist's communities, that are the living heart of Somerville. When they're gone they are gone for good and everyone is diminished by their loss.

Furthermore as the most densely populated city in Massachusetts I think I can say that we are already doing more than our share to mitigate the housing crisis. Mixed use and commercial districts are great —but not when they are expanded at the expense of our very limited protected art space. Please do not convert of our FAB zones. They are the only protection we have in the face of profit- motivated development. The arts are difficult to weigh in an equation —but they are so, so important.

Please keep artists working in Somerville.

Thank you

Anne Randolph

Madalyn Letellier

From: Amanda Smith [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 5:02 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]; Ellen Waylonis
Subject: Land Use Committee / Planning Board

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Amanda Smith and I have been a part of the Somerville community for eleven years.

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am writing to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and the unique culture of our city depends on maintaining the spaces we have. The City of Somerville has said that it values the arts and artists - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Thank you for your consideration.
Amanda Smith

Madalyn Letellier

From: Annelise Thompson [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 8:09 PM
To: All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED] Ellen Waylonis; Public Comments
Subject: Please preserve FAB spaces in Somerville!

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Annelise Thompson, and I have been a part of the Somerville community for 4 years. I currently live on [REDACTED] by Ball Square.

I am also a scientist who works out of Greentown Labs on Somerville Ave and a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Given that my job and my circus avocation are located in Somerville, much of my daily life revolves around this city, and I care deeply about how we shape the future of spaces in our community. I am here to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like Esh.

I've been doing circus arts since I was 15, and now at 32, wherever I move, I look for spaces where I can continue to express myself in the air and on the ground. When I moved here from Los Angeles in 2019, Esh immediately became an artistic and creative home for me. The coaches at space opened their doors to me and the friends I've made at Esh made a new city not feel so strange. As a scientist who moved to Somerville for my current job, I can firmly say that without knowing Esh was in Somerville, I wouldn't have moved to Boston. Circus and the community surrounding it mean that much to me.

While that could seem just like dedication to a hobby I love, I think Somerville would do its citizens a disservice to not encourage continued growth of the arts in tandem with the increasing number of start-ups in the area. I have found that discovery and creativity of all sorts -- scientific and artistic -- thrive in vibrant communities where the arts mix with STEM disciplines. I'm at my most creative scientifically after a good class at Esh. That's what drew me to Somerville in the first place! It seemed like a city that invited artists of all sorts to mingle with scientists and engineers.

However, without Esh, there would be no circus in Somerville, and I would have no place to create pieces with friends, develop stories for my community, and remember why I care so much about fighting against climate change in my day job. Having a dedicated studio that is busy every night of the week, full to bursting with excited students, is exactly the kind space I think Somerville needs more of. Somerville has already lost so many valuable arts spaces. This city has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville. Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,
Annelise Thompson

Madalyn Letellier

From: Barbara Fash [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 6:43 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
Subject: FAB zone amendment

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

To all,

As an artist living in Somerville and with a Studio in Somerville at the Milk Row Studios 438 Somerville Ave, I urge you to vote **no** on the amendment to change the current FAB zoning at 321 Washington Street to CI. I can see no reason to change a special status for artists in a city with more artists per capita than any other city except New York City. I care about the environment and my carbon footprint and deliberately chose to live in Somerville to be able to walk to and from my home to my studio, and 2.5 miles to my day job work in Cambridge. I do not own a car and pride myself as a 68 year old resident to seek alternative means of transportation and get healthy exercise. Pushing out artists for Commercial Industry would bring more contaminants into the city and impact everyone's health.

Please preserve the FAB zoning for 321 Washington Street.

Thank you
Barbara Fash
[REDACTED]

Madalyn Letellier

From: Brook Hopkins [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 5:11 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Brook Hopkins.

I have been a part of the Somerville community for 12 years.

My kids are students at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am here to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Arts spaces are so important to kids growing up in urban areas, like Somerville. It is already so competitive to get into arts lessons and camps. If these spaces get eaten up by developers, our kids will suffer.

Somerville has already lost so many valuable arts spaces. This city has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Brook Hopkins

Madalyn Letellier

From: Chelsea Catania <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 9:39 AM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Support of Fabrication District

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Chelsea Catania. I have been a part of the Somerville community for 7 years and I live on [REDACTED] I live on [REDACTED] because of its proximity to the Fabrication District; it is where I spend most of my time outside of work.

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am here to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Esh has been a home to me and a source of joy. It's been instrumental for developing the community that I am a part of, which would be severely hurt if they were to lose their space. There would be no local options to practice our art without Esh and it would be very difficult to afford lessons to build my skills.

On top of that, I am a member of Boulderling Project, I've been a member of this community since 2018, and I frequent Aeronaut Brewing often. I pretty much live life outside of work in this region. If these places were no longer in existence, I would likely reconsider my residency based on wherever they would exist next.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and the unique culture of our city depends on maintaining the spaces we have. The City of Somerville has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Chelsea Catania
[REDACTED]
Somerville, MA

Madalyn Letellier

From: 張植康 [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 10:51 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
Subject: Protect Somerville Art Spaces

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Chih-Kang Chang.

I have been a part of the Somerville community for 7 years; I live on [REDACTED].

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am writing to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and the unique culture of our city depends on maintaining the spaces we have. The City of Somerville has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Thank you for your consideration.

Chih-Kang Chang

Madalyn Letellier

From: David Ellsworth [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 6:10 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; dontfwithfab@gmail.com; artstayshere@gmail.com; ellen@eshcircusarts.com
Subject: Please preserve our FAB districts.

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is David Ellsworth and I have been a part of the Somerville community for 10 years, and while I no longer live directly in Somerville, I used to live on [REDACTED], and am proud of the city and consider it a second home.

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a Fabrication(FAB) district on Park Street. I've learned that Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am writing this email to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

The school is an environment where not only a positive, uplifting, and supportive community continues to build long lasting connections to each other, but it brings the type of industry and activities that are continuously revitalizing our city with opportunities that cannot be found without devoted artists, and Esh Circus Arts is one of those rare and important spaces that keeps myself and many like me coming back to Somerville at every opportunity.

It is clear that the FAB district is a key component to affordable, long-term spaces for artists to continue the growth and cultivation of the unique culture of our city. The City of Somerville has said that it values the arts and artists and this is the perfect opportunity to show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Thank you for your consideration.

Madalyn Letellier

From: Dan4th Nicholas [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 5:32 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; dontfwithfab@gmail.com; artstayshere@gmail.com; Ellen Waylonis
Subject: Protect FAB spaces in Somerville!

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Danforth Nicholas. I have been a part of the Somerville community for over 20 years, having moved to the Davis Square area in 2001 and staying within walking distance ever since. I haven't wanted to move precisely because of the wonderfully quirky, artistic, creative community that makes Somerville special.

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am writing to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and the unique culture of our city depends on maintaining the spaces we have. The City of Somerville has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Thank you for your consideration.

Danforth Nicholas

--

Danforth Nicholas
[REDACTED]

Madalyn Letellier

From: Danna Solomon [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 12:46 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; dontfwithfab@gmail.com; artstayshere@gmail.com
Cc: Ellen Waylonis
Subject: Please Preserve Somerville's Fabrication District

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Danna Solomon. I was a part of the Somerville community for 14 years, residing in Davis Square, Porter Square, and Union Square before moving to JP in 2021.

I am an arts manager, and a member of the Board of Directors of the Boston Circus Guild, a professional circus organization that represents dozens of performers that train or have trained at Esh Circus Arts, located in the FAB district on Park Street.

Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am writing to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Our artists have entertained at numerous municipal events over the years, including (among others) HONK! and the Somerville Arts Council's Ignite! Festival in Union Square. Without accessible space to train and gather, it would not be possible for our circus community to have thrived over the past decade as it has, and Somerville would be without this unique interdisciplinary artistic offering that so often draws residents to the city's distinctive public events.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and the unique culture of Somerville as a city depends on maintaining these spaces. The City of Somerville has said that it values the arts and artists - I implore you to please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Thank you for your consideration,
Danna

--

Danna Solomon
she/her
[REDACTED]

Madalyn Letellier

From: Eric Mumpower [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 6:12 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
Subject: [REDACTED] in support of the Fabrication District

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Eric Mumpower (he/him).

I have lived in Somerville for 26 years, and on [REDACTED] for almost 13 years.

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. Current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

The arts, circus and otherwise, bring so much desperately needed joy and vibrance to our community, and provide essential creative outlets for a large number of residents.

Somerville has already lost so many valuable arts spaces. This city has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Eric Mumpower

Madalyn Letellier

From: Ezra Varley [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 9:54 PM
To: Ellen Waylonis; [REDACTED]; All City Council; [REDACTED]
Gregory Jenkins; Mayor; Michael Rosenberg; Planning1; Public Comments; Rachel Strutt
Subject: Comment: Arts space in Somerville

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Ezra Varley (they/them). I have been a part of the Somerville community for ten years; I currently live on [REDACTED] in Winter Hill.

I am a staff member and professional circus artist who trains at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am here to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Losing the Esh arts space would not only result in my losing a majority of my income, but also losing the heart of my community: I work and train and play primarily at Esh, and feel creatively and professionally nurtured by the community there. Without Esh I'd have to move my training and my work out of Somerville; it's possible that I'd have to leave the greater Boston area to seek other sources of income.

The creative community that I've found at Esh has been literally life-changing for me, and I'd be devastated to lose a space that sometimes feels more like home to me than my actual place of residence. Somerville has already lost so many valuable arts spaces. This city has said that it values the arts and artists, but ordinances like this one do the opposite. How are we supposed to feel valued by a city that continuously decreases our access to affordable spaces dedicated to artistic creation? Please show your commitment to supporting artists in Somerville by preserving FAB and helping us grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ezra Varley

Madalyn Letellier

From: flynn kyran [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 8:00 AM
To: All City Council; Mayor; Public Comments; Planning1; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt
Subject: Protecting Somerville's FAB – Esh Circus Arts

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Kyran.

I moved to Massachusetts from Rhode Island after graduating this past summer. I chose to move to Cambridge (Central Square) for its proximity to Esh Circus Arts, which is located in a FAB district of Somerville on Park Street. I had practiced aerial acrobatics there during the summer of 2022. This circus space and its community brought me back to the region. Though I have not lived here very long, I am sending this to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Esh Circus Arts has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. They kindly took me under their wing last December as a student in the Professional Preparation Program (PPP). I practice there almost every day, and plan on continuing to do so.

Losing this space would prevent me from being able to practice the art that I love and hope to perform. It is my creative space, and hosts the hobby that continues to motivate me every day. Circus arts are complex, require a large space, standardized and up to date equipment, and professional staff to come together and to be practiced safely. This is what Esh offers Somerville and the surrounding cities. It is impossible to recreate such a space on your own.

Circus arts are a wonderful way for people to be in better touch with their body, and to rediscover movement. They have played a central role in my life ever since I took them on. Taking Esh away from Somerville would be stripping away an opportunity for everyone to learn about circus/continue their practice in a welcoming and professional environment.

Affordable, long-term space for all artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help preserve and grow this city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kyran Flynn

Madalyn Letellier

From: Genevieve Martineau [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 5:11 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]; Ellen Waylonis
Subject: Please preserve Somerville's Fabrication District

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Genevieve Martineau.

I have been a part of the Somerville community for at least 2 decades, either by living in the area or by shopping/participating/supporting various businesses.

All members of my family have been students at Esh Circus Arts over the years (my daughter, myself and my husband), located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am writing to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one. I am a professional in the circus arts industry and I will tell you that ESH Circus Arts has been a home away from home for both budding circus enthusiasts and professional circus artists. It is a place where kids and adults can learn the life-changing skills of persistence, team work and responsibility for self and others. It is a place where professionals around the world come to train, as there are very few spaces for circus artists to train safely. It is a place where the community is strong and open to all.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and the unique culture of our city depends on maintaining the spaces we have. The City of Somerville has said that it values the arts and artists - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Thank you for your consideration.

Genevieve Martineau
Marketing Director
Circus Smirkus
Boston Circus Guild

Madalyn Letellier

From: Johnny Blazes [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 8:26 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED] Ellen Waylonis
Subject: Please support FAB District

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Johnny Blazes. I work at Esh Circus Arts located in a FAB district on Park Street. I've worked at Esh for 10 years, and have participated as a performer and talent coordinator at SomerStreets, ArtBeat, FluffFest, The Arts at the Armory, Somerville Theater and many beloved former venues including Johnny D's, ONCE, Precinct, Radio, and so many more. I lived in Somerville from 2014-2020, after which I moved to Malden due to housing costs being too expensive.

Current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to preserve spaces like Esh Circus Arts. Somerville is a desirable place to live and work in huge part **because** of artists and the cultural spaces we create. Esh is not simply a gym where people go to get fit: it's a place where we create art about our daily lives, our dreams and aspirations; where we create community and push the boundaries of acceptance and human empathy; where people of all ages discover what it means to be truly *for* each other, to revel in each other's successes and uplift each other's failures. Throughout our 10 years in Somerville, we've gathered at Esh to mourn, to celebrate, and to just be in the midst of our lives, because art and movement are not separate from "life" -- they *are* life.

Please stand for the Somerville that we know is possible and that artists have been central in cultivating. Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Preserve FAB and continue Somerville's legacy of leading the region in truly living our collective values: community, equity, expression, and culture.

Thank you for your time and your service to our community.

Gratefully,
Johnny Blazes

--

Johnny Blazes | they/them/their
Co-Director, Youth and Professional Programs
www.eshcircusarts.com

Madalyn Letellier

From: Jo Dutilloy [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 5:39 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
Subject: Protect Somerville FAB Arts Spaces

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Jo Dutilloy and I'm submitting testimony on Somerville City Council's Land Use Committee in support of the Fabrication District.

I have been a part of the Somerville community for 5 years since moving to Boston in 2018.

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am here to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Somerville is home to the arts spaces and events I most commonly use and attend including Arts at the Armory and Esh. I have only recently joined Esh Circus Arts as a student but have been attending their student shows for years and supporting my partner's involvement in them. Esh and the arts communities in the area keep us living in the area because we feel connected to something bigger than ourselves. If we lost them, there would be a lot less holding us to the space and we might end up moving to somewhere more affordable where arts are more accessible.

Somerville has already lost so many valuable arts spaces. This city has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jo Dutilloy

Madalyn Letellier

From: Joel [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 5:21 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]; Ellen Waylonis
Subject: Fabrication District

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Joel Herzfeld (he-him)

I have been a part of the Somerville community for 13 years. I've lived on [REDACTED], and I love Somerville!

Today I'm writing as a staff member and touring circus artist who trains and coaches at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am here to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

As an artist, I depend on this space for my training. Without Esh, I surely would not be booking national and international tours at the rate I do. Esh is a unique community that can't just exist anywhere else, and its absence would be a painful loss to the hundreds of people who find community and belonging here.

As a city, Somerville says it values the arts and artists - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Joel Herzfeld

Madalyn Letellier

From: j. johnson [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 4:57 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Ben Ewen-Campen
Cc: Jennifer Badot
Subject: Support for FAB District

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

We are Somerville residents living on [REDACTED], and we are writing to you today to voice our support for the Fabrication District that protects spaces for artists and performers. I'm the father of a staff member at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. My spouse Jennifer and I firmly believe that future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like Esh.

Jennifer has been a resident in Somerville for over 30 years, and I moved here 11 years ago. Since that time, we've seen the city change from a vibrant, diverse, culturally rich urban area to one that has veered sharply towards accommodating the interests of real estate developers and corporate laboratories, biotech, etc. Consequently, housing prices and rents have skyrocketed, and as a result, the artists, musicians and performers who once made Somerville an exciting place to live and gave the city so much of its character have moved away from Somerville. They just couldn't afford to live here anymore.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and the unique culture of our city depends on maintaining the spaces we have.

Somerville has already lost too many valuable arts spaces. The City of Somerville has said that it values the arts and artists - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

J. Johnson
Jennifer Badot

Madalyn Letellier

From: Janine Myszka [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 12:32 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]; Ellen Waylonis
Subject: I support the preservation of FAB to keep artists and arts spaces in Somerville
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Janine Myszka (she/her).

I have been a part of the Somerville community for 7 years.

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am writing to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

I joined Esh after my previous aerial arts studio was forced to close down due to increasing space rental costs. Esh gives me a place to feel safe, strong, and empowered. Losing access to this space would be devastating, and even more so for younger students just finding the space who are more cost and travel restricted due to income

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and the unique culture of our city depends on maintaining the spaces we have. The City of Somerville has said that it values the arts and artists - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Thank you for your consideration.

Janine Myszka

Madalyn Letellier

From: Jessica Shada [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 9:58 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
Subject: FAB District - Save Artist Spaces | Esh Circus Arts

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

My name is Jessica Shada,

I have been a part of the Somerville community for 3 years.

I am a staff member and professional circus artist who trains at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am here to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Losing Esh Circus Arts would be nothing short of a tragedy. Having the honor of greeting students and staff - I have watched how much this place means to everyone who comes through it's doors.

Creating an inclusive environment for all age groups that centers it's focus around being better in mind and body. The community that has been formed within this space is a reflection on all that Somerville has to share. In order to train I would need to travel up to an hour and a half to the next studio. This would make it impossible for me to continue on this journey that has become so much a part of my life.

Working for this incredible company has been such an amazing experience. Not working for them would be the absolute opposite. I rely on this income to live in the area and would need to consider relocating in order to find work elsewhere.

Somerville has already lost so many valuable arts spaces! This city has said that it values the arts and artists - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,
Jessica Shada

Madalyn Letellier

From: Kim Lamoureux [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 9:36 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED] Ellen Waylonis
Subject: FAB district changes

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Kim Lamoureux.

I have been a part of the Somerville community for 6 years, formerly living on [REDACTED]

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am here to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Esh has provided an invaluable space for personal growth, socialization, and community. Through expert instruction of fundamental skills, safety, and unwavering coach support, I have gained confidence, strength, and community. Esh has brought so much joy to my life.

Somerville has already lost so many valuable arts spaces. This city has said that it values the arts and artists - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

--

Kim Lamoureux

Singer | Actor | Educator

www.kimlamoureux.com

[YouTube Channel](#)

Kim Lamoureux Voice Studio

Joyful Singing

www.kimlamoureux.com/lessons

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

Madalyn Letellier

From: Kristine O'Brien [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 11:59 AM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
Subject: Park Street FAB district

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Kristine O'Brien and I have been a part of the Somerville community since 2002, living at the corner of [REDACTED] for twenty years, and recently moving to Day Street in Davis Square.

Our family has been involved with Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street since the day they opened. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am here to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

I cannot imagine what our lives would be like if our kids hadn't had access to the remarkable people and talents with a home at Esh. Physical growth and resilience - sure there's mat, but your ego needs some practice at tumbling, too! Diversity and learning to value others' contributions - I think Esh was the main place my kids learned that.

I think my favorite memory is from when our daughter who was tall for her age had to make it from one mat to another traveling only across her classmates. She was the tallest - and her healthy athletic frame made her the heaviest, too. The first attempt was a flop. Literally. No one panicked; no one said "oh, let's try someone else." The instructor grinned and said "well, that didn't work - now what do you all want to try?"

The more access we as people have to spaces to learn, create, and improve as humans, the better off we'll be. Somerville has already lost so many valuable arts spaces. This city has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Stina O'Brien

Kristine O'Brien
she/her/hers
[REDACTED]

Madalyn Letellier

From: Laura Grego [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 1:21 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
Subject: support for arts spaces in Somerville

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Laura Grego.

I have been a part of the Somerville community for 25 years, living just a few blocks over the line in Cambridge, and spending much time in Perry Park/Argenziano School/Union Square areas, especially.

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am here to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

One incredible thing about Somerville is its ability to support artists and arts communities of all sizes. So much great creativity comes from this, and this makes Somerville a vibrant and attractive place to be. It is Somerville's niche in an increasingly expensive Greater Boston Region.

For myself, losing a space that welcomes the community to learn and practice circus arts in an affordable way, in a space I can walk to, would be quite sad.

Somerville has already lost so many valuable arts spaces. This city has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Laura

Madalyn Letellier

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 4:47 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: Fwd: Proposed zoning change to 321 Washington Street

FYI

From: "leekil" [REDACTED],
[REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 4:23:50 PM
Subject: Proposed zoning change to 321 Washington Street

Dear Councilors Scott, McLaughlin, Davis, Pineda Neufeld, and Wilson,

I'm writing on behalf of the members of Washington Street Art Center, a nonprofit artist studio building and gallery space at 321D Washington St., Somerville. This building has been our home since 1996, and we have provided affordable studio, darkroom, gallery, and performance space to hundreds of local artists since then.

We are concerned about the proposed zoning change to 321 Washington Street, the lot which includes our building, and the likelihood that granting this change would lead to our displacement as part of a redevelopment project. Our understanding is that the FAB district was created to preserve spaces like ours, and we are concerned that a change to this zoning designation would put our tenancy in jeopardy. Like so many other art spaces in Somerville, our ability to hold onto this space is already tenuous at best. When the property was purchased by the current owner, we received a substantial rent increase; after the initial one-year lease period, they refused to renew our lease, leaving us tenant-at-will.

The property owner has not engaged us in discussion about their plans for our building, or the lot as a whole, and we only learned of the proposed zoning change through community word of mouth.

We appreciate your time, and careful consideration. We hope to keep our space and our place in the Somerville arts community for the foreseeable future.

Lee Kilpatrick
Director, Washington Street Art Center

Madalyn Letellier

From: Maria DiPietro [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 3:16 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Maria DiPietro.

I have been an official part of the Somerville community for 2 years. I live on [REDACTED] Previous to that, I was involved in many pursuits in the city and enjoyed what it has to offer.

I am a former and aspiring student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am here to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

This space of physical training and art creation has been so valuable to me over the years. I have met so many wonderful people and challenged myself in bold (and somehow still safe!!) ways. I treasure this treasure! Additionally, I have watched so many individuals, identifying within marginalized populations, find a safe, supportive, and rich environment with Esh! Oh! And my daughter attended camp there for a few summers. It is such a special community fixture.

Somerville has already lost so many valuable arts spaces. This city has said that it values the arts and artists - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Maria DiPietro

Madalyn Letellier

From: Mandy Hackman [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 11:15 PM
To: Ellen Waylonis [REDACTED] All City Council; [REDACTED]
Gregory Jenkins; Mayor; Michael Rosenberg; Planning1; Public Comments; Rachel Strutt
Subject: Re: FAB zoning ordinance public comment

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Amanda Hackman.

I have been a part of the Somerville community for 4 years; I currently live on [REDACTED] in Teele Square.

I am a staff member and a professional circus artist who trains at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am here to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Esh is a place of employment for me, where I receive work opportunities that allow me to live in Massachusetts as a professional artist in a stable way. It is also a place where I experience a thriving arts community, including circus artists, dancers, musicians, and theater artists who all share ideas, practice their craft, and co-create work together. As a founding member of Circus 617, Esh has provided space for us to springboard a new contemporary circus company, create our first full length show, and act as an incubator for circus arts projects across Boston and throughout the western Massachusetts region. As an aerialist, if this space did not exist, I would have few to no other spaces to consistently practice my craft. I would very likely have to leave the city to seek training, teaching, and art making opportunities elsewhere. Esh is the cornerstone of so much circus and cross-creation in the area that I am certain many artists would also find themselves without a home in the area.

Apart from all this, I have witnessed that Esh functions as a genuine third space for many of the artists and students that come through its doors, something we are all deeply in need of in our current time. We learn together, we create together, but we also build community together in real and tangible ways that reverberate outward, providing a social net that enriches the lives of 'Eshlings' in ways well beyond circus arts.

I have worked and trained in circus spaces across the US, and I have never seen a circus studio so deeply embedded in its home city. I can only hope Somerville embraces us back- along with all of the other arts spaces affected by this proposed zoning.

Somerville has already lost so many valuable arts spaces. This city has said that it values the arts and artists - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Amanda (Mandy) Hackman

Madalyn Letellier

From: Michael "Mooch" Mucciolo [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 1:17 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]; Ellen Waylonis
Subject: Somerville FAB Zoning

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Michael Mucciolo (he/him) and I am the Director of Bookings and Operations for Boston Circus Guild as well as a resident of Somerville living on Miller Street.

Boston Circus Guild has numerous professional performers on our roster who train at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am writing as both a professional circus artist and owner of an arts organization to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Beyond providing a space for career artists to train and continue to develop their skills, Esh has also been a gracious partner to Boston Circus Guild over the years. We are able to hold our annual in-person auditions in their studio and have had many rehearsals for our original productions and public performances including Somerville Arts Council's annual Ignite festival in Union Square. Losing access to this arts space would negatively impact our ability to continue to foster the professional circus community that Boston Circus Guild has supported for over 14 years as well as cause immense challenges to staging new professional circus arts shows throughout the region in the future.

Somerville has already lost so many valuable arts spaces. This city has said that it values the arts and artists so I urge you to show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville. Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

--

Michael "Mooch" Mucciolo | *he/him/his*

Director of Bookings and Operations

www.bostoncircusguild.com

[REDACTED]



Madalyn Letellier

From: MINI ANN POLUMBAUM <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 3:13 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: Whatever is about to go on here sounds detrimental to our community.

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Hi--To whom it may concern:

As an artist and a resident of and a condominium owner at the Brickbottom community who has lived here for a little over 35 years, loves it here, and have every intention of remaining here, whatever is about to go on sounds like it'll be detrimental to our community. I and many other people here believe that whatever is about to happen near the address specified on the zoom link sounds like something that will not only cut off our view, but cut out the amounts of sunlight that will come into our apartments. This is not the right thing to do, and it'll further isolate the Brickbottom Community from the rest of the City of Somerville. Please do not destroy what we all moved into the Brickbottom Community for, or allow others to destroy our community. Thank you for your time and attention on this matter. I also hope to be at the zoom meeting tomorrow night at six o'clock, but was not able to put the link into my computer in order to register for the meeting.

Thank you for your time and attention on this matter.

Best,

Mini Ann Polumbaum (Miki)*

*This denotes my nickname that I go by, and prefer to be called. Thanks.

Madalyn Letellier

From: Monika Roy <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 5:49 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED] Ellen Waylonis
Subject: In support of the Fabrication District

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Monika Roy (she/her).

I have been a part of the Somerville community for almost 2 years; I live on [REDACTED]

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am writing to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Circus arts have been an important part of my life over the last 14 years wherever I have lived, and Esh has created a thoughtful and safe space for members of the community to train and grow their skills and self-confidence. Communities with circus arts spaces have also been a major factor in where I decide to live.

Somerville has already lost so many valuable arts spaces. This city has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

-Monika

Madalyn Letellier

From: M R [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 9:59 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
Subject: Arts preservation at FAB

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Matt Russell (he/him).

I have been a part of the Somerville community for close to 7 years; I lived on Kensington Ave before moving to Medford.

Thank you for taking the time to read my email today.

Over the past decade, I have been an on/off member of a small makerspace located near the Somerville Market Basket. There, I was able to be inspired, learn, and practice my skills as an amateur woodworker and even turned it into a small business for a time.

I am also a current student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am here to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

The space and community that reside at Esh was one of the primary reasons I chose this area as my home after graduating with my Master's degree. Without the social network and experience I've gained at Esh, I wouldn't be the person (let alone part-time fire performer and workshop teacher) I am today. I can't imagine losing this space and others near it; Somerville would feel like just another artless, unaffordable city that's become uninhabitable for artists.

If anything, Somerville needs more spaces like Esh to thrive and grow more into the artist-friendly space it's citizens want it to be. Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture. Please let us keep the space fertile for art.

Thank you for your consideration.

-Matt (aka Mateus)

Madalyn Letellier

From: Michelle Storch [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 15, 2024 9:08 AM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
Subject: Please maintain the city's arts spaces

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

I have been a part of the Somerville community for 6 years and I live on [REDACTED] between Inman & Union Squares.

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am writing to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and the unique culture of our city depends on maintaining the spaces we have. The City of Somerville has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Thank you for your consideration.
Michelle Storch

Madalyn Letellier

From: Nada Hussein [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 5:35 PM
To: Ellen Waylonis; [REDACTED].com; All City Council; [REDACTED]; Gregory Jenkins; Mayor; Michael Rosenberg; Planning1; Public Comments; Rachel Strutt
Subject: In support of the preservation of FAB

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Nada Hussein. I have been a part of the Somerville community for 8 years.

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am writing to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and the unique culture of our city depends on maintaining the spaces we have. The City of Somerville has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nada Hussein

Madalyn Letellier

From: Paula Garbarino [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 8:48 AM
To: Public Comments
Subject: somernova

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

To Whom it may concern,

In our 39 (Michael) and 50 (Paula) years of living in Somerville, we have participated in many community forums to discuss development proposals. We have attended over a dozen initial meetings for nearby developments and many follow-up meetings. In every case, community members have been able to influence size, scale, and/or use. Our alderman/councilors have sought out and represented community preferences. Our representatives have also educated us. Most memorable was Alderman-at-Large Denise Provost, 25 years ago, informing neighbors of the residential/commercial balance that helps the city's tax base. These healthy exchanges remind us of how many are working hard for a better Somerville. Having impact to stop global horrors seems hardly possible; but we can have healthy impact here in Somerville.

The Ames/Somernova buildings occupy a FAB zone for arts and creative enterprise that the neighborhood has long purchased this plot with full understanding that it was protected. Artisans Asylum was the most beloved of the current tenants, but Rafi would not extend their lease except under punishing terms and limited time frame, messaging noise and thereby driving the Asylum out. This is a bad track record.

Rafi insists on postponing traffic studies until after the city's (acceptance) process is well underway. Any neighborhood complex would tell you that traffic is already at capacity at commuting hours. But while Rafi campaigned for five years to befriend city government and city institutions, it failed to elicit neighborhood response until the fall of 2023 when the hub was unveiled to shocked response. At first many of us assumed the outlandish size of the project was a starting point for negotiation. In meeting after meeting in the fall and early winter, Rafi has changed nothing.

Union Square Neighborhood Council appears enthusiastic to design a community benefits package. Unfortunately, the achievement record is uneven. They worked hard on the Union Square Project, but contractors failed to hire local workers and the low income housing is delayed. ENFORCEMENT?? PENALTIES?? Very discouraging when developers have extraordinarily deep pockets and the city not. Let us remember the conservative economist Milton Friedman's warning: "The company has no social responsibility to public or society; its only responsibility is to its shareholders." The pandemic taught us that offices could empty out with everyone working from home. Downtown office space has yet to fully recover. Last year Nissenbaum's sale in Boynton yards fell through as the market for Lab Tech was glutted with no demand more. In hard times, Rafi's responsibilities will be to its investors first and foremost, not to community agreements.

In regards to the community center, this is so obviously the job of government to define need, plan, build and supply the public know-how and public money. But possibly the building has already been supplied. A few years ago, presenters on the high school informed the public that community space there had been planned. Recently we have been informed that there is unused space now in the high school. What a good location too: central and with public transport at the door.

When the time comes, we look forward to your vote against zoning change and against this proposal which is totally unsuitable to the location.

Sincerely,

Madalyn Letellier

From: Paulina Haduong [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 2:51 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; d [REDACTED]
Subject: In support of FAB district

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Paulina Haduong, and my pronouns are they/she.

I have been a part of the Somerville community for 11 years. I live at [REDACTED] (near Teele).

I have been a student at Esh Circus Arts over the last year, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am writing to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

I have also taught yoga in Somerville, at O2 and Samara, and previously was a student at Aircraft Aerial. All three of those businesses no longer exist, in part due to rent increases and redevelopment. I have friends who are artists who have investigated the feasibility of staying in Somerville to make their art, and it has proved to be difficult.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and the unique culture of our city depends on maintaining the spaces we have. The City of Somerville has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Thank you for your consideration.

Paulina Haduong
Postdoctoral Fellow | Creative Computing Lab
Harvard Graduate School of Education
they | she

Madalyn Letellier

From: Resa B <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 10:53 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]

This email is from an external source. Use caution responding to it, opening attachments or clicking links.

February 11, 2024

Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Resa Blatman, and I've been a part of the Somerville community for 36 years! I live on [REDACTED] and I'm a visual artist with a studio at Roger's Foam/Vernon Street Studios. I'm here to tell you how much current and future artists, and residents, of Somerville need the Fabrication District.

- If I lose my studio space, which by the way, has become increasingly expensive (they now raise the rent by 8% every year), then I'll have no choice but to move out of Somerville to a city, town, or state that allows me to have a home studio, or where I can affordably rent a studio in a building.

- I'm a better artist for having a studio in a building with so many other artists (100+ at Vernon Street). It allows for collaboration, friendship, and a unique creativity which can be difficult to foster when an artist works all alone at a home studio, or in a building with only one or two other artists.

- My husband and I have been looking to move out of Somerville because of the studio rental costs, and the fear that the Vernon Street building's owners could choose to sell their buildings, or kick out all of the artists on a whim — unfortunately, we are at their mercy. There are very few artist workspaces in the Greater Boston area that are available, let alone affordable.

- If the City of Somerville would like artists like myself to remain here working and thriving, then they could do one or all of the following:

- provide artists with a city-owned building (it does not have to be fancy or new)
- help artists to purchase a building (it does not have to be fancy or new)
- provide long-time Somerville artists, and artists who've been working in Somerville for 5+ years, a stipend to help defray the cost of their studio rent (a contract to prove one's 'working artist status' is a reasonable request)

- I have a wonderful studio mate of color who writes and directs plays, and who is also a photographer of dancers and actors. His presence in my space is a fabulous addition to the visual arts community at Vernon Street and my world. I love meeting the people who frequent his studio, and learning about his world of playwriting, dance, and acting — this is the beauty of having a thriving artist working space in Somerville! His photography business has brought all sorts of creative people to Somerville; these folks learn about a working factory (Rogers Foam); they learn about painters like myself, and they frequent Somerville businesses because they come here to see my studio mate.

- I'm an arts supporter, and Vernon Street Studios which is housed within the Rogers Foam building is just three blocks from my house. It's great to have this beautiful, old brick building in my community. I enjoy meeting the RF factory workers of all backgrounds and knowing that these blue-collar workers are a part of my community. I don't want my neighborhood to be made up of only wealthy people; I enjoy the mixture of classes, artists, and working people that is still Somerville but may not be for much longer.

I ask that you please help to preserve and grow our city's culture. DON'T F WITH FAB!
Thank you for your attention to this important City matter,
Resa

Madalyn Letellier

From: Reid Gilman [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 6:10 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt
Cc: Ellen Waylonis
Subject: Proposed FAB Changes

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Reid Gilman.

I have been a part of the Somerville community for 6 years and I live on [REDACTED]

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am writing to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and the unique culture of our city depends on maintaining the spaces we have. The City of Somerville has said that it values the arts and artists - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Be it artists' open studios or opportunities to train with world-class circus instructors, I benefit tremendously from FABs in Somerville. Easy access to the arts is one of the main draws to living in Somerville.

Thank you for your consideration.

Reid Gilman

Madalyn Letellier

From: Rose Shapiro [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 6:05 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
Subject: Preserve FAB

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Rose Shapiro.

I have been a part of the Somerville community for 6 years and live on [REDACTED] in Inman Square.

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am writing to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and the unique culture of our city depends on maintaining the spaces we have. The City of Somerville has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Thank you for your consideration.

Rose Shapiro

Madalyn Letellier

From: Rebecca Vessenes <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 9:47 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED] Ellen Waylonis
Subject: Preserve FAB District Zoning

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Rebecca Vessenes (she/her). I have been a part of the Somerville community for 10 years, living on [REDACTED].

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am here to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Being able to practice circus arts locally is very important to me -- it allows me to get physical exercise while also engaging in creative expressions. This past fall I performed in the Esh show at the Somerville Armory - a personally meaningful act that I developed and worked on for years at Esh. I likely would not have been able to do so if it wasn't for Esh's location in the FAB district.

I really appreciate how Somerville has celebrated community arts - from Somerville open studios, YART, art booths at Summer Days, and other events. Having local community artists is important and that involves supporting affordable spaces for artists to work and collaborate in. Somerville has already lost so many valuable arts spaces. This city has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Rebecca Vessenes

Madalyn Letellier

From: R W [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 6:20 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: Protect FAB Spaces!

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Hi Somerville City Council & the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Rylee Wrenner and I live at [REDACTED]. I've lived in Somerville for 2 years, and a big part of why I'm still in the city is because I attend classes at Esh Circus Arts. Esh is located in a FAB district on Park Street. I'm writing because I understand the existence of FAB spaces is currently under threat.

The Fabrication District is of utmost importance to the current and future residents of Somerville. Spaces like Esh provide tremendous benefit through anchoring culture in the community, providing livelihoods to artists, and creating experiences that make life better for professionals like myself.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important towards meeting these goals. The City of Somerville has said that it values the arts and artists. You each have an opportunity to prioritize that value now by advocating for the future of FAB.

Thanks for your consideration, and I look forward to following this issue and its outcomes.

-Rylee Wrenner [REDACTED]

Madalyn Letellier

From: sophie kaufman <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 9:23 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]; Ellen Waylonis
Subject: FAB District Zoning

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Sophie Kaufman.

I have been a part of the Somerville community for 11 years, and lived on [REDACTED] for two of those.

I am a staff member and professional circus artist who trains and works at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am here to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Esh is a home to a wonderful community of people who care deeply about their craft, and sharing it with others. Not only do all sorts of people take circus classes there, but it is a space where many valuable acts and full-length shows have been created and brought to the public. Artists need large spaces like this one to train and teach the things that they cannot at home. Many people have the privilege of taking their work anywhere. But circus artists need a space to call home; to hone their ideas, find support from others, and participate in the wonderful arts community of Somerville.

Somerville has already lost so many valuable arts spaces. This city has said that it values the arts and artists. Preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville will show that commitment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sophie Kaufman

Madalyn Letellier

From: Shir Livne [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 5:26 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]; Ellen Waylonis
Subject: FAB

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Shir Livne. I have been a part of the Somerville community for 12 years. I choose to be a part of this community because of the strong artistic presence that places like Esh Circus Arts provide.

I am a staff member and professional circus artist who trains at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am writing to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and the unique culture of our city depends on maintaining the spaces we have. The City of Somerville has said that it values the arts and artists - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Thank you for your consideration.

Shir Livne

Madalyn Letellier

From: susan mcdonald [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 8:56 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; [REDACTED]; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
Subject: Are you kidding??!!

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My name is Susan Corcoran, I have been a resident of Mid-Cambridge for the past 30+ years and have watched as spaces for the performing arts and local spaces for physical wellness have been forced out of the area by high rent and greedy developers. So far I have lost my first studio for aerial arts (of eight years) Aircraft, pushed out of the Ames Envelope Co space in 2017 - it was devastating for the students and circus community. Luckily, many of the students from Aircraft were able to continue aerial and circus arts at Esh Circus Arts on Park Street. Esh has become the leading Boston area center for training in the aerial arts and an important space where everyone can feel free to express themselves in a safe and welcoming environment.

I also lost two of the yoga studios that supported my physical and emotional well-being when O2 Yoga lost their space in Mid-Cambridge (which also housed the only all vegan food outlet in Cambridge) due to an unsustainable rent increase and then could not continue in their original space on Highland Ave in Somerville due to the after-effects of Covid. Affordable, long-term space for artists is imperative and part of the unique culture of our area. If the city of Somerville does value these spaces as much as we do, they need to preserve FAB and keep the arts in Somerville. We have reached a tipping point with the aggressive commercialization of the area, and there are so few spaces left for the arts that are not subsidized. Please support the unique culture of the area by preserving FAB and keeping the local arts of Somerville. Losing these long-term spaces for the arts is devastating to the emotional and physical health of the community and diminishes our few outlets for expression.

Thank you for your consideration,

Susan Corcoran

[REDACTED]
Cambridge, MA

Madalyn Letellier

From: Seth Pate [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 3:01 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
Subject: Against Proposed Changes to FAB Zoning

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Hello,

I first moved to Somerville in 2013. I currently live at [REDACTED].

During that time I've taken classes at Esh Circus Arts, seen concerts at Milk Row Studios, practiced for my own gigs and performed there, too.

I'm a scientist and have no grudge against Somernova. They're part of the community too. I just want to keep the weird stuff in. It's what keeps this a strange and interesting place to live. FAB seems to have been meant to preserve this stuff — so please preserve FAB.

Thanks,
Seth Pate

Madalyn Letellier

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 5:09 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]
Subject: Please Protect FAB Spaces

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Talia

I have been a part of the Somerville community for the last 4 years and live on [REDACTED]

I am also a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am here to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

This is the space where I can come to express myself creatively, which is the heart of what makes Somerville so unique compared to other cities in the Boston area. That is the reason I wanted to move to Somerville as it has a different culture and vibe, which stems from its artistic roots. Esh, in particular, as a "come as you are" community and a great escape from the work I usually do for my day job. It's helped me and so many other students to come move their bodies, be artistic, be happy, and come together. If that were to be lost, a huge part of the culture of Somerville would be lost, and would likely lead to many folks migrating out of the city or not feel invested in the city or even visit. Particularly, with the rise of tech and lab developments, this kind of space is the 3rd space that people can be together outside of the home and school.

Somerville has already lost so many valuable arts spaces. This city has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Madalyn Letellier

From: Tori Markwalder <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 5:18 PM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED]; Ellen Waylonis
Subject: Protect Somerville Art Spaces

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Tori Markwalder.

I have been a part of the Somerville community for almost 10 years and during that time I have been a student, resident, and a staff member at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am here to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

In fact, I moved to Massachusetts from Orlando, FL in large part in order to train at Esh Circus Arts as part of their Professional Preparatory Program. As a professional aerialist and circus artist, Esh is a special place that has been a second home to me, not just to train, learn, and work but also the home of a community where I can safely express myself and make art among other like minded and supportive artists. Without Esh I would not easily be able to practice my art or make a living here as a circus artist.

Somerville has already lost so many valuable arts spaces. This city has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tori Markwalder

Madalyn Letellier

From: Jenn Z <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 15, 2024 11:20 AM
To: Public Comments; All City Council; Planning1; Mayor; Gregory Jenkins; Michael Rosenberg; Rachel Strutt; [REDACTED] Ellen Waylonis
Subject: Save FAB!

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Dear Somerville City Council and the City of Somerville Planning Board,

My name is Jenn Zawadzkas, I have been a part of the Somerville community for 16 years and own a business in the city.

I am a student at Esh Circus Arts, located in a FAB district on Park Street. Esh has been a home for recreational and professional circus artists for more than 14 years, and has been in Somerville for more than 10 years. I am here to tell you how much current and future artists and residents of Somerville need the Fabrication District to protect spaces like this one.

Art is the heart of Somerville! It's what put our wonderful city on the map and, at least used to be one, of the densest artist per capita cities in the US. THIS IS DECLINING BECAUSE OF ISSUES LIKE THIS!

If the trend continues, Somerville will be a bland landscape of box stores, investment properties and will lose the character that makes it so special.

Artist like the students and professionals at Esh contribute significantly to the culture of Somerville, performing at Somerstreets and East Somerville Carnival, vending and volunteering at events like HONK!, Art Beat, Fluff Festival... the list goes on. Without artists these events will not happen and Somerville will be, frankly, quite lame.

Somerville has already lost so many valuable arts spaces. This city has said that it values the arts and artist - please show that now by preserving FAB and keeping the arts in Somerville.

Affordable, long-term space for artists is important, and Somerville needs more. Please help us preserve and grow our city's culture.

Thank you for your consideration.

--

Jenn

always ~ Dream