



November 16, 2023

Honorable councilors,

It is our understanding that the Council is considering amending Somerville's zoning code to expand the requirement for solar and green roofs in the city. While the committee does not feel qualified to speak to the question of how to balance the many factors that go into a change in zoning, *we do wish to express our unanimous support for expanding green roof coverage in the city.*

As we all know, Somerville is small, densely settled, and heavily paved. Our recently published Urban Forestry Master Plan estimates that more than 80% of the city's surface area is impermeable. Impermeable surfaces are limited in the ecosystem services they can provide and contribute to our ongoing challenges with storm water runoff and the heat island effect. Green roofs are one of the few options available with the potential to, over time, make a substantial change in that available surface area. Thoughtfully designed green roofs can provide substantial benefit to pollinators, cool the air, retain some amount of storm runoff, and can even share space with solar power systems.

It is this committee's opinion that Somerville should take every opportunity to think creatively and find ways to get multiple benefits from small space we all share.

Sincerely,

The Urban Forestry Committee of Somerville
Tori Antonino and Leah Grossman - Co-Chairs,