



## CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

February 24, 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, George Proakis - OSPCD, Michael Feloney - OSPCD, Goren Smiljic - ISD, David Shapiro - Law, Tim Snyder - Mayor's Office, Bill Shelton, Charles Sillari - Clerk of Committees

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:00 PM by Alderman Niedergang and adjourned at 7:45 PM.

#### Document List:

- SomerVision Update (with 196221)
- Univ. Accountability (with 200184)
- Univ. Accountability List (with 200184)

#### Approval of the January 26, 2016 Minutes

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>ACCEPTED</b> |
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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 discussed the SomerVision goal and the work being done by his department and Mr. Glavin said that he would like to return to the committee to share the recommendations. Alderman Ballantyne asked about a projected number of units and whether an analysis is being done to check the work. She also asked to receive the reports from the consultants. Mr. Glavin replied that the Planning Department is performing an independent analysis that will make it clearer and more substantial. Chairman Niedergang would like the SomerVision goal of 600 units looked at and possibly increased to 900. He also spoke about the 1% transfer tax. Mr. Feloney would like another study to examine how to use funds from certain fees. Mr. Shelton

stated that that the Planning Department doesn't have a report, due to being understaffed and too busy dealing with orders from the BOA. Mr. Shelton questioned the MAPC methodology because it doesn't consider fiscal impacts.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**196366: That the Director of SPCD submit a plan to create "Middle Class" housing.**

Alderman Ballantyne stated that the genesis for this item came from the mayor's 2014 inaugural address.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**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. Shapiro discussed the city's goal and said that a home rule petition allows the city to have a condo conversion board. There is no legislative history from the 1985 ordinance and case law has invalidated Boston's ordinance. Mr. Shapiro stated that the city must have a process and that a questionnaire is being circulated. Mr. Feloney said that a FAQ page is being drafted. Mr. Glavin explained that the status of a property, whether vacant or not, poses a challenge. Private property owners' rights must be considered. Chairman Niedergang noted that properties are being sold vacant and he asked if there is anything the city could do to protect tenants.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**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. Proakis spoke about keeping track of the zoning system, noting that the new system only goes back to 2014. He also spoke about the per job average based on square footage, (about 250 sq. ft./job). A document, "Status of Goals" was distributed and discussed. Alderman Ballantyne would like more discussion and wants to use best practices on the graphs.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**196188: That the Administration work with this Board to revise the Somervision Plan to provide more detailed goals with regard to affordable housing and the creation of a mix of housing units, especially those with more than 2 bedrooms, for long-term residents of all ages.**

Mr. Proakis said that the zoning overhaul process deals with the bedroom mix. He will set up a steering committee for discussion. Chairman Niedergang discussed studies regarding the

number of people who are looking to live in Somerville. Mr. Shelton discussed the SomerVision process and said that community and diversity are important. He believes that if the steering committee is re-convened, the underlying numbers should be revisited.

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b> |
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**196368: That the Director of SPCD submit a plan on the use of city owned properties as it relates to projected growth identified in the SomerVision Plan.**

Mr. Glavin stated an analysis is being performed and he discussed preserving open space and the Glen Street site. The Powderhouse School site was also discussed.

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b> |
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**199866: That the Director of SPCD (Planning) and the Supervisor of Inspectional Services compile a list of properties citywide that have been granted Zoning or Planning Board approval or building permits in the last 24 months but have not completed construction, including the reasons why.**

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b> |
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**200687: Planning Director submitting an updated response to #199866 re: development projects approved and not completed.**

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b> |
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**200184: That the Administration provide this Board with a written update on the first report of the University Accountability Ordinance.**

Mr. Smiljic submitted a list of properties that were inspected by ISD and described how they were chosen. According to Mr. Smiljic, not all property owners allowed inspectors access to their properties and some hired lawyers. Mr. Smiljic discussed ways to determine if more than 4 people live in a unit. Alderman Ballantyne asked if visual inspections are effective and she requested that a report on the list be submitted to the BOA. Mr. Shapiro discussed the of evidence and administrative search warrants. Some of the addresses provided by Tufts were found to have violations.

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>WORK COMPLETED</b> |
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**200195: Tufts University submitting its Fall 2015 University Accountability report.**

See 200184

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>WORK COMPLETED</b> |
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**200194: Harvard University submitting its Fall 2015 University Accountability report.**

See 200184

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**