

Good Jobs Somerville
3 Lester Terrace
Somerville, MA



New England Regional Council of Carpenters
750 Dorchester Avenue
Boston, MA 02125



May 28, 2015

Dear Alderman White,

We have been informed that Federal Realty Investment Trust (FRIT) has selected Callahan, Inc. as the general contractor for Assembly Row Parcel 6. The New England Regional Council of Carpenters (NERCC) and Good Jobs Somerville know that you share our grave concerns over Callahan's business model and construction practices, including its spotty history in Somerville.

The Somerville Board of Aldermen passed a resolution (#198410) on January 22nd of this year strongly urging FRIT to use all union labor and hire local workers on this project, even explicitly expressing concern over Callahan, the company that has now been chosen. As you know, Callahan has a reputation of choosing subcontractors with histories of wage theft, employee misclassification, and poor worker safety records. These business practices are not what Somerville deserves. For more information about Callahan's labor practices, please visit www.callahantruth.com.

FRIT experienced record profits in 2014, and regularly points to Assembly Row as one of its most successful projects in the country. Parcel 6 will be one of the largest projects in Eastern Massachusetts to be built without 100% union labor, setting a dangerous precedent and undermining the standards of Somerville. Additionally, the rents proposed for Assembly Row will be comparable to similarly sized projects within the Boston metropolitan area which are being built with union labor.

A significant amount of public funding went into making Assembly Square and Parcel 6 feasible, and as such, the public (and you, our elected representatives) deserve a say in how this project is completed. Last December, hundreds of Somerville residents and union members signed letters to Don Briggs of FRIT, urging the selection of a general contractor who would use union labor and hire local tradespeople at Assembly Square. By selecting Callahan as its general contractor, FRIT is ignoring the wishes of residents, tradespeople, and the Board of Aldermen.

Therefore, we respectfully request that the Board of Aldermen communicate its concerns about the selection of Callahan to FRIT, and request that FRIT provide weekly or monthly job, wage, and hiring data about Parcel 6 (either to the BoA or to the Mayor) in order to monitor FRIT's claim that it is providing good jobs for local people.

In Solidarity,

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Somerville Resident
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