

CITY OF SOMERVILLE LAW DEPARTMENT
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Housing and Community Development Committee

From: Eileen M. McGettigan, Special Counsel

Re: Docket #193060, Purchase of Real Estate by Redevelopment Authority

Date: April 2, 2013

Docket #193060 requested that the Director of SPCD:

- a. First provide in writing, a summary of the reasons for the purchase by the Somerville Redevelopment Authority, of the property located at 258 Somerville Avenue, the price for such purchase, the method of funding such purchase and a copy of the relevant urban renewal plan or other document or provision of law that authorizes such purchase of real estate by the Redevelopment Authority,
- b. Also provide, in writing, any additional contemplated purchase by the Redevelopment Authority of real estate and provide the same details as in subpart a above, and that...
- c. ...such written materials [be provided] at least three days before the committee meeting so that members have a reasonable opportunity to review the written materials prior to the meeting.

Response:

a. *Purchase of 258 Somerville Avenue*

The property is a vacant unbuildable 1449 s.f. lot which abutted property already owned by the Somerville Redevelopment Authority (SRA). The SRA entered into negotiations with the owners, John and Erika Carpenter, and agreed upon a purchase price of \$26,000 for the parcel. The SRA used federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to acquire the parcel. The deed was recorded on August 1, 2012. Under G.L.c. 121B, §§11(d) and 46(f), the SRA has the power to purchase property in order to prevent and eliminate urban blight. Copies of these statutes are attached.

b. *Additional Contemplated Purchases*

The SRA is in the process of extending offers to owners of property within the North Prospect Block in accordance with the Union Square Revitalization Plan, approved by the Board of

Aldermen on October 2, 2012, and by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) by letter dated November 19, 2012. If the SRA cannot agree upon a purchase price with these owners, these parcels will be taken by eminent domain. General Laws c. 121B, §11(d) also confers upon the SRA the power of eminent domain. The SRA will fund the property acquisitions with a portion of the \$8,000,000 authorized by the Board of Aldermen for such purpose on October 11, 2012. The Union Square Revitalization Plan is available on the City's website at

<http://www.somervillema.gov/sites/default/files/UnionSquareRevitalizationPlanFINAL.pdf>.

A copy of the DHCD approval letter is attached.

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