



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

City Council Licenses and Permits Committee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 25, 2025

6:00 PM

This meeting was held via Zoom and was called to order by Chair Burnley at 6:00 pm and adjourned at 7:10pm on a roll call vote of 3 in favor (Councilors Pineda-Neufeld, Davis, and Burnley), 0 opposed.

Others present: Rachel Nadkarni - Director of Economic Development, Michael Potere - Licensing Operations Manager, John Doyle - Assistant City Clerk

Roll Call

Present: City Councilor At Large Willie Burnley Jr., Ward Six City Councilor Lance L. Davis and Ward Seven City Councilor Judy Pineda Neufeld

1. Committee Minutes (ID # [25-0374](#)) Approval of the Minutes of the Licenses and Permits Committee Meeting of February 26, 2025.

RESULT: **ACCEPTED**

AYE: City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., Ward Six City Councilor Davis and Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld

2. Public Hearings

- 2.1. License (ID # [25-0500](#)) New Flammables License, POAH Clarendon LLC, 20 Stephenson Aman Street, storing 1,000 gallons.

Chair Burnley opened the public hearing. Jon Springfield with POAH Clarendon, LLC explained they are seeking the license to store approximately 50 cars in the parking garage. Councilor Davis asked if the 1,000 gallons of flammables are from the gas in the cars that are stored in the garage, to which Jon Springfield confirmed it is. There being no other speakers, the Chair closed the public hearing.

The Chair reminded the applicant that the committee's recommendation will be voted on by the full City Council, and the applicant will be informed when the license is issued.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED**

AYE: City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., Ward Six City Councilor Davis and Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld

- 2.2. License (ID # [25-1006](#)) New Garage License, 599 Somerville Ventures LLC, 599 Somerville Avenue, 33 vehicles inside, 0 vehicles outside, Mon-Fri: 8am-6pm, Sat: 8am-2pm, Sun: closed.

Chair Burnley opened the public hearing. Lee Thomas, owner of Somerville Ventures LLC, spoke on behalf of this application. Mr. Thomas explained they are seeking the license to operate the garage that is below a new building project to provide parking for the occupants of the building. The Chair asked Mr. Thomas if his company re-did the bike lane outside the building, to which Mr. Thomas confirmed the bike lane was re-done as part of the construction. Councilor Davis asked Mr. Thomas to specify the alternative modes that are part of the building in addition to the bike lane. Mr. Thomas stated that they will have bicycle storage for 30 bicycles, a new bus shelter, and parking spots for electric vehicles. There being no other speakers, the Chair closed the public hearing.

The Chair reminded the applicant that the committee's recommendation will be voted on by the full City Council, and the applicant will be informed when the license is issued.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED**

AYE: City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., Ward Six City
 Councilor Davis and Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda
 Neufeld

3. Resolution
 (ID # [24-1777](#))

By Councilor Scott

That representatives from Eversource, Comcast, RCN, Verizon and any other service providers appear before this Council to discuss transfers, pole removals and any other overhead service.

Chair Burnley began by explaining that double poles are utility poles that present a nuisance to the community for several reasons, including that most are out of service and are taking up space. Jacqueline Duffy and Jason Wright, representatives from Eversource, talked about a database known as ENGINE which is a system that all utility companies use to identify double poles and have them removed. This database allows these utility companies to coordinate with each other directly. They explained that this is one of the ways they are working to reduce the number of double poles in Somerville. Eversource explained there are currently 7-10 double poles that are on the list to be pulled. Jacqueline Duffy from Eversource encouraged folks to bring poles that are “eye sores” to Eversource’s attention so that it can be dealt with. Councilor Davis asked Eversource if it would be possible to present to the council a report of how many double poles have been removed between the time of this current meeting and when Eversource presents to City Council in approximately six months. He also added that a consistent report to the City Council, twice per year, would be a useful way to track moving forward. Mr. Wright said this is possible and he looks forward to it. Ellen Cummings, Regional Manager of Government Affairs at Verizon, explained that the handout titled "L&P - 2025-06-25 Verizon Somerville DP Report (with 24-1777)" that was discussed is the most updated list of double poles that was pulled from ENGINE today. She explained that there are

approximately 110 double poles in Somerville. Councilor Davis requested that Ms. Cummings make a glossary that defines the terms on the attachment that is being presented as the attachments contain many acronyms and technical material. The Chair said he will get together a map that shows exactly where in the city these double poles are.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

4. Order
(ID # [24-0107](#))

By Councilor Burnley Jr.

That the Director of Economic Development update this Council on efforts taken to inform relevant business owners about the newly implemented closed captioning ordinance.

Rachel Nadkarni, Director of Economic Development, updated the committee on the status of the outreach the department has conducted regarding the new closed captioning ordinance which requires businesses to have closed captioning turned on operating televisions at all times. Director Nadkarni explained that implementing this ordinance can be challenging for the Economic Development Department to navigate and explained that one of the challenges is that business owners often are initially concerned when they see government employees coming into their business due to the political environment in the United States at the current time. The department is currently working on these requests on a case by case basis as they navigate a way to perform outreach without souring their relationship with Somerville's small business community. Chair Burnley asked if Economic Development has talked to the Commission for Persons with Disabilities about this ordinance, to which Director Nadkarni said they have not talked to the Commission since this ordinance was being drafted. Chair Burnley recommended that Director Nadkarni reach out to the Commission on this matter. Chair Burnley asked Director Nadkarni what the department is doing in terms of mailing to businesses. Michael Potere, Licensing Operations Manager with the City Clerk's Office, explained that letters were sent out to businesses during the renewal period, but that these letters did not specifically cite this ordinance. Rather, the letter asked businesses to familiarize themselves with the ordinances and laws of the city. Manager Potere went on to explain that there is a process by which residents can submit complaints to the Licensing Commission if they feel a particular business is violating this ordinance.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

Referenced Documents:

- L&P - 2025-06-25 Verizon Somerville DP Report (with 24-1777)

