

Date: January 31, 2019
To: Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone
From: Appointments Advisory Committee
CC: Kristen Stelljes
RE: Recommendation for Appointments to Zoning Board of Appeals

The Somerville Appointments Advisory Committee (“AAC” or the “Committee”) recommends **Anne Brockelman** for appointment to a full voting position on the Zoning Board of Appeals (“ZBA”). The Committee recommends **Drew Kane** to fill the current vacant alternate position on the ZBA. Because Anne is a sitting alternate member on the ZBA, the Committee recommends the appointment of **Zach Baum** to the position that Anne will vacate if she is elevated to full membership. [REDACTED]

Anne Brockelman has been an alternate member of the ZBA since 2015, and in August 2018 the Board of Aldermen confirmed her reappointment. Anne is an architect and serves as a member of the Massachusetts School Building Authority board of directors. She has worked on a variety of civic and educational projects, including university libraries, state courthouses, and the UMass Lowell campus master plan.

As an alternate member Anne participates in deliberations with the rest of the ZBA members, and she often is required to vote when a full member is absent. In her interview, she demonstrated a depth of knowledge of the workings of the ZBA, the city’s zoning overhaul, and the objectives of SomerVision. We believe she is well prepared to assume the responsibilities of full membership.

Drew Kane is an urban planner and designer and has more than 14 years of experience as a planning and design consultant. He has worked with municipalities on issues including neighborhood master plans, public space design, and zoning policy and zoning codes.

Drew has experience interacting with communities that will be affected by new development. He said that educating the public about the economic rationales for a project and discussions about the impact on public life are important so community members can understand and provide valuable input during the evolution of a project. In working on a development in Detroit, Drew said he witnessed the varied interests of a residential neighborhood and a growing commercial development. According to his application to the AAC, discussions between these two groups about job opportunities, access to amenities, and access to new open space enabled them to find common ground, and the resulting plan prioritized those shared interests. The Committee believes that Drew’s experience and perspective will make him an effective contributor to the ZBA as an alternate member.

Zach Baum is a real estate developer and is a part owner of Bow Market in Union Square. He seeks to join the ZBA because he has an interest in development being done right as a resident and local business owner. Zach is a member of Union Square Main Streets and has appeared before the Planning Board and ZBA in connection with the Bow Market development. The Committee thought that Zach gave thoughtful responses to its questions. He explained that he believes that successful urban environments cater to users at all times of the day. When asked what criteria he would apply to evaluate ZBA applications, Zach said that he would first consider the purpose of the project and would ensure that he understood local community perspective and respected their role in development.

The Committee believes that Zach's first-hand experience with the development of Bow Market will be invaluable to his work on the ZBA, and he impressed the Committee with both his written application and during his interview. We recommend him for appointment as a ZBA alternate member.

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