

Please select the top three areas in which you have working knowledge, strong interest, and/or experience:

Buildings

Municipal and School Operations

Somerville Community-Based Organizations or Advocacy Groups

Statement of Interest:

My name is Corey Donahue, I'm a resident of Ward 2, a climate justice advocate, a parent of a 1-year-old, and a proud member of the Somerville Carbon Free and Healthy Schools Coalition. I'm interested in becoming a member of the Climate Action Commission because I believe it's critical that Somerville does everything it can to reduce carbon emissions and support citizens to afford the energy that they need.

I work in education, doing what I can to ensure that children have the opportunity to have a bright future. However, I've long been terrified of the devastating impacts of climate change in the future for my community, my family, and myself. We already see today the ways in which heat, flooding, irregular weather events, and storms are having negative impacts on our very own community. With water levels rising and average temperatures going up, it will only be worse. I've spent a lot of my adult life doing what I can to push down this eco-anxiety and/or just think about the ways in which I might personally reduce emissions, from riding my bike, turning off lightbulbs, or limiting meat consumption. But this is not enough. I now try to instead advocate for change in my community, especially through the city government.

I moved here about 6 years ago with my wife; we've grown to love the community of Somerville and wish to continue living here for a long time. Because of that, I've gotten involved in local initiatives, learning about the community's past (I'm a docent at the Prospect Hill Tower), present (through joining community events and city-sponsored neighborhood meetings), and future (I've been a leader with the Somerville Carbon Free and Healthy Schools Coalition). Through our group's advocacy for safer schools, we've helped raise awareness of the need for more sustainable and climate-resilient school buildings. In 2024, as part of our advocacy, the City Council and School Committee passed resolutions urging the City to prioritize decarbonization and commit to creating a timeline and plan. The April 2024 Climate Forward plan included, for the first time, goals related to the decarbonization of municipal buildings. As a member of this group, I was selected to advise the City on the future Winter Hill School, including its size and placement as well as

building specifications, giving us a voice to advocate for carbon free and healthy schools. As part of this work, Mayor Wilson has also committed to including a ballot initiative in November 2027 for Somerville residents to not only vote on the funding necessary for a new Winter Hill school, but to also vote on a second simultaneous debt exclusion that will fund improvements to make all SPS schools more energy efficient and carbon free.

In addition, my involvement in the Somerville Climate Ambassadors Program has helped me learn about current emissions in the city, future effects of global warming, and the city's efforts to combat climate change. Through this work, I came to learn how the city can do more to prompt property owners to decarbonize buildings through energy efficiency measures, to create more opportunities for people to safely and efficiently find alternatives to driving (such as walking, biking, and public transportation), and to reduce waste in the city. I'd like to use a position on the CAC to advocate for change, learn from and reflect the viewpoints of the community, and provide critical (and friendly) feedback to the city on its efforts.

I believe that I can bring a new perspective to the commission with a fierce urgency to mitigate our community's contributions to the climate crisis. I believe Somerville has the capacity to be a national leader in its efforts to reduce carbon emissions and I hope to help make the CAC a core part of that. I look forward to hearing from you.