



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

November 6, 2019

REPORT OF THE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Ben Ewen-Campen	Chair	Present	
Stephanie Hirsch	Vice Chair	Absent	
Jesse Clingan	Ward Four City Councilor	Absent	
Mark Niedergang	Ward Five City Councilor	Present	

President Ballantyne appointed Councilor Niedergang to be a member of this committee. Councilor-at-Large Stephanie Hirsch and Councilor Jesse Clingan were unable to attend tonight's meeting.

Others present: Annie Connor, Councilor Lance Davis, Ithzel Polanio-Cabados, Mike Feloney and George Proakis.

The meeting was held in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chairman Ewen-Campen and adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Approval of the September 4, 2019 Minutes

RESULT:

ACCEPTED

Affordable Commercial Space

207068: That the Administration advise this Board on the possibility of creating facilities similar to Bow Market, as start-up or temporary commercial space for small, local businesses displaced as the development of older buildings occurs.

Councilor Davis joined the table to introduce his intention to find ways to create affordable commercial spaces, particularly for small businesses, and his desire to possibly include this in an overlay district in Davis Square and other parts of the city. There were discussions about requiring developers to create a designated affordable commercial space, which does not exist right now. Councilor Davis and Director Proakis recalled that in 2017, during negotiations with a developer, a number of specific proposals were discussed, including setting aside some commercial space as "affordable," and also the creation of retail advisory committee that could advise the City and large developers on supporting local small businesses; this specific deal never went forward. Mr. Proakis reported that there was no formal recommendations at this time. The Economic Development team has been looking at this request, and today frequently

attempts to match up tenants with spaces, at their request. One solution would be to address this through baseline zoning. Mr. Proakis stated it is more complicated to select tenants for affordable office space.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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209140: That the Director of SPCD develop with the Ward 6 Councilor language in the zoning ordinance to require that developers provide affordable commercial spaces.

See item #207068

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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Minority-owned Business Support

208809: That the Administration initiate a Disparity Study to formally evaluate whether Somerville has a basis for implementing race- and gender-conscious contracting policies, and to serve as a baseline for future equity-based policies.

Ms. Connor stated that the Administration is in agreement with Councilor Ewen-Campen that a Disparity Study is an important next step, and is now looking into initiating that process. Ms. Connor met and did some research with the City of Somerville's Purchasing Director, Angela Allen. This is a good step to establish groundwork on preferences and transparency on data collection. Ms. Connor stated that, now that the Mayor's office is now at back at full capacity following recent hires, they should be able to work on a possible Request for Proposals. Ms. Connor also stated this will require lots of work.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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208881: Black Economic Council of MA supporting a Resolution calling for a Disparity Study.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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208882: Welcome Project supporting a Resolution calling for a Disparity Study.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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207749: That the Director of Purchasing report to the Committee on Housing and Community Development the percentage of state-certified minority, women, veteran, and/or disadvantaged business enterprises that have contracts with the City.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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206941: That the Director of Purchasing provide this Board with data on the number of procurement contracts awarded to people of color and women for the past 10 years.

Ms. Connor stated Ms. Allen is working on collecting this data.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

Universal Wait List Update

204990: That the Director of SPCD update this Board on the Affordable Housing Universal Wait List plan and consolidating the process of applying for affordable housing into a single, universal, persistent application, lottery, and wait list.

Mr. Mike Feloney and Ms. Ithzel Polanio-Cabadas provided an update on their ongoing work to create a “Consolidated Wait List,” for all inclusionary rental housing opportunities, and explained that they have begun using the term “Consolidated” rather than “Universal,” as this list will not include Somerville Housing Authority or housing created by non-profits such as Somerville Community Corporation. When asked why the list is specific to rentals, not ownership units, Mr. Feloney explained that ownership units require more time-sensitive, specific documents such as mortgage pre-approvals that are not conducive to a comprehensive waitlist. Mr. Feloney explained that the Housing Division, with help from Christine Koh, had issued an RFP for a consultant to create a Consolidated Wait List, but unfortunately did not receive any proposals by the deadline. He discussed the possibility to split out the Scope of Work into three separate scopes in order to get a response to the RFP, as this could be one reason why consultants were unable to respond; those three scopes are: 1) design of the consolidated list, 2) community outreach effort and 3) implementation (running of lottery and potential ongoing work.) The City of Cambridge has been doing the process for a while without a consultant, but their list is somewhat simpler in that it only has one “emergency” priority category. Mr. Feloney stated the City of Somerville would like three tiers: Current Somerville resident, Currently working in Somerville and health related (currently homeless, domestic violence displacement and unit uninhabitable.) Mr. Feloney also mentioned that they will proactively seek input from institutions such as the Keene Foundation, which are known to be interested in this type of work. This item was kept in committee for regular updates.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

208576: That the Director of SPCD provide a quarterly update regarding implementation of a universal waiting list for affordable housing opportunities.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

206266: That the Director of SPCD, the Director of Housing Stability, or the City Solicitor explain under what circumstances a current resident could be given preference for a deed-restricted unit.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

206233: That the Director of SPCD develop an affordable housing program targeted especially at city employees whose income is below a certain threshold level.

Mr. Feloney stated that OHS does get involved and he will update this information outlining possible concerns/problems.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

205824: That the Administration implement the 2015 Sustainable Neighborhood Working

Group recommendation to include as a preference for inclusionary housing “Families with children in Somerville Public Schools classified as homeless and in temporary out-of-district placements.”

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

207728: That the Director of SPCD discuss an “Urban Renewal Displacee” preference in affordable housing lotteries.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

Nunziato

208811: That the Commissioner of Public Works and the Director of SPCD consider less dust-producing surfaces for the Nunziato Dog Park, and present alternatives, in writing, to the Ward 3 City Councilor.

Councilor Ewen-Campen explained that, given the proposed infrastructure work at Nunziato Park has now been postponed for several years at the earliest, it is urgently necessary to upgrade the dog park to reduce neighborhood odor, dust, and spread of the contaminated stone dust onto the abutting sidewalks. Ms. Connor was not able to get anyone from DPW to respond to this request. She stated that Mike Bowler may be the person to attend to the smells at Nunziato Dog Park. Chairman Ewen-Campen will reach out to Mr. Bowler. The Chairman has also received emails stating that stone dust is not healthy for the parks. Ms. Connor will reach out to DPW to find out who the right person is to respond to this request.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

208987: That the Commissioner of Public Works commence regular sidewalk cleaning outside the Nunziato Dog Park, and provide the Ward 3 City Councilor with a written policy for scheduled sidewalk cleaning.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

HUD Public Charge Rule Change

208266: That the Director of SPCD report to this Council, within 30 days, the impact on our residents if President Trump’s public charge and HUD’s new proposed rule change on public housing is adopted.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

208637: Director of Housing Stability responding to #208266 re: proposed changes to federal housing policy and public charge rules.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

To Close

204377: That the Superintendent of Inspectional Services and the City Solicitor appear at this Board's November 9, 2017 meeting to discuss why developers have gotten building permits without meeting pre-conditions specified in zoning decisions, how the City can more effectively monitor projects for compliance with zoning conditions and other requirements, and what fines and penalties can be levied to deter future violations.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

204405: Superintendent of Inspectional Services responding to #204168 re: stop work orders issued over the last 2 years.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

204443: Director of SPCD requesting to brief this Board on the Clarendon Hills redevelopment proposal.

George Proakis appeared before the committee to give a brief update on Clarendon Hills. There is an update to the previously agreed-upon letter outlining conditions required by the City Council, necessary because the unit count has changed with the prevailing wage requirement. Ms. McGettigan is working on this document. They have just started looking at the 40B application and hoping to have before the Board of Appeals within the next few weeks.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

204671: That the Director of SPCD discuss with the Ward 7 Alderman the traffic strategy and mitigation options for the new projects around Teele Square.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

204995: That the Commissioner of Public Works and the Arts Council Director determine the feasibility of creating a mural (or another graffiti deterrent) on the back side of the Argenziano School.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

205100: That the Administration appear before this Board to discuss a possible Transit and Pedestrian Advisory Group.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

199126: That the Director of Health and Human Services report to this Board on the increase in homeless families and unaccompanied homeless minors, the work of the Homelessness Task Force, and the possible need for city resources to serve them.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED