



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

June 21, 2018

REPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE MATTERS COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Mark Niedergang	Chair	Present	
Lance L. Davis	Vice Chair	Present	
Mary Jo Rossetti	Alderman at Large	Present	
Matthew McLaughlin	Ward One Alderman	Present	
Katjana Ballantyne	Ward Seven Alderman	Present	

Others present: Alderman Ben Ewen-Campen, Eileen McGettigan - Law, Peter Forcellese - Legislative Clerk.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 5:00 PM by Chairman Niedergang and adjourned at 5:45 PM.

Approval of the May 2, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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Approval of the May 7, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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Approval of the May 8, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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Approval of the May 16, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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Approval of the May 17, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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Approval of the May 21, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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206161: Special Counsel submitting a revised Community Benefits Ordinance.

Chair Niedergang said the ordinance should really be called the Neighborhood Council Designation Ordinance. Ms. McGettigan replied that the name “Community Benefits” should remain as the official title since that is the term used in the Development Covenant between the City and the master developer US2. Therefore this ordinance needs to be called the “Community Benefits Ordinance”. Ms. McGettigan recommended that, in the future, there should be created a committee that would be referred to as Community Benefits Committee since paragraph 3 of the Development Covenant states that funds are “to be dispensed....by the Community Benefits Committee....” Ms. McGettigan informed the members that it would be fine to approve this ordinance now since funds that could be dispensed won’t be released from escrow until the first building permit for the first building on the D-2 block is issued, most likely in the late fall. She also said that the city could try to change the covenant language to change the name of Community Benefits Committee to something else.

Ms. McGettigan gave an overview of the contents of this new proposed ordinance.

Sec. II (b) - Alderman Davis inquired what could happen if a future city administration puts forth a neighborhood plan that is not in accord with the vision and ideas of a neighborhood council for that area. He said that, for example, the point has been made that the SomerVision plan is due for a revision and that perhaps some changes need to be made to that overarching strategic plan for the City. He posed the questions: “Are these still the goals we want?” and “If SomerVision’s goals change down the road, should the neighborhood plans be tied to it?” Ms. McGettigan explained that a corporate purpose is never specific. Alderman Ballantyne commented that a neighborhood plan could be changed by the neighborhood.

Alderman Davis stated that the language regarding allegiance by a neighborhood council to the City’s strategic plan and neighborhood plan raises concerns for him about a neighborhood council’s independence. So he made a motion to strike the following language from Sec II (b): ***“and to implement the goals of the city’s comprehensive plan and the neighborhood plan for the neighborhood it represents.”*** The motion was approved unanimously.

Alderman Rossetti asked who determines who get the funds and Ms. McGettigan replied that the Community Benefits funds would be deposited into specific neighborhood accounts. She pointed out that this ordinance only speaks to how the money is held by the city.

Alderman Rossetti made a motion to strike the words ***“organization or”*** from the definition of ‘Neighborhood Council’, saying that it was repetitious and might give the false impression that a neighborhood council does not need to be a non-profit organization. The motion was approved unanimously.

Chairman Niedergang stated that if the Committee approves this ordinance tonight, it would go to the Board of Aldermen at its next regular meeting on June 28, 2018 to be officially enrolled and ordained. He would then schedule a public hearing for consideration of designation of the Union Square Neighborhood Council (USNC) under this ordinance for July 9, 2018. A vote

could then be taken at that same meeting on July 9th if the Board wanted to do so, and would then be confirmed by the full Board at the BOA meeting on July 12, 2018.

Alderman Davis stated that he looked at the definition of Community Benefits and is comfortable that this would not preclude a neighborhood council from negotiating additional benefits, financial or otherwise, from a developer. Ms. McGettigan agreed.

RESULT:	APPROVED AS AMENDED
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205484: That the Administration draft an ordinance to designate a Neighborhood Council as soon as possible.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205483: That the Administration vigorously renegotiate the Development Covenant with U2, consistent with the request of this Board and without additional material provisions that favor US2.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205201: That the Administration work with US2 to amend the Development Covenant to allow this Board to recognize a Neighborhood Council to negotiate a CBA and discuss the amendment with this Board prior to execution.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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203098: Assistant City Solicitor submitting an Ordinance to create a Community Benefits Committee.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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203555: The Chamber of Commerce, Union Square Main Streets, and Somerville Local First submitting comments re: the Union Sq proposed zoning, the US2 Covenant, and the Community Benefits Ordinance.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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203556: The Maurice and Jane Sugar Law Center for Economic and Social Justice submitting comments re: #203098, the Community Benefits Ordinance.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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