

Valerie Locker, CPESC, ISA Certified Arborist – she/her

January 30, 2026

Somerville Conservation Commission
Somerville City Hall
93 Highland Ave
Somerville, MA 02143

Dear Mr. Drayton and members of the Appointments Advisory Committee,

I am a resident and an environmental planning professional with a drive to support how environmental planning of our city bolsters a vibrant and resilient community. As such, I'm excited to apply for a Conservation Commission member position with the City of Somerville. My professional expertise in environmental permitting, combined with my understanding of how to balance future vision with existing regulations/policies, would make me a valuable asset to the Commission.

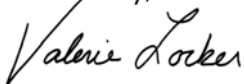
As an environmental and planning project manager, I lead teams navigating complex permitting processes, including MA Wetlands Protection Act and local bylaws/ordinances. I understand how to review project designs for compliance with regulations and how to collaborate with project teams to adapt designs when needed. Not only am I familiar with the complex environmental regulatory framework in MA, but I actively enjoy diving into regulations to understand how they are implemented in different geographies and how that reflects the values of a community.

I have represented projects – ranging from controversial large-scale solar to simple utility surveys – at public meetings and am sensitive to listening to and responding to the concerns of stakeholders. I regularly collaborate with diverse subject matter experts such as ecologists, civil engineers (including stormwater management and transportation/traffic experts), developers, urban foresters, landscape architects, and environmental planners.

As a Conservation Commission member, I would review projects to meet existing regulatory requirements and, when needed, collaborate in identifying potential solutions that support the values and challenges that Somerville faces. I would bring my applied experience to support existing and future open space initiatives, with an eye for integrating climate resiliency and environmental justice.

I have been a resident of Somerville since I returned to Massachusetts in 2021. My husband and I still periodically pause when walking around the city to tell each other with pride, "We live here." I want to contribute back to our community and believe that my technical skills, collaborative approach, and emotional intelligence would be an asset to the Commission. Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to discussing further.

Sincerely,



Valerie Locker, CPESC, ISA Certified Arborist – she/her

