



# City of Somerville, Massachusetts

## Land Use Committee

### Meeting Minutes Dispositions

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**Thursday, May 21, 2026**

**6:00 PM**

**Virtual**

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This meeting was held via Zoom and was called to order by Chair Ewen-Campen at 6:14 pm and adjourned at 7:27 pm on a roll call vote of 5 in favor (Councilors Davis, Clingan, McLaughlin, Ewen-Campen), 0 opposed, and 1 absent (Councilor Sait).

Others present: Fiona DiMartino – Deputy Director of Planning, Preservation, and Zoning, Samantha Carr – City Council Land Use Analyst, Madalyn Letellier – Assistant City Clerk, Legislative Services.

To open the meeting members of the committee gave their thoughts and reflections on these amendments after hearing from the public and after the public hearing.

Councilor Davis shared a general sense of skepticism over the amendments in front of the body related to accessory dwelling units. He stated his viewpoint that the amendments show that the Zoning Ordinance may not be in line with what is happening and is not carrying out the intent for backyard cottages. Councilor Clingan gave context to the intent in 2019 to upzone in Neighborhood Residential (NR) districts and give tenants the opportunity to rent and stay in place. He echoed concerns like Councilor Davis. Chair Ewen-Campen spoke to the narrative presented at the public hearing. Mainly around gentrification and units that are unaffordable being built. The Chair spoke to gentrification being a larger issue than the building types being allowed in the city and what started as an opportunity to create extra space for residents has changed significantly.

#### Roll Call

**Present:** Ward Six City Councilor Lance L. Davis, Ward Four City Councilor Jesse Clingan, Ward Two City Councilor Matthew McLaughlin and Ward Three City Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen

**Absent:** Ward Five City Councilor Naima Sait

1. Approval of the Minutes of the Land Use Committee Meeting of May 7, 2026. [26-0860](#)

Accepted

**Aye:** Ward Six City Councilor Davis, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, Ward Two City Councilor McLaughlin and Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen

**Absent:** Ward Five City Councilor Sait

2. 29 registered voters requesting a Zoning Text Amendment to amend Zoning Ordinance Section 3.1.12 Backyard Cottage. [26-0330](#)

Kept in committee

3. 14 registered voters requesting a Zoning Text Amendment to amend the Zoning Ordinance Section 3.1.12 Backyard Cottage. [26-0329](#)

Kept in committee

4. 14 registered voters requesting a Zoning Text Amendment to amend Zoning Ordinance Section 12.2.2 regarding affordable dwelling units. [26-0328](#)

Kept in committee

5. 29 registered voters requesting a Zoning Text Amendment to amend Zoning Ordinance Section 15.7.2.d Zoning Board of Appeals Board Rules. [26-0327](#)

Kept in committee