



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

City Council Land Use Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 18, 2026

6:30 PM

Joint Meeting with Planning Board

This meeting was held via Zoom and was called to order by Chair Ewen-Campen at 6:31 pm and adjourned at 7:14 pm on a roll call vote of 4 in favor (Councilors Davis, Clingan, Sait, Ewen-Campen), 1 absent (Councilor McLaughlin)

Councilor Sait joined the meeting at 6:33 PM.

The committee went into recess at 6:32 pm and returned at 6:34 PM 5 in favor (Councilors Davis, Clingan, Sait, McLaughlin, Ewen-Campen), 0 absent..

Others present: Fiona DiMartino – Deputy Director of Planning and Zoning, Katherine Wiese – Senior Planner in the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development, Michael Capuano – Chair of the Planning Board, Amelia Aboff – Vice Chair of the Planning Board, Coralie Cooper – Planning Board Member, Jahan Habib – Planning Board Member, Luc Shuster – Planning Board Member, Lynn McNeley – Planning Board Member, Lynn Richards – Planning Board Member, Tom Galligani- Executive Director of Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development, Samantha Carr – City Council Land Use Analyst, Madalyn Letellier – Assistant City Clerk.

Roll Call

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

1. Public Hearings

- 1.1. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-0746](#)) Requesting approval of the Urban Center Housing Tax Increment Financing (UCH-TIF) Zone, Plan, and Form of Agreement for Assembly Square and East Somerville.

Executive Director Galligani and Planner Wiese presented on *Land Use - 2026-06-18 UCH-TIF Assembly Square and East Somerville Presentation v.2 (with 26-0746)* that walked the committee through the benefits of the implementation of this tool. Chair Ewen-Campen asked if this plan was accepted does it commit the city to certain developments, Planner Wiese stated this agreement does not allow any project to be automatically accepted, it still must go through negotiations and approval through the city. The process means the property owner goes to OSPCD to look at the financials of their proposed project and staff would propose it to the City

Council for approval, a public hearing is not required for each project.

Chair Ewen-Campen opened the public hearing at 7:10 PM.

Crystal Huff and Ben Rogan shared support for the tool and its use for affordable housing.

Chair Ewen-Campen closed the public hearing at 7:13 PM.

Public comments will be accepted until Friday July 10th at 12:00 PM and can be submitted to publiccomments@somervillema.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

- 1.2. Zoning Ordinance (ID # [26-0835](#)) By Councilor Davis, Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Clingan, Councilor Link, Councilor Mbah, Councilor Hardt, Councilor Sait and Councilor Wheeler

Proposing an amendment to Section 2.1.1 of the Zoning Ordinance regarding Homeless Shelters.

Councilor Davis introduced the amendment, it is looking to expand where a homeless shelter could be located within the city to better serve residents at need. Land Use Analyst Carr clarified the Commercial Core zones have not been included in the zone, and there are specific use cases of pedestrian designated streets within the High-Rise districts. In response to Planning Board member Aboff Councilor Davis stated his intent was to remove the necessity of the Dover amendment and make shelters possible in more areas within the city. Planning Board Aboff shared perspective that ground floor use is important to shelter as the burden of going up and down stairs or using an elevator can be a limitation to people to use facilities. Planning Board Chair Capuano asked for additional information prior to their next meeting for an overview about what surrounding communities have done related to zoning and permitting for shelters in residential areas. Deputy Director DiMartino stated staff could prepare the information before the next meeting. Chair Ewen-Campen asked if domestic violence shelters are in the same use category, Deputy Director DiMartino stated staff would investigate what other use cases should be looped into the amendment and come back with additional information. Councilor Sait asked for a visual representation of what the amendment would look like if the amendment did and did not include Neighborhood Residential.

Chair Ewen-Campen opened the public hearing at 7:04 PM.

Crystall Huff shared a personal analysis shows 38% of the city is Neighborhood Residential (NR) and would like to see the zoning district included when looking at the amendment for homeless and domestic violence shelters.

Chair Ewen-Campen closed the public hearing at 7:06 PM.

Public comments will be accepted until Friday July 10th at 12:00 PM and can be submitted to publiccomments@somervillema.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

2. Other Business

Public
Communication
(ID # [26-0257](#))

Union 2 Associates, LLC requesting a Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning district of 2 and 9 Union Square, 286, 290, and 298 Somerville Avenue from Commercial Core 5 (CC5) to Mid-Rise 6 (MR6).

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE WITHDRAWN

Referenced Documents:

- Land Use - 6-18-26 Request for Withdrawal of Zoning Map Amendment (with 26-0257)
- Land Use - 2026-06-18 UCH-TIF Assembly Square and East Somerville Presentation v.2 (with 26-0746)