



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS**  
***MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT***  
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April 25, 2013

The Honorable Board of Aldermen  
City Hall  
93 Highland Avenue  
Somerville, MA 02143

Re: An ordinance amending the Somerville Zoning Ordinance (SZO) Section 7.11.9.2 to separate supermarket from general merchandise and department store in the use table and Section 2.2 to add definitions of these uses

Dear Honorable Board of Aldermen:

In keeping with its lawful responsibilities, the Planning Board submits to your Honorable Board its recommendation on an ordinance to separate supermarket from general merchandise and department store in the use table and add definitions of these uses. This amendment was addressed in a staff report provided to your honorable board on February 14, 2013. Planning Staff also submitted this initial staff report to the Planning Board.

On April 18, 2013, at 6:00 p.m. the Planning Board and Land Use Committee of the Board of Aldermen jointly held a duly advertised public hearing in the Aldermanic Chambers in City Hall. The purpose of the hearing was to solicit public comments on the proposed amendments and to evaluate the amendments in the context of testimony received and the findings and analysis of the Planning Staff.

This report from the Planning Board to the Board of Aldermen will focus on the discussion at the April 18, 2013 meeting and its final recommendation.

DISCUSSION DURING HEARING



At the public hearing on April 18, 2013, George Proakis, Director of Planning, explained the proposal as outlined in the staff report. Alderman White asked if a Special Permit with Site Plan Review as opposed to a Special Permit could be required for a change of a nonconforming use in districts where department stores or grocery stores are currently not allowed but may exist and change to another use. Staff indicated that this issue would be investigated.

Two constituents spoke generally in support of the ordinance. Each requested clarification that this amendment was not connected to a recent grocery store amendment for Assembly Square. This amendment does not relate to the grocery store amendment currently pending for the Assembly Square District.

The Planning Board was supportive of the amendment and asked staff to look into the question of whether a Special Permit with Site Plan Review could be required for a change of a nonconforming use.

#### PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATION

Following due consideration, Elizabeth Moroney made a motion to **RECOMMEND APPROVAL** the proposed amendment as laid out in the Planning Staff Report of April 18, 2013. James Kirylo seconded the motion, which carried 5-0.

The Land Use Committee kept the written record open until April 25, 2013. As of April 24 there have been no written comments submitted by the public. There is one more day before the written comment period closes.

Sincerely,



Kevin Prior  
Chair