



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

October 27, 2021
REPORT OF THE LICENSES AND PERMITS COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
William A. White Jr.	Chair	Present	
Wilfred N. Mbah	Vice Chair	Present	
Jefferson Thomas ("J.T.") Scott	Ward Two City Councilor	Present	

The meeting was called to order by Chair White at 6:01pm and adjourned at 6:51pm.

Others present: Nick Antanavica - ISD; Kimberly Wells - City Clerk; Bonnie Denis - Somerville Commission for Persons with Disabilities; Joe Lynch - Licensing Commission

Approval of the September 22, 2021 Minutes

The minutes were accepted on a roll call vote of 3 in favor (Scott, Mbah, White) and 0 opposed.

RESULT: ACCEPTED

204527: Requesting that Eversource meet with this city's Administration to discuss creating a city-wide Host Community Agreement.

Chair White noted that this is not in the purview of this Committee; applicants are entitled to these permits by law.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

212026: Submitted by Verizon to install a Utility Pole 70S near the intersection of Houghton and Prospect Sts.

Councilor Scott verified that nobody from Verizon had been in contact with him. Chair White asked Ms. Wells to contact Verizon in advance of the next meeting and inform them that if nobody responds or appears, this item will be denied. Ms. Wells confirmed she will do so.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

212221: New Garage License, Brazil Auto Repair Inc, 621 Somerville Avenue, 2 autos inside, 0 outside for mechanical repairs only, operating Mon-Fri: 8am-6pm, Sat: 8am-2pm, Sun: Closed.

Ms. Costa and Mr. Paiva shared that they are the new owners but nothing will change from what it has been for the last 20 years. There will be no storage outside.

RESULT:	APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]
AYES:	White Jr., Mbah, Scott

212299: New Garage License, FRIT, 485 Foley Street, 250 autos inside, 0 outside for storing vehicles only.

Mr. Andre, representing FRIT, described that the garage would be constructed as the new garage for the residential Miscela building. Councilor Scott asked about the placement of the entrance and the HP spaces. Mr. Andre confirmed that the entrance is near the train station, and it is a controlled access by the front desk, as there is no public access available.

RESULT:	APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]
AYES:	White Jr., Mbah, Scott

212300: New Garage License, FRIT, 455 Grand Union Boulevard, 611 autos inside, 0 outside for storing vehicles only.

Mr. Andre shared that this is the new office and retail garage where Puma is now located. This garage will be open to the public after normal office hours. Councilor Scott commented that it appears that the entrance is on the south-facing side of the building, with parking beginning on the second floor and Mr. Andre confirmed those facts. Councilor Scott asked if there was an abutting structure and Mr. Andre clarified that the garage extends to level 6 and then the connected building continues to level 13, which is not identified in the plans. Councilor Scott asked about the location of HP spots. Mr. Andre noted that there are 3 ADA van spaces and 8 ADA spaces, for 11 HP spaces in total. Councilor Scott asked if those would be accessible at a reduced cost, and Mr. Andre noted that there are 3 hours free during the times that the garage is open to the public.

Ms. Denis noted that according to the ADA regulations from the state, there should be 12 spaces, and added that there is a lack of expertise in Engineering and ISD in evaluating these plans.

Councilor Scott moved that the City Clerk provide a written report to confirm that the parking spaces meet ADA regulations. The motion was approved on a roll call vote of 3 in favor (Scott, Mbah, White) and 0 opposed.

(At the October 28, 2021 City Council meeting, the City Clerk confirmed that according to the new schema she received, there are 13 HP parking spaces.)

RESULT:	APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]
AYES:	White Jr., Mbah, Scott

212359: That the Director of Inspectional Services, the Chair of the Commission for Persons with Disabilities, and the Chair of the Licensing Commission appear before this Council to discuss permitting and enforcement of accessibility concerns related to outdoor dining.

Chair White noted that there was an outstanding item from the previous meeting, which was regarding a request for documents by Ms. Denis. He shared that the response provided to Ms. Denis was obtained

through utilization of search terms to analyze records. Mr. Shapiro had stated to Chair White that all documents were produced based on the parameters given. Chair White asked Ms. Denis if there were any remaining concerns and Ms. Denis noted that her request was not satisfied, and there were emails that should have been identified with these search terms. She has firsthand experience that the topic has been discussed heavily with many City staff, and does not find it believable that there was no email communication. She added that if the Chair of the Licensing Commission and the Director of ISD had never emailed about outdoor dining, that is also troubling. She further shared an email thread that should have been caught with the search terms, and added that she has been informed that 311 is the only place for complaints, but this thread also indicates that there are other forms for complaints.

Councilor Scott suggested that there may be a misplaced parentheses in the search, which could be the reason for the error, and IT might be able to reformat the search to ensure that the records are supplied.

Chair White elaborated that there is a need to refine the search, but he doesn't believe that there was any malicious intent. He asked Chair Lynch and Mr. Antanavica if they had anything to add and Mr. Lynch noted that Chair Denis is correct, because there are multiple emails that he knows he has sent on this subject. Mr. Antanavica agreed and confirmed that there was a search error and it would be investigated and the emails would be produced.

Chair White offered to connect Ms. Denis with the Mayor's Office and IT to determine how to fulfill this request.

Ms. Denis added that there are further concerns about these records, which included a list of complaints filed. She has concerns about a lack of technical expertise in responding to the complaints. Chair White added that a more robust process for permanent outdoor seating was in progress and Ms. Denis noted that she was told she would be involved in that process. Mr. Lynch clarified that Economic Development is working with the departments who are involved in licensing and permitting and that Engineering, Economic Development, and ISD will be presenting a plan to the Licensing Commission at its November 15 meeting. Mr. Galligani has informed Mr. Lynch that a draft will be shared with departments, including Ms. Denis, before it is presented to the Licensing Commission. Chair White suggested that Ms. Denis be included in the planning, rather than post-draft. Ms. Denis noted that the Commission for Persons with Disabilities exists as an advisory board for this reason. Chair White will follow up about the records request.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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