



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

November 5, 2018

REPORT OF THE CONFIRMATION OF APPOINTMENTS AND PERSONNEL MATTERS COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Jefferson Thomas ("J.T.") Scott	Chair	Present	
Stephanie Hirsch	Vice Chair	Present	
Wilfred N. Mbah	Alderman at Large	Present	
Lance L. Davis	Ward Six Alderman	Absent	
Ben Ewen-Campen	Ward Three Alderman	Present	
Matthew McLaughlin	Ward One Alderman	Present	
Jesse Clingan	Ward Four Alderman	Present	
Mark Niedergang	Ward Five Alderman	Present	
Katjana Ballantyne	Ward Seven Alderman	Absent	
William A. White Jr.	Alderman At Large	Present	
Mary Jo Rossetti	Alderman at Large	Absent	

Others present: Sarah Lewis - OSPCD, George Proakis - OSPCD, Michael Feloney - OSPCD, Rositha Durham - Clerk of Committees.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:03 PM by Chairman Scott and adjourned at 9:50 PM.

204650: Requesting the re-appointment of Kevin Prior to the Planning Board.

This item was withdrawn by the Administration.

RESULT:	WITHDRAWN
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204651: Requesting the re-appointment of Rebecca Lyn Cooper to the Planning Board.

Alderman Niedergang distributed a document titled "Questions for Planning Board applicants for re-appointment." The questions on this document was the starting point of the re-appointment process in tonight's meeting.

George Proakis introduced Rebecca Lyn Cooper. She has been a member of the planning board for three years. Ms. Cooper lives in Ward 5. She is very active in the planning board role and this is the end of her first term. She services as Vice Chair with a background in architecture. Ms. Cooper is very practical in problem solving and often takes notes to understand the

conditions. It was stated by the committee members that she has an impressive background and resume. Ms. Cooper had prepared a statement that she read to the BOA about passion for the work and defending her role. Ms. Cooper talked about her involvement in a couple of projects such as: Bow Street Market and Assembly Row. Ald. Hirsch talked about how many people are still talking the FRIT waiver. She also talked about how to restore the trust and faith in Somerville. The BOA members went around the table to state why or why not they would be supporting the re-appointment of Ms. Cooper.

There was a roll call vote on the reappointment of Ms. Cooper. Aldermen Mbah, White, Ewen-Campen, Hirsch and McLaughlin voted in favor of re-appointing Ms. Cooper. Aldermen Scott, Clingan and Niedergang voted against re-appointing Ms. Cooper. The vote was in favor of the re-appointment.

Ald. Hirsch asked Ms. Connors if the Mayor plans to put through new appointees/candidates for the expired positions. The Mayor's office is working on a list, but no timeline when the list will be available.

RESULT:	APPROVED. [5 TO 3]
AYES:	Hirsch, Mbah, Ewen-Campen, McLaughlin, White Jr.
NAYS:	Scott, Clingan, Niedergang
ABSENT:	Davis, Ballantyne, Rossetti

204653: Requesting the re-appointment of Gerard Amaral as an Alternate Member of the Planning Board.

Alderman Hirsch recused herself from this item. This meeting of the Whole Committee was requested by Alderman Niedergang. Mr. Amaral was introduced by Sara Lewis. It was stated that Mr. Amaral has a wide variety of expertise and personalities. He has been involved in Land Use, long term Somerville Planning Board, Architect, and politician. He has six years of service as a solid board member and remains objective when things gets heated in the meeting. Alderman Niedergang distributed his list of questions to all BOA members and others in the meeting. The committee asked Mr. Amaral for a couple of examples when he disagreed with the planning board's recommendation. He stated there were not many disagreements on his part and he had not voted on many cases that he could remember. He also stated he is a big advocate for air quality in buildings. Mr. Amaral stated he would vote against something if he felt it was wrong. There were questions about the public process and Mr. Amaral's role. Mr. Amaral was asked about his role in the FRIT waiver, which he stated he did not vote on that item. He also talked about how mistreated he felt when he walked outside after a previous meeting. Ald. Clingan talked about the frustrations from the residents feeling that their voices are not heard. Ald. White asked if Mr. Amaral had ever voted against the planning staff. Ald. Scott stated there were concerns around Mr. Amaral's contribution, sense of expertise and was asked why he applied to be on the planning board. There were comments from the committee about restoring faith and trust in the city, to push back on developers and being able to navigate tough meetings. All BOA members stated their reasons for not re-appointing Mr. Amaral, except Ald. White stated in favor of the re-appointment. Ald. Ewen-Campen motioned to not re-confirm the re-appointment. There was a voice vote and six BOA members voted not to reconfirm the re-appointment, except Ald. White who voted in favor of the re-appointment.

RESULT:	NOT APPROVED
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206454: Requesting the re-appointment of Michael A. Capuano to the Planning Board.

Mr. Proakis introduced Mr. Capuano to the committee for re-appointment. Mr. Capuano is now the Vice Chair of the planning board. He is a lifelong resident of Somerville and has been on the planning board since 2008. Mr. Capuano stated he voted against the FRIT waiver. He has a long history of development and general planning. There were discussions about getting the Union Square project right. There were also discussions about several changes in the past being controversial and was asked how many changes have been to the benefit of the developer. The BOA members went around the table stating their reasons for voting for or against the re-appointment. The Ward 2 Alderman stated that his ward does not feel like they are represented in the meetings. A voice vote was called and all BOA members, except the Chair voted in favor of the re-appointment. The re-appointment was approved

RESULT:

APPROVED

205041: Requesting the re-appointment of Zachary Zasloff to the Condominium Review Board.

Aldermen Niedergang and McLaughlin recused themselves from the Condominium Review Board discussions. Mr. Feloney introduced Mr. Zasloff to the BOA. He moved to Somerville 17 years ago and spent six years renting. Mr. Zasloff talked about his role on the CRB to make sure the community is heard. He is an independent thinker and does not necessarily side with city staffers. Mr. Feloney stated he reviews the CRB minutes but does not always agree with them. In the January meeting, the minutes stated that all permits would be voted by February 26. This has not happened yet. The chair that the BOA is working on a new condo conversion ordinance and will send to the CRB soon. A voice vote was taken and all voted in favor of re-appointment.

RESULT:

APPROVED

205042: Requesting the re-appointment of Daniel Maltzman to the Condominium Review Board.

This item was withdrawn by the Administration.

RESULT:

WITHDRAWN

206912: Requesting the appointment of Patricha Paul to the position of Condominium Review Board member.

Mr. Feloney introduced Ms. Paul to the BOA. There is an urgent need to fill the position since the CRB has not had a quorum in some time. Ms. Paul was selected by the housing board. She already serves on the Women Commission and may require a waiver as a special municipal employee. The committee will have legal present to the BOA on November 8th on waivers for special municipal employees. Ald. Ewen-Campen has heard wonderful things about Ms. Paul. Ms. Paul stated she comes from all different aspects of housings and has a passion for tenants' rights. All were impressed with Ms. Paul and that she is already contributing to the community. There was a voice vote and all voted in favor of appointing Ms. Paul to the CRB.

RESULT:

APPROVED

204659: Requesting the re-appointment of Dick Bauer to the Historic Preservation Commission.

Ald. Ewen-Campen recused himself from this item and Ald. Niedergang rejoined the meeting. Sarah White, Preservation Planner, introduced Mr. Bauer to the committee. There are two ordinances that the Historic Preservation Commission oversees, demolition review and local historic buildings. Mr. Bauer has been on the commission for a very long time and has chaired for many years. There were questions about what is meant by “preferably preserved.” There were discussions about the Holman’s Building status. Also discussions about the new ordinance regarding demolition and city owned buildings would be exempt. Mr. Bauer does not think that city owned buildings should be exempt. There were also discussions about not everyone living in a historic building has historic money. Questions were asked how to define hardship. The commission would look at the specifics of the property and financial health of the owners. There was a voice vote and all voted in favor of re-appointing Mr. Bauer.

RESULT:

APPROVED

Handout:

- Questions (with 204650, 204651, 204653, 206454)