

October 27, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in strong support of Somerville's application to the Fossil Fuel Free Demonstration Program to become one of the first 10 communities in the Commonwealth to be allowed to restrict the use of fossil fuels in new construction and major renovation projects. The City of Somerville is submitting this proposal on behalf of the community, and we urge you to approve it.

The need for fossil fuel restrictions in new construction and major renovation projects is particularly urgent in densely populated Somerville. Residential and commercial buildings are mostly occupied by renters who have limited ability to influence decisions about a building's major systems. Landlords therefore have little incentive to make improvements that will reduce dependence on fossil fuels. A destructive cycle of higher energy burdens and declining public health is the result.

Poor air quality stemming from combustion of fossil fuels, such as oil and gas, often disproportionately impacts Somerville's most vulnerable residents and contributes to childhood asthma and adult chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). In fact, COPD is one of the leading causes of hospitalization and death for Somerville residents. Requiring new and renovated buildings to be fossil fuel-free will reduce the incidence of these illnesses and lead to a healthier environment for all residents.

To prevent the damaging downstream impacts of locked-in fossil fuel systems, it is critical that buildings built today are built fossil fuel-free. We believe that Somerville's participation in the Fossil Fuel Free Demonstration Program will improve public health and accelerate the city's efforts to become carbon net negative.

As an MBTA and Housing Choice community with a demonstrated commitment to equity and climate action, Somerville is uniquely positioned for success in this program. We are eager to lead the way in creating cleaner, more resilient residential and commercial properties that reduce indoor and outdoor air pollution and increase energy efficiency.

Sincerely,

Rachel Schwarz

A thick black horizontal bar used to redact the signature of Rachel Schwarz.

Department of Energy Resources  
100 Cambridge St #1020  
Boston, MA 02114  
*Transmitted via email to [green.communities@mass.gov](mailto:green.communities@mass.gov)*

October 2023

RE: Letter of Support for Somerville's Fossil Fuel Free Demonstration Program Application

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Kate Burgess, and I'm writing as a former Somerville Climate Ambassador in strong support of Somerville's application to the Fossil Fuel Free Demonstration Program to become one of the first 10 communities in the Commonwealth to be allowed to restrict the use of fossil fuels in new construction and major renovation projects. The City of Somerville is submitting this proposal on behalf of the community, and we urge you to approve it.

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Thank you for your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

Kate Burgess



Department of Energy Resources

100 Cambridge St #1020

Boston, MA 02114

Transmitted via email to [green.communities@mass.gov](mailto:green.communities@mass.gov)

October 2023

RE: Letter of Support for Somerville's Fossil Fuel Free Demonstration Program Application

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of Green & Open Somerville in strong support of Somerville's application to the Fossil Fuel Free Demonstration Program to become one of the first 10 communities in the Commonwealth to be allowed to restrict the use of fossil fuels in new construction and major renovation projects. The City of Somerville is submitting this proposal on behalf of the community, and we urge you to approve it.

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Thank you for your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

Renée Scott

Department of Energy Resources  
100 Cambridge St #1020  
Boston, MA 02114  
*Transmitted via email to [green.communities@mass.gov](mailto:green.communities@mass.gov)*

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Thank you for your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

Anjana Sukumar

October 27, 2023

Department of Energy Resources  
100 Cambridge St #1020  
Boston, MA 02114

*Transmitted via email to [green.communities@mass.gov](mailto:green.communities@mass.gov)*

RE: Letter of Support for Somerville's Fossil Fuel Free Demonstration Program Application

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of Community Action Agency of Somerville, Inc. (CAAS) in strong support of Somerville's application to the Fossil Fuel Free Demonstration Program to become one of the first 10 communities in the Commonwealth to be allowed to restrict the use of fossil fuels in new construction and major renovation projects. The City of Somerville is submitting this proposal on behalf of the community, and we urge you to approve it.

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CAAS helps local families and individuals achieve financial security while working to eliminate the root causes of economic injustice. We promote opportunities for Somerville residents in

education, employment, housing, health, and improved neighborhood life, and empower low-income communities whose civic engagement has been obstructed or discouraged by oppression and discrimination. Since its founding in 1981, CAAS has been the leading advocate for low-income Somerville residents, not only advocating for them individually, but also pushing for broader systemic change. Each year we leverage the work of 100 employees, more than 300 volunteers, and \$11 million in federal, state, local and private funding to support over 600 low-income households through early childhood education, housing stability services, free tax filing, and community organizing. Our vision for Somerville is for a city where no one lives in poverty, where we support each other through strong community structures, and where the opportunity to thrive is a lived experience for every resident.

Environmental justice is a key component of economic justice, and support for this proposal is consistent with the fulfillment of our mission. Thank you for your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,



David Gibbs  
Executive Director

Department of Energy Resources  
100 Cambridge St #1020  
Boston, MA 02114  
*Transmitted via email to [green.communities@mass.gov](mailto:green.communities@mass.gov)*

October 2023

RE: Letter of Support for Somerville's Fossil Fuel Free Demonstration Program Application

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing as a member of Somerville's 2023 Climate Forward Ambassador cohort in strong support of Somerville's application to the Fossil Fuel Free Demonstration Program to become one of the first 10 communities in the Commonwealth to be allowed to restrict the use of fossil fuels in new construction and major renovation projects. The City of Somerville is submitting this proposal on behalf of the community, and we urge you to approve it.

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Thank you for your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

Michael Hendrix

2023 Class of Somerville Climate Forward Ambassadors



Department of Energy Resources  
100 Cambridge St #1020  
Boston, MA 02114  
*Transmitted via email to [green.communities@mass.gov](mailto:green.communities@mass.gov)*

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Sincerely,

Anjana Sukumar

Department of Energy Resources  
100 Cambridge St #1020  
Boston, MA 02114  
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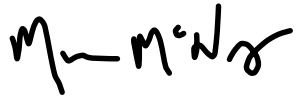
According to Somerville Climate Forward, "new development is anticipated to occur at an annual growth rate of over 1% in both residential and commercial sectors." The Fossil Fuel Free program presents an opportunity to accelerate workforce development in the clean energy space. Contractors, home energy raters, architects, designers, electricians, plumbers, landscapers, and more will be galvanized by this program. The City, our partners, and members of the workforce, will work together to learn how to implement and deploy new, fossil fuel-free technologies and practices on a wider scale. Over time, this will have both economically and environmentally beneficial effects in the broader region.

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Thank you for your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael McNeley". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "M" and a cursive "McNeley".

Michael McNeley



Department of Energy Resources

100 Cambridge St #1020

Boston, MA 02114

Transmitted via email to [green.communities@mass.gov](mailto:green.communities@mass.gov)

October 26, 2023

RE: Letter of Support for Somerville's Fossil Fuel Free Demonstration Program Application

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of the Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA) in strong support of Somerville's application to the Fossil Fuel Free Demonstration Program to become one of the first 10 communities in the Commonwealth to be allowed to restrict the use of fossil fuels in new construction and major renovation projects. The City of Somerville is submitting this proposal on behalf of the community, and we urge you to approve it.

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The Mystic River Watershed Association is a nonprofit environmental advocacy organization that started in 1972. The organization centers environmental justice and works to create healthy communities throughout the 21 communities of the watershed. We are active in the climate space. We started the Resilient Mystic Collaborative (RMC) in 2018 to bring our municipalities together for collective action to create a watershed more resilient to a future climate. This work is consistent with our vision for a future that sharply reduces the carbon footprint and creates healthier communities.

Thank you for your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Herron". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a stylized "P" and "H".

Patrick Herron  
Executive Director