

Madalyn Letellier

From: S Lee [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 15, 2025 10:40 PM
To: Planning1; All City Council; Public Comments
Subject: Support for more community space - arts, mixed use, teen

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Hi,

I am writing as I understand there will be a land use meeting Thurs.

I want to give my strong support to initiatives that prioritize community space such as those for arts, community events and teen space.

Somerville is a great city but needs more good community space - ideally, free and low cost where people, families, kids can gather and connect and build.

Thank you for your focus on this key issue,

Susan Lee

Ward 3 resident

Madalyn Letellier

From: Tom Bent [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 17, 2025 12:42 PM
To: Public Comments
Subject: Letter in Support for Somernova's Campus Expansion
Attachments: CITY COUNCIL.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Please forward the attached letter to the City Council.

Thanks,

Thomas Bent
Founder
Bent Electrical Contractors Inc.
O [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

IBEW Local 103





COMPLETE ELECTRICAL, FIRE ALARM AND SECURITY SYSTEMS • DESIGN, INSTALLATION AND SERVICE

[REDACTED] Somerville, Massachusetts 02143
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Somerville City Council
Somerville City Hall
93 Highland Avenue
Somerville, MA 02143

Subject: Support for Somernova's Campus Expansion

Dear Members of the Somerville City Council,

On behalf of the Somerville Chamber of Commerce, I write to express our strong support for the Arts & Innovation Overlay District and expansion of Somernova's innovation campus. As a hub for entrepreneurship and emerging industries, Somernova plays a critical role in fostering economic development, job creation, and business innovation in Somerville. Its expansion presents an invaluable opportunity to further strengthen our city's commercial tax base while advancing our position as a leading center for innovation in climate-tech and much more.

Somerville faces ongoing fiscal challenges due to its historically limited commercial tax base, which places a disproportionate burden on residential taxpayers. In order to ensure a sustainable financial future for our city, we must prioritize economic growth by supporting projects that drive commercial investment and generate long-term revenue. The expansion of Somernova represents precisely the type of development that will help balance our tax structure, creating high-quality jobs and economic opportunities while alleviating the tax burden on residents.

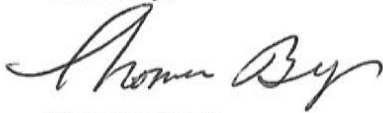
However, for such projects to be viable, they must be financially feasible. Somerville's extensive permitting processes, coupled with rising fees and regulatory requirements, create significant barriers to development. While we recognize the importance of responsible planning and community engagement, we must also acknowledge the need for streamlined processes and pragmatic policies that allow businesses to invest in our city without undue financial strain. If we do not foster a more predictable and efficient development environment, we risk losing crucial economic opportunities to neighboring communities with more competitive policies.

The Somerville Chamber of Commerce urges the City Council and the administration to support Somernova's expansion and, more broadly, to evaluate the policies that impact commercial investment in Somerville. We must work together to ensure that our city remains an attractive destination for businesses, entrepreneurs, and investors who contribute to the vitality of our

economy. By embracing growth and innovation, we can build a stronger and more prosperous Somerville for all.

We appreciate your leadership and consideration on this matter and welcome the opportunity to further discuss how we can support economic development in Somerville. Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas Bent". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Thomas" and last name "Bent" clearly distinguishable.

Thomas Bent

Founder, Bent Electrical Contractors Inc.

Chairman Government Affairs Committee, Somerville Chamber of Commerce

Madalyn Letellier

From: Jennifer Park [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 18, 2025 5:13 PM
To: Planning1; All City Council; Public Comments
Subject: Support for Arts & Innovation Subarea Zoning on Somerville Avenue
Attachments: Letter of Support from Jennifer Park_ Owner Bloc Cafe and Forge Baking Co. & Ice Cream Bar.docx.pdf

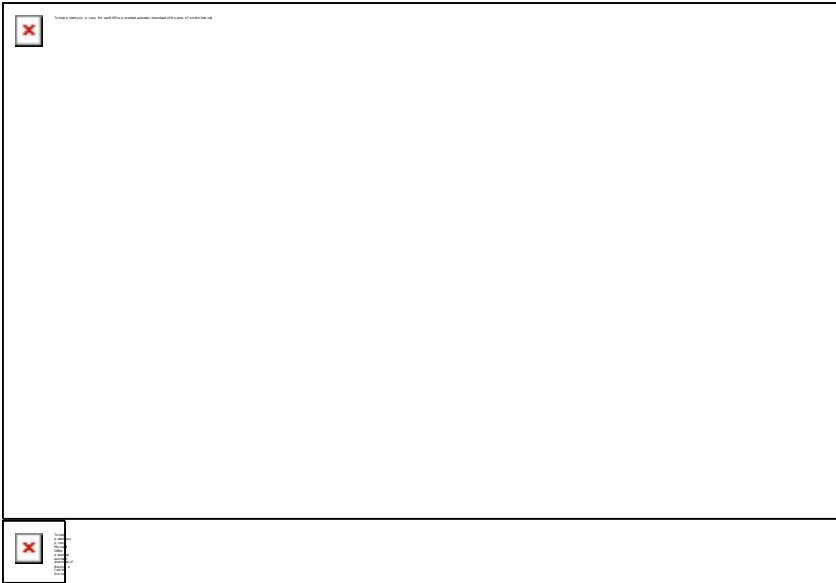
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Hello All!

I wish I could be at the meeting on Thursday evening to show my support in person, but unfortunately, I have a prior commitment.

Please see my attached letter of support!

Best,
Jennifer





Jennifer Park
Owner/Founder



Somerville, MA 02143



Somerville Land Use Committee & Planning Board
Somerville City Council
93 Highland Ave.
Somerville, MA 02143

Dear Members of the Land Use Committee and Planning Board,

As a neighboring business owner in Somerville, I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed Arts & Innovation Subarea Zoning Overlay District in the Central Somerville Avenue corridor. As the owner of three Somerville based businesses, I have seen firsthand how the intersection of artists, makers, and climatetech entrepreneurs has fueled creativity, collaboration, and community growth in Union Square. The proposed zoning changes will not only sustain this energy but amplify it, bringing new opportunities for small businesses like mine and strengthening the cultural and economic fabric of our neighborhood.

Somerville thrives because of its diversity—of people, of industries, and of ideas. This zoning update will create a dynamic environment where the arts and innovation collide, producing something truly special. A stronger, more interconnected ecosystem of creators and entrepreneurs means a livelier, more engaged community, where local businesses benefit from increased foot traffic, greater collaboration, and an expanding customer base.

From an economic perspective, these changes are a clear win. By allowing for strategic growth in climatetech while securing dedicated spaces for artists and makers, the city is ensuring that Somerville remains a destination for those who seek inspiration, innovation, and culture—all of which drive more visitors, more local spending, and more opportunities for small businesses. As new companies and creative professionals establish themselves here, they will need places to meet, gather, and fuel their ideas over coffee, meals, and shared experiences.

More importantly, these zoning changes will help preserve what makes Somerville special. We've all seen neighborhoods in the Greater Boston area lose their character due to unchecked development that prioritizes profits over people. This proposal strikes the right balance—it supports economic growth without displacing the artists and small businesses that give Union Square its unique heartbeat.

I urge the Land Use Committee and Planning Board to approve this amendment and ensure that Somerville remains a thriving hub for innovation, creativity, and local business success. I look forward to participating in the upcoming discussion and ask that you confirm whether I may join in person or remotely.

Thank you for your dedication to shaping a vibrant, inclusive, and forward-thinking future for our city.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Park

Owner/Founder

Diesel Cafe, Bloc Cafe, Forge Coffee Baking Co. and Ice Cream Bar

Madalyn Letellier

From: Joe Curtatone [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 18, 2025 10:27 PM
To: Planning1; All City Council; Public Comments
Subject: Letter of Support for The Proposed Arts & Innovation Sub-Area Zoning Overlay District in The Central Somerville Avenue Corridor
Attachments: Letter of Support- ACT.pdf
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear Land Use Committee and Planning Board Members,

Attached please find a Letter of Support from the Alliance for Climate Transition (ACT) for the proposed Arts & Innovation Sub-Area Zoning Overlay District in the Central Somerville Avenue corridor. Thank you.

Joe Curtatone

Joseph A. Curtatone
President



ACT | The Alliance for Climate Transition

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



March 18, 2025

Dear Land Use Committee and Planning Board Members,

On behalf of the Alliance for Climate Transition (ACT), I am writing to express our strong support for the proposed Arts & Innovation Sub-Area Zoning Overlay District in the Central Somerville Avenue corridor. These zoning amendments represent an important step in ensuring that Somerville continues to be a hub for both climate tech innovation and the creative economy by supporting the expansion of climate tech businesses while protecting essential space for artists and makers.

As an organization committed to accelerating the just and equitable transition to a clean energy future and diverse climate economy, we recognize the critical role that Somerville plays in advancing climate tech solutions. However, we also acknowledge that rapid industry growth must be balanced with thoughtful planning to support longstanding creative communities. The proposed zoning changes take a proactive and equitable approach by allowing for larger and taller buildings to accommodate climate tech firms while reserving dedicated space for artists and makers to continue thriving.

We commend the City of Somerville and its community stakeholders for their inclusive and transparent approach to this process. Through the Five-Point Plan, extensive public meetings, and community engagement, the city has shaped a zoning strategy that prioritizes both economic growth and cultural preservation. The Arts & Innovation Zoning Overlay District is a necessary step to ensure that Somerville remains a model for sustainable development and inclusive economic growth.

Thank you for your leadership in shaping policies that support sustainable innovation while maintaining Somerville's rich artistic and cultural landscape. We look forward to continued collaboration in building a future where both climate innovation and creativity flourish together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joseph A. Curtatone".

Joseph A. Curtatone
President
Alliance for Climate Transition (ACT)

Madalyn Letellier

From: Andrea Aparicio [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 5:40 PM
To: Public Comments; staff
Subject: Arts & Innovation Overlay District

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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March 18, 2025

Somerville City Clerk,

Somerville Bike Kitchen (SBK) is a volunteer-run, community-driven bicycle repair space where people of all backgrounds can learn, share skills, and keep their bikes rolling. When we found ourselves in need of a new location, we explored numerous avenues within both the private sector and local government, searching for a place that aligned with our values of accessibility, community, and sustainability. Somernova welcomed us, offering not just a physical space but an environment where we could grow and thrive. Since the summer of 2023, Somernova has been our home, providing us with the space and support needed to continue our mission. Since the move, our community engagement has more than doubled, with twice as many visitors coming through our doors to repair their bikes, learn new skills, and connect with others who share a passion for biking.

Beyond providing space, Somernova has been a strong ally and supporter of our broader community efforts. They have facilitated and encouraged SBK's hosting of events such as bike repair workshops, swap meets, and skill-sharing sessions, which bring people together and promote cycling as an accessible, empowering mode of transportation. Additionally, the Dojo at Somernova has been an amazing resource for youth programming and community-centered organizing, allowing us to expand our impact and provide more opportunities for people of diverse backgrounds to build connections.

As a largely volunteer-run, grassroots group, we are well aware that Somerville sorely lacks accessible community space. Flexible, low-barrier-to-entry spaces where neighbors can gather, help one another, exchange ideas, and connect are essential to fostering a true sense of community.

Sincerely,

Somerville Bike Kitchen Staff