
April 28, 2022

Mayor's Appointments Advisory Committee

City of Somerville

93 Highland Avenue

Somerville, MA 02143

Dear Members of the Appointments Advisory Committee:

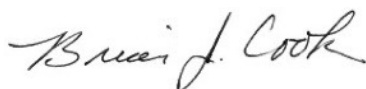
Please accept this letter and accompanying resume in application for one of the open seats on the **Somerville Zoning Board of Appeals**.

Although a recent transplant to Somerville, having moved in February 2021 to live near immediate family, I am no stranger to Massachusetts. I lived in Worcester for 24 years, raising a family and serving as a tenured member of the faculty of Clark University before pursuing other career opportunities at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg and Alexandria, Virginia. Since arriving in Somerville, I have been keenly interested in how this dynamic small city is navigating the challenges of preserving its past, strengthening its resilience, and improving its livability, all while growing and changing as it must. Serving on the Zoning Board of Appeals offers a valuable opportunity to contribute to enhancing Somerville's quality of life.

As my resume of selected experience shows, my principal expertise is in teaching, research, and community service in public administration and public policy. Nevertheless, over the course of my career I have been connected to most of the areas of expertise considered beneficial for service on the Board. To highlight just two such connections, while at Virginia Tech I was centrally involved in the creation of a state-wide land use education program for local planning and zoning board members in Virginia, and early in my career I worked in community planning and development and in support of the architecture and design profession.

If you require additional details about my background or interests through a scheduled interview or other means, my contact information can be found below and on my resume.

Sincerely yours,



Brian J. Cook





Brian J. Cook

Profile

Doctorate in Government & Politics with specialties in public administration, environmental policy design, and urban politics and public policy. Retired after 40 years of teaching, research, professional practice, and community engagement at the federal, state, and local levels.

Selected Experience Relevant to Zoning Board of Appeals

PROFESSOR AND CHAIR, CENTER FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION & POLICY, COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN STUDIES, VIRGINIA TECH, 2008-2019

Coordinated with faculty in Urban Planning and Agricultural Extension to establish a state-wide Land Use Education Program to train members of local planning and zoning boards in Virginia. Worked closely with local practitioners and faculty in Urban Affairs and Planning to establish an interdisciplinary local government management certificate program. Served on college-level committees evaluating the scholarship, teaching, and professional practice of faculty in Urban Affairs and Planning, Architecture + Design, and Landscape Architecture.

DIRECTOR, MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM, COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL AND CONTINUING EDUCATION, CLARK UNIVERSITY, 2005-2008

In addition to overseeing program design and delivery and teaching courses, established connections with city and town officials in Central Massachusetts to provide opportunities for student engagement with pro bono services to local communities, including citizen satisfaction surveys and program evaluations.

PROFESSOR OF GOVERNMENT, CLARK UNIVERSITY, 1984-2008

Served on several committees engaged in campus planning and facility design and construction. Taught courses in Environmental Management, American Politics, Research Design, and related topics.

POLICY ANALYST, OFFICE OF AIR AND RADIATION, U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, 1997-1999

Assessed existing programs and developed new programs to reduce urban air pollution, including the linkages between land use, transportation, and air quality. Devoted special attention to the environmental justice implications of the disparate spatial impacts of air pollution control programs, and to the ways in which brownfields redevelopment can improve air quality.

DIRECTOR, RESEARCH AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT, AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS, 1979-1982

Conducted research and advised the Executive Vice President and AIA board on initiatives to support the national architectural profession. Worked closely with other AIA staff to developed advocacy positions on major legislation and regulatory programs affecting the work of architects, including architecture and engineering standards for the built environment, land use planning, and environmental quality. Also served as research advisor to a committee led by the Architect of the Capitol conducting a national survey of historic buildings.

PROGRAM ANALYST, COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, 1977-1979

Part of the team that analyzed data and designed research to evaluate the Community Development Block Grant program. Lead staff person for Urban Development Action Grant small cities regulations. Worked with localities on the preparation of and implementation plans for their CDBG and UDAG grant proposals.

Education

PhD, Government and Politics, University of Maryland, 1984; MA, Government and Politics, University of Maryland, 1982; BA, Political Science, Cleveland State University, 1977

Skills

Extensive training in formal policy analysis and applied statistics. General familiarity with land use law and zoning ordinances. Well versed in the complex interplay of urban economies, state and local policy and politics, transportation planning, and residential, commercial, and industrial development and revitalization.