



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

CLERK OF COMMITTEES

April 12, 2017

REPORT OF THE LAND USE COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Lance L. Davis	Chair	Present	
Mark Niedergang	Vice Chair	Present	
William A. White Jr.	Alderman At Large	Present	
Matthew McLaughlin	Ward One Alderman	Present	
Maryann M. Heuston	Ward Two Alderman	Present	
Robert J. McWatters	Ward Three Alderman	Present	
Tony Lafuente	Ward Four Alderman	Absent	
Katjana Ballantyne	Ward Seven Alderman	Present	
Mary Jo Rossetti	Alderman at Large	Present	
John M. Connolly	Alderman At Large	Present	
Dennis M. Sullivan	Alderman At Large	Present	

Others present: Michael Glavin - OSPCD, George Proakis - OSPCD, Tom Galligani - OSPCD, Annie Connor - Legislative Liaison, Charles Sillari - Clerk of Committees.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:12 PM by Alderman Davis and adjourned at 8:36 PM.

202853: Requesting an updated amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to create new CCD-55 and CCD-45 Commercial subdistricts, a new Coordinated Development Special Permit, a new Union Square Overlay District, and related changes to Article 5 and the Zoning Map.

Mr. Galligani discussed development costs of other communities. Alderman White said he would like to see information from Boston and Cambridge on open space requirements and inflow/infiltration mitigation.

Alderman Niedergang asked about additional height in Union Square and asked if D1 would be a high rise tower. Mr. Proakis said open space was considered when increasing density and explained how the shadow study impacted the proposed ordinance. Alderman Niedergang asked if he could get shadow studies for the D6 block and inquired to what the height the tallest building could be.

Mr. Proakis explained that open space is set in a manner to get commercial development. He said the effort is to try to achieve SomerVision's goals. Mr. Proakis noted that there are

community goals and ecological goals and sometimes, ecological goals can't be met because it would require using valuable land in a transit oriented area.

Pedestrian circulation and civic space were discussed and the neighborhood plan of civic space was more than doubled. Additionally, a neighborhood park is required. Mr. Proakis said civic space must be on its own lot. The committee discussed how certain requirements would be enforced and were told that there would be a phasing plan, setting out an order in which things must occur.

Alderman Heuston wants the move into zoning to be proactive and not reactive and said that creating open space in Union Square is important and it's needed in the overlay, adding that anything outside the overlay is a bonus. Mr. Proakis said that developers must stick to expectations and that open space must get built in the phasing. Alderman Rossetti asked if the plan has anything that encourages roof top green spaces and Mr. Proakis spoke about the challenges involved and discussed white roofs, solar panels and green roofs. He said that detail in the zoning shouldn't be a priority. Alderman Rossetti stated that she has been dealing with this subject on the high school building project. Mr. Proakis said an increase in building size is a way to make up for the increased green space.

Alderman McLaughlin is worried about things that aren't guaranteed and offered Assembly Square as an example. Alderman White said he recalls presentations where much of Assembly Square was supposed to be commercial. He cited reasons why some things at Assembly Square won't work in Union Square and said that he wants things to be concrete, adding that the zoning map is one of the strongest ways accomplish this. Mr. Proakis said the special permit strategy is a strong mechanism.

Ald Ballantyne asked about commercial office and R/D office percentages. She expressed concern about relocating the public safety building and the costs the city will have to bear. The committee was told that there will be close to one million square feet of development in Union Square and that hotels bring in a great deal of taxes. Mr. Proakis said residential development will continue to do well however, commercial development could be tricky when it comes to financing and may not bring money into the city as quickly as residential.

Mr. Proakis said he is ready to submit the plan for Boynton Yards and Alderman Ballantyne feels this is being kicked down the road. Mr. Proakis said the Union Square plan is basically on the 60/40. The phasing is set out so that developers must adhere to certain development time lines to ensure commercial/residential splits are met. Alderman White would like consultants to look at the plan. Mr. Proakis discussed the ability of the BOA to put phasing requirements into the hands of the BOA and not the Planning Board. Alderman White suggested taking the language from the covenant and incorporating it into the zoning. Alderman Connolly asked about the covenant and spoke about the 60/40 requirement. Alderman Niedergang doesn't believe 60% is enough commercial development in Union Square and he is not happy with the phasing. Alderman Sullivan said people are concerned about the increased expenses of the city, adding that commercial development would ease the burden. Mr. Proakis explained again how requiring commercial development first could cause delays, noting that it sometimes take a while to find commercial tenants.

Alderman Niedergang commented that he is not a fan of the master land disposition and Alderman White said that if the city doesn't pass the zoning, the disposition can be re-negotiated.

Chairman Davis said that what constitutes commercial development is always a concern and he expressed concern that there is no mechanism ensuring the commercial portion will be built in a meaningful. He suggested a lien on the residential until the commercial is finished or holding up a C of O.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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202854: Requesting an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to adjust the definition of Net Floor Area, clarify affordable housing required in RA and RB districts, and confirm the process to approve subdivisions, lot splits, lot mergers and lot line adjustments.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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202852: Requesting the adoption of an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance map to rezone Emerson Street and a portion of Everett Street to Residence B.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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202864: Proposing an updated Article 16B in the city's Zoning Ordinances, with attendant Zoning Map changes, to establish a minimum mixed use ratio in designated areas.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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Handouts:

- 20170406 USOD_PBSubmittal
- Development Costs Comparison
- USQ Shadow Study
- USQ Shadow Study-2
- USQ Zoning Presentation 4-12-17