



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
SOMERVILLE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

**JOSEPH A. CURTATONE  
MAYOR**

*NANCY A. BUSNACH*  
*CHAIR*

**MINUTES**

Somerville Redevelopment Authority  
Thursday, February 7, 2019 at 5:30 p.m.  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room, City Hall  
93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA

Present from the Somerville Redevelopment Authority (SRA): Nancy Busnach (Chair), Iwona Bonney (Secretary), William Gage, Phil Ercolini and Ben Ewen-Campen. Also present were Eileen McGettigan as Special Counsel, Thomas Galligani as Director of Economic Development and Sunayana Thomas as Senior Economic Development Planner.

Nancy Busnach, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM. Open session commenced. A quorum was present.

**Documents and Other Exhibits Used at the Meeting**

- i. Notice of Meeting and Meeting Agenda
- ii. Draft January 10, 2019 Minutes
- iii. Montaje Affordable Unit Certification Memo
- iv. Revised Draft Memorandum of Agreement

**Discussion and Actions Taken**

**1. Approval of January Minutes:**

- Motion by Iwona Bonney, seconded by William Gage
- Mr. Ercolini' s last name spelled incorrectly
- Unanimously approved with noted corrections

**2. Introduction of New SRA Member – City Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen**

- Ms. McGettigan introduced and welcomed Councilor Ben Ewen–Campen to the Board. She stressed the importance of having four members to have a quorum and requested that each member notify Ms. McGettigan with a confirmation of attendance or notification of absence.

### 3. Assembly Square Update

Sunayana Thomas and Tom Galligani provided the update for Assembly Square

- Retail/Restaurant openings:
  - Block 5A
    - Top Shelf – opened in December
    - La Cucina – now open
  - Block 5B
    - Lease signed with Puma for 150,000 SF out of 275,000 SF building. Anticipated number of employees is 550 with 100 new positions. No manufacturing on site only design and sales office.
  - Block 6
    - Assembly Dental – now open
  - Block 11
    - Parelli Optical – opening in May
    - AR Nail Bar – opening in April
- Alloy affordable housing lottery completed
- Montaje is 98% leased, 95% occupied with 4 affordable units awaiting approval.
  - Mr. Ercolini questioned how many project based vouchers versus tenant vouchers were available and requested a written response from Director of Housing.
- Estimated total number of employees at Assembly including Partners is roughly 6,000.

### 4. Union Square Update

Ms. Thomas provided the update for Union Square.

- MEPA – US2 submitted the DEIR to MEPA on January 15, 2019 and included revisions related to the comments provided by the SRA. The MEPA comment period is open through February 22, 2019 and US2 expects to receive the MEPA certificate with feedback by March 1, 2019.
- DSPR – The City Planning Department has organized a D2 Development Update meeting on February 12, 2019 to review alternate design efforts, underground parking, cost estimates and peer review, possible temporary parking locations, and opportunity zones. In parallel, US2 is preparing the DSPR application to formally begin the Planning Board process and anticipates filing later this month.
- CBA Negotiations – The weekly meetings between US2 and the Union Square Neighborhood Council (“USNC”) have continued into 2019 and US2 is optimistic about getting a CBA finalized.

- D2.1 Lab Co-Development Partner – US2 continues to work with the prospective Lab Co-Development Partner to facilitate development and construction of the D2.1 commercial project. The parties are currently finalizing the documentation for the transaction. Demonstrating D2.1 land control, including the City-owned D2 parcel, will be required to complete the transaction.
- GLX – US2 met with GLX leadership and the City of Somerville in January and continue to work through construction schedules, logistics and related easements between the D2 project and the GLX project.
- Mr. Ewen-Campen questioned if US2 has announced their commercial development partner and if SRA has any approvals left to provide to US2.
  - Ms. McGettigan explained that they will need to come before the SRA for an estoppel certificate relating to the Master Land Disposition Agreement.

## **5. 90 Washington Street – Demonstration Plan and MOA Discussion**

- Ms. McGettigan noted that the City Council will review the MOA through the Finance Committee on Monday. The MOA was updated based on Ben Ewen-Campen’s comments.
- Mr. Gage raised his concerns regarding the site accommodating mixed use and open space and having sufficient parking.
- Ms. Busnach raised concerns regarding the contaminated soil and environmental remediation and requested that the Cobble Hill residents be included in the community conversations as direct abutters.
- Mr. Ercolini questioned whether a needs assessment was completed for the purpose of relocating the Public Safety building.
- Mr. Galligani explained that a needs assessment was completed by Weston and Sampson and 90 Washington was determined to be the best site to accommodate the needs of both facilities.
- Ms. Thomas added that the Feasibility Study conducted by Weston and Sampson includes needs assessment data about the existing facility and how those goals relate to spatial requirements. Ms. Thomas also mentioned that the City will convene a Public Safety Complex Building Committee to determine how much of the site will be needed for the Complex. A public engagement process is also outlined in the plan to explore strategies and design concepts for achieving the community goals.
- Ms. McGettigan pointed out that there are no tenants that will need relocation assistance.
- Mr. Ewen-Campen noted that parking could be feasible on this site but it’s too early to find a solution. This area is designated as an Opportunity Zone which could be an incentive financially.

- Ms. Bonney noted that incorporated open space would make it more of a neighborhood than it is today.
- Alderman McLaughlin, as a meeting attendee and Ward Councilor for the project area, provided his comments in support of the SRA acquiring the property by eminent domain because the community has waited too long and emphasized the need to ensure development happens on this site. He supports the Demonstration Plan and the potential for a mix of uses on site.
- Ms. Busnach asked Ms. McGettigan what is the process and timeline requirements for this project.
- Ms. McGettigan explained that the Board could vote to approve the Plan and MOA with the condition that it be revisited if the City Council requests any changes. If the Council approves the MOA without any further edits and votes to appropriate the pro tanto payment as required by the MOA, then the SRA could vote the Order of Taking at the next SRA meeting. The Plan requires a simple majority vote of the Council but 8 votes would be required for the Council to appropriate funding for the pro tanto payment.
- Ms. Bonney questioned if Mr. Ewen-Campen's vote will be counted twice since he is also a City Councilor.
- Ms. McGettigan clarified that he is not a Councilor as a member of the SRA. However, the home rule petition was not clear regarding voting rights.
- Mr. Galligani explained that while both parties will approve the demonstration project plan and the MOA, only the SRA can vote to approve the Order of Taking and only the City Council can approve funding for the pro tanto payment.
- Ms. Bonney questioned whether this would be challenged in court.
- Ms. McGettigan noted that the SRA has the authority to take the property pursuant to M.G.L c.121B Section 46(f). Accordingly, the SRA will be the title holder on the property.
- Mr. Ewen-Campen noted that if we as the City were to move forward, we will have to compromise.
- Ms. Busnach requested guidance from the Law Department regarding Mr. Ewen-Campen's role and the conflict of interest statute.
- Mr. Gage raised the concerns of avoiding conflicts similar to the Union Square developer selection process.
- Mr. Galligani and Ms. Thomas assured the board that it will be a collaborative effort between the City, SRA and the community.

**Vote:** To approve 90 Washington Demonstration Project Plan

- Motion by William Gage, seconded by Iwona Bonney
- Unanimously approved

**Vote:** To approve revised Memorandum of Agreement and authorize Nancy Busnach to sign if no changes are made by the City Council

- Motion by Iwona Bonney, seconded by William Gage
- Unanimously approved

**6. Other Business Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair**

- Ms. McGettigan noted that there are three vacant SRA positions; one to replace Anne Tate, the second to replace Nancy Busnach, and the third the new position created by the Home Rule petition which expanded Board membership. The Appointments Advisory Committee has selected two candidates: Patrick McCormick to fill Anne Tate's long vacant position and Emily Hedeman to replace Nancy Busnach. The Confirmation of Appointments Committee has not yet put either of the candidates on their agenda. In the meantime, Nancy Busnach will continue to serve until her successor is confirmed.
- The Board was reminded to complete the Conflict of Interest training and to provide copies of their completion certifications to Ms. Thomas.

**7. Selection of Date for Next Meeting**

- Next regular meeting will be on March 7, 2019 at 5:00 p.m.

**8. Adjournment**

- Motion to adjourn by William Gage; seconded by Ben Ewen-Campen at 6:31pm.