



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SOMERVILLE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

NANCY A. BUSNACH
CHAIR

MINUTES

Thursday July 20, 2017

3rd 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, and Phil Ercolini. Absent: Anne Tate. Also present were Eileen McGettigan as Special Counsel, Thomas Galligani as Director of Economic Development, Emily Hedeman as Urban Revitalization Specialist, and Lauren Drago as Economic Development Assistant.

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

Documents and Other Exhibits Used at the Meeting

- i. Notice of Meeting and Meeting Agenda
- ii. Draft Minutes from the June 8, 2017 Meeting

Discussion and Actions Taken

1. Approval of Minutes:

Vote: Approve the June 8th, 2017 Regular Meeting minutes.

- Motion to approve minutes made by Iwona Bonney, seconded by Phil Ercolini.
- Unanimously approved

Vote: Amend and approve the April 27th, 2017 Regular Meeting minutes.

- Eileen McGettigan stated that a typo was made in the set of minutes, Ms. Busnach's name was listed twice, and Mr. Gage's name was excluded in the executive session roll call vote. Mr. Gage was present and had voted in favor of entering the executive session.
- Motion to amend and approve minutes made by Iwona Bonney, seconded by Phil Ercolini.
- Unanimously approved.



2. Assembly Square Update:

Emily Hedeman gave updates on Assembly Square.

- Ms. Hedeman stated that Trader Joe's, anticipated to open the first week in August, is actively hiring.
- Ms. Busnach inquired whether the location of the job fair is the final location of the Trader Joe's store.
- Ms. Hedeman stated that the hiring location was a temporary location in Assembly Row, and the final location of Trader Joe's would be in the Assembly Square Marketplace.
- Ms. Hedeman gave an overview of upcoming Assembly Row events, including Bar Stars, the Sylvester Baxter Riverfront Park Summer Movie Series, Race to the Row, Riverfest, and the Brown Box Theater project performing *Hamlet* outdoors.
- Ms. Hedeman reviewed the most recent retail tenants to begin operations including Columbia, Fragrance Outlet, Title Boxing, and upcoming tenants of Orangetheory Fitness, Sabroso Taqueria, Zo Greek, and Caffè Nero.
- Ms. Hedeman noted that for the residential uses, Alloy at Assembly Row condos are over 90% sold. With exterior finish installation underway, ten residences remain for sale. Montaje rental apartments are being leased and the first move-ins will be in late September.
- Ms. Bonney inquired regarding the new pizza restaurant opening in Assembly Square.
- Ms. Hedeman stated that Midici recently had their liquor license approved and the Economic Development team wrote a letter of recommendation in favor of their application. She will follow up on the opening date if available at the next meeting.
- Ms. Hedeman stated that FRIT sent out job surveys to restaurants and retailers, and is expecting results by the end of the week. Staff from the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development ("OSPCD") will compare survey results with previous analysis periods and present the results during an upcoming SRA meeting.

3. Union Square Update:

Thomas Galligani, Eileen McGettigan, and William Gage gave updates regarding Union Square redevelopment.

- Mr. Galligani stated that after the SRA meeting on June 8th, 2017 the Union Square Zoning was approved by the Board of Aldermen in the early hours of the 9th, after which the Development Covenant, tied to the zoning, was signed by the Mayor.
- Mr. Galligani recognized that getting the zoning and the covenant approved was a momentous occasion and that the next step will be for the Master Developer to submit a coordinated development plan sometime this fall. There is 2.3 million SF of development opportunity.
- Mr. Galligani recognized community input, feedback, and the hard work of the Board of Aldermen.

- Mr. Galligani stated that the Neighborhood Council Working Group continues to move forward. Mr. Galligani asked Mr. Gage for feedback and supplemental information on Neighborhood Council Working Group meetings.
- Mr. Gage stated that the Neighborhood Council Working Group was trying to get neighborhood buy in to the neighborhood council concept. Mr. Gage stated that the opposition was not to the concept, but to the timing and that people within the neighborhood wanted more time.
- Ms. Busnach recognized the contributions of the working group.
- Mr. Gage stated that there were over 250 in attendance at the Neighborhood Council Working Group meeting. Mr. Gage stated that some of the vocalized complaints were that there was not enough involvement from different neighborhood groups. Mr. Gage stated that significant outreach was done prior to this meeting and that the Neighborhood Council Working Group is looking to meet again in September.
- Mr. Galligani stated that the Neighborhood Council Working Group was looking for two-thirds majority vote on the neighborhood council.
- Mr. Gage stated that the Neighborhood Council Working Group may have put a high a bar on approval, but that he was hopeful for future progress in September.
- Ms. McGettigan stated that the Community Benefits Ordinance was before the Legislative Matters Committee, but because of what happened during the election process and the Aldermen realizing that the money to fund the community benefits fund is in escrow until building permits are received, that there is no rush for the Community Benefits Ordinance. There is the opportunity to have a public hearing and take the time to do it right and there is no sense of urgency. Alderman Rossetti, the chair of the Legislative Matters Committee, stated that some people were very concerned that if there was no Neighborhood Council organized by the neighborhood, the Mayor would intervene and create his own group.
- Ms. McGettigan stated that the city will not create its own Neighborhood Council and will proceed diligently and move forward on the ordinance. The next sets of meetings are in September and the City is looking to end up with a better ordinance.
- Ms. Busnach expressed thanks to Mr. Gage for his time spent on the Neighborhood Council Working Group.
- Mr. Gage expressed that his time spent with the Neighborhood Council Working Group is worthwhile. Mr. Gage inquired whether staff could arrange for US2 to be at the next SRA meeting for a presentation of what their plans are now that the MLDA is approved and they are getting ready to file with the Commonwealth and the City.
- Ms. McGettigan stated that she received some feedback on the MLDA from the Department of Housing and Community Development (“DHCD”). Their main concern is that the regulations state that the master developer has to implement the plan and those exact words are not within the MLDA, even though they are implied. There will need to be a small amendment to the MLDA, which will require a vote, to include the specific language requested by DHCD.
- Ms. McGettigan stated that the Goodyear site has been sold to Hamilton Development, which may be a challenge in the future to US2 executing their plan, related to family affordable housing potentially sited on that parcel.

- Mr. Gage inquired as to the current status of Mr. Fahey.
- Ms. McGettigan stated that the Fahey matter would be discussed during the executive session.

4. Other Business Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair

- No other business.

5. Selection of Date for Next Meeting:

- Next regular meeting will be September 14, 2017.

6. Adjournment of Open Session:

Vote: Adjourn the Open Session of the June 8th meeting and enter into Executive Session for the purpose of litigation strategy regarding the Prospect Iron & Steel, Chapien, Fahey, and Murrow matters. The Chair stated that the board would not be reconvening in open session.

- Motion made by Phil Ercolini. Iwona Bonney seconded the motion. A roll call vote was held.

William Gage: Aye

Iwona Bonney: Aye

Phil Ercolini: Aye

Nancy Busnach: Aye

Unanimously approved. Open Session adjourned at 5:51pm.

7. Executive Session- Litigation Strategy

8. Adjournment