



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

**JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR**

*NANCY A. BUSNACH
CHAIR*

MINUTES

Thursday, December 10th, 2015

Present from the Somerville Redevelopment Authority: Nancy Busnach (Chair), Iwona Bonney (Secretary), William Gage, and Rebecca Schrumm. Also present were Eileen McGettigan as Special Counsel, Michael Glavin, Executive Director of the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development, Edward O'Donnell, Director of Economic Development, Amanda Maher, Senior Economic Development Specialist, and Ben Sommer, Economic Development Assistant.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Nancy Busnach, Chair. A quorum was present.

1. Approval of Minutes:

- William Gage stated that in regards to the October 8th minutes, he was not present at that meeting. William Gage also stated that in regards to the November 12th, his name be changed from "Bill Gage" to "William Gage."

Vote: Approve the October and November minutes.

- Motion to approve minutes with the above-noted corrections made by William Gage, seconded by Iwona Bonney.
- Unanimously approved.

2. Assembly Square Update

- Edward O'Donnell provided an update on Assembly Square, including that the project is becoming widely recognized as a model of transit oriented development internationally citing a recent tour of two Mexican developers and the City's collaboration with Audi on self-parking cars which will be tested in Assembly in 2018.
- There will be a series of gift wrapping parties at the Assembly Row Welcome center from Friday the 11th through the 24th. A donation of \$5 for a wrapped gift will go towards a local charity.
- Amanda Maher provided information on a workforce development program taking place in Assembly. Federal Realty and Callahan Construction have teamed up with the Somerville High School's Center for Vocational and Technical Education's building trades program to have students finish two apartment units on Block 6. Students will work to finish build out, including plumbing and electrical.

3. Union Square Update:

- O'Donnell provided an update on Union Square developments.
- There was a public meeting on the Post Office development on Tuesday, December 1st, at the Argenziano School. The developers, Union Square Partners, highlighted the diversity of uses in their plan including offices, co-working space, and an entertainment venue. They are also looking to preserve the historic character of the building and utilize historic tax credits. One thing the community requested was that they keep the WPA mural in the lobby and allow public access to it.

a. Report of LOCUS Strategy Leaders Process

- O'Donnell provided information on the LOCUS process. The process began on Wednesday, November 19th, with the opening session going from 1-9pm in the Council Chambers. This was followed by a multi-lingual drop-in session on Tuesday, December 2nd in the Argenziano School. The process, facilitated by Chris Leinberger of LOCUS, works with strategy leaders representing many constituencies in the Union Square area compiling strategy cards and coming to a consensus that will be recommended to the Union Square Civic Advisory Committee (CAC) and the City to inform public benefits strategies. Next Locus meetings will be January 13th and 14th, 2016.
- William Gage is representing the SRA as a strategy leader for the LOCUS process and provided an update on his work. Amanda Maher distributed documents pertaining to the LOCUS process, including strategy cards and the briefing book. Eileen McGettigan gave a summary of the documents.
- William Gage gave summary of his choices on the strategy cards.
- McGettigan asked that feedback from the other SRA members on the strategy cards be emailed to her. She will compile members' feedback and send to William Gage and LOCUS. Feedback should be sent before December 30th as the next LOCUS meeting will happen before the next SRA meeting.
- William Gage stated that the process felt very collaborative and positive. There were remaining questions on Boynton Yards and Grand Junction which was not part of the Urban Renewal Plan. Gage also asked LOCUS to set up a meeting with the Davis Square Task Force which went through a similar process and was successful.

b. Green Line Extension Update

- O'Donnell updated the SRA on the progress of the Green Line Extension. Everything is on the table from rebidding to cancelling the project. More than \$700 million in State funds are already committed. On Thursday December 10th the MBTA cancelled contracts with four contractors on the project including construction, design, and others.
- The Mayor, Ed O'Donnell, and Brad Rawson, Director of Transportation and Infrastructure, are looking for solutions from cost adjustments to increased revenue streams.

4. Other Business

- Thursday, January 14th, 2016 at 5:30pm will be the next SRA meeting. The meeting will be held at Somerville City Hall, 3rd floor conference room.
 - Ed O'Donnell and Amanda Maher both announced their departure at the end of the year. Nancy Busnach, Chair, commended them on their service to the City of Somerville. Michael Glavin expressed that even with O'Donnell's and Maher's absence, the City will be continuing its programs and projects under his oversight.
5. Motion to adjourn by Iwona Bonney and seconded by Rebecca Schrumm. Unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 6:06pm.