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February 7, 2007

**REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEES ON FINANCE AND  
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

The Committees on Finance and Housing and Community Development convened on February 7, 2007, in Joint Session, with Chairmen Maryann Heuston and Rebekah Gewirtz presiding and Committee Members Aldermen Bruce Desmond, Dennis Sullivan, Robert Trane and William White also present and voting. Also present were Phil Ercolini, Steve Winslow, Mark Friedman, Arne Franzen, Jackie Jackson and Maria Ortiz from SPCD and Meghann Ackerman from the Somerville Journal.

Mr. Friedman reviewed the 1-year Action Plan and told the members that this is the 5<sup>th</sup> and final plan under the 5-year action plan. HUD directed that the plan assume level funding and Mr. Friedman noted that Congress will level fund the programs but there will be more communities involved, so the actual funding that reaches Somerville may be reduced by about \$5,000. The plan will be submitted to HUD on Feb 15, 2007 and includes new funding as well as funds being carried forward. Mr. Friedman told the members that the input obtained from citizens and city departments is compiled at SPCD and viewed against the 5-year action plan to come up with a final proposal. A public hearing was held recently and Chairman Heuston requested that the transcript from that public hearing be forwarded to the members.

Alderman White requested that pie charts be provided for as many years as possible to be used for comparison and he also requested an amortization schedule for the Section 10B loans.

Alderman Desmond, noting that there is a lack of playground equipment geared to children with disabilities, was informed that ADA funds could be used to provide ADA approved playground equipment for children with disabilities.

Alderman Sullivan stated that the city needs to do more to assist the homeless and asked if the number of homeless is tied to the amount of funding received for shelters and similar programs. Mr. Friedman explained that the federal government applies its own formula to calculate the amount of funding provided.

Alderman Sullivan also asked that SPCD keep the Disabilities Commission in the loop on projects that might concern them.

Mr. Ercolini informed the members that HUD asked Somerville to participate in an effort to end chronic homelessness within 10 years. He noted that local businesses and religious agencies were asked to participate and the only one to step forward was Tag's Hardware.

The committee discussed matters before it and took action on the following item:

**182605:** Communication from Mayor - Requesting approval of SPCD's proposed

1-Year Action Plan for the Federal HUD CDBG, HOME, and ESG programs,  
totaling \$4,791,462.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Should be approved

**VOTE:** Unanimous, 6 - 0 in favor

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Alderman Maryann Heuston, Chairman  
Committee on Finance

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Alderman Rebekah Gewirtz, Chairman  
Committee on Housing and Community Development

**COMMITTEE REPORT**

Report of the Joint Committees on Finance  
and Housing and Community Development,  
February 7, 2007

In Board of Aldermen

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Clerk