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December 4, 2008

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LAND USE
MEETING IN JOINT SESSION WITH THE PLANNING BOARD

The Committee on Land Use met with the Planning Board on December 4, 2008 with Chairman Sean O'Donovan presiding and Committee Members Aldermen Maryann Heuston and Thomas Taylor also present and voting. Also present were Aldermen Bruce Desmond, Rebekah Gewirtz, Walter Pero and William White. Also present were Jessie Baker from the Mayor's Office, Monica Lamboy of SPCD, Madeline Masters from the Planning Department, Matthew Buckley and John Gannon of the Law Department, Steve Mackey of the Chamber of Commerce and several other interested members of the public

Ms. Lamboy addressed the committee regarding the proposed plan for Union Square. She spoke of the imbalance between housing and jobs compared to Cambridge and Boston. She also discussed the history of Union Square and the possibilities for Union Square's future. She discussed ways to make Union Square transit friendly and how the proposed plan for Union Square will call for increased open space.

Ms. Masters discussed building design standards and pedestrian concerns. She emphasized floor area ratio and how it would impact proposed development. She also discussed parking requirements, linkage fees and the arts overlay district. Ms. Masters also addressed dimensional and landscaping requirements and how developers will be impacted by the proposed ordinance.

Rob May gave an overview of the Transit Oriented District and how it would impact parking requirements. He also spoke on affordable housing and proposed designed for the Kiley Barrel site, Boynton Yards and the Prospect Street bridge. He addressed the Committee on how the proximity to public transit will decrease the need for parking spaces.

Alderman Connolly noted that the Green Line extension should be considered in the future development of Union Square. Monica Lamboy explained that the proposed designs utilized the incoming Green Line. Alderman Connolly also discussed his concerns with the height of proposed buildings. Alderman Desmond also expressed some concern regarding the proposed heights of buildings.

Alderman White expressed his concern over the lack of commercial development in the city and how special permits could hinder development. Alderman Heuston expressed her concern over the location of affordable units and noted that many of said units are located in Ward 2. Ms. Lamboy discussed timelines

for development stages and how developers will be impacted. Mr. Capuano of the Planning Board expressed concern with the height requirements and number of stories allowed. Kevin Prior expressed his approval of the plan.

A public hearing was held and interested members of the public were given the opportunity to speak on the subject. Attorney Adam Dash spoke on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce and gave some suggestions as to make development easier for small businesses. Union Square businessman Ken Kelly spoke in favor of the plan citing ways it would enhance life in Union Square. Wig Zamore spoke about the importance of bringing a commercial tax base into the city. Attorney Richard DiGirolamo submitted a letter for the record which is attached herewith.

Following the public hearing, Alderman White requested that SPCD provide the Board of Aldermen with statistics showing the change in the number of families living in Union Square.

Kevin Prior stated that written testimony will be left open for the planning board to 12:00 PM on January 2, 2009.

Chairman O'Donovan stated that written testimony will be left open for the Board of Aldermen to 4:30 PM on January 30, 2009.

No papers were acted on.

Alderman Sean T. O'Donovan, Chairman
Committee on Land Use

COMMITTEE REPORT

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meeting in Joint Session with the Planning
Board, December 4, 2008

In Board of Aldermen

Clerk