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March 4, 2009

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LAND USE
MEETING AS A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The Committee on Land Use convened as a Committee of the Whole on March 4, 2009, with Chairman Sean O'Donovan presiding and Committee Members Aldermen Maryann Heuston, John Connolly, Walter Pero, William Roche, Dennis Sullivan, Robert Trane and William White also present and voting. Also present were Administrative Assistant Jessie Baker, Monica Lamboy, Madeline Masters and Stephen Houdette from SPCD, Stephen Mackey from the Chamber of Commerce, Mimi Graney from Union Square Main Streets, Joe Grafton from Somerville Local First and Stuart Dash from Union Square Neighbors.

Ms. Lamboy addressed the members and provided a response to an earlier question having to do with potential revenues at Union Square under both TOD 100 and TOD 85 scenarios. The committee also discussed the proposed zoning ordinance for Union Square and noted that the proposal must be acted on by April 30th of this year.

Alderman White expressed his concerns regarding restrictions on residential development, limitations on the heights of buildings and the proposed plans of developers and stated his preference for commercial development over residential condominiums. Alderman Connolly asked about any proposed commercial vs residential splits and whether there was any interest being expressed by the life science industry and Chairman Heuston questioned the proposed locations for dog parks.

Mr. Houdette discussed linkage contributions and the economic impact of the proposed development on the city and Ms. Lamboy spoke about the role of "artist studio space" in the proposal and also justified the 35% requirement for pedestrian oriented uses. Mr. Dash offered his opinion of the proposed ordinance and briefly told the members about his organization.

The committee made requests for the requirements for artist certification and estimates for how many artists would be included in inclusionary housing. Additional areas of concern were:

- the impact on the building code regarding the residential use of basements
- allowing the Design Review Committee to make determinations
- possible loopholes in height restrictions and
- parking requirements

No Papers were acted on.

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

COMMITTEE REPORT

Report of the Committee on Land Use,
meeting as a Committee of the Whole, March
4, 2009

In Board of Aldermen

- Clerk