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April 8, 2009

### **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LAND USE**

The Committee on Land Use held a meeting on April 8, 2009, with Chairman Sean O'Donovan presiding and Committee Members Aldermen Maryann Heuston and William White also present and voting. Also present were Alderman Thomas Taylor, Administrative Assistant Jessie Baker, Chris D'Orio and Rob May of SPCD and Stephen Mackey from the Chamber of Commerce.

The committee discussed the proposed zoning ordinance for Union Square and Alderman White stated that major changes to the proposal might require re-advertising for another new public hearing. Among the topics discussed were:

- Landscaping,
- Open space and the definition of usable open space in connection with business hours of operation,
- Payments in lieu of open space,
- Parking requirements,
- Pedestrian oriented business entries as opposed to mall entrances,
- Required setbacks for buildings which abut railroad tracks,
- Design guidelines,
- Trash pickup requirements,
- Artist living and working spaces,
- Specialty food vs. Fast food,
- Dimensional requirements of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance,
- Requirement to provide bicycle parking spaces for newly constructed homes,
- Parking requirements and traffic demand management plans,
- Loading space requirements,
- Parking structures,
- Signage requirements,
- Amendments to the inclusionary housing section and
- Amendments to the zoning map.

There was a discussion about possible conflicts between various provisions of the proposed ordinance and Mr. May informed the members that he would look into these. Alderman Heuston would like to implement a policy so that businesses may only have deliveries during certain hours of the day and Alderman White suggested that loading requirements be spelled out in special permit conditions. Alderman White discussed the site plan approval process with respect to “by-right” development and expressed his concern with protected uses changing in the future, e.g., a school turning into a bowling alley and Alderman Taylor expressed concern regarding protected uses such as churches. Alderman White stated that the committee should consider the Dover Amendment when drafting the ordinance and Mr. May said that he would consult with the Law Department on that issue.

Mr. May stated that the proposal being put forth encourages small retail operations and he explained the “light industrial use” and the minimum FAR for such use. He further stated that the new ordinance encourages the use of unused parking spaces by allowing the leasing of parking lots by one business from another.

No Papers were acted on.

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

**COMMITTEE REPORT**

Report of the Committee on Land Use, April  
8, 2009

In Board of Aldermen

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Clerk