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June 1, 2006

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

The Committee on Land Use met in Joint Session with the Planning Board on June 1, 2006, with Chairman William White presiding and Committee Members Aldermen Sean O'Donovan and Thomas Taylor also present and voting. Also present were Aldermen Maryann Heuston, Walter Pero, Bruce Desmond, Dennis Sullivan, Denise Provost and Rebekah Gewirtz as well as members of the Planning Board and several interested parties.

The purpose of the meeting was to conduct a Public Hearing re: a proposed amendment to the City of Somerville zoning map to rezone the properties at 100 through 114 Temple Street and 8 through 16 Butler Drive (St. Polycarp's church and associated buildings), referenced by the City Assessor as Map 69, Block A, Lot 1 and Map 57, Block A, Lot 2, from Residence B (RB) zoning to Neighborhood Business (NB) zoning.

Director of Housing, Phil Ercolini told the members that the Somerville Community Corporation showed interest in developing this parcel and that the neighbors were in favor of having a retail component in the development project. Supports project.

Lara Curtis from SPCD told the members that the property is comprised of 2 parcels and that allowing the zoning to change from RB to NB would allow for mixed use and more flexibility in the development. She noted that an NB development could go as high as 4 stories.

Alderman Pero stated that he, along with Alderman Sullivan, first submitted this proposal and he asked that the board focus on the retail development portion along Mystic Ave.

Dan LeBlanc, from the Somerville Community Corporation (SCC), informed the members that the SCC purchased the property a few months ago and had canvassed the neighborhood to obtain input prior to making a bid on the property. Mr. LeBlanc stated that the best use would be to keep the church building and the rectory and to redevelop the rest of the site as mixed use. A new building would be constructed along Mystic Avenue with retail space on the 1st floor and a total of 85 units of new housing, (25 rental units and 60 condos).

Chairman White requested a summary showing the number of floors and units that would be proposed under RB vs. NB zoning, as well as information of what would require special permits. Chairman White asked that this data be submitted to the committee after the Planning Board submits its recommendation on

this matter and asked that the Planning Board's report specify that a special permit process would be needed. Chairman White informed those present that he would schedule a neighborhood meeting on this proposal.

The following persons spoke in favor of the amendment and made the following points:

- Alderman Sullivan urged caution with traffic and parking concerns
- George Bishop stated that it would be good for the Ten Hills area
- Attorney Adam Dash stated that the SCC has experience in developing quality projects
- Ezra Glenn stated that denial of this request would actually work against the RB zoning
- Susan Mortimor stated that the proposal would bring the Mystic Ave. and Ten Hills neighborhoods together

Letters of support received by Planning Board have been attached to this report.

The following persons spoke against the amendment and made the following points:

- Linda Bohan stated that allowing more density in a highly congested traffic area is not good for the neighborhood and she expressed concern that if the SCC has to subdivide the parcel, there might be a problem with what is built. She further stated that parking is a problem and that traffic exiting onto Derby Street would be disruptive.

Chairman White stated that the record would remain open until the close of business on Thursday, June 8, 2006, to accept further written comments. For the record, Chairman White stated that, even though he had held positions in organizations in the past in St. Ann's Parish, he held those positions prior to St. Ann's sale of the property in issue to the SCC and does not currently hold any positions in any parish organizations. Alderman White stated that he believes he is impartial in this matter.

The Public Hearing was closed and the committee adjourned to committee room to discuss the following item:

180450: Communication from Mayor - Requesting approval of an amendment to Article 7 of the Zoning Ordinance re: Table of Permitted Uses.

RECOMMENDATION: Should be approved

VOTE: Unanimous, 3 - 0 in favor

Alderman William A. White, Jr., Chairman
Committee on Land Use

COMMITTEE REPORT

Report of the Committee on Land Use
Meeting in Joint Session with the
Planning Board, June 1, 2006

In Board of Aldermen

Clerk