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July 17, 2008

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 July 17, 2008, with Chairman Sean O'Donovan presiding and Committee Members Aldermen Maryann Heuston and Thomas Taylor also present and voting. Also present Aldermen William White, Walter Pero and Bruce Desmond, members of the Planning Board, Robert May and Madeleine Masters from SPCD and interested members of the public.

A Public Hearing was held to discuss an ordinance amending the zoning ordinance of the City of Somerville with respect to Article 6, temporarily limiting development for the following parcels located in the vicinity of Broadway and Temple Street (identified by map-block-lot): 58-c-6, 58-c-7, 58-c-8, 58-c-9, 70-d-5, 70-d-10, 70-d-24, 70-d-25, 70-d-27.

Mr. May addressed the members and explained that the purpose of the moratorium is to complete a comprehensive study on the development opportunities in the Winter Hill area. The study will also take the Green Line extension in account.

Alderman Heuston expressed her concerns over having the former Star Market site vacant for several months. Mr. May responded by stating that the owner of the property will be responsible to maintain the property. Ms. Masters read the Somerville Zoning Ordinance and explained the fact that the owner is able to put a super market in as a tenant.

The owner of the former Star Market site, Jim Cohen, spoke against the proposed item stating that he was never notified of the proposed moratorium. He further stated that if he was properly notified his counsel would have attended. He stated that he had a tenant ready to sign a lease, met with the Mayor, and the Mayor did not want a discount store at the site. Mr. Cohen stated he will try to get another grocery store as a tenant, however it will be difficult with the Super Stop & Shop down the street.

Alderman White asked what notice was given to the owner of the properties impacted. Ms. Masters explained that she gave notice according to the statute, which is newspaper publications and posting. She did not mail the owner a notice.

Alderman Pero spoke in favor of the moratorium stating that it will allow for positive development on Winter Hill.

Chairman O'Donovan kept the record open until August 7, 2008 to allow for further testimony.

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 in Joint Session with the Planning
Board, July 17, 2008

In Board of Aldermen

Clerk