

Somerville

Redevelopment Authority

2023 Annual Report

Prepared by the Somerville Office of Strategic Planning and Community
Development – Economic Development Division

Somerville Redevelopment Authority (SRA)

The Somerville Redevelopment Authority (SRA) was founded in 1956, pursuant to the authority granted by the Massachusetts General Law Chapter 121B, § 3.

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Overview

The Somerville Redevelopment Authority (SRA) was founded in 1956, pursuant to the authority granted by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 121B, § 3. This law provides the SRA with the power to declare an area “substandard, decadent, and/or a blighted open area,” and to then prepare an urban renewal plan for redevelopment of these areas and undertake eminent domain takings to implement these plans. The goal of this process and of the SRA’s work generally is to create more economically prosperous and livable neighborhoods throughout Somerville.

The SRA Annual Report for 2023 reviews the projects under the Authority’s jurisdiction during this calendar year. Submittal of annual reports are required by the Commonwealth’s Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) and must be submitted both to EOHLC and to the mayor or “selectmen” of the city in which the Authority is established.¹ (In the case of Somerville, these “selectmen” are referred to as “City Councilors.”) The SRA’s hope is that this report will also make the Authority’s work clearer to the residents of Somerville and other stakeholders whom they serve.

This report will review the following:

- What “urban renewal” is and how it is approached in Somerville;
- The status of active urban renewal plans within Somerville and areas where urban renewal is being considered;
- Land holdings of the SRA and any leaseholders of this land; and
- Any relevant organizational changes from the past year, including the adoption by the SRA of a Code of Conduct.

¹ 760 CMR 12.00: Urban Renewal Regulations, <https://www.mass.gov/regulations/760-CMR-1200-urban-renewal-regulations>

What is ‘urban renewal’ and how is it used in Somerville?

Urban renewal refers to “a strategy for redeveloping and revitalizing substandard [and] decadent [sites] and blighted open areas for residential, commercial, industrial, business, governmental, recreational, educational, hospital, or other uses.”² (Definitions for the terms “substandard,” “decadent” and “blighted” can be found in Appendix A.) The Massachusetts version of the program was established by the legislature under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 121B and describes the ways in which local authorities that implement urban renewal (called “redevelopment authorities”) can be formed and the rules they must follow in their work. More recently, the state has also released guidelines for urban renewal under 760 CMR 12.00 in the Code of Massachusetts Regulations, which lists regulations issued by state agencies (including the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC), which oversees urban renewal in Massachusetts).

In Somerville, the authority that governs the process of urban renewal is the Somerville Redevelopment Authority (SRA). The SRA can have up to seven members, though only six of those seven seats were occupied during 2023. Five of those members are appointed by the mayor subject to a City Council vote, one is appointed by the Governor, and one is a sitting City Councilor appointed by the City Council President. (A list of SRA members can be found in Appendix B.) Staff from the Mayor’s Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development’s (OSPCD) Economic Development Division serve as staff to the SRA, though only in a supportive, non-voting capacity.

The vision and processes for urban renewal in a particular area are encapsulated in “urban renewal plans” (or “urban revitalization plans”). Urban renewal plans in Massachusetts are required to contain several components, including the characteristics of the project area that they seek to redevelop; how that area meets the eligibility criteria for being a blighted open area, decadent area, or substandard area; the goals of the plan; any acquisitions that are anticipated as part of project implementation; and the plan for citizen participation, among other relevant details. A plan must be passed by the local urban renewal agency and the governing body in the city they are intended for (in Somerville, this the SRA and the City Council, respectively) and submitted to the EOHLC for approval before any implementation can begin. Urban renewal agencies can also create a type of urban renewal plan known as a “disposition project plan” to “develop, test, and report methods and techniques and carry out demonstrations for the prevention and elimination of slums and urban blight,” as described in MGL c. 121b § 46(f).

Once an urban renewal plan is adopted by the relevant parties, it gives a redevelopment authority the power to take private property identified in the urban renewal area through

² Urban Renewal, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/urban-renewal-ur>

a process known as *eminent domain*, which requires an owner to sell property specified in the plan to an authority. An authority must pay fair market value for property taken by eminent domain and is required to pay relocation fees for existing tenants.³ The intention of the SRA is to only use urban renewal in situations in which the private market is not facilitating redevelopment of a substandard, decadent, or blighted open area on its own. Even when a property is included in a plan, the SRA strives for private development partners to purchase the site directly rather than using eminent domain.

Somerville currently has two active urban renewal plans, in Union Square and Winter Hill. It also has one active demonstration project plan at 90 Washington Street on the Inner Belt / East Somerville border. One urban renewal plan in Assembly Square also recently expired in 2022. A plan has been considered by the SRA and neighborhood stakeholders in Gilman Square, though no plan exists as of the end of 2023. More details about the status of each of these plans can be found in the following section.

The SRA also regularly considers new areas in which to use urban renewal, whether through the initiative of an individual SRA member, recommendation from City planning reports or staff, or another source. In Somerville, the creation of an urban renewal plan is accompanied by significant neighborhood outreach and engagement to form a vision for redevelopment and ensure that there is ample public support for the project. As established by a 2021 memorandum of agreement (MOA) between the SRA and the Somerville City Council, any disposition of property to a for-profit private developer as part of the implementation of an urban renewal plan must also be accompanied by the creation of a Civic Advisory Committee (CAC). A CAC is a committee of local stakeholders (eg. residents, business owners, institutional partners) in or near the urban renewal plan area who provide feedback to guide the decision-making processes of the SRA. As of the end of 2023, CACs exist and are active for the Winter Hill Urban Renewal Plan, 90 Washington Street Demonstration Project Plan, and in Gilman Square.

The SRA aims to host one general meeting per month to discuss elements of these projects. In 2023, the SRA hosted nine general meetings. The SRA can also call a special meeting if it needs to discuss a topic more urgently than its usual schedule allows. In 2023, the SRA hosted six special meetings. In all six of these meetings, the SRA entered executive session (meaning a session closed to the public) to discuss an active legal case to which they are a party. (For more information, see the “90 Washington Demonstration Project Plan” section.) All 2023 meetings of the SRA were hosted virtually, using GoToWebinar through September and then Zoom Webinar for the remainder of the year. The full list of SRA meetings for 2023 can be found in Appendix C.

³ The process used to determine fair market value is generally to have a certified third party appraiser conduct an appraisal of the property and produce a value. The relocation fees paid to existing tenants are determined by a state formula.

2023 Project Highlights

Union Square Revitalization Plan

In 2012, the SRA adopted the Union Square Revitalization Plan (USRP), which laid out a development vision for the Union Square neighborhood that would capitalize on the extension of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's (MBTA) Green Line (GLX) to Somerville. This plan identified seven parcels to be compiled from smaller properties and then sold for redevelopment, known as the "disposition (D) parcels" (see Figure 1).



Figure 1: Disposition parcels identified in the Union Square Revitalization Plan. (Source: Union Square Station Associates' Coordinated Development Special Permit (CDSP) application to the Somerville Planning Board.)

The SRA then used a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to select a master developer for the area, Union Square Station Associates (US2), with whom the SRA entered into an agreement in 2017 to outline development responsibilities. Also in 2017, the Somerville Planning Board approved US2's Coordinated Development Special Permit (CDSP) application, which serves as a more detailed guide for 2.4 million square feet (sf) of development across the disposition parcels. The implementation of this plan will likely take several decades to complete. This work is being completed in conjunction with a City-led plaza and streetscape redesign project in Union Square that aims to capitalize on new development and ensure public spaces and roadways can best serve a growing neighborhood. In 2019, US2 also entered into a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) with the Union Square Neighborhood Council (USNC), a neighborhood advocacy organization, to outline additional benefits to be delivered with new development.

US2's work implementing the USRP and CDSP to date has largely focused on an area referred to as the "D2 Parcel," located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Somerville Avenue and Prospect Street. This parcel is comprised of three buildings, a civic space, and several thoroughfares. Of the three buildings, one building, known as the "D2.1 parcel" or 10 Prospect Street, is purely commercial, offering just over 180,000 sf of office and life science space (see Figure 2). The other two buildings, known as the "D2.2 parcel" and "D2.3 parcel" (collectively 20-50 Prospect, see Figure 3), are mixed-use, containing 450 residential units (20% of which are deed-restricted affordable), 18,000 sf of ground-floor retail space, and a shared parking structure. In 2023, US2 received initial Certificates of Occupancy for D2.1, D2.2, and the first nineteen floors (out of twenty-five) for D2.3, and leased over 100 residential units. The development team is working towards final certificates of occupancy for all three buildings in early 2024.

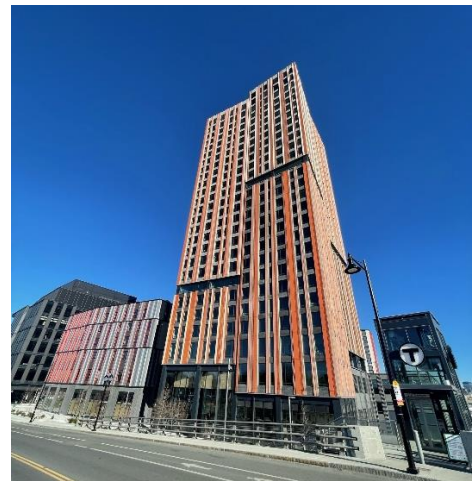


Figure 2 (left): 10 Prospect Street, which is located on the D2.1 subparcel of the USRP. The building contains 180,000 square feet of office and life science space. (Source: Union Square Station Associates.)

Figure 3 (right): 20-50 Prospect Street, which are located on what is referred to as the D2.2 and D2.3 subparcels of the USRP, directly south of D2.1. The two buildings contain a total of 450 units of housing, 20% of which are deed-restricted affordable. (Source: Ben Demers.)

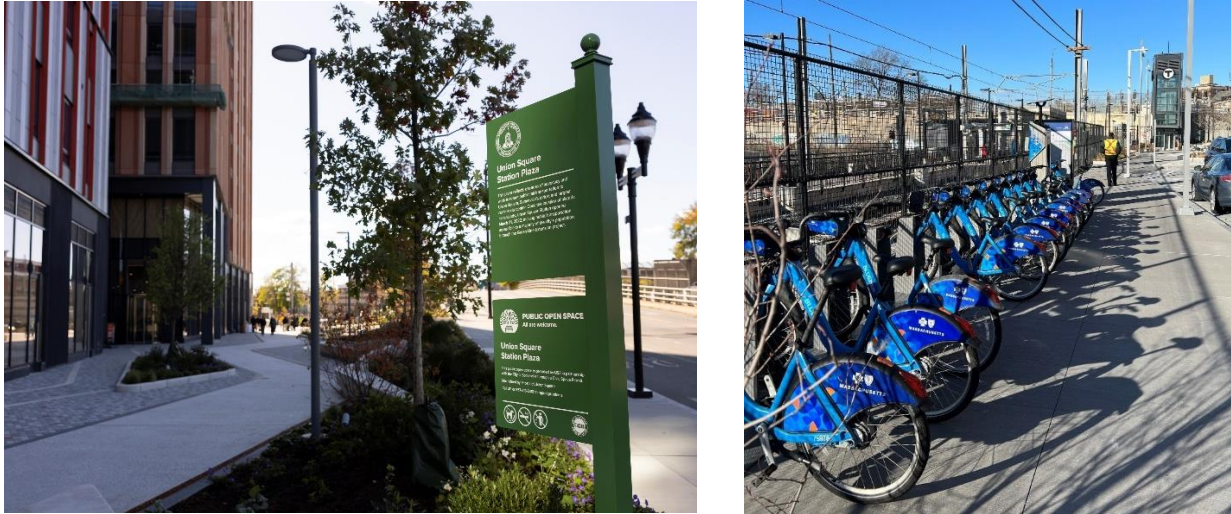


Figure 4 (left): The entrance to Union Square Station Plaza, directly west of 10-50 Prospect Street. (Source: Michael Blanchard). **Figure 5 (right):** Blue Bike station installed on the "D2" parcel in Union Square, directly adjacent to the Union Square Green Line Station. (Source: Union Square Station Associates.)

In addition to these buildings, US2 finished construction of the majority of an 18,000 sf civic space located on D2 in 2023 (see Figure 4). This civic space provides both a place for local residents and employees to gather and a connection to the Union Square MBTA station from the central intersection at Prospect Street and Somerville Avenue. US2 also completed several benefits related to the adjacent MBTA station, including development of an MBTA employee break room and a blue bike station that allows for easy transition between cycling and the Green Line (see Figure 5).

Outside of D2, US2 continued work coordinating with the MBTA in 2023 on development of the D3.1 subparcel, located directly south of the Union Square MBTA station and tracks. The CDSP identified this site for a 280,000 sf life science building, along with 16,000 sf of new civic space. US2 and the USNC also re-entered negotiations regarding the delivery of an affordable housing development on the D4.3 parcel as part of their CBA, which were ongoing at the end of 2023.

Lastly, as part of the plaza and streetscape work in Union Square that will accompany new development, City staff released 25% design drawings and worked with US2 to coordinate phasing of the project. (See Figure 6 on the next page for a rendering of a pedestrianized Bow Street from this 25% plan, which would aim to make the area more accessible and navigable for pedestrians.)



Figure 6: A rendering of a design consideration for a pedestrianized Bow Street in Union Square, completed as part of the Union Square Plaza and Streetscape Redesign project being led by the City in coordination with US2's work on the Union Square disposition parcels. (Source: Union Square Plaza and Streetscape 25% Design Ideas and Vision. For more information, visit: <https://voice.somervillema.gov/union-square-p-and-s/#folder-34531-11604>)

Winter Hill Urban Renewal Plan

Between 2019 and 2021, OSPCD conducted a community engagement process on behalf of the SRA regarding redevelopment of a former Star Market site at 299 Broadway, which led to the adoption of the Winter Hill Urban Renewal Plan (WHURP) in 2021 by the SRA and City Council. The plan was then approved by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD, now EOHLIC). This plan declared 299 Broadway and several surrounding sites as “decadent,” and gave the SRA the power to take the sites through eminent domain if needed. (See Figure 7 for a map of the included sites.)



Figure 7: A map of the parcels included in the Winter Hill Urban Renewal Plan from 2021. (Source: Winter Hill Urban Renewal Plan.)

However, rather than needing to select a master developer to acquire and develop the sites or take them through eminent domain, as was done in Union Square, a private development partnership made up of a for-profit developer, Mark Development, a nonprofit housing developer, Beacon Communities, and an equity partner, RISE Together, formed to create a proposal for the largest site that would meet the goals of the WHURP. The proposed design includes two mixed-use buildings that together will provide 288 units of housing, 132 of which are deed-restricted affordable. It will also provide approximately 20,000 square feet of civic space and 3,000 square feet of community space. This proposal was passed by the Somerville Zoning Board of Appeals in February of 2023. The team then purchased the property in early October 2023, and has begun working towards Building Permit application.



Figure 8: A rendering of the proposed development at 299 Broadway, approved by the Somerville Zoning Board of Appeals in February 2023. (Source: <https://www.299broadwaysomerville.com/work/#updates>)

The development team has also partnered closely with the City to support the financing of the project, given market fluctuations in 2023. The project has received a commitment of funding from Somerville's Affordable Housing Trust. In February 2023, the Somerville City Council also passed an Urban Center Housing Tax Increment Financing (UCH-TIF) scheme that exempts the site owner from needing to pay property tax on the increase in site value for a twenty-year period. The City also received a MassWorks grant to support civic space development at the site.

In November, City staff reconvened the Winter Hill Urban Renewal Plan Civic Advisory Committee (CAC) on behalf of the SRA after a year-long hiatus while the project went through the ZBA process and the development team closed on the site. The CAC provides community input and guidance to the SRA and City regarding implementation of the WHURP. Even though the plan is being fulfilled through private development without eminent domain, the CAC will continue to meet throughout the construction of 299 Broadway as a forum for community engagement.

90 Washington Street Disposition Project Plan

In late 2018, OSPCD informed the SRA about the possibility of acquiring a four-acre site at 90 Washington Street in the Inner Belt that could serve as the site of a new “Public Safety Building” (PSB) containing a new fire station and police dispatch center, as well as for associated commercial, residential, and civic development. (See Figures 9 and 10 for an overview of the site.) In 2019 and 2020, the SRA and City Council each approved several steps in the redevelopment process, including the adoption of the 90 Washington Street Demonstration Project Plan (DPP), a payment for the taking of the property through eminent domain, and the demolition of Cobble Hill Plaza. The City then conducted more intensive engagement regarding neighborhood desires for the site through 2022.

In early 2023, the City released a Request for Qualification (RFQ) to learn what developers thought was possible on the site, including what additional uses could be paired with the PSB. The City received responses to this RFQ from three development teams, all of whom met the request's minimum qualifications and thus will be invited to apply for a Request for Proposals when the SRA is ready to move forward with long-term redevelopment.



Figures 9 (left) and 10 (right): An aerial view of 90 Washington Street and a close-up map showing the site's boundaries. (Sources: 90 Washington Street Request for Qualifications (Figure 7) and October 2022 Community Meeting (Figure 8).)

In March 2023, the City also convened the 90 Washington Street Civic Advisory Committee (CAC), which is intended to provide the SRA and City with community input and guidance regarding development of 90 Washington Street. The CAC reviewed responses to the RFQ for development and interviewed each of the three respondents, and summarized their takeaways for the SRA.

However, much of the SRA's planning work for the 90 Washington Street DPP was delayed in 2023 due to an ongoing legal case to which the SRA has been a party since 2021 (*Cobble Hill Center LLC v. Somerville Redevelopment Authority*), regarding the market value used in the taking for 90 Washington Street. In May 2023, the SRA received a judgment in the case that required it to pay an additional \$26,528,000 for the taking beyond the original pro tanto payment of \$8,778,000. The SRA did not move forward with development planning while considering the possibility of an appeal.

Since long-term development is still being planned, the SRA also extended a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City that had been created in November 2022 that allows the Somerville Department of Public Works to store snow on 90 Washington Street in the case of snow emergencies, along with other materials. Because of a low level of snowfall, no snow was ultimately stored at the site in 2023, though other equipment was stored.

Consideration of urban renewal in Gilman Square

Located just down the hill from Somerville City Hall, Gilman Square is a neighborhood that's identity is still coalescing, particularly given the new GLX station that opened at its center in December 2022. The City currently owns a parcel located directly adjacent to the station at 350 Medford Street, known colloquially as "the Homans site" due to a building that was previously located on the site, and which was used as a construction laydown area for the MBTA until May 2023 as they were finishing the GLX station. The 2014 Gilman Square Station Area Plan identified this site and several others in the

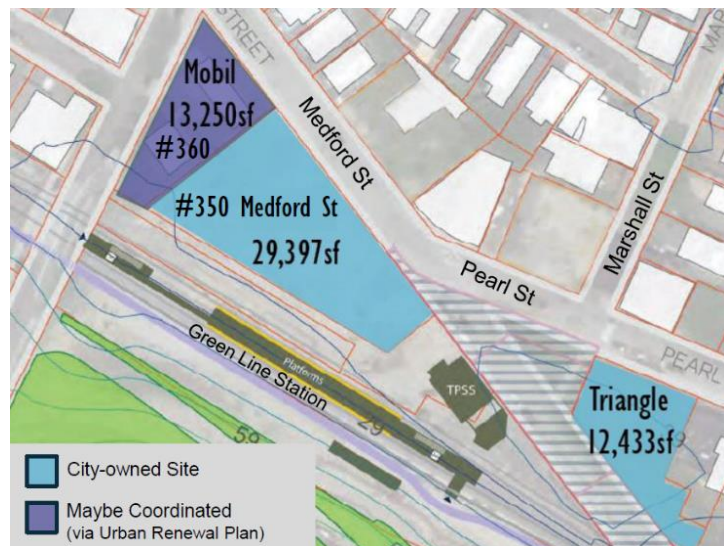


Figure 11: A map of Gilman Square, depicting two City-owned parcels at 350 Medford Street and the triangular park, along with the Mobil Station (360 Medford Street) that the Gilman Square Station Area Plan recommended might be combined with the Homans site through urban renewal to facilitate a larger scale of development.

area for either public or private redevelopment and suggested that the SRA could be engaged to support this process.

Because of the consideration of SRA support, City staff proactively convened a Gilman Square Civic Advisory Committee (CAC) in February 2022 to provide input on both the redevelopment of land already owned by the City and the potential for facilitating development through urban renewal. The focus of urban renewal considerations has been a Mobil gas station located at 360 Medford Street, directly adjacent to the City-owned Homans site, which community members have expressed could ideally be combined with the Homans site to allow for larger-scale development. The CAC met several times in 2023. However, because the City has not been ready to move forward with long-term development of the Homans site and thus with a potential joint development of the Homans site and Mobil station, the CAC has avoided making a final recommendation regarding the use of urban renewal for the Mobil station.

This open consideration of whether to use urban renewal for the Mobil station while not being ready to move forward with development of the Homans site has led to some pushback from local neighborhood groups, who worry that it influences whether the Mobil station owner is able to find a private buyer for their land. However, the CAC has not found this to be a sufficient reason to recommend for or against the use of urban renewal at this time.

SRA landholdings

List and map of SRA-owned land

Below is a list of properties currently owned by the SRA as of December 2023, listing the property ID, site address, land and total property values, lot size, and the Somerville Zoning Ordinance zone in which each property falls. Data for this list was compiled from the Somerville Assessor’s Database. These parcels of land came into SRA ownership as part of the implementation of various urban renewal plans throughout the course of the Authority’s existence. Four of these parcels are located in Boynton Yards, one in nearby Union Square (this parcel is part of the D2 parcel of the Union Square Revitalization Plan), and one in the Inner Belt (90 Washington Street). The total assessed property value across the six SRA-owned properties totals approximately \$5.298 million, with over half of that value being derived from 90 Washington Street.

A map of these properties can be found on the following page.

Property ID	Site address	Assessed land value (from Somerville Assessor’s Database)	Total assessed property value (from Somerville Assessor’s Database)	Lot size (acres)	Zone
106-A-3B	90 Washington St	\$3,539,200	\$3,583,400	3.9887	CIV
96-A-43	0 Windsor Pl	\$372,500	\$372,500	0.0513	CI
97-A-7	138 South St	\$587,200	\$621,200	0.2681	CIV
97-A-8	100 South St	\$314,100	\$326,000	0.0876	CIV
97-D-9	24 Medford St	\$214,500	\$214,500	0.0318	MR4
82-D-L5	NA (portion of 50 Prospect St)	\$224,408*	\$224,408	0.0843	UR

*The value for lot 82-D-L5 is estimated here based on its share of the area of what the Somerville Assessor’s Office currently lists as parcel 82-D-26A, the value and area measurement of which are meant to capture this subparcel in addition to several others. The value of parcel 82-D-26A is listed as \$5,291,300, and the area is listed as 1.9877 acres. To estimate the value for lot 82-D-L5, one can take the area of the lot, 0.0843 acres, and take the ratio of that area to 1.9877, and then apply this ratio to the overall value of \$5,291,300 to get a value of \$224,408.

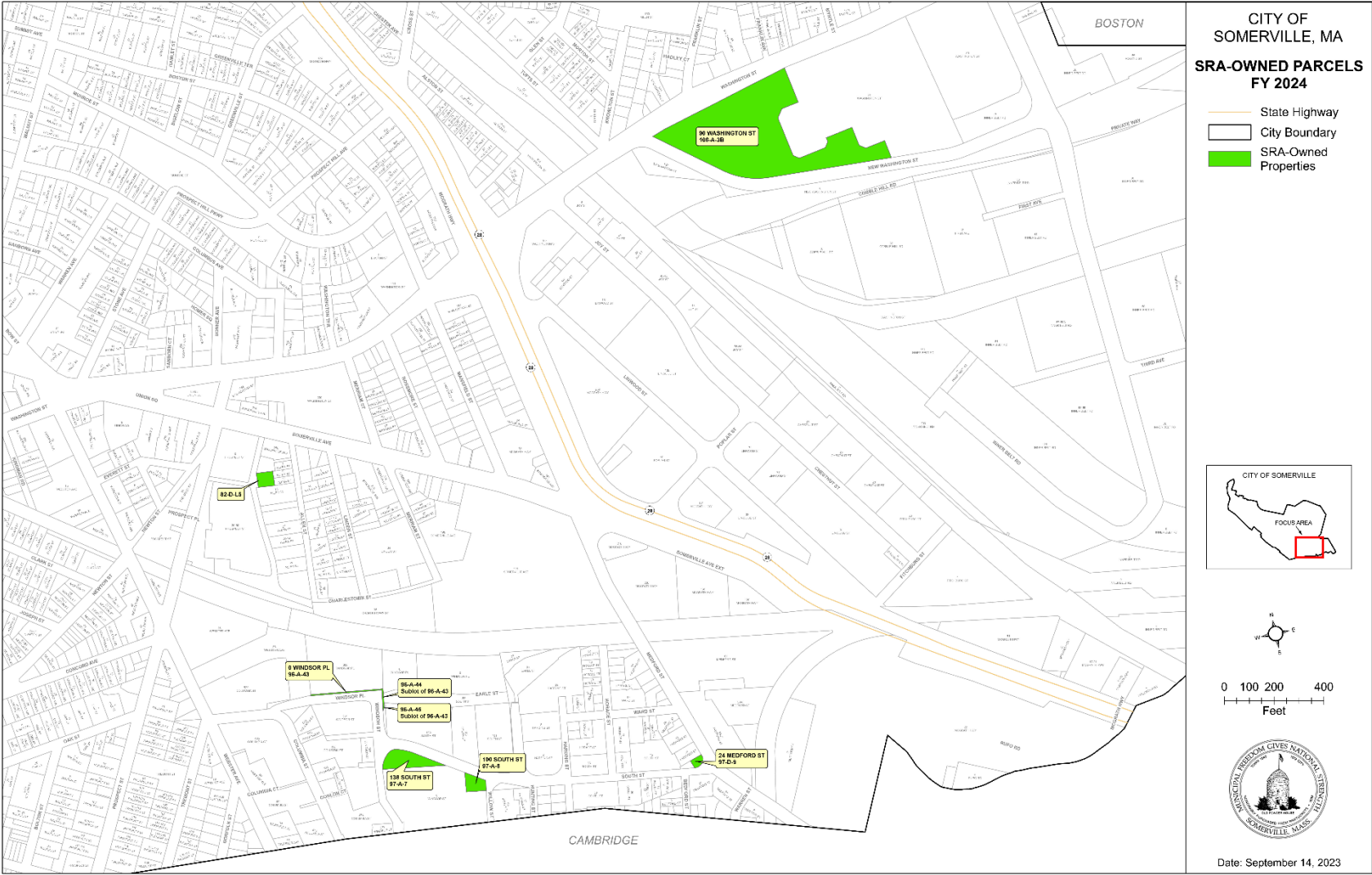


Figure 12: A map of properties owned by the Somerville Redevelopment Authority. (Source: Somerville Assessor's Database.)

SRA leaseholder: Groundwork Somerville

The SRA currently manages one lease across its landholdings. This lease is with Groundwork Somerville, an urban agriculture nonprofit whose work encompasses “youth empowerment, urban farming, equitable food access, and community engagement.” Groundwork Somerville leases the SRA-owned land at 100 and 138 South Street for their urban farm operation.

Since 2000, Groundwork Somerville (GWS) has worked to cultivate the next generation of civil and environmental leaders to create a greener and more equitable Somerville. Through equitable food access, urban farming, youth empowerment, and community engagement, GWS builds the foundation necessary for a healthy community.

GWS accomplishes these goals through four core programs:

- **South Street Farm:** GWS operates Somerville’s only urban farm which increases the community’s access to culturally relevant, affordable produce. Over 2,700 lbs. of produce are harvested each year and the organization works with community partners to distribute the food to predominantly low-income communities of color in Somerville.
- **Green Team Program:** GWS’s Green Team is an empowerment and employment program for youth of color and youth from economically disadvantaged backgrounds in Somerville. They engage youth in environmental justice, urban farming, bike repair, and leadership lessons. Their Biking Division launched in Fall 2023.
- **School Gardens Program:** GWS built and maintains gardens at nine Somerville public schools including all elementary and middle schools, the public charter school, and the high school. Through this program, they provide garden-based and seed-to-table curriculum to over 1,250 Somerville public school students yearly.
- **Climate Safe Neighborhoods:** Launched in September 2023, this program tackles the impacts and risks of climate change on predominantly low-income communities of color in Somerville and engages citizens in the solution-building process.



Figure 13: A harvest for the Mobile Market.
(Source: Groundwork Somerville.)



Figure 14: South Street Farm. (Source: Groundwork Somerville.)



Figure 15: The Groundwork Green Team working on the South Street Farm mural with local artist Eugenia Volkova. (Source: Groundwork Somerville.)

SRA Code of Conduct

In September 2023, the SRA unanimously adopted its first Code of Conduct, which was requested of all public boards and commissions working for the City. This code outlines appropriate standards for board and commission members to follow in public meetings and is meant to ensure that these meetings remain safe and welcoming spaces for the diversity of residents in Somerville. Examples of standards include:

- Members will strive to appreciate differences in approach and point of view and treat residents, city employees, partner organizations and other board, commission, or committee members with courtesy, respect, and professionalism.
- The committee chair will be tasked with ensuring that members are adhering to the code of conduct.
- Disorderly conduct, including rude or intimidating behavior, utilizing obscene, abusive, threatening, or intimidating language or actions will not be tolerated. In addition to any other remedies or enforcement options available under the law, each board/committee/commission may vote to censure the member and the appointing authority may decline to reappoint an individual who violates any provision of this Code of Conduct. The Staff Liaison of each board/committee/commission may recommend action through the appointing authority against the appointed individual that is deemed lawful including but not limited to requesting that the individual attend training, receiving counseling and/or coaching, and/or removal from assigned duties and responsibilities including special assignments for the board or committee.

The full Code of Conduct can be found in Appendix D. Failure to comply with this code can be grounds of termination from the SRA moving forward.

Appendices

Appendix A: Definitions of *blighted open area*, *decadent area*, and *substandard area*

Below are definitions for the terms “blighted open area,” “decadent area,” and “substandard area.” These three terms describe the types of spaces that are eligible for the use of urban renewal. Thus proving that an area meets the requirements in these definitions is a key piece in the process of urban renewal.

Blighted open area: A predominantly open area which is detrimental to the safety, health, morals, welfare or sound growth of a community because it is unduly costly to develop it soundly through the ordinary operations of private enterprise by reason of the existence of ledge, rock, unsuitable soil, or other physical conditions, or by reason of the necessity for unduly expensive excavation, fill or grading, or by reason of the need for unduly expensive foundations, retaining walls or unduly expensive measures for waterproofing structures or for draining the area or for the prevention of the flooding thereof or for the protection of adjacent properties and the water table therein or for unduly expensive measures incident to building around or over rights-of-way through the area, or for otherwise making the area appropriate for sound development, or by reason of obsolete, inappropriate or otherwise faulty platting or subdivision, deterioration of site improvements or facilities, division of the area by rights-of-way, diversity of ownership of plots, or inadequacy of transportation facilities or other utilities, or by reason of tax and special assessment delinquencies, or because there has been a substantial change in business or economic conditions or practices, or an abandonment or cessation of a previous use or of work on improvements begun but not feasible to complete without the aids provided by this chapter, or by reason of any combination of the foregoing or other condition; or a predominantly open area which by reason of any condition or combination of conditions which are not being remedied by the ordinary operations of private enterprise is of such a character that in essence it is detrimental to the safety, health, morals, welfare or sound growth of the community in which it is situated.

Decadent area: Any area which is detrimental to safety, health, morals, welfare or sound growth of a community because of the existence of buildings which are out of repair, physically deteriorated, unfit for human habitation, or obsolete, or in need of major maintenance or repair, or because much of the real estate in recent years has been sold or taken for nonpayment of taxes or upon foreclosure of mortgages, or because buildings have been torn down and not replaced and under existing conditions it is improbable that the buildings will be replaced, or because of a substantial change in business or economic conditions, or because of inadequate light, air, or open space, or because of excessive land coverage or because diversity of ownership, irregular lot sizes or obsolete street patterns make it improbable that the area will be redeveloped by the ordinary operations of private enterprise, or by reason of any combination of the foregoing conditions.

Substandard area: Any area wherein dwellings predominate which, by reason of dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement or design, lack of ventilation, light or sanitation facilities or any combination of these factors, are detrimental to safety, health or morals.

Appendix B: List of SRA members during 2023

The SRA itself can have up to seven members, though only six of those seven seats were occupied during 2023. Five of those members are appointed by the mayor subject to a City Council vote, one is appointed by the Governor, and one is a sitting City Councilor appointed by the City Council President.

Appointee	Appointed by	Position	Date of first appointment
Phil Ercolini	Mayor & Council	Chair	November 10, 2016
Iwona Bonney	Governor	Secretary	December 4, 2002
Ben Ewen-Campen	Council President	City Councilor	January 24, 2019
William Gage	Mayor & Council	General	January 22, 2009
Patrick McCormick	Mayor & Council	General	March 28, 2019
Christine Stone	Mayor & Council	General	March 25, 2021
Vacant	Mayor & Council	General	NA

Appendix C: 2023 Somerville Redevelopment Authority meetings and votes

The SRA aims to host one general meeting per month, except for a summer recess and months in which no SRA or staff member has a significant item to discuss. In 2023, the SRA hosted nine general meetings.

The SRA can also call a special meeting if it needs to discuss a topic more urgently than its usual schedule allows. In 2023, the SRA hosted six special meetings. In all six of these meetings, the SRA entered into executive session to discuss an active legal case to which they are a party. (For more information, see the “90 Washington Demonstration Project Plan” section.)

All meetings of the SRA were hosted virtually, using GoToWebinar through September 2023 and then Zoom Webinar for the remainder of the year.

Meeting date	Type	Vote count
January 25, 2023	Regular	3
February 15, 2023	Regular	3
March 15, 2023	Regular	2
April 19, 2023	Regular	2
April 25, 2023	Special	1
April 28, 2023	Special	2
May 9, 2023	Special	1
May 10, 2023	Special	1
May 17, 2023	Regular	2
May 23, 2023	Special	1
June 21, 2023	Regular	3
September 12, 2023	Regular	4
October 3, 2023	Special	2
October 18, 2023	Regular	4
December 20, 2023	Regular	3

Appendix D: City of Somerville Code of Conduct for Board, Commission and Committee members

The City of Somerville places a high priority on encouraging all residents to participate in our government's decision-making and planning processes. One valuable way for residents to do this is by becoming a member of Somerville's boards, commissions and committees. These bodies are tasked with a wide variety of duties and services. The city strives to ensure that residents from all demographic sectors are participating on our boards, commissions and committees, along with ensuring these are safe spaces where members can all contribute equally. Members are important agents of the city, and thus must uphold high standards of conduct and professionalism. In order to achieve this, all members must comply with the following Code of Conduct when serving on any board, commission or committee:

1. Members will strive to appreciate differences in approach and point of view and treat residents, city employees, partner organizations and other board, commission or committee members with courtesy, respect and professionalism.
2. Members must administer board positions with integrity, honesty, truthfulness and adherence to the absolute obligation to safeguard the public trust. Members are also expected to maintain professional working relationships with other members, City staff and members of the public.
3. Attendance and participation are an important part of appointment to a board, commission or committee. While it is understood that members have other obligations, the expectation is that members will make every effort to attend and participate in meetings, and whenever possible communicate any hardships to attendance.
4. In some instances, members may find that various laws may apply to boards, commissions and committees and to member participation, such as the Open Meeting Law and the Public Records Law. Members are expected to comply with the applicable laws, and may seek guidance from city staff, the City Clerk's office or the City Solicitor's office. Members are expected to have a basic understanding of these laws and how they apply to their membership.
5. The committee chair will be tasked with ensuring that all members have the opportunity to provide input and encourage the exchange of fair and balanced knowledge and perspectives.
6. Members cannot unilaterally act on behalf of a board, commission or committee without authorization from that board, commission or committee.
7. Members should commit to studying and analyzing the problems and issues that come before them, listen to requests/questions, ask for clarification if necessary, and provide complete, knowledgeable, accurate, precise information regarding inquiries.

8. The committee chair will be tasked with ensuring that members are adhering to the code of conduct.

9. The conduct of public officials and employees—paid or unpaid—is governed by state conflict of interest law, the purpose of which is to prevent conflicts between private interests and public duties. Violations of the law may carry civil or criminal penalties. Members should comply with the law and disclose any personal or business interest which may result in actual or perceived conflicts of interest. Many aspects of the law are complicated, and members can seek guidance from the State Ethics Commission or the City Solicitor's Office.

10. Disorderly conduct, including rude or intimidating behavior, utilizing obscene, abusive, threatening or intimidating language or actions will not be tolerated. In addition to any other remedies or enforcement options available under the law, each board/committee/commission may vote to censure the member and the appointing authority may decline to reappoint an individual who violates any provision of this Code of Conduct. The Staff Liaison of each board/committee/commission may recommend action through the appointing authority against the appointed individual that is deemed lawful including but not limited to requesting that the individual attend training, receive counseling and/or coaching, and/or removal from assigned duties and responsibilities including special assignments for the board or committee.

11. In the event a member violates this Code of Conduct, the following action steps may be taken:

a. Any violation may be cause for dismissal, educational and/or corrective action.

b. After an initial incident, a meeting may be called with the member and relevant city staff to clarify why the behavior violated the code of conduct and determine appropriate measures as listed above.

c. Further incidents may result in dismissal from serving on that board/commission/committee and may be considered in evaluating applications for serving on any City board/commission/committee in the future.

12. As agents of the City of Somerville, members are expected not to discriminate against, or harass, anyone with regard to race, sex, color, religion, national origin, citizenship status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, disability, military, veteran status or any other protected status or classification under federal, state or local law:

Failure to abide by the above Code of Conduct may result in termination of an appointment.