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Happy New Year

From the Publisher and Staff of The Somerville Times



MassDOT's McGrath Boulevard project holds design public hearing



Plans for the McGrath Boulevard project were recently discussed during a virtual design public hearing.

By The Times Staff

The long-awaited and much-anticipated McGrath Boulevard project that aims to transform Route 28 from an elevated highway to a ground-level boulevard is expected to move forward as planned after a virtual design public hearing convened on December 9.

The McGrath Boulevard project spans a vital corridor linking Cambridge and Somerville. The project area extends along the corridor from Broadway to Third Street in Cambridge.

"After significant public outreach, surveys, collaboration, careful planning, design *Continued on page 4*

Big Fish Little Fish pet store closes

By Harry Kane

The fish tanks have been drained, and the pet store everybody liked is closing down. Whether you are a big fish or a little fish in Somerville, it's sad to see the popular pet store in Porter Square come to an end.

"It's the end of an era," says Armand Ghioni, owner of the pet shop.

The pet store, which carried a variety of tropical and freshwater fish, small animals, and pet supplies, has been in operation since 1971, explained Ghioni. He fondly remembers when he began working there, cleaning the hamster cages, back in 1978, while he attended the John F. Kennedy School.

"When I graduated high school, you can't make no money working at a pet shop, so I left, I quit," explains Ghioni.

He left for several years, but couldn't stay away for long. Ghioni would soon return to *Continued on page 4*



Popular pet store Big Fish Little Fish is closing its doors for good after decades of serving the community.

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The views and opinions expressed in Newstalk do not necessarily reflect those of The Somerville Times, its publisher or staff. The column has many contributors.

The staff of *The Somerville Times* would like to wish everyone a very **happy New Year**. May the year to come bring one and all good health and prosperity, and continue through to the following years to come.

City offices will be closed for the **New Year's Holiday** on January 1, 2026. Trash, recycling, and yard waste collection will be delayed by one day. All **Somerville Public Library** locations will be closed all day Thursday, January 1, for the New Year's holiday. Regular hours will resume on Friday, January 2.

The last day for **street sweeping** is **December 31, 2025**. Street sweeping resumes **April 1, 2026**.

Ring in the new year on **Thursday, January 1, 2026**, as they raise the **Grand Union Flag on Prospect Hill** to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the first flag raising. A **processional** led by "George Washington" will leave from **City Hall concourse** (93 Highland Ave.) at 11:30 a.m., followed by a **ceremony at Prospect Hill Park** from 12 to 1 p.m. This event is held in partnership with the **Somerville Museum**.

Happy birthday this week to several locals: Happy birthday to **Sophia Carafotes**. We wish her the very best. We hope she enjoys her day. Happy Birthday to **Kevin O'Donovan**. *Continued on page 7*

Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of December 31 – January 6 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
Wednesday <i>December 31</i>	Cloudy	35°/19°	3%	1%	WSW 15 mph
Thursday <i>January 1</i>	Partly Cloudy	27°/13°	16%	11%	SW 11 mph
Friday <i>January 2</i>	Partly Cloudy	26°/14°	15%	8%	W 9 mph
Saturday <i>January 3</i>	Partly Cloudy	32°/18°	9%	5%	W 9 mph
Sunday <i>January 4</i>	Partly Cloudy	30°/16°	22%	12%	WSW 11 mph
Monday <i>January 5</i>	Partly Cloudy	26°/21°	8%	5%	W 10 mph
Tuesday <i>January 6</i>	Snow	33°/20°	44%	31%	WNW 13 mph

NOTE: Conditions subject to change. Always check a daily forecast prior to activities that can be affected by the weather.

TheSomervilleTimes.com Comments of the Week

Response to: Somerville's affordability crisis

David says:

I'm not convinced by this argument that just because other cities exist that are bigger than Somerville, then there's no point in Somerville making reforms to add housing to address housing affordability. Again it's just like the climate change analogy. It's like saying well our jurisdiction is only a small portion of global greenhouse gas emissions, so there's no point in us doing anything to address the problem. It's better to contribute to solving a problem, even if your actions alone do not completely solve the problem, rather than do nothing. Given that zoning determines how much market rate and affordable housing can/will be built, and that is determined at the municipal level, it is largely municipal policy that needs to change, although I would support more state level action as well. Regarding the fiscal impact of new housing, my understanding is that the available evidence suggests that it is net positive. A fiscal analysis presented during a recent land use committee meeting found that a 30 unit apartment building would be fiscally net positive to the city by 25-28k annually:

<https://somervillema.legistar.com/MeetingDetail.aspx?ID=1346331&GUID=54904FFE-8756-4F61-9554-86251C4BC29F&Search=>

That analysis is discussed starting 1:19 into the meeting.

Response to: Somerville installing six new electric vehicle charging stations across the city

JoeSchmoe says:

Meanwhile electricity prices soar for the average residents thanks to EV's and AI in datacenters consuming a good percentage of a resource people need in their homes instead.

EV Aware says:

The program in Melrose should be copied, keeping a lot more people happy.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

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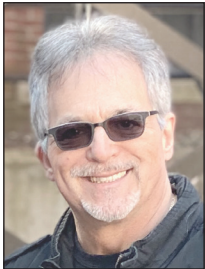
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Life in the **VILLE** by Jimmy Del Ponte

The views and opinions expressed in the commentaries and letters to the Editor of The Somerville Times do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of The Somerville Times, its publishers or staff.

New Year's Eve...sure has changed!



Did you wake up with a splitting headache on January 1? I didn't, but that's not the way it used to be.

How has the whole New Year's Eve celebration thing

changed? Well, I can only speak for myself and some of my Somerville friends. I can remember playing in the band at the Dilboy Post in Davis Square and going home with a ton of leftover Chinese food, including gallon jugs full of duck sauce. I recall a certain New Year's Eve at The Embassy Lounge on Somerville Ave. that ended with the Police Department's van escorting some patrons to jail. But that was the old days when we were younger.

We had that party instinct, and we had more energy than we knew what to do with. We planned and waited anxiously for what was known as "amateur night." We weren't as careful as we should have been back then, and a lot of us were lucky to have made it home safely.

We had some odd New Year's traditions

when we were younger. Sometimes we would rent a hotel room and fill the tub with ice and beverages. Some would actually do midnight laps around Trum Field to celebrate. There was always a package deal at the now-defunct Faces disco on Route 2. You could ring in the New Year with hi-balls and disco balls. Getting a room at the "crappy hotel" next door was part of the Faces experience.

The Willow, Decos, and O'Brien's in Ball Square were hot party spots, too. The Powder House Pub had action as well. For about 6 bucks, you could join in the all-you-can-eat New Year's Eve festivities at Bo Bo's Chinese restaurant in Ball Square. At the other end of the city on lower Broadway, Khoury's State always had a smoking New Year's Eve shindig. A pal recalls one New Year's Eve at the old Duffy's (then Choices), which was Jasper's at the time. A brawl started in the joint and spilled out onto Bow Street. After a few minutes, the boisterous party people ended up fighting back at the club. It was sort of a walking tour of the Union Square area! Talk about your noisemakers.



Once, I went into Boston for First Night. It was the "first night" I actually thought I was going to freeze to death. No thanks. Many times we would just stay home and order Chinese food from Yee's Village or Golden Delight on College Ave. I almost

forgot to mention that we watched The Three Stooges Marathon. That was a tradition. Lots of Somerville families would just sit around the TV watching the ball drop in Times Square. Those times were fun and simple. *Continued on page 13*

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Money Map Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

Q: What are the right and wrong ways to use debt?

A: Debt can be a powerful tool for building your financial future—but only when used with intention. Used poorly, it can damage your finances and add unnecessary stress.

Here are a few ways to make debt work for you, not against you:

- Use debt when it provides a clear return. For example, borrowing against investments or long-term savings that earn more than the interest rate.

- Borrow for meaningful goals—not fleeting wants.

Good examples include a primary home,

education, or proactive health care. Riskier uses: dining takeout habits, unused subscriptions, or short-term entertainment.

- Keep interest rates competitive.

Aim for rates close to today's mortgage prime rate. Avoid "high-cost" debt—generally anything above 10%. Tax-deductible interest (like mortgage interest) further lowers your true cost.

- Always borrow with a repayment plan.

Even 0% offers can backfire if you don't know how—and when—you'll pay them off.

- Rule of thumb: Don't stretch payments longer than the benefit you receive from the purchase.

For example, 5-year debt for a 5-day vacation probably isn't a good idea.

Bottom line: Debt isn't good or bad—it's a tool. When used with purpose, limits, and a plan, it can support your goals instead of derailing them!

Any questions? I'd be happy to help.

I'm Vincent Hicks, CPA, based in Somerville with over 20 years of experience. Reach out at vhicksconnect@gmail.com or (859) 553-0788.

Disclaimer: This column provides general financial information and should not be considered legal, investment, or tax advice. Individual situations vary. Always consult a qualified professional for personalized guidance.



MassDOT's McGrath Boulevard project holds design public hearing

CONT. FROM PG 1

development, environmental review, and utility investigations, the project has now advanced to the 25 percent design level," said Christopher Cameron, project manager at the Massachusetts Department of Transportation.

The boulevard concept began with MassDOT's determination that the McCarthy Overpass needed replacement back in 2011, according to Cameron.

Cameron says the McCarthy Viaduct Overpass is "structurally deficient and divides neighborhoods." He added that the McGrath Highway is "oversized for today's travel patterns and lacks safe and accessible facilities for people walking and biking."

There were 263 crashes between 2017-2021, with 72 injury crashes and 21 bicycle and pedestrian crashes, according to MassDOT.

The project is driven by five goals. These include enhancing safety to support Vision Zero objectives, reconnecting neighborhoods, supporting sustainable transportation, delivering resilient infrastructure to deal with climate change, and an accessible design that removes barriers.

Key design elements include dedicated bus stop areas, protected intersections for pedestrians and bicyclists, increased green space, and separated bike lanes.

"Together these elements create a more complete street that balances mobility with livability," said Cameron.

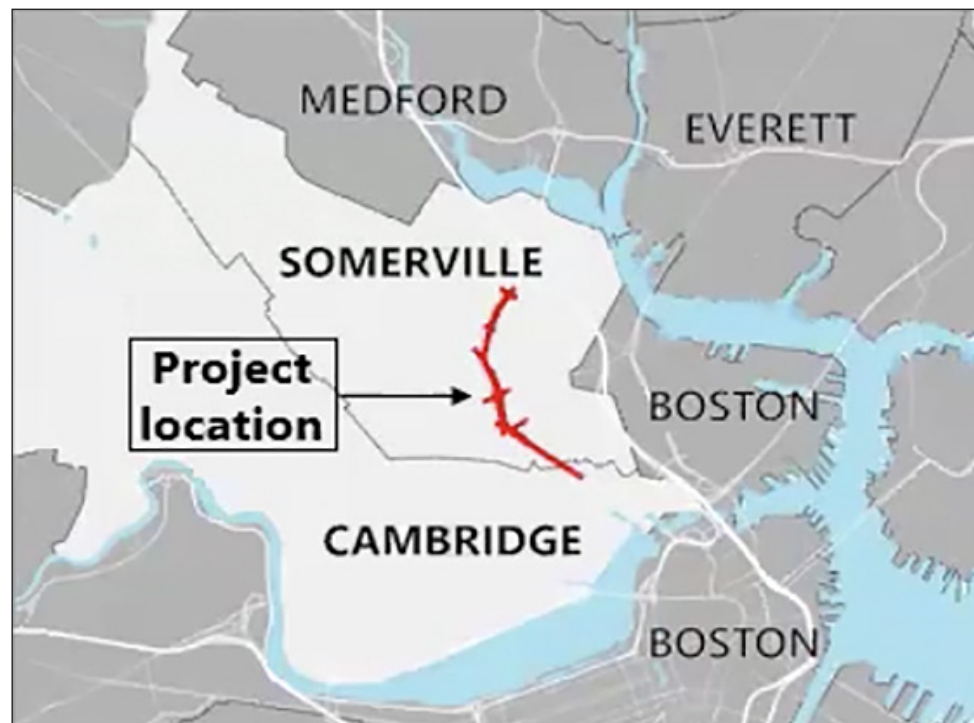
The elevated overpass will be transformed into a street-level boulevard, with the removal of 1 of 3 vehicle lanes in each direction, a separated bike lane in both directions, green space and trees, and widened sidewalks for improved comfort and accessibility.

The design team described intersections and spotlighted the Pedestrian Bridge at Otis Street that will be removed.

Under the proposed plan, Otis Street will have a raised crosswalk for safer pedestrian movement. The removal of the pedestrian bridge would add more than 1,000 square feet of space to the Deanna Cremin Playground.

Other community benefits include improved access to the Green Line Extension (GLX) and the Community Path, new open space at Somerville Avenue and Medford Street, and gives priority to pedestrians, cyclists, and public transportation to reduce car-dependence and improve mobility.

The next steps will allow for ongoing community engagement until the 100 percent final design in 2027, followed by advertisement, bid review, and contractor selection. The anticipated completion of



construction is 2032.

State Rep. Mike Connolly thanked the team and said that he was pleased with MassDOT's commitment to adding a raised crosswalk at Otis Street. He also echoed concerns from written questions about accessibility in the Brickbottom neighborhood.

Brad Rawson, Director of Mobility at OSPCD, thanked the team on behalf of the City of Somerville and said the project had reached a milestone in the plan-

ning process.

Later, on December 18, a Somerville Pedestrian & Transit Advisory Committee meeting was held, and members discussed some of the key aspects from the hearing.

At the PTAC meeting, mobility staff presented key elements of the design for MassDOT's McGrath Boulevard project with the goal of identifying recommendations to incorporate into a comment letter in support of the project.

Big Fish Little Fish pet store closes

CONT. FROM PG 1

his boyhood job in 1990, but this time to take over as the owner.

"When people are happy, they go buy a pet. When they are sad, they go buy a pet," says Ghioni.

It's not that business was bad, it's just the end

of an era, he explains. Ghioni is ready to turn the page and start a new chapter in his life.

"With the inflation and everything, with the new generation, hamsters and gerbils are dead," says Ghioni. "Kids don't want to take care of hamsters and gerbils anymore."

While sales have slowed down for pocket pets and some pet-related items, Ghioni says that sales increased for fish due to more people working at home during the pandemic years.

From betta fish to chinchillas to exotic

pagoda snails, to tarantulas and turtles to parrots and bamboo shrimp, Ghioni and his pet store will always be remembered in the hearts and minds of the community for his knowledge, care, and genuine love of animals.

COMMENTARY

The views and opinions expressed in the commentaries and letters to the Editor of The Somerville Times do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of The Somerville Times, its publishers or staff.

Thank you, Somerville, It's Been an Honor and a Privilege



By Mayor Katjana Ballantyne

When I took office in 2022, Somerville was still emerging from the worst of the pandemic while navigating the host of pressures facing most cities across the nation: housing instability, growing need for services, aging infrastructure, and the urgency of climate change. But as I rallied my administration to meet these needs, I also saw the opportunity to build a more inclusive, equitable city where everyone can thrive — at its core, we were seeking progress for all.

That vision and those values guided every decision of the past four years. And as my second term comes to a close, I am submitting an End of Term Transition Report to our City Council as a governing responsibility. Its aim is simple: clearly document where Somerville stands in terms of projects and initiatives and provide a reliable foundation for the next administration, for the City Council, and for the public as they too serve this amazing community we all call home.

Below are some key points, and the report offers a more detailed summary of my administration's work, and I want to be clear, it's also a reflection of the many people who shaped the progress of

the last four years. I want to thank our community partners and residents, our business owners and workers, our local and regional elected officials, and our tireless staff for your voices, commitment, resilience, creativity, determination, and your belief in this city.

Thank you as well for the honor of allowing me to serve as your Mayor. As we move forward, I too as a dedicated resident will continue to do my part, with you and for you, always.

Inclusive by Design

Inclusiveness begins with ensuring the people most affected by policy decisions have a seat at the table. That principle shaped initiatives such as the Anti-Displacement Task Force [1], Cultural Capacity Plan [2], Climate Forward Plan [3], Participatory Budgeting [4], and Public Safety for All [5] reports. It guided our expansion of outreach across departments from hundreds of in-person engagements to the work of outreach staff who did the work to meet residents where they are on sidewalks, in businesses, at events, and more.

Inclusiveness also means standing up for the safety and dignity of our residents. In February 2025, Somerville joined Chelsea in filing a federal lawsuit with the pro bono support of Lawyers for Civil Rights, challenging actions by the Trump Administration that threaten to withhold federal funding from so-called "sanctuary cities." Somerville has been identified as a welcoming city since 1987 because residents are safer when victims and witnesses can report crimes without fear. Pro-

tecting that principle, and the federal resources that support public safety, homelessness prevention, and youth health initiatives, is part of governing responsibly.

Equity as a Guiding Commitment

Many residents and staff told me that with our American Rescue Plan Act funding, we could have focused solely on traditional infrastructure projects. We chose instead to make equity central to our recovery. Equity is rarely the easiest path, but it is the right one.

While \$44 million went to infrastructure, \$35 million supported residents facing the hardest impacts of COVID-19. We implemented flexible rental assistance, guaranteed basic income, childcare support, and other programs that required creativity and determination from our staff.

We also took on structural inequities within the City workforce. Through the Wage and Compensation Study, and the negotiations that followed, we lifted historically low salaries within SMEU and improved benefits while righting long-standing inequities between comparable jobs. This is lasting pay equity and a reflection of my administration's and our community's commitment to doing what is right.

Creating Opportunities to Thrive

To deliver on our progressive values, we must diversify our revenue. That's why my administration pursued strategic commercial development rather than leaving growth to chance.

Through tough tech zoning, the Brickbottom plan, and As-

sembly Square, Somerville is positioned to generate roughly \$255 million in community benefits, investments that will support affordable housing, job creation, linkage fees, and resources for schools and core services.

Because of this approach, we were able to increase the Somerville Public Schools budget by nearly 34% over four years. We built or upgraded 13 parks, accelerated street safety improvements, and advanced nationally recognized climate work, including the Pollinator Action Plan, which offers a nationally recognized blueprint for other cities to help prevent species collapse.

In response to long-standing calls from youth, families, and educators, I also drove resources into out-of-school time programming including opening three temporary, dedicated spaces for teens across Somerville during the summer months. While temporary by design, they piloted a model for responding to youth needs while continuing the work toward a long-term solution.

A Foundation for the Future

Sound fiscal stewardship is essential to delivering lasting progress. During my term, Somerville achieved a historic milestone, earning a AAA bond rating for the first time in the City's history — and maintaining that top rating for three consecutive years. This distinction reflects disciplined financial management and long-term planning, and it matters because it lowers borrowing costs and allows the City to invest more effectively in infrastructure, housing, schools, and core ser-

vices that residents rely on.

That same commitment to fiscal responsibility is reflected in delivering a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2026, even amid economic uncertainty and rising costs. Together, these achievements ensure Somerville remains financially strong while continuing to advance equity, opportunity, and resilience.

Those are just highlights of the work we advanced with the backing of a community that believes in progress for all — whether launching the most ambitious infrastructure projects in a century, like the Poplar Street Pump Station and sewer separation efforts, or expanding housing supports, artist space, and food access.

Everything a local government does flows from the will of its people. Our will and our values will carry us through coming challenges and help us seize new opportunities. Somerville's future is bright because its people believe in that brighter future. I am grateful to have served, proud of what my administration has built, and confident in the foundation we are passing on.

Links:

- [1] <https://voice.somervillema.gov/adtf>
- [2] <https://voice.somervillema.gov/cultural-capacity-plan>
- [3] <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/programs/climate-forward>
- [4] <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/finance/participatory-budgeting>
- [5] <https://www.somervillema.gov/psfa-task-force>

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COMMENTARY

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Remembering Robert Elliott and David Johnston



By William C. Shelton

In the late 1980s Union Square after dark was a ghost town. Other than Midnite Convenience, about the only thing open was the Irish Eyes bar. But you would need to practice the buddy system there, because if you fell down, you might get stuck to the floor.

Then Sally Loh opened New Asia, bringing delicious and affordable Chinese food to evening diners. A few other enterprises came and went, until 1995 when Robert Elliott opened Tír na nÓg. It was the pioneer that blazed the way for virtually all the dining and entertainment that the Square now hosts.

Robert had grown up in County Limerick. When his uncle, Paddy Grace, became manager of a hotel on the Irish coast, Robert joined him to manage the resort's musical offerings. Eventually Paddy came here and opened downtown Boston's storied Littlest Bar. Robert opened the Owl and Thistle pub in Seattle. And when that enterprise reached the end of its life cycle, Robert came to Somerville.

Tír na nÓg's square footage was, in fact, less than the Littlest Bar's. But in that cozy space, he presented free live music every night of the week. His own band, the Johnny Come Latelys, played Friday nights. He politely ignored my observation that Johnnies Come Lately was grammatically correct.

A community of regulars grew up around Tír na nÓg, composed of initial strangers who got to know and be concerned about each other's wellbeing. If you were one of them, you would probably recognize half the people in the pub any time you went there. It really was a place where "everyone knows your name."

Robert presided over every aspect of the pub. And although a stoic man, he had a kind word for all.

In 2006 an avaricious landlord imagined that if he did not extend the lease, he could buy a liquor license and capture the nÓg's clientele. When the nÓg community failed to persuade the Licensing Commission not to issue the license, they boycotted the new enterprise, and it closed within a few months.

Robert's generous management of the pub had left him with modest means. He continued to live in the Square, and I would encounter him from time to time at Sally O'Brien's, where he managed the door on nights that bands performed.

During its heyday, Tír na nÓg's Tuesday-night residency was the David Johnston Band. David had grown up in Old Greenwich, Connecticut, where he started his first band when he was eleven years old.

After graduating from New England College as a music major, he came to Boston to work as an IT technician. His love of music drew him to take classes at Berklee, and then work in a series of record stores, and eventually to quit his day job to compose and play full time.

A guitar virtuoso, David formed a band with other virtuosi: Chris Rival on lead guitar (and recording engineer), Richard Gates on bass, and rotating drum

masters Dave Mattacks, John Sands, and Andy Plaisted. Each of them had exceeded Malcolm Gladwell's 10,000-hour rule several times over.

Although influenced by the Blues and what we now call "Americana," David wrote songs ranging from ethereal instrumentals, to rock and roll, to thumping blues, to ballads. He told me that playing guitar was the one thing that always gave him pleasure. He did it wherever he could, music halls, on local radio, in bars, on the street, and at my dining room table.

He held a Cambridge street-performer's license for 24 years, and one would see him most days busking in Harvard Square. When he wasn't performing for others, he played for himself.

A generous soul, David was the most self-effacing human that I've ever known. Self-promotion was excruciating to him, and so he just didn't do it. While less talented performers achieved commercial success, David barely eked out a living. If his talent were divided by his ego, the quotient would approach infinity.

There is a handful of people I know who have sacrificed financial gain and given everything to their art. I worry about how they will materially sustain themselves in old age.

I no longer worry about David. He died in September. When he did not arrive for a gig, his bandmate found him in his apartment, where he lived alone. In death, he preceded Robert Elliott, who left us on December 15th.

Sally O'Brien's this past Sunday evening was no place for claustrophobes. Former bandmates, admiring musicians, and many, many fans came to celebrate his music and his life. Simply inching



David Johnston busking in Harvard Square.

— Photo by Nate Dow

through the multitude was challenging but rewarding. Every few steps friends and acquaintances shared their David stories, their tears, and laughter.

He would have loved it. And he probably would have felt apologetic for drawing so much atten-

tion. I miss him.

Robert Elliott, also self-effacing, had expressed a wish that there be no memorial service for himself. I imagine that, in this matter, those of us who cared for him will disregard his wish. I'll let you know when that happens.



The author and Robert Elliott at a music festival that Robert organized to benefit the Family Center.
— Photo by Andrew Browning

COMMENTARY

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Have a happy and healthy New Year, Somerville!

Our View Of The Times



Looking back on the year just passed is an interesting thing to do. Sometimes sobering, at other times amusing, yet always somewhat inspiring if one considers what has been accomplished and what else is left to be done.

The advance of progress and renewal marches on as we in turn continue the pursuit of our individual hope and dreams.

Observing and participating in the

machinations of political goings on, even at the lowest level, is something of a civic duty that we all should share a sense of responsibility for. It's what makes democracy great, that every man and woman can make a difference in what transpires, mainly when they express their viewpoints at the polls.

Looking ahead to what may come in 2026, we can't help but feel optimistic

about the days to come in our city. It will take some hard work and serious planning, but an improving economy is within sight, as is better civic infrastructure, community resources, and a plethora of other important quality of life issues.

As always, it's up to us to push things in the right direction. To send the proper signals to our city officials. To back them up when they get it right, and to call them on

it when they seem to go astray. They have their duties and we have ours. Let each one carry on in the best fashion possible.

It is the way of our community. We enjoy a uniquely favorable reputation as those who can.

We wish each and every one of our readers the best in the year to come. May peace, prosperity, and good health bless you and yours.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

We wish him a great birthday. Happy birthday to everyone here and from the city that is celebrating this week. We wish all our Facebook friends, such as **Win Win, Helene Messina, Christopher Kenney, Thomas Ross, John Brady, Matthew Martino, Marie Miele, and Steven Anthony**, a very happy birthday. We hope everyone has a great day. To all the others we may have missed, we sincerely wish them the very best of birthdays.

The community is invited to see the creativity and holiday spirit of their neighbors by embarking on a self-guided **Illuminations Tour** through January 2026.

The **Illuminations map** is available to take a self-guided tour: <https://somervilleartsandculture.org/illuminationstour>.

Low-income households may be eligible to receive help with winter heating costs through the **Home Energy Assistance Program**. This program serves residents of Somerville and Cambridge. Participants receive assistance with their heating costs **between November 1 and April 30**. Learn more about the program, check if you qualify, and apply for assistance today at somerville-ma.gov/heatingassistance.

Take steps to protect yourself and loved

ones against **COVID-19**, the flu, and other illnesses in the new year. Somerville's **Health & Human Services Department** is hosting free vaccine clinics at locations across the city. Find all vaccine clinics on the city website and register online at www.somervillema.gov/vaccinations

The trailer for **Voices of Somerville**, produced by **Olivia Huang**, can be seen at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGKV2LhT7WA>. It concerns the voices of poets from Somerville and others in the area. The movie includes Somerville residents **Gloria Mindock, Doug Holder, Lloyd Schwartz** (Somerville Poet Laureate), **Denise Provost**, and others. The full movie will be released next month.

Apply today for **Creative Space** at **Somerville's Armory**.

School meals are free for all students. Nutritious breakfast and lunch are free for all students in **Somerville Public Schools**. Breakfast starts at 8:15 a.m. for prekindergarten students, at 7:30 a.m. for students in grades K-8, and at 7:15 a.m. at Somerville High School and Next Wave/Full Circle. Check out the menu: <https://linqconnect.com/public/menu/FE53U3>.

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FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#1003

1. Which country celebrates New Year first each year?
2. Which song is traditionally sung at midnight on New Year's Eve?
3. Which Scottish poet popularized *Auld Lang Syne*?
4. Which city hosts the most famous New Year's Eve fireworks display?
5. In Spain, how many grapes are eaten at midnight for good luck?
6. What color underwear is worn for good luck in some Latin American countries?
7. What country celebrates New Year by smashing plates at friends' doors?
8. What is the last song played before midnight in Times Square?
9. Which famous civil rights leader's birthday is celebrated on January 15?
10. What major event is commemorated on January 28, 1986?
11. What is the full moon in January commonly called?
12. What was Taylor Swift's first song to chart on the Billboard Hot 100?

Answers on page 13

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

1. Women have more tastebuds than men.
2. Women see more colors than men.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD ON THE FARM

ACROSS

1. Laura Ingalls' notebook
6. Boozer
9. Biblical pronoun
13. Sacred text, to some
14. "Fat chance!"
15. Afrikaners' ancestors
16. Cake spread
17. Chowd down
18. Clear the blackboard
19. Barn chore
21. John Deere, e.g.
23. Nirvana's "Come as You ____"
24. Spasm of pain
25. Broadband access overseer, acr.
28. Mark for omission
30. Recessed space
35. "____ and the Real Girl," movie
37. "Shoot!"
39. E in baseball box score
40. Oil org.
41. Intelligent
43. A mixture or medley
44. Children's respiratory disease
46. Foggy view?
47. Politicians, for short
48. In a sympathetic manner
50. Ski hill ride
52. Maiden name indicator
53. Bald eagle's nest
55. Repeated Latin dance step
57. a.k.a. harvester
61. Opposite of pasture
65. Common varieties are yellow, red and white
66. Tall tale
68. Smooth, in manner
69. Audience's approval
70. "____ at ease"
71. Stomach sore
72. Caribou or moose
73. Soldier's bed
74. Harsh

DOWN

1. Separate cream from milk
2. Locus, pl.
3. Seed coat
4. Form of Japanese poetry

CROSSWORD												
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
13					14			15				
16					17			18				
19					20		21	22				
			23			24						
25	26	27		28		29		30	31	32	33	34
35			36		37		38		39			
40				41			42		43			
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48				49		50		51		52		
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57	58	59	60				61			62	63	64
65					66	67		68				
69					70			71				
72					73			74				



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Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:

N	A	A	C	P		I	M	P			B	L	A	H	
E	L	G	A	R		B	O	A			W	A	I	V	E
A	G	A	V	E		I	O	N			I	N	F	E	R
T	A	R	I	F	F	S		D	O	D	G	E	R	S	
			L	A	O			C	A	N	E				
O	A	F		B	O	L	A		E	N	T	R	A	P	
S	N	A	P		L	O	R	D		S	H	A	V	E	
M	O	K	E		S	O	L	E	S		A	L	A	R	
I	R	I	S	H		P	O	E	T		W	E	I	R	
C	A	R	T	E	R		A	P	E	S		S	L	Y	
			L	I	E	D		N	H	L					
F	O	R	G	O	O	D		G	O	O	D	A	L	L	
U	B	O	A	T		U	S	A		F	O	L	I	O	
R	E	A	L	S		C	I	G		A	P	O	R	T	
L	Y	R	E			E	R	A		R	A	T	E	S	

5. Encircle
6. Deep pile carpet
7. Cereal grass
8. Sorority letter
9. Cleopatra's necklace
10. Thermostat option
11. Guesstimate phrase (2 words)
12. Olympic cast-out, e.g.
15. Charles Darwin's vessel
20. Must-haves
22. Ribonucleic acid, acr.
24. Fine
25. Group of chickens
26. Birthplace of Caprese
27. Oedipus' successor
29. Baby sheep
31. ____ rotation
32. Acrylic fiber
33. Bridal veil fabric
34. With a jagged margin
36. Gulf War missile
38. Pasture-raised chicken's morsel
42. Vanish without this?
45. Lamentation
49. Japanese capital
51. Rh in Rh disease
54. Indiana Jones' find, e.g.
56. Not a minor
57. For boys and girls
58. Popular fairy-tale beginning
59. Stephen King's "The Green ____"
60. Male pig
61. Abe Lincoln's hat material
62. Tatted cloth
63. Done
64. Seaside bird
67. UN labor grp.

Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

Community invited to Somerville 2026 inaugural events

As Somerville embarks on the next legislative term, Mayor-Elect Jake Wilson, the Somerville City Council, and the Somerville School Committee invite the community to attend the 2026 Inaugural events. Please join us for the Mayor's Inaugural Address, remarks by the Council President and School Committee Chair, music, spoken word, and civic pride, followed by a reception to celebrate our community and the launch of the new term.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- Organizational Meeting of the City Council and School Committee, Friday, January 2, 10:30 a.m.
- Inaugural Ceremony, Saturday, January 3, 6 -7:30 p.m.
- Reception, Saturday, January 3, 7:30 -10:30 p.m.

Organizational Meeting, Friday, January 2

- What: At this brief meeting of the City Council and School Committee, the City Council President and Vice President, as well as the School Committee Chair and Vice Chair, will be selected, and all members of both bodies will take the oath of office. The public is welcome.
- When: Friday, January 2, at 10:30 a.m. in the City Council Chambers in City Hall (93 Highland Ave.)

Inaugural Ceremony at SHS Auditorium, Saturday, January 3

- When & Where: Saturday, January 3,

from 6 to 7:30 p.m., at the Somerville High School auditorium (81 Highland Ave.)

- What: Hear Mayor Wilson's inaugural address as well as remarks by the City Council President, the School Committee Chairperson, and honored guest MBTA Chairman and Interim Transportation Secretary Philip Eng. Emceed by Somerville resident and comedian Eugene Mirman, the program also features musical and spoken word performances, a Unity Invocation, and all elected officials will publicly take the oath of office.

- What to wear? Festive dress is welcome, and you'll see everything from black tie to blue jeans, with many people opting for semi-formal or cocktail attire. Bottom line, everyone is welcome.

Reception at the Armory Saturday, January 3

- When & Where: Following the ceremony, the community is invited to a reception at the Somerville Armory (191 Highland Ave.) from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m.
- What: Live band, dancing, and DJ as well as refreshments.

New! Kid & Teen Zone, Saturday, January 3

- What: For the first time, the City's Parks & Recreation Department will host a Kid & Teen Zone for the inauguration to help families enjoy the events. Games, activities, pizza (including glu-



ten-free), and light snacks for ages 5-16 will be offered near the main Reception area in rooms provided courtesy of the Somerville Arts Council's SomArt Space program.

- Where: The Parks & Rec Kid & Teen Zone is on the second floor of the Armory (191 Highland Ave.).

- Drop-Off & Activity Times: Open to families attending Saturday's inaugural events, youth drop-off and registration will be from 5 to 8:30 p.m., and activities will run from 5:30 to 10:30 p.m.

RSVP (Optional), Interpretation & Viewing

- RSVP: RSVP welcome, but optional, for any and all events. Please RSVP to inauguration2026@somervillema.gov.
- ASL & Interpretation: The ceremony will include American Sign Language in-

terpretation and live interpretation into Spanish and Portuguese. Interpretation into additional languages is available upon advance request by emailing language-access@somervillema.gov or calling 311 (617-666-3311) at least seven days in advance of the event.

- Attend, Watch Live Online or on TV, or Later On-Demand: All inaugural events are free and open to the public. The Inaugural Ceremony will also be recorded. Watch live or view later on YouTube.com/SomervilleGovTV and on CityTV cable. For more information, including directions, parking, interpretation info, and more, please visit somervillema.gov/inauguration20.

For more information on all inaugural events, please visit somervillema.gov/inauguration2026.

Dorothy's Corner BY DOROTHY DIMARZO



Lentil Soup

I always have lentils in the pantry for a quick and easy weeknight meal. This soup is a perfect accompaniment to a hearty salad and some crusty bread.

- 1/2 lb. lentils
- 2 tbs. olive oil
- 2 large carrots, chopped in 1/2" pieces
- 2 celery stalks, chopped in 1/2" pieces
- 1/2 large onion or 1 small, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, finely minced
- 1/4 cup tomato paste
- 4 - 1/2 cups of water
- 1 1/2 tsp. vegetable base or chicken base
- Salt and pepper

In a 6-quart pot, add olive oil, carrots, celery, and onion. Add 1/4 teaspoon of each salt and pepper and sauté for about 7 minutes. Add tomato paste and cook down for about 3 minutes, then add garlic and cook additional 30 seconds.

Add water and vegetable or chicken base along with the lentils. Bring to a simmer, cover and cook until the lentils are soft, about 35 - 45 minutes.

Check for additional seasoning. For additional flavoring, I add a teaspoon of pesto to each bowl, this is optional, but certainly bumps up the flavor! Serves 3.

Visit Dorothy's website at <http://ddimarzo2002.wix.com/thymethief>.



LEGAL NOTICES

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SUMMONS (Family Law)

FL-110

CITACIÓN (Derecho familiar)

NOTICE TO RESPONDENT (Name):
 AVISO AL DEMANDADO (Nombre):
 ILYA ANTONYUK

FOR COURT USE ONLY
 (SOLO PARA USO DE LA CORTE)

You have been sued. Read the information below and on the next page.
 Lo han demandado. Lea la información a continuación y en la página siguiente.

Electronically FILED by
 Superior Court of California,
 County of Los Angeles
 7/28/2025 12:15 PM
 David W. Slayton,
 Executive Officer/Clerk of Court,
 By Sofia Martinez, Deputy Clerk

Petitioner's name is:
 Nombre del demandante: GLORIA LAM

CASE NUMBER (NÚMERO DE CASO):
 25AVFL00701

You have 30 calendar days after this Summons and Petition are served on you to file a Response (form FL-120) at the court and have a copy served on the petitioner. A letter, phone call, or court appearance will not protect you.

Tiene 30 días de calendario después de haber recibido la entrega legal de esta Citación y Petición para presentar una Respuesta (formulario FL-120) ante la corte y efectuar la entrega legal de una copia al demandante. Una carta o llamada telefónica o una audiencia de la corte no basta para protegerlo.

If you do not file your Response on time, the court may make orders affecting your marriage or domestic partnership, your property, and custody of your children. You may be ordered to pay support and attorney fees and costs.

Si no presenta su Respuesta a tiempo, la corte puede dar órdenes que afecten su matrimonio o pareja de hecho, sus bienes y la custodia de sus hijos. La corte también le puede ordenar que pague manutención, y honorarios y costos legales.

For legal advice, contact a lawyer immediately. Get help finding a lawyer at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courts.ca.gov/selfhelp), at the California Legal Services website (www.lawhelpca.org), or by contacting your local county bar association.

Para asesoramiento legal, póngase en contacto de inmediato con un abogado. Puede obtener información para encontrar un abogado en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en el sitio web de los Servicios Legales de California (www.lawhelpca.org) o poniéndose en contacto con el colegio de abogados de su condado.

NOTICE—RESTRAINING ORDERS ARE ON PAGE 2:
 These restraining orders are effective against both spouses or domestic partners until the petition is dismissed, a judgment is entered, or the court makes further orders. They are enforceable anywhere in California by any law enforcement officer who has received or seen a copy of them.

AVISO—LAS ÓRDENES DE RESTRICCIÓN SE ENCUENTRAN EN LA PÁGINA 2: Las órdenes de restricción están en vigencia en cuanto a ambos cónyuges o miembros de la pareja de hecho hasta que se despidan la petición, se emita un fallo o la corte dé otras órdenes. Cualquier agencia del orden público que haya recibido o visto una copia de estas órdenes puede hacerlas acatar en cualquier lugar de California.

FEE WAIVER: If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the clerk for a fee waiver form. The court may order you to pay back all or part of the fees and costs that the court waived for you or the other party.

EXENCIÓN DE CUOTAS: Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario un formulario de exención de cuotas. La corte puede ordenar que usted pague, ya sea en parte o por completo, las cuotas y costos de la corte previamente exentos a petición de usted o de la otra parte.



- The name and address of the court are (El nombre y dirección de la corte son):
 LOS ANGELES SUPERIOR COURT
 42011 4th STREET WEST
 LANCASTER, CA 93534
- The name, address, and telephone number of the petitioner's attorney, or the petitioner without an attorney, are: (El nombre, dirección y número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante si no tiene abogado, son):
 JOHN C. BIGLER, CFLS
 1037 WEST AVENUE N, SUITE 201
 PALMDALE, CA 93551
 (661) 947-8499

David W. Slayton

Date (Fecha): 7/28/2025

Clerk, by (Secretario, por) /s/ Sofia Martinez, Deputy (Asistente)

Page 1 of 2

Form Adopted for Mandatory Use
 Judicial Council of California
 FL-110 (Rev. January 1, 2015)

SUMMONS
 (Family Law)

Family Code, §§ 232, 233, 2024.7, 2040, 7700;
 Code of Civil Procedure, §§ 412.20, 416.60-416.90
www.courts.ca.gov



LEGAL NOTICES

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FL-110

STANDARD FAMILY LAW RESTRAINING ORDERS

Starting immediately, you and your spouse or domestic partner are restrained from:

1. removing the minor children of the parties from the state or applying for a new or replacement passport for those minor children without the prior written consent of the other party or an order of the court;
2. cashing, borrowing against, canceling, transferring, disposing of, or changing the beneficiaries of any insurance or other coverage, including life, health, automobile, and disability, held for the benefit of the parties and their minor children;
3. transferring, encumbering, hypothecating, concealing, or in any way disposing of any property, real or personal, whether community, quasi-community, or separate, without the written consent of the other party or an order of the court, except in the usual course of business or for the necessities of life; and
4. creating a nonprobate transfer or modifying a nonprobate transfer in a manner that affects the disposition of property subject to the transfer, without the written consent of the other party or an order of the court. Before revocation of a nonprobate transfer can take effect or a right of survivorship to property can be eliminated, notice of the change must be filed and served on the other party.

You must notify each other of any proposed extraordinary expenditures at least five business days prior to incurring these extraordinary expenditures and account to the court for all extraordinary expenditures made after these restraining orders are effective. However, you may use community property, quasi-community property, or your own separate property to pay an attorney to help you or to pay court costs.

ÓRDENES DE RESTRICCIÓN ESTÁNDAR DE DERECHO FAMILIAR

En forma inmediata, usted y su cónyuge o pareja de hecho tienen prohibido:

1. llevarse del estado de California a los hijos menores de las partes, o solicitar un pasaporte nuevo o de repuesto para los hijos menores, sin el consentimiento previo por escrito de la otra parte o sin una orden de la corte;
2. cobrar, pedir prestado, cancelar, transferir, deshacerse o cambiar el nombre de los beneficiarios de cualquier seguro u otro tipo de cobertura, como de vida, salud, vehículo y discapacidad, que tenga como beneficiario(s) a las partes y su(s) hijo(s) menor(es);
3. transferir, gravar, hipotecar, ocultar o deshacerse de cualquier manera de cualquier propiedad, inmueble o personal, ya sea comunitaria, cuasicomunitaria o separada, sin el consentimiento escrito de la otra parte o una orden de la corte, excepto en el curso habitual de actividades personales y comerciales o para satisfacer las necesidades de la vida; y
4. crear o modificar una transferencia no testamentaria de manera que afecte la asignación de una propiedad sujeta a transferencia, sin el consentimiento por escrito de la otra parte o una orden de la corte. Antes de que se pueda eliminar la revocación de una transferencia no testamentaria, se debe presentar ante la corte un aviso del cambio y hacer una entrega legal de dicho aviso a la otra parte.

Cada parte tiene que notificar a la otra sobre cualquier gasto extraordinario propuesto por lo menos cinco días hábiles antes de realizarlo, y rendir cuenta a la corte de todos los gastos extraordinarios realizados después de que estas órdenes de restricción hayan entrado en vigencia. No obstante, puede usar propiedad comunitaria, cuasicomunitaria o suya separada para pagar a un abogado que lo ayude o para pagar los costos de la corte.

NOTICE—ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HEALTH INSURANCE: Do you or someone in your household need affordable health insurance? If so, you should apply for Covered California. Covered California can help reduce the cost you pay towards high quality affordable health care. For more information, visit www.coveredca.com. Or call Covered California at 1-800-300-1506.

AVISO—ACCESO A SEGURO DE SALUD MÁS ECONÓMICO: ¿Necesita seguro de salud a un costo asequible, ya sea para usted o alguien en su hogar? Si es así, puede presentar una solicitud con Covered California. Covered California lo puede ayudar a reducir el costo que paga por seguro de salud asequible y de alta calidad. Para obtener más información, visite www.coveredca.com. O llame a Covered California al 1-800-300-0213.

WARNING—IMPORTANT INFORMATION

California law provides that, for purposes of division of property upon dissolution of a marriage or domestic partnership or upon legal separation, property acquired by the parties during marriage or domestic partnership in joint form is presumed to be community property. If either party to this action should die before the jointly held community property is divided, the language in the deed that characterizes how title is held (i.e., joint tenancy, tenants in common, or community property) will be controlling, and not the community property presumption. You should consult your attorney if you want the community property presumption to be written into the recorded title to the property.

ADVERTENCIA—INFORMACIÓN IMPORTANTE

De acuerdo a la ley de California, las propiedades adquiridas por las partes durante su matrimonio o pareja de hecho en forma conjunta se consideran propiedad comunitaria para fines de la división de bienes que ocurre cuando se produce una disolución o separación legal del matrimonio o pareja de hecho. Si cualquiera de las partes de este caso llega a fallecer antes de que se divida la propiedad comunitaria de tenencia conjunta, el destino de la misma quedará determinado por las cláusulas de la escritura correspondiente que describen su tenencia (por ej., tenencia conjunta, tenencia en común o propiedad comunitaria) y no por la presunción de propiedad comunitaria. Si quiere que la presunción comunitaria quede registrada en la escritura de la propiedad, debería consultar con un abogado.

LEGAL NOTICES

Legal Notices can also be viewed on our website at www.thesomervilletimes.com



City of Somerville
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) will hold a virtual public hearing on **Tuesday, January 20, 2026**, at 6:00pm through Zoom.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission will be conducted via remote participation. A recording of these proceedings can be found online here: [Agendas, Minutes, & More](#).

TO USE A COMPUTER

Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN_A2pH_BVKTdGw_Llx7QJ4rA

TO CALL IN

Attendees must register for the meeting online in order for a call-in number to be emailed to them by Zoom.

The Historic Preservation Commission will consider the following pursuant to the Historic Districts Act, Chapter 40C of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, and/or the City of Somerville Code of Ordinances, Pt. II, Chap. 7, Sections 7-16 – 7-28.

Alterations to Local Historic District (LHD) Properties

76 Columbus Ave Applicant: T&K Mechanical
Owner: Jesa Damora and John Bailes
The Applicant seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter an LHD property by installing a new HVAC system.

DETERMINATIONS OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE (STEP 1 IN THE DEMOLITION REVIEW PROCESS)

184 Broadway Applicant: Adam Dash & Associates- Adam Dash
Owner: The Somerville Community Corporation, Inc.
The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.

DETERMINATIONS OF PREFERABLY PRESERVED (STEP 2 IN THE DEMOLITION REVIEW PROCESS)

58 Main Street Applicant: Patrick Easley
Owner: Doug Keah
The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.

21 Avon Street (House) Applicant: Law Office of Michael LaRosa LLC- Michael LaRosa
Owner: Joseph A. Ferro, Trustee of 21 Avon Street Realty Trust
The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.

21 Avon Street (Barn) Applicant: Law Office of Michael LaRosa LLC- Michael LaRosa
Owner: Joseph A. Ferro, Trustee of 21 Avon Street Realty Trust
The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.

Development review application submittal materials and other documentation may be viewed online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/historic-preservation/hpc-cases>. Interested persons may provide comments to the Historic Preservation Commission at the hearing or by submitting written comments by email to historic@somervillema.gov.

12/31/25 The Somerville Times



ADVERTISEMENT

The Somerville Housing Authority, the Awarding Authority, invites sealed bids from electrical contractors for the Panelboard and Transformer Replacement, Phase 2 project at the Bryant Manor Development for the Somerville Housing Authority in Somerville Massachusetts, in accordance with the documents prepared by Nangle Engineering Incorporated.

The Project consists of: Replacement of FPE panelboards and transformers with new, and repair of ground fault protection at the main switchboard.

The work is estimated to cost \$295,000.00.

Bids are subject to M.G.L. c.149 §44A-J & to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. c.149 §26 to 27H inclusive. General bidders must be certified by the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) in the category of Electrical.

General Bids will be received until **2:00 pm, Thursday, January 29, 2026** and publicly posted online forthwith.

Filed sub-bids for the trades listed below will be received until 2:00 pm, Thursday, January 22, 2026 and publicly posted online forthwith.

Filed sub-bidders must be DCAMM certified for the trades listed below and bidders must include a current DCAMM Sub-Bidder Certificate of Eligibility and a signed DCAMM Sub-Bidder's Update Statement.

SUBTRADES: Section 23.00.00 HVAC

This project is being Electronically Bid (E-Bid). All bids shall be prepared and submitted online at www.Projectdog.com and received no later than the date & time specified above. Hard copy bids will not be accepted by the Awarding Authority. For E-Bid Tutorial and Instructions, download the [Supplemental Instructions To Bidders for Electronic Bid Projects](#) from www.Projectdog.com. For assistance, contact Projectdog, Inc. at 978.499.9014

General bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit that is not less than five (5%) of the greatest possible bid amount (considering all alternatives), and made payable to the Somerville Housing Authority.

Bid Forms and Contract Documents will be available online and for purchase at www.Projectdog.com, project code 872075 on **Wednesday, January 7, 2026**.

Bidders requesting Contract Documents to be mailed to them shall include a separate check for \$35.00 per set, payable to Projectdog, Inc., to cover mail handling costs.

The existing building will be available for observation on the morning of **Thursday, January 15, 2026** at 75 Myrtle Street, Somerville. Bidders must contact Nangle Engineering Inc. (gpnangle@nangleengineering.com) or at (978) 777-7650 prior to close of business on the Monday prior to schedule an appointment.

The inspection is an opportunity to visit and observe the site only. Any oral interpretations offered at the site inspection are non-binding. Any questions must be submitted in writing to the Designer, at the e-mail address on the Project Manual cover, no later than 4:00 PM on the Friday prior to the date stated above for the receipt of bids. Questions after that time may not be responded to, at the sole discretion of the designer.

The Somerville Housing Authority reserves the right to waive any informalities in or to reject any and all bids, or to waive any informalities in the bidding. No bid shall be withdrawn for a period of thirty (30) days, Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays excluded, after approval of the award by the Somerville Housing Authority without written consent of the Somerville Housing Authority.

Diane Cohan, Executive Director
January 7, 2026

12/31/25 The Somerville Times

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www.TheSomervilleTimes.com



City of Somerville
PLANNING BOARD
City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Somerville Planning Board (PB) will hold a virtual public hearing on **Thursday, January 15, 2026**, at 6:00pm through Zoom.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission will be conducted via remote participation. A recording of these proceedings can be found online here: [Agendas, Minutes, & More](#).

TO USE A COMPUTER

Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN_nv7nLC5BSfmCg1K_VYMvsA

TO CALL IN

An attendee must register for the meeting online in order for a call-in number to be emailed to them by Zoom.

The Planning Board will consider the following pursuant to M.G.L. 40A and the Somerville Zoning Ordinance:

201B Highland Ave Allan Knowles owner of Danger Wizard LLC proposes to establish a Recreational Services use in the Mid-Rise 3 (MR3) zoning district, which requires a Special Permit.

152-158 Broadway Michael LaRosa, representing Btone Fitness, proposes to establish a Fitness Services use in a ground-story commercial space fronting a Pedestrian Street in the Mid-Rise 5 (MR5) zoning district, which requires a Special Permit.

248 Elm Street Somerville BBQ Inc. seeks to establish a Formula Business principal use in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) zoning district, which requires a Special Permit.

366 Broadway 366 Broadway Somerville LLC requests to change a condition of a previously issued Special Permit (P&21-175) in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) zoning district.

Development review application submittal materials and other documentation may be viewed online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/ospcd/planning-and-zoning/reports-and-decisions>. Interested persons may provide comments to the Planning Board at the hearing or by submitting written comments by email to PlanningBoard@somervillema.gov.

12/31/25 The Somerville Times



CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
INVITATION FOR BIDS
IFB 26-32

The City of Somerville, through the Procurement & Contract Services Department invites bids for:

Water Meter Parts

The IFB package may be obtained online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement> or from the City of Somerville's BidExpress page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after: **Wednesday, December 31, 2025**. Sealed bids will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **1:00 pm, Thursday, January 15, 2026**.

The City of Somerville reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any minor informality in the IFB process, and accept the bid(s) deemed to be in the best interests of the City of Somerville.

Please email jremy@somervillema.gov for more information.

Jordan T. Remy
Deputy Chief Procurement Officer
617-625-6600 x3400

12/31/25 The Somerville Times

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
IFB #26-34**

The City of Somerville, through the Procurement and Contracting Services Department, invites sealed bids for:

2026 Streets Improvement Project

An Invitation for Bid may be obtained online at www.bidexpress.com, <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or at PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **12/31/2025**. Sealed bids will be received at above office until: **01/21/2026 2:00PM EST**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves right to reject any or all bids if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

MassDOT prequalification of contractors with the class of work as, Highway Construction, for the project with an estimated value of \$2,490,114.60 will be required.

Please contact Jordan T. Remy at jremy@somervillema.gov for more information.

5% Bid Deposit required.

**Jordan T. Remy
Deputy Chief Procurement Officer
617-625-6600 x3400**

12/31/25 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
IFB #26-33**

The City of Somerville, through the Procurement and Contracting Services Department, invites sealed bids for:

Water Meter Replacement, Repairs, Testing, and Maintenance

An Invitation for Bid may be obtained online at www.bidexpress.com, <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or at PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **12/31/2025**. Sealed bids will be received at above office until: **01/15/2026 2:00PM EST**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves right to reject any or all bids if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

Please contact Jordan T. Remy at jremy@somervillema.gov for more information.

5% Bid Deposit required.

**Jordan T. Remy
Deputy Chief Procurement Officer
617-625-6600 x3400**

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Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

All creative disciplines are encouraged to apply for open spaces **now through March 11, 2026**. The city is now accepting Requests for Proposals (RFPs) from arts and creative enterprises interested in leasing space at the city-owned Armory at 191 Highland Ave. The RFP will remain **through March 11, 2026**. Full details on eligibility, available spaces, lease terms, evaluation criteria, and how to submit a proposal are available on the **Armory Master Plan SomerVoice** page, which will serve as the primary hub for this process: www.voice.somervillema.gov/armory-master-plan. To help applicants feel confident throughout the process, the city will soon offer building tours, Q&As, and workshops. Subscribe to project updates on the **SomerVoice** page to be the first to know when new resources are posted. The full RFP is available on the SomerVoice page and at www.somervillema.gov/procurement.

Some reminders for the 2025/2026 snow season: **Snow emergency parking is on the odd side of the street all winter**, unless posted signage says differently. Sign up for alerts or update your information at somerville-ma.gov/alerts. You can call 311 (617-666-3311) if you need assistance. Flashing blue lights at major intersections indicate a snow emergency. Snow emergencies are announced on the city's website, social media feeds, City TV, and via information shared with local media. Property owners are responsible for clearing snow from sidewalks within six daylight hours of the end of snowfall. For more information on the city's snow policies,

visit somervillema.gov/snow. Somerville's **Teen Shoveling Program** is back for the 2025/26 season, providing a paid opportunity for youth to assist local seniors and homeowners with disabilities in clearing snow after a storm. The program is available for teens aged 14 to 19 years old. All interested youths must submit an application. Youths aged 18 or 19 must also submit a CORI form. For questions and to learn more, visit somervillema.gov/shoveling, contact **Daniel Harris** at dharris@somervillema.gov or 617-625-6600 ext. 2406, or 311 by phone (617-666-3311), email, text, mobile app, chat, social media, web, and more at somervillema.gov/311.

The **City of Somerville** is seeking one new member to join the **Mayor's Appointments Advisory Committee (AAC)**. If you care about fairness, transparency, and community voice in local government, this is a great opportunity to make a meaningful impact. The AAC plays a key role in strengthening how Somerville selects members for its regulatory and decision-making boards and commissions. By helping review applicants and recommend finalists, AAC members ensure that appointments reflect the needs, values, and diversity of our community. How to apply: online.somervillema.gov/besomerville, email, send materials to Careers@somervillema.gov with the subject line: "AAC Member Application", mail: City Hall – Attn: HR / Kristen Hill, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA 02143.

For anyone in need of food resources, go to the **Somerville Food Coalition's** website: www.somervillema.gov/snap. Free local pantries, community meals, community fridges, and more. Find more information at <https://www.somervillema.gov/snap>. Here are some locations where you can find free food at **Somerville's Community Fridges** can be found at 35 Prospect St., **Elizabeth Peabody House**, 275-277 Broadway, St. Clements, across from 29 St. Clements Road. Donations are welcome at these locations.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our **Arts Editor, Doug Holder**, for setting up a **GoFundMe** campaign for *The Somerville Times*. With the cost of printing going up and a lack of businesses having the resources to advertise, free papers feel the effect. We sincerely thank all who have already contributed and thank any future contributors. If you are interested in helping, please visit <https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-the-somerville-times>. Or if anyone is interested in advertising, please contact Bobbieton@aol.com. We offer great discounts to help our advertisers be able to advertise. Thank you all so much for your support!

Don't forget, if you would like to subscribe to receive a digital edition of our paper, go directly online to our website, over to the right side, and fill out your email address to receive a free, full PDF copy of the paper.

New Year's Eve...sure has changed! CONT. FROM PG 3

These days I was lucky to have stayed awake until midnight. I actually nodded out a few times! There was no more booze and no more having to try to quit smoking. Most of all, there were no more hangovers. We watched some Stooges, some Dick Clark (RIP), and ate bacon-wrapped scallops. I have learned that resolutions

don't always work out. When you hit a certain age, you are what you are, so just get used to it. Sure, I'd like to resolve to stop getting angry in traffic. I'd like to try to be more patient when joggers hog the sidewalk. I wish I could clean my house more and toss out some clutter. I know I'll never learn to manage money, so forget about that. Here's

one for you. Let's all resolve to try to enjoy life while we are still here and keep this in mind. Stop worrying about everything and hug your loved ones more. Have fun and relax. Stop and smell the flowers. (Get that scowl off your face, tough guy!) Congratulations, you made it to another year. I hope it's the best one yet.

Ms. Cam's *From on page 8*

Olio

Answers

1. Kiribati	8. <i>Imagine</i> by John Lennon
2. <i>Auld Lang Syne</i>	9. Martin Luther King Jr.
3. Robert Burns	10. The Challenger space shuttle disaster
4. Sydney, Australia	11. The Wolf Moon
5. 12 grapes	12. <i>Tim McGraw</i>
6. Yellow	
7. Denmark	



Somerville Fair Housing Commission
Question of the week



Q: What actions violate the Fair Housing Act?

A: When you are dealing with member of a protected class and you:

- Refuse to rent, sell, or negotiate housing
- Make housing unavailable or deny a dwelling
- Set different terms, conditions, or privileges for sale/rental
- Provide different housing services/facilities
- Falsely deny housing is available for inspection, sale, or rental
- Make, print, or publish any notice, statement, or advertisement that indicates a preference or limitation based on a protected class

The Somerville Fair Housing Commission generally meets on the fourth Thursday of each month at 3 p.m. online. Call 617-625-6600 ext. 2578 for the login information.

A GoFundMe has been launched by our own **Doug Holder** to help keep **The Somerville Times** free and thriving. Every dollar helps us stay independent and serve our community.

To donate visit:

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-the-somerville-times>

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and speak to the Assignment Editor

BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER

By Bobbygeorge Potaris



Why should you stand on just your left foot during the New Year's Eve countdown? So you start the New Year on the right foot.

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Somerville through the eyes of Denise



A shrine for time... — Photo by Denise Provost

On This Day in History

December 31

- 1223 – In France, Louis VIII succeeds his father, Philip Augustus.
- 1789 – The Bastille, a fortress in Paris used to hold political prisoners, is stormed.
- 1798 – The Sedition Act is passed by the U.S. Congress.
- 1900 – European Allies retake Tientsin, China, from the rebelling Boxers.
- 1933 – Nazi Germany promulgates the Law for the Protection of Hereditary Health, the beginning of the Euthanasia program.
- 1938 – Howard Hughes sets a new world record for an around-the-world flight.
- 1941 – Vichy French Foreign Legionaries sign an armistice in Damascus, allowing them to join the Free French Foreign Legion.
- 1945 – American battleships and cruisers bombard the Japanese home islands for the first time.
- 1951 – The George Washington Carver National Monument in Joplin, Missouri becomes the first national park honoring an African American.
- 1964 – The United States sends 600 more troops to Vietnam.



OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

A HANDPICKED POEM
presented by Michael T Steffen

A HANDPICKED POEM

presented by Off the Shelf Correspondent Michael T Steffen

Poor Fish

by Lewis Meyers / from Plume 172 December 2025

I saw the loser in 3-card Monte
pleading with the cat who ran the game:
You'll give me my fifty back, won't you?
Yesterday payday, rent today.
It's only fair, chance is unjust,
and this can't be happening to me,
can it? But above the avenue's rich rug
the cards continued changing places,
continued slicking through the dealer's practiced hands,
his dry eye out only for the police.
No one looking on or moving along
took the victim's part. Where in our
lapsed world do marks find pity?
Pity goes to animals, who can't help it,
and who try hard to stay away from us
unless a bright prospect entices them,
a lure for innocents. Like the pickerel
I caught who looked at me. Mutely
it beseeched me in the name of all that's holy
to save it. I ate it, soul and body.
But the hooked man, poor fish, voiced
his complaint and plea, for all the good that did him,
as I heard his cries grow fainter as I swam into
the shadows of towers dangling their lighted suites.

Whoever said The art of losing isn't hard to master—? Much as I have loved that poem through the years, in all seasons, and through much consideration, and much loss of my own, I've always thought it somewhat aloof and a matter of exercise, especially for Elizabeth Bishop. There is a sort of easy divinity and wisdom in the attainment—as an “art”—of acceptance. While every mother, widow and therapist will frown with the lot of us in the actual agony of that most unfair event of our being dispossessed: Loss is just something we never really do swallow with much ease, if grace. It strikes us down. It disheartens us. Aggrieves us. Yet—keys, credit card, phone...boat, home...job, bet, contest...parent, spouse, child... however severe or irreplaceable, loss remains the sting of stings, and perhaps only an aging true orphan of philosophy, religion, poverty, or poetry would be able to frame a consolation in acceptance with Bishop's heart, wit and cultural and historical vantage.

Lewis Meyers' stunning poem snatches us back unawares into the moment and the existential individuality of the awful moment and its feeling, in the instance of losing one's rent money to a hustler in a game of three shifted and re-shifted face-down (anonymous) cards—Where's the Queen? The philosopher and literary critic Joseph Campbell reminds

us about the charmed quality of the number 3, its mnemonic resonance in every Tom, Dick and Harry; as well as its count with holiness heard in Trinity and seen in the dancing figures of the classical Graces; but also the recurrence of prongs on the Devil's pitchfork and the succession of bad things that happen.

The unacceptable lesson is the lesson we seem to need, again and again. As easily as we swallow shiny, readily available deals and advantages, we somehow, generation to generation, fail to get this lesson – easy come, easy go – into the understanding and reflexes of our possessive DNA. We remain as gullible to the flashy scam for easy profit as ever before.

The poem's ending – as I swam into the shadows – does a peculiar thing with language that is characteristic of Lewis Meyers' knack, to dial up and ring change on our vernacular understanding. His sleight of hand here is similar to that of the title of his 2024 collection, *Field Notes of a Flaneur*, with its odd confusion of an urban observer in a scientific wilderness. The poem's final lines take the city, which we often refer to as a “jungle” because of its survivalist demands, a feature in the pitiless hustle going on in the poem, and turn it into a psychological sea. I swam... The poet himself identifies with the poem's eponymous victim, the fish, the city seen as a row of fishermen—the shadows of towers dangling their lighted suites... With the pun between “suites” and sweets, the image of the allures of the city comes easily into focus. There's a stroke of poetic genius in the trope of making the city a sea, in its visionary correlation with and affirmation of a changing climate and its eventual physical impact on our major cities in their usual coastal locations. On the metaphorical register, the novelty of “sea” for city however must suggest the typological “jungle” of lingo past, and that jungle's heft of significance in our struggle for civil rights as well as environmental restoration, with the greater tolerance and allowances for language we older readers knew back in the day, pre-911, way pre-Pandemic. Shifts in language measure shifts in temperament, civilized and cultural. Poetry like the other arts are accounts and artifacts so deeply permeated by the actual times, they stand indeed as the true chronicles of those times, our most reliable sources for how things once truly stood in our view of things and ways of expressing them.

Following Meyers' untimely death in 2020, his wife Diana Tietjens Meyers has continued to curate the best of his poetry. In these past years his work has appeared in *Plume*, *Paris Review*, *Poetry Northwest*, *Five Points*, *Hudson Review*, *Massachusetts Review*, and *Arkansas International*. His book *Field Notes of a Flaneur* won the 2024 New Measure Poetry Prize and will be published early in 2026 by New Verse Editions.

Lyrical

SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Poet Kitty Beer reports: “I write novels about climate change. I also write short stories. At one time I was a freelance reporter specializing in environmental issues.”



Old Lady Blues

I no longer dash,
Nor do I sashay anywhere.
But I waddle
And I trundle
And I stagger and I stumble,
And I get there anyway.
My boyfriend's eighty, and he's
Bald and deaf.
But he cuddles very nicely
And his fingers still are deft.
When I sing it's but a treble,
When I giggle it's a cackle.
But dozing in the sunlight,
I am a ferocious rebel.

— Kitty Beer

To have your work considered for the Lyrical send it to:

Doug Holder, 25 School St., Somerville, MA 02143. dougholder@post.harvard.edu

The Somerville Times
Best of Somerville 2025
 Cast your vote!

You have until January 23, 2026 to vote for your favorites in each category. To cast your vote, email us at thebestofsomerville@yahoo.com. The winners will be announced on January 28, 2026. If you don't see your favorite category here, simply add it in your email.

Foods & Restaurants

- Best Breakfast
- Best Combination Breakfast & Lunch
- Best Italian Food
- Best Chinese Food
- Best Mexican Food
- Best Portuguese Food
- Best Local Deli
- Best Variety and all around Restaurant
- Best Seafood
- Best Irish Pub
- Best Local Bar
- Best Thai Food
- Best Hamburger
- Best Mac & Cheese
- Best Hot-Dog
- Best Roast Beef Sandwich
- Best Pizza
- Best Bakery

- Best Sub Shop
- Best Coffee Shop Franchise
- Best Coffee Shop local
- Best Bar Food

Best of Somerville Services

- Best Electrician
- Best Plumber
- Best Attorney
- Best Teacher
- Best City Worker
- Best Receptionist
- Best Real Estate Agent/Realtor
- Best Real Estate Rental Agent
- Best Compost Company
- Best Bank Teller
- Best Bank Employee
- Best Waitstaff
- Best Bartender

- Best Cook
- Best Caterer
- Best Barber
- Best Hair Salon
- Best Doctor
- Best Nurse
- Best Coach
- Best Police Officer
- Best Fire Fighter
- Best Photographer
- Best Somerville Historian
- Best Eye Doctor
- Best Orthodontist
- Best Mortgage Officer
- Best Somerville Artist
- Best Somerville Poet
- Best Somerville Writer
- Best Somerville Celebrity
- Best City Elected Politician

Best of Somerville Businesses

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