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Legislative Matters Committee supports DSNC, questions 'red circle' area



The city's Legislative Matters Committee recommended approval of the DSNC to the City Council.
— Photo by Tim Sackton, under Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike license.

By Harry Kane

The law has spoken, and the proposed Davis Square Neighborhood Council could include residents from neighboring cities, according to City Attorney Cynthia Amara. And, at the Legislative Matters Committee meeting on September 15, members voted to recommend approval of the DSNC, which will go to the City Council for formal recognition.

While City Councilors are in support of the DSNC, they voiced concerns about the “red circle” area that includes areas beyond the geographical limits of the city. This inclusion may result in issues for synergistic collaboration among members who share differing opinions on potential upcoming development and revitalization projects in Davis Square.

Continued on page 4

21st Annual Honk! Festival of Activist Street Bands

“Why do we HONK!?! How do we HONK!?! When do we HONK!?!” These are the HONK! Festival’s opening remarks, seemingly rhetorical questions, performed cantastoria-style, and delivered every year at HONK!’s opening ceremonies. Questions that have kicked off every HONK! since its local humble beginnings back in 2006.

And they actually do have answers, especially when delivered to those who happen to be musicians who inhabit the unplugged mobile brass band world. They are members of bands who are actively motivated to respond in solidarity, knowing that “something is very wrong in their neighborhoods.” And who are inherently compelled to “do something about that.” By hitting the streets, loudly and forcefully.

For that is the seriousness of

Continued on page 5



The HONK! Festival 21st Annual Festival of Activist Street Bands will be honking its way throughout the area on October 9-11.
— Photo by Tim Plenk

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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.

Community members are invited to join Mayor Jake Wilson, the City Council, and the School Committee during the 2026 "Neighborhood Connect" meeting series. The series kicks off on Wednesday, September 23, in Ward 4 (Winter Hill, Ten Hills, and more) at the Healey School cafeteria (5 Meacham St). from 6 - 8 p.m. Free pizza and refreshments will be available starting at 6 p.m. Neighborhood Connect (formerly City Hall Community Meetings) will debut a new meeting format, moving from formal presentations to a science-fair format with City staff setting up at tables. Meetings will kick off with quick citywide updates and a brief wel-come from the Mayor and Ward Councilor before breaking to allow attendees to move about for one-on-one and small group conversations. Unsure about which ward you live in? Find out with the MySomerville address lookup tool at somervillema.gov/mysomerville.

As your family adjusts to another school year, check one simple thing off your list: confirm your child is riding in the right car seat for their age and size. The Somerville Police have officers who are Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians who will be available to help you determine the right seat for your children and demonstrate how to correctly install and use those seats. This is a free event next Saturday, September 26, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Somerville Police Headquarters, located at 220 Washington Street, Somerville.

Continued on page 7

Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of September 23 – September 29 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
Wednesday September 23	Partly Cloudy	63°/49°	8%	3%	NE 17 mph
Thursday September 24	Sunny	64°/51°	5%	1%	NE 15 mph
Friday September 25	Rain	79°/53°	51%	39%	NNE 21 mph
Saturday September 26	Rain	64°/53°	84%	51%	NNE 23 mph
Sunday September 27	Rain	59°/54°	83%	47%	NNE 17 mph
Monday September 28	Rain	62°/56°	67%	38%	NNE 11 mph
Tuesday September 29	Partly Cloudy	67°/54°	25%	17%	NNE 8 mph

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

Somerville High School will play against Cambridge Rindge & Latin at Fenway Park



This year, Somerville High School’s football team will be playing their Thanksgiving Game against Cambridge Rindge & Latin at Fenway Park on Thursday, November 24, 2026 at 5:00pm.

For tickets to this longtime rivalry and special tradition visit: <http://www.redsox.com/highschool-football>

The Somerville Times

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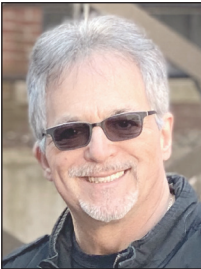
Life in the

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.

Somerville Wine



One of our family heirlooms is one of the last bottles of my grandfather's homemade wine. It's in a Ballantine Ale bottle. I remember my father saying it was either really good wine or very bad vinegar. It remains unopened in my kitchen cupboard, but I thought I'd look into winemaking in Somerville by starting with my grandpa.

Grandpa was a Somerville school custodian.

There was a sprawling grapevine in his yard that is still there today. All the stomping and bottling was done by my grandpa right there on Elmwood St across from the Western Junior High School. The cellar still contains the bottle-capping gizmo and a press.

Here are some reader comments:

"My grandfather made wine down cellar. He had his own wine press and grew his

own grapes in the backyard. My brother is going to try to make some wine as well using the old wine press!"

"I have great memories of eating grapes in grandpa's backyard with my cousins."

"My brother and I would raid a neighbor's grape arbor; often he would chase us away."

"My grandfather made wine down in our cellar. He had his own wine press and grew his own grapes in the backyard. My brother is going to try to make some wine as well using the old wine press! So many memories in that house." "My family owned it for four generations; I am still so sad that it had to be sold. Of course, the new owner is making condos. I have read many posts about people saying negative things about Somerville, but despite it all, I miss it terribly."

I'm sure my grandpa and his friends had plenty of wine to get them through Prohibition in the 1930's. In the meantime, the bottle of Grandpa's will stay in the cabinet.



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Grace turns eight!



Last week Grace Mbah celebrated her eighth birthday. We wish her a great year and hope she had a wonderful day!

Money Map Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

Q: If I donate something other than cash – such as clothing – can I still get a tax deduction?

A: Potentially, yes! If you itemize deductions, qualifying charitable contributions can include both cash and noncash donations.

♦ **The deduction isn't new – but the floor is.** Taxpayers who itemize have long been able to deduct qualifying charitable donations of both money and property. What changed beginning in 2026 is that a new floor applies: you generally can deduct charitable contributions only to the extent they exceed 0.5% of your adjusted gross income (AGI)—a tax-law measure of

your income.

For example, if your AGI is \$100,000, the floor is \$500. If you make \$2,000 of otherwise qualifying charitable contributions during the year, generally \$1,500 remains above the floor before considering other applicable limits.

♦ **This is different from the new deduction for people taking the standard deduction.**

As we discussed in the previous Money Map Tip, beginning in 2026, taxpayers taking the standard deduction can also potentially deduct charitable contributions—but that new deduction generally applies only to qualifying cash contributions. If you want to deduct qualifying donations of property, such as clothing, you generally need to itemize.

♦ **Keep good records of what you donate.** Whether you donate cash or property, keep appropriate records from the qualified charitable organization. Noncash contributions can require additional documentation, particularly as the value of the donation increases.

Bottom Line: If you donate property such as clothing, don't assume that only cash contributions can provide a tax benefit. Noncash donations can potentially be deductible when you itemize; just remember that beginning in 2026, the new 0.5%-of-AGI floor applies to itemized charitable contributions.

Any questions? I'm Vincent Hicks, a CPA based in the Cambridge–Somerville area. Reach out at vincent@hickscpasolutions.com or (859) 553-0788.



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.

Legislative Matters Committee supports DSNC, questions 'red circle' area

CONT. FROM PG 1

Somerville's Law Department provided its opinion as to whether the DSNC can allow membership and voting eligibility of individuals who reside within a half-mile of the neighborhood, referred to as the catchment area, that would include the neighboring cities of Cambridge, Arlington, or Medford.

The answer from the City Attorney was that the membership criteria are left to the discretion of the neighborhood council, and that people who live outside of the boundary of Davis Square or across city limits could indeed be part of the DSNC.

"The neighborhood council should have discretion," said City Council President Lance Davis at the Legislative Matters Committee meeting, where he spoke at length on the issue, along with other members who talked about the parameters of Chapter 7, Article IX of the Somerville Code of Ordinances that govern the neighborhood council recognition policy and community benefits.

At the meeting, Davis said the catchment area is beyond what he "envisioned or anticipated," and explained the City Council recognition process will decide the limits of the area.

"I think it's going to be unwieldy," said Davis. "I think it raises lots of questions about whether it's sort of consistent with what we collectively as a City Council intended when we created this ordinance."

Davis says the decision raises a bigger question about what the City of Somerville feels is "appropriate" for any neighbor-

hood council.

In a letter addressed to Somerville City Council President Lance Davis on September 14, City Attorney Cynthia Amara wrote, "The neighborhood and membership could be defined to extend beyond the geographical limits of the city."

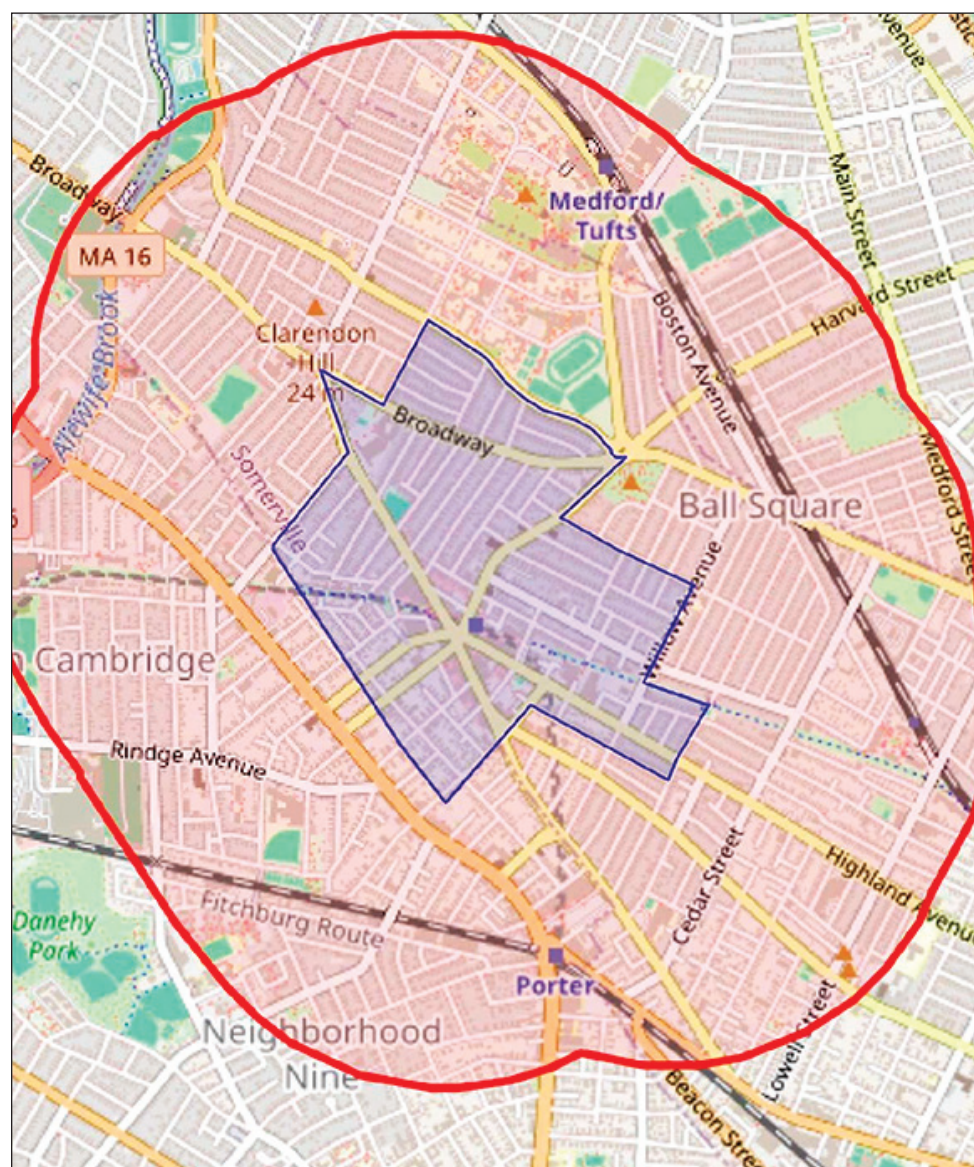
City Councilor Wilfred Mbah said this decision may set an important precedent. He echoed what Councilor Davis said and asked to review the ordinance.

City Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen expressed concerns that the catchment area may dilute the legitimacy of the DSNC by giving power to constituencies with different priorities from outside the square.

"From my perspective, what we are trying to guard against with this ordinance is a quote on quote, random group of people who call themselves a neighborhood council but really don't take in the perspective of their neighbors, don't listen, don't have transparent meetings, don't allow for elections," said Ewen-Campen.

He worries that the general public may think this recognition process confers a new legal authority to neighborhood councils, but said, "The headline is: 'No, it does not.' The recognition process does not grant a new legal authority to a nonprofit." He later added, "This does not create some new quasi-governmental body."

Ewen-Campen made it clear that if the organization is open, transparent, and democratic, they deserve recognition. He reiterated that the City Council shouldn't dictate the bylaws or catchment area of the



The "red circle" area.

neighborhood council, but that it may be time to review the ordinance.

City Councilor J.T. Scott explained that bylaws and catchment areas are "fluid," and added that the current ordi-

nance exists as a result of the necessity to "match the language of a contract" from a prior administration that required a recognized neighborhood council to be engaged with a developer.

Unhoused neighbors rejoice, less red tape for shelters

By The Times Staff

The city is looking to expand where shelters for the unhoused could be located within the city to better serve residents in need.

While certain shelter uses are already allowed, a zoning amendment approved at the September 10 City Council meeting will permit defined homeless shelters either by-right or via special permit depending on the zone.

“In basically any residential zone, these will be allowable uses by right requiring a neighborhood meeting,” said Ward 3 City Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen.

A special permit will be required in a neighborhood residence. Ewen-Campen explained the city doesn’t want to prohibit homeless shelters from neighborhood residences, but wanted to acknowledge that there would be “site-specific conversations” that will be discussed in

a public forum before a permit granting authority.

Planning Division Deputy Director Fiona DiMartino confirmed that special permits for shelters would follow standard review procedures, allowing specific restrictions to be placed on a permit on a case-by-case basis, according to the meeting minutes of the September 3 Land Use Committee.

City Councilor President Lance Davis introduced this item to establish a clearer process to allow for more shelter options citywide.

“I think this is absolutely the moral call for us to enable more services,” said Ward 2 City Councilor J.T. Thomas.

City Councilor At Large Jon Link said that creating more shelters for the unhoused is “part of being a welcoming community” and that this zoning amendment will assist the less fortunate with being “able to live with dignity.”



City officials are seeking to amend zoning regulations in order to facilitate the addition of more resources for serving the unhoused in the community.

21st Annual Honk! Festival of Activist Street Bands

purpose that the annual HONK! Festival always conveys to its festival participants. Which then proves to be contagious to all those gathered, musicians and audience alike. The seriousness of purpose, combined with having lots of fun together, reinforces this like-minded camaraderie. In order to DO SOMETHING as a response to what is definitely NOT acceptable – whether that be politically, socially, humanely.

The HONK! Festival was catapulted into existence right here in the Somerville area in 2006, initially with 3 local bands, 8 from across the U.S., and 1 travelling in from Vancouver. And yes, HONK! has grown.

There are now over 20 independent HONK!s (plus related activist street band gatherings) operating around the world. With 35 U.S. bands participating on-site specifically in Somerville/Cambridge this October. Let’s just say, there is a reason for that phenomenon! With the local Festival still under the ongoing coordination of HONK!’s founding band, the Good Trouble Brass Band (fka Second Line Social Aid & Pleasure Society Brass Band).

These links may provide further inves-

tigation into how can all this be: honkfest.org/about/, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HONK! The schedule details for this year’s HONK! are still being finely tuned, but will include many of the elements that participants and attendees have come to expect for the full HONK! experience.

Outdoor street-level band concerts will be held throughout Somerville’s Davis Square and the nearby neighborhoods on HONK! Friday and Saturday. And the vast “Reclaim the Streets for Horns, Bikes, and Feet” Parade will again travel from Davis Square to Harvard Square in Cambridge, on HONK! Sunday, arriving to participate in their 47th annual Oktoberfest.

Below follows the current list of HONK! on-site participants for 2026, with further details on each available at honkfest.org/2026-festival/bands-2026/:

- All For One Brass Band (New Orleans, LA);
- aNova Brazil (Boston, MA);
- Band Together (pickup band) (Somerville, MA);
- The Brass Balagan (Burlington, VT);
- Brassica and the Wild Sprouts (Pittsburgh, PA);
- Brass Liberation Orchestra (San Fran-

- cisco, CA);
- Brass Solidarity (Minneapolis, MN);
- brassterisk (Somerville, MA)
- The Bread and Puppet Circus Band (Glover, VT);
- Conical Cacophony (Boston, MA);
- DC Activist Street Band (Washington, DC);
- Detroit Party Marching Band (Detroit, MI);
- Dirty Water Brass Band (Boston, MA);
- 8-Bit Brass Band (Seattle, WA);
- Emperor Nortons Stationary Marching Band (Somerville, MA);
- Expandable Brass Band (Northampton, MA);
- Extraordinary Rendition Band (Providence, RI);
- Fly By Brass Band (Somerville, MA);
- Forward! Marching Band (Madison, WI);
- Funkrust Brass Band (New York, NY);
- Good Trouble Brass Band (Somerville, MA);
- Ideal Maine Social Aid and Sanctuary Band (Portland, ME);
- The Jamaica Plain Honk Band (JP Honk) (Jamaica Plain, MA);
- Leftist Marching Band (Portsmouth,

- NH);
- Magnificent Danger (Boston, MA);
- May Day Marching Band (Pittsburgh, PA);
- The Party Band (Lowell, MA);
- Rara Bel Poze (Boston, MA);
- Rude Mechanical Orchestra (New York City, NY);
- Sass-a-Brass (Kansas City MO);
- School of HONK (Somerville, MA);
- Undertow Brass Band (Providence, RI);
- UNiTY Street Band (Syracuse, NY);
- Unlawful Assembly (Minneapolis,MN);
- Yes Ma am Brass Band (Austin, TX)

HONK! Festival
21st Annual Festival of Activist Street Bands.
October 9-11, 2026
Held throughout Somerville, Cambridge, and a few Boston neighborhoods.
Rain or shine.
Free and open to all; if interested in volunteering, contact volunteer@honkfest.org.
If interested in hosting visiting musicians in your home, please contact housing@honkfest.org.
For HONK! updates:
honkfest.org, facebook.com/honkfestival, instagram.com/honkfest/.

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.

Residents Sound the Alarm Over Proposed Ordinance Amid Rising Anti-Jewish Hate

Shalom Somerville –

For most of us, Somerville in the fall is a pretty great place—fruit trees overhanging the crowded sidewalks, a band in the park, pickleball and backyard grills. Most of us look around and feel the excitement of the college students returning and kids with backpacks headed to school with their parents in the morning.

But Jewish people in Somerville see something else that most other people walk by without noticing. Stickers on street signs blame Israel for unspeakable crimes; signs snidely showing the flag of Israel with a poop emoji replacing the Star of David—the symbol of Judaism. (The message is clear—our country and religion are shit.) Politicians speak in coded language, pretending the well-documented rise in antisemitism is somehow not affecting our community. Jewish and Israeli students at Somerville High are forced to traverse a coercive anti-Israel gauntlet to get into their school building. Children are screamed at, neighbors kicked and spit on, accused of being “baby-killers” during supposed protests for peace. Jewish people are literally afraid for their safety.

This was the message from the numerous Jewish people and their allies who

showed up to a virtual hearing on Tuesday, September 8 to oppose the anti-Israel ordinance currently under development by city councilors.

Like the text of the ordinance, those supporting it explicitly targeted Israel and only Israel. That painted an almost comic backdrop for councilors who promoted it by claiming that, somehow, the ordinance is not about Israel. That “all are welcome here.” But every speaker who spoke in favor of it spoke specifically against Israel.

The testimony of Jewish residents painted a starkly different picture:

“My child has been told more than once that he can’t be friends because he’s Jewish.”

“My child’s school is not a place where it feels safe to express connection to Israel.”

“I exited a city council meeting to an angry mob and was threatened by name, alarming police, who insisted on escorting me to my car.”

“While standing outside of the Kennedy School holding a sign, someone walked past me, kicked me, and yelled, ‘Go away, you fucking Zio.’”

“My mother refuses to speak Hebrew in public in Somerville, because she is afraid of how people will react.”

“I have an Israeli flag at my property; they’ve

pulled it, they’ve thrown it on the dirt.”

“I was verbally attacked in Davis Square while walking home from daycare with my son in his baby carrier. My husband had antisemitic slurs yelled at him while dropping our toddler off at daycare.”

“My middle school son was shouted at because he wears a yarmulke, as if a ten-year-old could stop the violence in Israel. My daughter was exposed to multiple swastikas at Somerville High.”

And on and on and on.

This is the reality in Somerville for Jewish residents. These are our daily experiences in the context of an ordinance that names only Israel, of all the countries in the world, for condemnation. Meanwhile, as one resident astutely pointed out, there is no mention of the 400,000 Black Sudanese people murdered, the constant warfare and killing of Ukrainians at the hands of Russia, the one and a half million Rohingya who have fled genocide in Myanmar, the million Uyghurs detained and oppressed in China. Instead, this ordinance continues to single out the only Jewish state for “criticism.” All while the people pushing it say they are being fair and we are overreacting.

As one resident stated, “If another minority group came to you with their lived

experience and told you, over and over, that a proposal before this council were causing that group the kind of harm you’ve heard about tonight, would you continue to pursue it? No—you would condemn it, and rightly so.” Another shared her exhaustion: “I am tired of being told, directly or indirectly, that the fear Jewish families are feeling in this city is not real.”

Her warning to the city councilors about the harm caused by their actions was clear and direct. “You may not intend this ordinance to target Jews, but when you single out the world’s only Jewish state, Jewish residents tell you that it is making an already hostile environment feel more isolating and more unsafe. You have a responsibility to listen. Please reject this ordinance. Do not take something false and harmful and give it the dignity of city policy. Do not make Jewish families in Somerville feel even more alone than many of us already do.”

We shall see if the councilors listen, or continue to charge headlong down this path that makes Somerville increasingly unsafe for its residents.

Shalom Somerville is a community organization standing up for Jews, Israelis, and Zionism in Somerville. Learn more about us at shalomsomerville.org.

Food insecurity in Somerville

Four out of every 10 neighbors are food insecure, according to the Greater Boston Food Bank—a staggering 40% do not have enough food to eat! This rate has more than doubled since 2019.

How can this be?

I’ve seen this need firsthand while packing fresh food boxes at Food For Free, handing out free fresh food at the CHA Revere Health Center, and at our weekly Come to the Table meal at Connexion Church. The lines are long well before the food is available. As the need continues to

grow, many recipients have an overwhelming fear of not having food for their families and themselves.

The magnitude of the increasing numbers of folks experiencing hunger and food insecurity is hard to fully grasp. According to the Massachusetts Public Health Alliance, 1.1 million households across Massachusetts lack access to healthy food, with 25% regularly missing meals or going hungry.

It’s heartbreaking and compelling—yet we can all make a difference.

Rising food insecurity causes a ripple

effect—farmers are struggling with increased costs and a decrease in funds from these programs and are in need of our support too. You can help both!

For a 9th year, Union Square Main Streets, the nonprofit that produces the Union Square Farmers Market, has organized the Good Food For All campaign, which raises awareness and funds for the market’s SNAP Match Program and helps keep fresh, healthy and culturally exciting produce affordable.

Food is medicine. Will you join me in

ensuring the Union Square Farmers Market can continue to double SNAP dollars up to \$15 every week of its season by donating to the campaign either at the market or at <https://www.unionsquaremain.org/good-food-for-all>?

A donation in any amount makes a difference, thank you!

—Mary Cassesso, lifelong Somervillian, Union Square resident for 40+ years, and member of Union Square Main Streets’ Board of Directors

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COMMENTARY

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



The Fluff Festival brings tons of fun to Somerville.

Our View Of The Times



The “What the Fluff?” festival hit Union Square once again last weekend, proving to be an event that has grown in the hearts of so many here.

The festival is proof that Somerville doesn’t just have a proud tradition of innovation; it has a world-class sense of humor and community spirit.

For all these years, Marshmallow Fluff has been a favorite snack food for many,

while others could, frankly, take it or leave it. Either way, few would argue that the annual festival itself is chock full of fun and frivolity for everyone who attends.

A lot of public events come and go over the course of each year: road races, music festivals, family events ... you name it. What is it, though, about the celebration of this sweet stuff that kindles a spot of warmth in so many of our hearts? Is it the

generally wacky nature of the event itself? The overall tongue-in-cheek nature of each event within the event?

It is certainly a unique affair, with a rich history and heritage that sparks the imagination and brings out the kid in all of us.

The timing of it may have some influence on our affection towards it. As we bid farewell to the summer months and ring in the beginning of autumn, we may view

the festivities as a last hurrah of the high season. One last fling in the warmth of the sun as we gently roll along towards the darker days of winter.

Whatever mysterious forces may exist that compel us to smear, spread, consume, or bathe in the stuff, most of us have a really good time while doing it.

Maybe that’s what it’s all about in the end. Simply enjoying the day.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

Happy birthday this week to several locals: Happy Birthday to **Lori Pino** of **Amal Niccoli Salon** in Ball Square. We wish her the best and hope she enjoys her day. Happy birthday to **Karen F. McWatters**, who celebrates this week. We hope she has a great birthday. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as **Kimberly Barnett**, **Ann Sylvester**, **Julia Gilligan Corsetti**, **Scott Breen**, **Lisa Monaco**, **Joell Johns**, **Roy Carreiro**, **Joseph Leblanc**, **Debbie Price King** and, **Linda Malone** 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.

Somerville Rec is calling for all young ballers! If you are ready to hit the court and sharpen your basketball skills? Somerville Rec’s **Somerville Youth League Basketball Clinic** is the perfect opportunity for players in Grades K–5 to build their fundamentals, improve their game, and have fun! Players will work on their skills while learning the importance of teamwork, confidence, and good sportsmanship. **Saturdays, October 3–November 14**, Grades K–2: 9:00–10:30 a.m., Grades 3–5: 10:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m. at Somerville High School. \$100 Residents | \$150 Non-Residents. Register

online at somervillerec.com!

HONK! Festival 21st Annual Festival of Activist Street Bands takes place **October 9 –11**. Held throughout Somerville, Cambridge, and a few Boston neighborhoods. Rain or shine. Free and open to all; if interested in volunteering, contact volunteer@honkfest.org. If interested in hosting visiting musicians in your home, please contact housing@honkfest.org. For HONK! updates: honkfest.org, facebook.com/honkfestival, instagram.com/honkfest/. Contact info: honkfest.org/contact/, info@honkfest.org, (617) 702-2977.

Bansari Mitra, author of **GHOSTS FROM THE PAST**, Wilderness House Press, will have a book launch at **Just Bookish Store** in Dorchester on **October 3, 4-5.30 pm (Saturday)**, 1463 Dorchester Ave, Dorchester, MA 02122

Somerville neighbors need your help. On **Tuesday, September 8**, a fire on Dartmouth Street left four households — including multiple vulnerable residents and their pets — without homes. Please consider donating whatever you can to the **Somerville Homeless Coalition’s Emergency**

Continued on page 21

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#1039

1. Who did Archibald Query sell the Marshmallow Fluff recipe to?

2. Who is the first to discover that Peter Parker is Spider-Man?

3. What band released *Back in Black* in 1980?

4. The first YouTube video was 19 seconds of a co-founder where?

5. Atephobia is a fear of what?

6. The "moonwalk" was popularized by Michael Jackson performing what song?

7. Who played Sally Field's daughter in movie *Steel Magnolias*?

8. What is the only U.S. state with a 3-word capital?

9. In 1955, Rosa Parks refused to give up her bus seat in which Alabama city?

10. Which president said "Ask not what your country can do for you" at his 1961 inauguration?

11. What Western series about the Cartwright family ran 14 seasons?

12. Who was the "King of the Cowboys" who rode a horse named Trigger?

Answers on page 14

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

1. Jupiter is twice as large as all the other planets combined.

2. The Super Soaker was invented by a NASA engineer.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

THE 2010s

ACROSS

1. Convention freebie

5. Tucker of TV's "Modern Family"

8. To the ____ degree

11. Space Shuttle Program org.

12. Deal with it

13. Extra tire

15. Stead

16. Real estate land unit

17. Enter user name and password (2 words)

18. Instagram's parent company

20. "Fine by me"

21. Strong virile man

22. Caviar alternative

23. Bruno Mars' hat

26. Highest-reaching

30. Before of yore

31. Quill-dipping vessel

34. Popular aquarium show star

35. Schoolmarm's whip

37. Neither here ____ there

38. Opposite of cation

39. Hurry up, acr.

40. Blood infection

42. Not com or edu

43. Arranged in order

45. Inside info

47. Aye's opposite

48. B2C business

50. Hyperbolic tangent

52. Katy Perry's 2010 hit

55. Battle royal

56. One R in R&R

57. Nightcrawler

59. Hipsters' facial trend

60. Prima donnas' problems

61. Not in favor

62. Public promotions

63. Even, to a poet

64. CISC alternative

DOWN

1. Pete Davidson's TV show

2. Ragamuffin

3. On a deck, perhaps

4. Cowboy, in South America

5. Popular warming drink

6. Chef's garb

7. Opposite of domineering and bold

8. Hindu serpent deity

9. Legendary King Priam's city

10. Chicken coop dweller

12. Taxi driver

13. Ship with a single mast

14. ____ GO game

19. Spooky

22. Decay

23. Greek cheese, pl.

24. Remove from existence

25. ____'s, blended Scotch whisky

26. High rocky hills

27. Celestial hunter

28. Open disrespect

29. Sour-tasting

32. Capped joint

33. Funko ____!

36. Toy for the fidgety

38. Off kilter

40. Dirty dwelling

41. Specks in the sea

44. Oohed and ____

46. Atmospheric pressure line, on weather map

48. Military blockade

49. Fire-raising

50. ____ off on a golf course, past tense

51. Exclamation of sorrow

52. ____ solo, Alex Honnold's feat

53. Raja's daughter

54. Baby fox and baby beaver

55. Business school degree, acr.

58. Habitual twitching

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Soulution to last week's crossword puzzle:

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

Local Festival celebrates the many cultural offerings in Somerville

By Keith Foster

September 15 marked the 15th anniversary of the Somerville Foodie Crawl in East Somerville, celebrating the many cultural food offerings along Broadway Main Streets. Tickets were \$40, and they included food, exploration, and support for local businesses and the mission of East Somerville Main Streets. The Foodie Crawl is East Somerville’s signature tasting event and main annual fundraiser; guests enjoy tastings, live entertainment, and interac-

tive experiences along the route. This year’s Foodie Crawl did not look like any street festival, like the Feasts in the North End. The participating restaurants only had a sign outside the front door. Taco Loco was one of those participating restaurants. Benjamin Morales, son of the owner who also works at the restaurant, called the Foodie Crawl “an amazing way to give back to the community. Somerville has been really good to us, and the Foodie Crawl gives people in Somerville an opportunity to try and enjoy the food.”



The layout at Taco Loco in East Somerville. — Photos by Keith Foster



Live music outside Los Paisanos Restaurant in East Somerville.



Dorothy's Corner

BY DOROTHY DIMARZO



Butternut Squash & Feta Sauce

Creamy, full of flavor, and deeply satisfying. The roasted butternut squash adds a lovely car-amelized sweetness that balances beautifully with the tangy feta. A touch of zá atar lifts the dish with a subtle herbal note. Perfect over pasta-rich, comforting, and surprisingly elegant.

- 3 Cups of 1/2" Cubed Butternut Squash
- 3 Garlic Cloves, Peeled
- 1 Tablespoon Olive Oil
- 1/2 Teaspoon Salt
- 1/2 Teaspoon Pepper
- 1 Tablespoon Zá atar, Plus Extra For Garnish
- 4 oz Feta Cheese, Plus Extra For Garnish

8 oz Pasta, Mezze Rigatoni, Ziti, Or Whatever Your Preference

Preheat oven to 425°. Add the butternut squash, garlic, olive oil, salt, pepper, and zá atar to a bowl and blend well. Place the mixture onto a lined baking sheet and bake for approximately 20 minutes, or until fork tender. Meanwhile, cook the pasta according to the package. Place the mixture into a food processor or blender along with the feta. Blend until smooth. It's going to be really thick, so add some pasta water to thin it out a bit. You're looking for a pancake batter consistency. Strain the pasta into a bowl and add about a 1/2 cup of the sauce to the pasta and toss until well coated. Split the pasta between 4 bowls, add the remainder of the sauce to each bowl and garnish



with zá atar and feta. Serves 4.

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

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City of Somerville
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The **Somerville Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)** will hold a virtual public hearing on **Wednesday, September 30, 2026**, at 6:00pm through Zoom. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals 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/webinar/register/WN_OTIFna0uRqaF7_wM6o_f-w

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

- 61 Boston Street** Adam Dash, Esq. on behalf of Jacob S. Taylor and Janet Smith Taylor, proposes to expand a nonconformity for the rear setback of a two-family structure in the Neighborhood Residence (NR) zoning district, which requires a Section 6 finding.
- 333 Highland Avenue** Fan Wang proposes alterations and additions to an existing non-conforming principal building which has 4 units when the maximum is 3 units in the Neighborhood Residence (NR) zoning district, which requires a Special Permit.
- 1154 Broadway** Adam Dash & Associates, on behalf of Laxmi N. Pradhan and Jharana Pradhan, seek relief from SZO 4.2.9.a for the required GreenScore in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) Zoning District, which requires a Hardship Variance.
- 1154 Broadway** Adam Dash & Associates, on behalf of Laxmi N. Pradhan and Jharana Pradhan, seek relief from SZO 10.3.6.a.i for the landscape buffer requirements in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) Zoning District, which requires a Hardship Variance.
- 1154 Broadway** Adam Dash & Associates, on behalf of Laxmi N. Pradhan and Jharana Pradhan, seek relief from SZO 4.2.9.c for building height in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) Zoning District, which requires a Hardship Variance.
- 1154 Broadway** Adam Dash & Associates, on behalf of Laxmi N. Pradhan and Jharana Pradhan, seek relief from SZO 4.2.9.c for number of stories of a commercial building in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) Zoning District, which requires a Hardship Variance.
- 1154 Broadway** Adam Dash & Associates, on behalf of Laxmi N. Pradhan and Jharana Pradhan, seek relief from SZO 4.2.9.b for a nonconforming rear setback in the Mid-Rise (MR4) Zoning District, which requires a Hardship Variance.
- 1154 Broadway** Adam Dash & Associates, on behalf of Laxmi N. Pradhan and Jharana Pradhan, seek relief from SZO 4.2.15.c.ii for a driveway in the frontage area of a lot in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) Zoning District, which requires a Hardship Variance.
- 1154 Broadway** Adam Dash & Associates, on behalf of Laxmi N. Pradhan and Jharana Pradhan, seek relief from SZO 4.2.9.b for the secondary front setback standards in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) Zoning District, which requires a Hardship Variance.
- 1154 Broadway** Adam Dash & Associates, on behalf of Laxmi N. Pradhan and Jharana Pradhan, seek relief from SZO 4.2.16.a.i. for the sidewalk width standard in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) Zoning District, which requires a Hardship Variance.
- 1154 Broadway** Adam Dash & Associates, on behalf of Laxmi N. Pradhan and Jharana Pradhan, seek relief from SZO 4.2.16.b.ii for curb cut standards in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) Zoning District, which requires a Hardship Variance.
- 1154 Broadway** Adam Dash & Associates, on behalf of Laxmi N. Pradhan and Jharana Pradhan, seek relief from SZO 4.2.16.b.iv.a. for the curb cut distance from intersection standards in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) Zoning District, which requires a Hardship Variance.

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 Zoning Board of Appeals at the hearing or by submitting written comments by email to ZoningBoard@somervillema.gov. Persons with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication (i.e., CART, ASL), written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures in order to access the programs, activities, and meetings of the City of Somerville should contact the ADA Coordinator in advance at 617-625-6600 x 2059 or ADA@somervillema.gov.
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City of Somerville
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The **Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)** will hold a virtual public hearing on **Tuesday, October 6, 2026**, at 6:45pm 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/webinar/register/WN_LICeWQvcS62n3YLvJXZLbQ

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.

Determinations of Preferably Preserved (STEP 2 IN THE DEMO REVIEW PROCESS)

- 23 Hinckley Street** Applicant: W.O.M. Construction
Owner: 23 Hinckley St Somerville LLC
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. Persons with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication (i.e., CART, ASL), written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures in order to access the programs, activities, and meetings of the City of Somerville should contact the ADA Coordinator in advance at 617-625-6600 x 2059 or ADA@somervillema.gov.

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SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY
30 Memorial Road, Somerville, Massachusetts 02145
Telephone (617) 625-1152 Fax (617) 628-7057 TDD (617) 628-8889

ADVERTISEMENT
REQUEST FOR DESIGN SERVICES (RFS)

The **Somerville Housing Authority**, the Awarding Authority, invites sealed proposals from registered Engineering/Architecture firms to provide professional design and construction administration services of a Parking Lot Improvement project located at our Mystic View development.
A briefing and site inspection is scheduled for **10:00 AM on Wednesday, September 30th, 2026**, at the Mystic View family facility located at 30 Memorial Road, Somerville, MA 02145.
Response to this RFS must be submitted no later than **3:00PM Wednesday, October 7th, 2026**.
The RFS may be obtained after **8:00AM on Wednesday, September 23rd, 2026**, by contacting ryanc@sha-web.org or by phone at 617-625-1152 Ext.331.
Questions must be sent in writing to ryanc@sha-web.org no later than **Monday, October 5th, 2026**.
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Education • Inspiration • Excellence

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
167 HOLLAND STREET, 3RD Floor
SOMERVILLE, MA 02144
RFP #S2027-05**

The School Committee of the City of Somerville invites sealed proposals for:

A Provider for A College and Career Youth Development and Support Program Districtwide for Middle School Grade Students for FY27

Each Proposal shall be submitted in two separate sealed envelopes clearly marked “Price Proposal for Provider Services for A College and Career Youth Development and Program for Middle School Grade Students” and a “Non-Price Proposal for Provider Services for A College and Career Youth Development and Program for Middle School Grade Students” in accordance with the Request for Proposal and Contract Documents which may be obtained at the Finance Office, Somerville School Department, 167 Holland Street, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA 02144 on or after **September 17, 2026** between the hours of Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

All Proposals shall be filed no later than **2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 7, 2026** at the Finance Office, Somerville School Department, 167 Holland Street, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA 02144. Proposals will be reviewed by an Evaluation Committee which may include possible interviews with the proposal finalists.

Please contact Leah Arredondo (larredondo@k12.somerville.ma.us) or call 617-629-5218 to receive the proposal and register as a proposal vendor.

The School Committee of the City of Somerville reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or any part or parts thereof, waive any minor informality in the Proposal process and to award the Contract that is deemed to be in the best interest of the City of Somerville School Department.

Robert A. Berretta,
Chief Financial Officer
Somerville Public Schools

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
167 HOLLAND STREET, 3RD Floor
SOMERVILLE, MA 02144
RFP #S2027-04**

The School Committee of the City of Somerville invites sealed proposals for:

A Vendor to Provide An Integrated Special Education Management Platform in the Somerville Public Schools for a three and a half-year period January 1, 2027 – June 30, 2030.

Each Proposal shall be submitted in two separate sealed envelopes clearly marked “Price Proposal for Vendor Services for “An Integrated Special Education Management Platform” and a “Non-Price Proposal for Vendor Services for the An Integrated Special Education Management Platform” in accordance with the Request for Proposal and Contract Documents which may be obtained at the Finance Office, Somerville School Department, 167 Holland Street, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA 02144 on or after **September 16, 2026** between the hours of Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

All Proposals shall be filed no later than **4:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 8, 2026** at the Finance Office, Somerville School Department, 167 Holland Street, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA 02144. Proposals will be reviewed by an Evaluation Committee which may include possible interviews with the proposal finalists.

Please contact Leah Arredondo (larredondo@k12.somerville.ma.us) or call 617-629-5218 to receive the proposal and register as a proposal vendor.

The School Committee of the City of Somerville reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or any part or parts thereof, waive any minor informality in the Proposal process and to award the Contract that is deemed to be in the best interest of the City of Somerville School Department.

Robert A. Berretta,
Chief Financial Officer
Somerville Public Schools

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
8 BONAIR STREET
SOMERVILLE, MA 02145
BID #S2027-06**

The School Committee of the City of Somerville invites sealed bids for:

A 2026 or Newer Hybrid Refrigerated Box Truck for the Somerville Public Schools Food Service Department

The IFB package may be obtained by emailing Leah Arredondo in the Finance Office, larredondo@k12.somerville.ma.us or can be picked up at the Somerville School Department, Finance Office, 8 Bonair Street, Somerville, MA 02145 on or after September 18, 2026.

Sealed bid responses will be received no later than **2 p.m., Friday, October 16, 2026** at the Finance Office Somerville School Department, 167 Holland Street, 3rd Floor, Somerville, MA 02144 at which time and place they shall be publicly opened and read aloud.

The School Committee of the City of Somerville reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or any part or parts thereof, waive any minor informality in the Proposal process and to award the Contract that is deemed to be in the best interest of the City of Somerville School Department.

Robert A. Berretta,
Chief Financial Officer
Somerville Public Schools

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
IFB # 27-18**

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

Somerville Parks Tree Health Program 2027

An Invitation for Bid (IFB) may be obtained online at www.bidexpress.com, <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or from the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **Wednesday, September 23, 2026**. Sealed bids will be received at above office until: **3:00PM Wednesday, October 7, 2026**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves the 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 Felisa Gárate at fgarate@somervillema.gov for more information.

5% Bid Deposit required.

Felisa Gárate
Senior Procurement Manager
617-625-6600 x3406

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
INVITATION FOR BIDS
IFB #27-16**

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

PoolPak Maintenance and Repairs

A bid package may be obtained online at: <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/finance/procurement-and-contracting-services> or from the City of Somerville’s BidExpress page at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress> on or after: **Wednesday, September 23th, 2026**. Sealed responses will be received at the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 or via Bid Express until: **2:00 pm, Wednesday, October 7th, 2026**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to reject any or all proposals if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

Please email Logan Carroll Lcarroll@somervillema.gov for more information.

Logan Carroll
Procurement Manager
617-625-6600 x3407

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
IFB #27-17**

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

East Somerville Community School Façade Stabilization

An Invitation for Bid may be obtained online at <http://www.somervillema.gov/BidExpress>, <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **09/23/2026**. 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.

Filed Sub-Bids are due by **10/08/2026 at 3:00pm**

Sealed General Bids are due by **10/15/2026 at 3:00pm**.

A **Pre-Bid Site Visit** is scheduled for **9/30/2026 at 11:00 AM** at 50 Cross Street in Somerville, MA 02145

5% Bid Deposit required. Prevailing wages apply. DCAMM Certification required.

Please email tchukhatsang@somervillema.gov for more information.

Thupten Chukhatsang
Senior Procurement Manager
617-625-6600 x3400

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CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
JAKE WILSON
MAYOR

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Somerville City Council's **Land Use Committee** and the **Somerville Planning Board** will hold a joint public hearing on **Thursday, October 1st, 2026, at 6:30 pm**. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this hearing will be conducted via remote participation.

REGISTER ONLINE

https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN_w4XWFI4xSjiZyeF2VAG26

You have two ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. Enter the link exactly as it appears into your internet browser. You will then be asked to register for the meeting.
2. If you are unable to attend but wish to be heard, you may email your comments to publiccomments@somervillema.gov, or send them by US mail to the City Clerk, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA, 02143. Your comments must arrive no later than 4:00 PM on the day of the Hearing, in order to be sure they are conveyed to the Council and Planning Board for inclusion with the Hearing testimony.

The purpose of this hearing is to receive public comments concerning the following:

- Mayor Wilson requesting ordainment of an amendment to Sections 3.2.17, 4.1.15, 4.2.15, 4.3.15, 4.4.15, 5.1.16, 6.1.13, 6.2.14, 6.3.13, 6.4.16, 6.5.13 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance to correct parking maximums.
- Mayor Wilson requesting ordainment of an amendment to Sections 2.4.4, 3.1.7, 3.1.8, 3.1.9, 3.1.10, 3.1.11, 3.2.7, 3.2.8, 3.2.9, 3.2.10, 3.2.11, 4.1.7, 4.2.7, 4.3.7, 4.4.7 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinances to remove ground story elevation requirements.
- Mayor Wilson requesting ordainment of an amendment to Sections 3.1.3, 3.1.6, 3.1.8, 3.1.9, 3.1.11, 3.1.12, 3.1.13, 3.1.16, 3.2.6 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance to align with State Law regarding protected accessory dwelling units.
- Mayor Wilson requesting ordainment of an amendment to Sections 2.4.5, 3.1.17, 3.2.16, 4.1.8, 4.1.9, 4.1.14, 4.2.8, 4.2.9, 4.2.14, 4.3.8, 4.3.9, 4.3.14, 4.4.8, 4.4.9, 4.4.15, 5.1.7, 5.1.8, 5.1.9, 5.1.16, 6.1.12, 6.2.7, 6.2.8, 6.2.14, 6.3.12, 6.4.9, 6.4.15, 6.5.7, 7.2.8 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance to clarify requirements for principal entrances.
- Mayor Wilson requesting ordainment of an amendment to Sections 2.1.1, 2.4.5, 3.1.16, 3.2.8, 3.2.9, 3.2.10, 3.2.11, 3.2.15, 4.1.3, 4.1.7, 4.1.8, 4.1.9, 4.1.10, 4.1.13, 4.2.3, 4.2.7, 4.2.8, 4.2.9, 4.2.10, 4.2.13, 4.3.3, 4.3.7, 4.3.8, 4.3.9, 4.3.10, 4.3.13, 4.4.3, 4.4.7, 4.4.8, 4.4.9, 4.4.13, 5.1.3, 5.1.7, 5.1.8, 5.1.9, 5.1.10, 5.1.11, 5.1.14, 6.1.3, 6.1.7, 6.1.8, 6.1.11, 6.2.3, 6.2.7, 6.2.8, 6.2.9, 6.2.12, 6.3.3, 6.3.8, 6.4.3, 6.4.9, 6.4.11, 6.5.3, 6.5.7, 6.5.8, 6.5.11, 7.2.7, 7.2.10, 7.4.3, 7.4.6, 7.4.7, 7.4.8, 7.4.11, 8.1.1, 8.1.2, 8.1.4, 8.1.5, 8.1.6, 8.2.2, 8.2.4, 8.2.5, 8.4.16, 8.4.17, 8.4.19, 9.1.7, 12.1.1, 12.1.2, 12.1.4, 12.1.5, 12.1.6, 12.1.7, 12.3.5, 12.3.6, 12.3.7 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance to update terminology for affordable dwelling units and commercial spaces.

Zoning amendments may be viewed online by searching for the Somerville City Council's [online meeting calendar](#) for the meeting or request information.

Final language of the above amendments may be modified by the City Council during the legislative process. The Chair(s) may opt to extend the period for written comments, in which case additional comments will be accepted until the date indicated. This information can be found in the minutes of the meeting.

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Section 00 11 13
ADVERTISEMENT TO BID
MGL c.149 Over \$150K

The **SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY**, the Awarding Authority, invites sealed bids from Contractors for the Balcony Guardrail Repair - Bryant Manor at Bryant Manor (667-4) in Somerville, Massachusetts, in accordance with the documents prepared by **REVERSE ARCHITECTURE**.

The Project consists of but not limited to:

The project consists of exterior work on 51 concrete balconies at a concrete-frame multifamily residential building. Work consists of repairs to concrete parapet walls and modifications to aluminum guardrails at all balconies and painting. The building will be occupied during construction. This project is subject to HUD procurement requirements and state and Davis Bacon wage rates.

The work is estimated to cost **\$373,000.00**.

All bidding Requests for Information (RFIs) shall be submitted online by 10/02/2026 at 5:00PM EDT for filed sub-bids and by **10/16/2026 at 5:00PM EDT** for general bids.

Bids are subject to M.G.L. c.149 §44A-J & to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. c.149 §526 to 27H inclusive.

THIS PROJECT IS BEING ELECTRONICALLY BID AND HARD COPY BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Please review the instructions in the bid documents on how to register as an electronic bidder. All Bids shall be submitted online at www.biddocs.com and received no later than the date and time specified.

General bidders must be certified by the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) in the following category of work, **General Building Construction**, and must submit a current DCAMM Certificate of Eligibility and signed DCAMM Prime/General Contractor Update Statement.

General Bids will be received until **23 October 2026 at 4:00PM EDT** and publicly opened online, forthwith.

Filed Sub-bids for the trades listed below will be received until **08 October 2026 at 4:00PM EDT** and publicly opened 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.

TRADES

Miscellaneous and Ornamental Metals

Painting

General bids and sub-bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit that is not less than five (5%) of the greatest possible bid amount (including all alternates), and made payable to the **SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY**. Note: A bid deposit is not required for Projects advertised under \$50,000.

Bid Forms and Contract Documents will be available for review at www.biddocs.com (may be viewed and downloaded electronically at no cost).

PRE-BID CONFERENCE / SITE VISIT: Scheduled

Date and Time: 09/29/2026 at 10:00AM EDT Address: 75 Myrtle Street, Somerville, MA 02145 Instructions: Meet at main entrance.

The hard copy Contract Documents may be seen at:

Nashoba Blue Inc.
433 Main Street
Hudson, MA 01749
978-568-1167

9/16/26, 9/23/26 The Somerville Times

Message from Mayor Jake Wilson

Three weeks ago, flash floods in the Himalayan region devastated countless Nepali and Tibetan communities, but the sheer scale of this nightmare is still revealing itself. Rescuers are desperately searching for thousands still missing and more than 1,400 lives have been confirmed lost.

Survivors of the floods are facing a difficult recovery. In an instant, an area filled with vibrant communities, just like Somerville, was decimated. The infrastructure impacts are catastrophic, with \$200 million needed to repair Nepal's roads and bridges alone. But the personal losses are immeasurable. It's estimated that the floods destroyed 8,317 Nepali homes. That's thousands of tables where families gathered for meals, thousands of beds parents used to tuck in their kids – vanished in seconds. UNICEF estimates more than 32,000 children were affected by the floods.

But we can help. If you're able to support recovery efforts, donations can be made to the Nepali Red Cross (<https://bit.ly/46xomsF>) or directly to the Government of Nepal through the Prime Minister's Disaster Relief Fund (<https://bit.ly/46ybKS9>). There's a long road to recovery ahead for all affected, but with our support, survivors don't need to walk it alone.

I also want to share my gratitude and sympathy with Somerville's Nepali and Tibetan communities. Over the past three weeks you've transformed your grief and fear into the type of courage and resilience that is an inspiration and call to action for all of us. Longtime Somerville resident Vijendra Kumar Pradhan, who recently passed, exemplified that spirit. My deepest condolences on this profound loss are with his family, friends, and the entire Nepali community. Vijendra was a talented artist, energetic community leader, and cherished friend to many. He served as President of the Newah Organization of New England and was an impactful member of the Greater Boston Nepali community. His generosity, friendship, and kindness now serve as lights to help guide all of us through these difficult times.

— Mayor Jake Wilson

SPD welcomes four new officers

The Somerville Police Department welcome four new police officers to the ranks of the Somerville Police Department. Pictured from left to right: Chief Benford, Deputy Chief Lavey, Officer Joshua Benson, Officer Chanthan Neang, Officer Isaiah Saint-Vil, Officer Christian Marsden, and Deputy Chief Donovan.

— Somerville Police Department



McWatters meets Schindler

While visiting his son, former Alderman Bob McWatters met Matthew Schindler, an elected member of the Maryland House of Delegates in Hagerstown, Maryland.



To advertise in **The Somerville Times**
call **857-488-5138**

Somerville Museum honors community connection through telephone wires

By Eliot Josti

The Somerville Museum displayed an array of artwork, from modern to historical, focused on a fundraising event on Thursday. “PICK UP! Somerville Museum is calling!” brought in amazing local acts from comedians to dancers to honor the first residential phone ever made in the world.

In partnership with America’s 250th celebrations, the “Let Freedom Ring” public art project invited the community to interact with the history and future of the city.

“The idea behind the exhibit was to display how history is told, and who is left out. Especially during the 250th anniversary, it is almost a reckoning period. Since the exhibition was called ‘History on the Line,’ we took maps, lines, routes, and telephones to display the message,” said Stephanie Marlin-Curiel, executive director of The Somerville Museum.

As Somerville residents explored the exhibit, refreshments were served while TJ the DJ played music all night long. Jimmy Tingle also attended the event with several jokes and acts to keep the energy high. The

Sambaviva Brazilian dance ensemble put on an amazing performance to a melody of telephone-themed songs.

Lastly, a creative video combining puppetry and history was played, dedicating its storyline to Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone.

In addition, twelve telephone boxes were recreated by several artists, giving people the chance to not only listen to stories being told, but record and share their thoughts.

Anusha Tandon created a vintage phone line where Somerville citizens discussed their interpretations of freedom and could even listen to the words of their fellows.

“The sound piece called ‘Messages’ by Anusha was really a work of art. We had great feedback from the event, and it was truly an amazing evening,” said Marlin-Curiel.

One telephone box by Sophie (Phi) Day represented the Women’s Suffrage Movement, displaying imagery in connection to two “Somerville Suffragettes,” Martha A. Perry Lowe and Maria Theresa Hollander. Both Somerville natives were social activists and extremely successful women who shaped the movement.



The “PICK UP! Somerville Museum is calling!” fundraising event brought local historical awareness to life in a fun and witty fashion.
— Photos courtesy of the Somerville Museum

“The star motif throughout the piece is pulled from an abolitionist baby quilt associated with M.T. Hollander, reminding us that the fight for liberty is always intersectional and that victories are won when everyone is guaranteed equal rights,” said Day in her artist statement.

Not only is Somerville rooted in deep

American history, but it continues honoring and crediting those whose stories might not be told.

“We want to design a way to display history that has been hidden, even those not associated with the revolution, ensuring that Somerville is marked,” said Marlin-Curiel.



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Ms. Cam's

Olío

Answers

1. Two candy makers, H. Allen Durkee and Fred L. Mower

2. Ned

3. AC/DC

4. At the zoo (*Me at the zoo*)

5. Cats

6. Billie Jean

7. Julia Roberts

8. Utah (Salt Lake City)

9. Montgomery

10. John F. Kennedy

11. Bonanza

12. Roy Rogers

Somerville Homeless Coalition to host 31st annual 5k on October 3

By Claire Q. Wood

On October 3, the Somerville Homeless Coalition (SHC) will host their 31st annual Road Race. The 5k serves as a community event as well as a fundraiser.

“Technically it’s our 30th year, but this will be our 31st race. It started back in 1996 and has evolved over time. It’s a great community event,” Executive Director Michael Libby said. Libby has held the position for eight years and has been with SHC for 27.

“The Road Race is just a really great opportunity for people to come together,” Libby said. “There are walkers. There are runners. Community supporters that help us throughout the year all come.”

SHC provides a myriad of services in Davis Square and throughout Somerville. Their main offices as well as their emergency shelter are both located in or near Davis Square, and their food pantry, Project Soup, is located in East Somerville. They also provide case management to families,

grocery deliveries, community meals, and operate an engagement center for anyone seeking housing assistance.

Government funding isn’t enough to maintain all of SHC’s operations throughout the year; to that end, the 5k is one of two big fundraising events to help fill in the gaps.

“Government funding makes up about 75 to 80 percent of our funding, and we have to raise about 20 to 25 percent in order to make us fully able to operate the most effective programs to serve the community, and typically that’s anywhere between 1.5 to 2 million dollars,” Libby said.

The Road Race is one of SHC’s signature fundraising events aiming to help close that gap. Libby shared that this year SHC aims to raise \$50,000 or more.

“We typically get about 500 runners,” Libby said.

Libby also emphasized how essential community engagement is to the success of SHC, both through the Road Race as well as year-round.

“I think it’s always key to remind people



The Somerville Homeless Coalition's 31st annual Road Race hits the streets on Saturday, October 3.

that [community support] is a critical part of helping us be successful and being able to live up the values of the city,” Libby said. “It’s such a caring and compassionate local community, which makes our life a lot, a lot easier. In terms of fundraising, we rely

on that support.”

The 5k begins at 9 a.m. and starts and finishes in Davis Square on October 3rd, 2026. You can register to run or walk the Road Race on the SHC website: <https://somervillehomelesscoalition.org/>.

SPS celebrates student growth and progress in 2026 MCAS and accountability results

Somerville Public Schools is celebrating encouraging gains in student achievement and growth reflected in newly released MCAS results, particularly in mathematics and among younger learners.

In Grades 3 thru 8, results show a four percentage point increase in the share of students meeting or exceeding expectations in mathematics, the district’s strongest performance on this measure in the past four years. Third graders made notable gains in both math and ELA, signaling continued progress in foundational skills.

Math growth among third graders also improved, with an average student growth percentile (SGP) of 55. SPG measures how much a student’s academic performance has changed compared with other students with similar prior achievement.

SPS also saw gains among student groups, including a two percentage point increase in Grades 3–8 math achievement among students with disabilities. ELA achievement across Grades 3–8 remained steady at 40%, with average student growth holding at 50, which is considered moderate growth.

“These results reflect the hard work of

our students and educators,” said Superintendent Dr. Rubén Carmona. “We are encouraged by the gains we are seeing, particularly in mathematics and among our youngest learners. District-wide implementation of Illustrative Mathematics, along with strengthened reading interventions for students with disabilities, are contributing to this progress. At the same time, we know that data is most valuable when it helps us identify where we can continue to grow.”

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) is the statewide assessment program used to measure student learning and academic achievement in Massachusetts. It provides information about how students and schools are performing in areas such as English Language Arts, mathematics, and science, helping educators and districts identify strengths and areas for continued growth.

Somerville students also met or exceeded several state-set accountability targets, including Grades 3–8 math achievement and growth, ELA growth, and multilingual learner progress toward English language proficiency. At the high school level,



students met targets for math and ELA achievement and growth, graduation rate, and chronic absenteeism.

The results also point to areas for continued improvement such as achievement at particular schools and among student subgroups, as well as specific indicators such as chronic absenteeism and dropout rate.

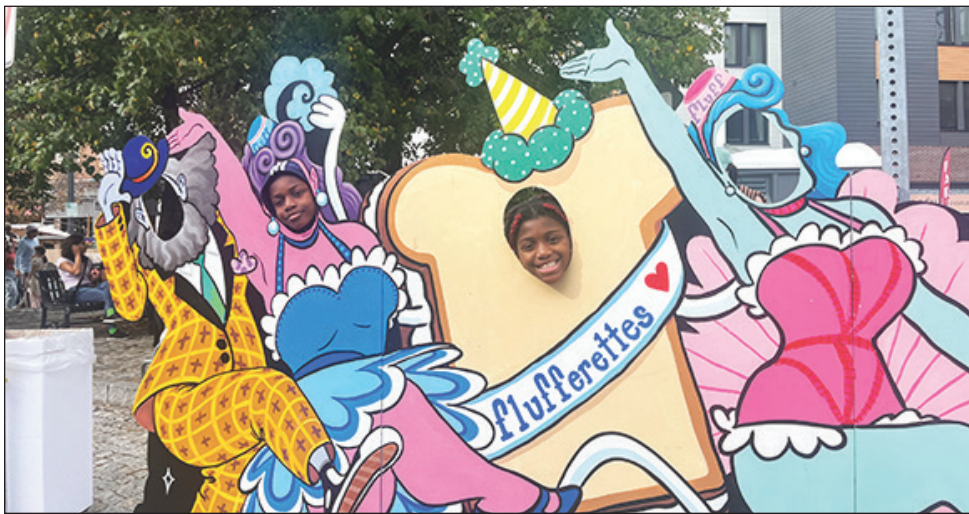
The district will use MCAS and Accountability results alongside classroom

evidence, formative assessments, student experience, and educator expertise to guide ongoing improvement.

“Our goal is not simply to improve assessment scores,” said Assistant Superintendent Dr. Jessica Boston Davis. “It is to ensure that every student experiences rigorous, relevant, grade-level instruction and has the support they need to grow academically and thrive.”

'What the Fluff?' Festival sticks around for another year

Somerville's annual "What the Fluff?" Festival returned to Union Square on Saturday, September 19. This year's theme, "Legally Fluff: A Toast to Union Square," celebrates the festival's 21st year. Community members of all ages enjoyed free festivities honoring the invention of Marshmallow Fluff and the neighborhood's creative spirit. The festival honors the invention of Marshmallow Fluff by Archibald Query in Somerville in 1917 and salutes the spirit of innovation that still thrives in Union Square today.— *Photos by Matthias Gat*





Somerville 'Neighborhood Connect' meeting series to share latest city updates – and pizza

Community members are invited to join Mayor Jake Wilson, the City Council, and the School Committee during the 2026 'Neighborhood Connect' meeting series. Formerly known as City Hall Community Meetings, Neighborhood Connect will take place in each of Somerville's seven wards. Meet local elected officials, neighbors, and city staff who will be ready to answer questions, share neighborhood updates, information on city initiatives, neighborhood crime stats, and more.

Neighborhood Connect will debut a new meeting format, moving from formal presentations to a science-fair format with city staff setting up at tables. Meetings will kick off with quick citywide updates and a brief welcome from the Mayor and Ward Councilor before breaking to allow attendees to move about for one-on-one and small group conversations. All meetings will still start with a social half-hour with free pizza and snacks.

"The Neighborhood Connect series is a great way for residents to learn what's happening in the city and in their neighborhood, ask questions, and share their perspectives on issues that matter to them," said Mayor Jake Wilson. "I've long appreciated these meetings – as a public servant and before that as a resident – and I'm excited to try out this new approach to give even more opportunity for folks to have meaningful conversations and build connections with city representatives, staff, and neighbors."

"I really encourage the community to come out for these meetings, especially with a new format designed to make sure more people get a chance to give feedback, make suggestions, and get their questions answered," said Council President and Ward 6 Councilor Lance Davis. "This is local government at the ground level at its best – with neighbors, elected officials, and staff all face to face and focused on our goals. And it's a great way to meet people who live in your neighborhood."

Fall 2026 Schedule

Meetings run from 6 to 8 p.m.:

6-6:30 p.m.: pizza and light refreshments

6:30 to 8 p.m.: Get a brief update from the Mayor and Ward Councilor followed by unstructured time to move about and speak with local elected officials, get updates from city staff, and meet neighbors.

Unsure about which ward you live in? Find out with the MySomerville address lookup tool at somervillema.gov/mysomerville.

Ward 4 (Winter Hill, Ten Hills, and more):

Date: Wednesday, September 23

Location: Healey School Cafeteria, 5 Meacham St.

Ward 5 (Magoun Sq., NE Ball Sq., Cedar & Lowell St. areas, NW Porter Sq., and more):

Date: Tuesday, September 29

Location: Kennedy School Cafeteria, 5 Cherry St.

Ward 7 (West Somerville, Teele Sq., and more):

Date: Thursday, October 1

Location: West Somerville Neighborhood School Cafeteria, 177 Powder House Blvd.

Ward 3 (N. Union Sq., Prospect Hill, Spring Hill, Central Hill, and more):

Date: Wednesday, October 7

Location: Somerville High School Cafeteria, 81 Highland Ave.

Ward 1 (East Somerville, Assembly Sq., and more):

Date: Tuesday, October 13

Location: East Somerville Community School Cafeteria, 50 Cross St.

Ward 6 (Greater Davis Sq. neighborhood and more):

Date: Thursday, October 15

Location: Somerville Community Baptist Church, 31 College Ave.

Ward 2 (S. Union Sq., Perry and Lincoln Park neighborhoods, Beacon St. area, and more):

Date: Wednesday, October 21

Location: Argenziano School Cafeteria, 290 Washington St.



Dear Somerville Community,

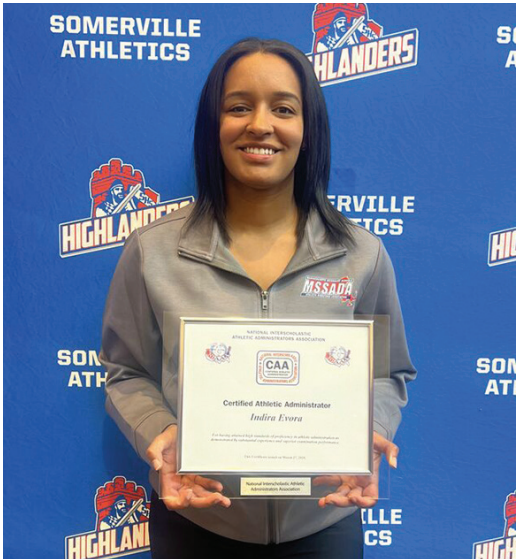
I am thrilled to announce that Indira Evora, our amazing Assistant Athletic Director, has been selected as the recipient of the 2026–2027 District 5/MSSADA Outstanding Assistant Athletic Director Award!

Indira has been an outstanding administrator and an invaluable member of our District. She is a tremendous resource to our Athletic Department, our students, and our entire school community. Her dedication, leadership, and commitment to supporting our student-athletes and programs are truly deserving of this recognition.

Please join me in congratulating Indira on this well-deserved honor! We are incredibly fortunate to have her as part of our Somerville community.

Congratulations, Indira!

Stanley Vieira
Director of Athletics
Somerville Public Schools



Somerville to hold Tufts Street ‘Neighborway’ ribbon-cutting October 6

Come celebrate the transformation of Tufts Street into Somerville’s newest “Neighborway.” On Tuesday, October 6, at 11 a.m., the City of Somerville will host a ribbon-cutting to mark the completion of the street’s recent redesign and reconstruction to increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists. The event will be held at Leonard Grimes Park, located at the corner of Tufts Street and Glen Street.

In the Somerville Bicycle Network Plan Tufts Street is designated as a “Neighborway,” which is a walk- and bike-friendly street designed to lower vehicle volumes and speeds. In addition to rebuilding the sidewalks and repaving the street, the redesign includes traffic calming such as raised crossings that make it easier – and safer – to cross the street. The reimagined street also features landscaped areas for plants and trees as well as a new mural to create a more environmentally friendly and welcoming experience for everyone using the street.

“Our neighborhood streets should be built for our community, not someone passing through and looking to skip traffic on McGrath Highway,” said Mayor Jake Wilson. “We are a city that prides ourselves on innovation, and this is an innovative approach to make our streets safer for our residents. I want to thank everyone involved, including all the community members who shared their perspectives throughout the design and our project partners at Neighborways Design.”

After over a year spent engaging community members, analyzing traffic patterns,

testing emergency vehicle operations, and finalizing plans, construction began in late summer of 2025. It is expected to conclude with the planting of approximately 45 new street trees over the coming weeks.

“Tufts Street was a long-neglected road that operated as a cut-through for out-of-town traffic. Due to resident advocacy and a responsive city government, Tufts Street is now a safe neighborhood road for pedestrians,” said Ward 1 City Councilor Matt McLaughlin.

Neighborways are an important part of the city’s Bicycle Network Plan. Designed to be low-stress and high-comfort, these residential streets provide two-way connections for people biking and an alternative to busier streets for pedestrians and cyclists.

“The city’s Neighborways are a network of quieter streets that get you to the schools, parks, and business districts without a lot of traffic,” said Mark Chase, Founder and Principal at Neighborways Design. “These streets are designed to be calmer, more beautiful, and safer for people biking and walking around town. Tufts Street is getting a lot more trees, and the mural here shows off the work of local artists, adding color and a nature theme that the neighbors wanted on their street.”

For more information on the project, including the project’s final design and an overview of the community process that helped inform it, visit somervillema.gov/tuftsstreet.

To view this update and more city news on the city website, visit somervillema.gov/news.





Somerville Fair Housing Commission
Question of the week

Q: Is anybody exempt from the federal Fair Housing Act?

A: There are several situations that are exempted from Title VIII:

- 1) A single-family house sold or rented by the owner – but only if done without the use of a real estate broker and without discriminatory advertising (oral or written), and only if certain other conditions are met.
- 2) Rental of rooms or units in owner-occupied dwellings of four units or less.
- 3) Exemptions for familial status include:
 - state and federally owned elderly developments; or,
 - housing intended for and solely occupied by persons 62 years of age or older; or,
 - housing intended for occupancy by at least one person 55 years old or older per unit.
- 4) Exemptions for disabilities include:
 - persons whose tenancy would constitute a direct threat to the health and safety of others; and,
 - persons whose tenancy would result in substantial physical damage to the property of others.

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.

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

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By Bobbygeorge Potaris



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Somerville through the eyes of Denise



Urban pumpkin... — Photo by Denise Provost

On This Day in History

September 23

- 1561 – Philip II of Spain gives orders to halt colonizing efforts in Florida.
- 1667 – Slaves in Virginia are banned from obtaining their freedom by converting to Christianity.
- 1806 – The Lewis and Clark Expedition arrives back in St. Louis after three years.
- 1912 – Mack Sennett's first "Keystone Cop" film debuts, *Cohen Collects a Debt*.
- 1945 – The first American dies in Vietnam during the fall of Saigon to French forces.
- 1952 – Richard Nixon responds to slush fund charges during his 'Checkers Speech.'
- 1954 – East German police arrest 400 citizens as U.S. spies.
- 1967 – Soviets sign a pact to send more aid to Hanoi.
- 1973 – Juan Peron is re-elected president of Argentina after being overthrown in 1955.
- 1992 – Provisional Irish Republican Army detonates 3,700-lb. bomb in Belfast.
- 2002 – The first public version of Mozilla Firefox browser released.
- 2004 – Hurricane Jeanne causes severe flooding in Haiti.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

Displacement Fund developed in partnership with the city. <https://secure.qgiv.com/for/emerfun>

Somerville Recreation’s Fall Festival returns on October 3. A Free festival welcomes fall with bounce houses, pumpkin decorating, a magician, and more, October 3, from 1 to 4 p.m. at **Founders Memorial Rink** (8 Garden Court). Costumes and cozy sweaters are welcome but not required. To learn about more programming from Somerville Recreation, be sure to sign up for the Parks and Recreation newsletter at somerville-ma.gov/subscribe. To view this update and more city news on the city website, visit somervillema.gov/news or somervillema.gov/calendar.

SomerStreets: Monster Mash transforms Somerville Avenue into a festive Halloween celebration for all ages. Join in on **Sunday, October 18**, from 1 to 5 p.m. (severe weather date: Sunday, October 25) for live music, interactive art activities, family fun, local food vendors, and more. If you are interested in volunteer at Monster Mash please sign up here: <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/somerstreets/monster-mash-volunteer/>

Craft Vendors Wanted! Do you make or sell crafty items? The **Somerville Community Baptist Church** in Davis Square is holding a "**Spooky-Thankful-Merry Craft Fair**," featuring items for Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas, on **Saturday, October 17**, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. To reserve a table at the Fair, please mail your check for \$35 by October 3 to "Somerville Community Baptist Church," 31 College Ave., Somerville, MA 02144. Or you can bring your check or cash directly to the Church, any Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The **City of Somerville** is seeking one new member to join the **Somerville Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)**. The ZBA is the decision-making authority for development that requires Site Plan Approval or a Special Permit in the Neighborhood Residence, Urban Residence, Commercial Industry, Commercial Business, and Tufts University zoning districts; the ZBA is also the decision-making authority for all Hardship Variances, Comprehensive Permits, and Administrative Appeals. All Somerville residents

are invited to apply. Applications are due by Friday, October 30, and should include a resume and letter of interest. Applications can be sent via email or U.S. Mail to: Email: zoningboard@somervillema.gov Mail: Attn: Planning Division, 167 Holland St., Somerville, MA 02144 For questions or more information, contact zoningboard@somervillema.gov or call 311 (671-666-3311).

Rockabye Beats returns to the East Branch the **3rd Wednesday of each month**, Sep-Dec* (replacing one weekly storytime)! Best for ages 0-5, we’ll enjoy an interactive and engaging 45 minutes of sing-along, dance-along fun! Please note: East Branch is a small 1-room library. Indoor space for strollers is limited and they ask that strollers be parked outside. Questions? Contact **Meghan**: mforsell@somervillema.gov. Somerville Public Library (MA)115 Broadway, Somerville, MA, 02145. Next event will be October 21, 11 – 11:45 a.m.

Calling all local musicians! The interest form for the **Somerville Winter Farmer’s Market 2026-27 season** is now LIVE on the website. Share your talents with the community this winter by filling out the form and getting on stage at the Winter Market. You can find the sign-up form at: <https://www.somwintermarket.org/musicians>.

Registration for **SHC’s Somerville 5k** is open. Every step taken on **October 3** supports the community’s most vulnerable, helping raise the critical funds needed to tackle housing and food insecurity. Register today to run and claim your race t-shirt. For more information, visit <https://somervillehomelesscoalition.org/>.

SFD Collector’s Playing Cards are here! September is **Leukemia and Lymphoma Awareness Month**, making it the perfect time to launch our once-every-two-years fundraiser benefiting the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Each custom deck features the 54 most senior firefighters currently in the **Somerville Fire Department**, including two jokers, and serves as a unique piece of SFD history. Decks are \$20 each, with a portion of every sale being donated to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society to support the fight against blood cancers. Quantities are limited. Contact Antonio Cicolini <https://www.facebook.com/antonio.cicolini> to reserve your deck while supplies last.

www.facebook.com/antonio.cicolini to reserve your deck while supplies last.

Are you a **food truck owner? Market coordinator? Performance group?** Have a business and a great idea or know somebody who does? The city wants to hear from you. Fill out the survey at bit.ly/gsqac and let them know how your business or organization could make **350 Medford St.** a vibrant place for community to spend time. If you don't have a business or concept ready to launch, please keep an eye out for other opportunities to share your ideas for the space.

Celebrate the transformation of **Tufts Street** into Somerville’s newest **“Neighborhood.”** On **Tuesday, October 6**, at 11 a.m., the **City of Somerville** will host a ribbon cutting to mark the completion of the street’s recent redesign and reconstruction to increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists. The event will be held at **Leonard Grimes Park**, located at the corner of Tufts Street and Glen Street.

All **SPS Kindergarten students** can sign up for a library card and get a **FREE BOOK!** Just bring an adult photo ID and proof of residency to your nearby library branch, and your child will be able to borrow books, movies, CDs, and more. Visit any of the Somerville branches: Central - 79 Highland Ave, East - 115 Broadway, West - 40 College Ave.

The **Somerville Museum** presents **Common Ground: Photography, Place, and Community, September 17 - December 5**, One Westwood Rd. This exhibition features 15 photographers who have chosen Somerville as their home. The works on view range from documentary to conceptual and are united by the perspective of artists living and working within this evolving urban environment. “Common Ground” explores how artists navigate and contribute to Somerville’s shifting identity, examining the relationship between place, community, and creative practice. Visit <https://www.somervillemuseum.org/>.

Join **Union Square Main Streets** and 60+ of your favorite local food producers for the **22nd Annual Union Square Farmers Market**. Shop local **Saturdays through October 31**, except July 4 and September 19, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the Union Square Plaza. They continue to offer our SNAP matches. Check the mar-

ket webpage for the latest info and to see which vendors accept SNAP. To get the latest updates about the Union Square Farmers Market, visit www.unionsquaremain.org/2026-season.

The **Somerville Mobile Farmers Market** has returned for the 2026 season. The market brings fresh, affordable, local produce to four city locations **Thursdays through Saturdays and runs through October 31**. All produce is sourced from local farms and priced affordably to make healthy, fresh food accessible to all. The mobile market accepts cash, debit and credit cards, SNAP, Fresh Connect, WIC Farmers Market Coupons, and Senior Farmers Market Coupons. For the full schedule, weekly produce updates, and more information about programs and events, visit the market's website at somervillemobilefarmers-market.org.

The **Davis Square Market** has opened for the 2026 Season. The market will run **every Wednesday** from 12 noon to 6 p.m., **through November 25**, at **44 Day St.**, Somerville. This long-running market features over two dozen Massachusetts farmers and food producers offering a vibrant selection of delicious produce, protein, baked goods, and ready-to-eat meals. The market accepts cash, credit/debit cards, WIC/Senior coupons, and EBT cards and offers a weekly \$15 SNAP Match. Visit <https://www.mass-farmersmarkets.org/davis>.

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 Bobbietoner@aol.com. We offer great discounts to help our advertisers be able to advertise. Thank you all so much for your support!

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OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

Counting Bricks

Poems by Gary Metras

Counting Bricks
Poems by Gary Metras
Dos Madres Press
Loveland, Ohio
120 Pages
\$21.00

Review by Dennis Daly

Mnemonic sentiment, boiled down to its essential, tear-charged elements, cannot be ignored. It drives human nature. It mobilizes the emotions. It guides our unruly impulses toward goodness. Poets who completely excise sentimentality from their art do so at their own peril. Thankfully, Gary Metras is not one of those poets.

Metras, in his new poetry collection, *Counting Bricks*, injects physical awe and unusual detail into the ordinariness of passion and its rolling tides of melancholy and elation. His precise, yet down-to-earth, verbiage contains and grounds any unseemly maudlin excess.

The poet's opening piece entitled *Splinter* engages the peculiar bond between mother and child. He reduces the extraction of an everyday splinter into a series of detailed components. Using first his adult perception, then morphing into his child-memory, Metras nails the moment. From the beginning of the procedure to its end, specifics trump pain and fear (although both wait patiently in abeyance). Metras' pre-teen protagonist concludes the poem this way,

it will not do to cry. I watch the needle
enter where the splinter entered.
The needle opens skin, probes beneath
the straight, dark path, snags it, lifts.
She does not take up tweezers.
She bends as if to kiss my finger,
but closes her teeth on the splinter,
draws it out, swipes it with the ball
of her middle finger. We stare
at the tiny slice of the world that yielded
such distress. I walk away healing
and remember the pain.

As poor Gloucester in Shakespeare's *King Lear* laments, "As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods. They kill us for their sport." Yes, the human condition accepts and to some extent submits to chance and nature's blind cruelty. In Metras' poem, *The Ants*, the poet paints these same boys at it again. This time with the help of lighter fluid the youngsters destroy a multitude of unsuspecting ants devouring a candy bar. Utter meanness or child's play? The perpetrators



of this massacre went on to live their anonymous, albeit somewhat messy lives. Metras redirects despair and all obvious bleakness, ending his poetic litany with an ironic flourish and a bit of karma,

... Shy-Dickie went
into the Air Force and never came
back. Adelle, we think, is still in jail
in Mexico. Jerry drives the school bus
and his cute sister was pregnant seven
times by five men. Know-It-All-Stanley
sweeps the floors at Merriam-Webster's.
Susie is a nurse's aide and a mother and a
grandmother and seldom sees her twin
brother. Holy-Roy retired from the Post Office
and walks his neighbor's dogs.
Billy B. has ex-wives and inherited my father's
worn bar stool at the Royal Café. And one day
walking into the drugstore in my 53rd year,
I step on a can of lighter fluid and
remember the smell of burning ants.

Counting Bricks, the title poem of this collection, dryly delivers its vital minutiae of clan history using the medium of an old photograph. The picture, portrayed on the book's cover, includes the poet's father and a host of his siblings. A family member had found the photograph and scanned it. Now every few years it surfaces and insists on being noticed and, with sentiment built in, remembered.

Continued on page 23

Lyrical

SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Deborah Leipziger is an author, poet, and advisor on sustainability. Born in Brazil, Ms. Leipziger is the author of several books on sustainability and human rights. Her second collection of poems, *Tell Me*, was published in 2026 by Lily Poetry Review Books. Her work appears in numerous anthologies, including *The Nature of our Times* and *Tree Lines: 21st Century American Poems*. Her poems have been published in ten countries in such magazines as *Revista Cardenal*, *Inkwell*, *The Bombay Literary Magazine*, *On the Seawall*, and *Salamander*.



Summer of Leaving

We wander into your garden.
You gather zinnias for me
to celebrate, to mark absence,
in a few weeks, your daughter and mine
will leave home.

Magenta maize orange coral,
the petals chubby fingers
curling opening grasping.

You say:
you must cut them back,
so they will grow.

Under a parasol,
you pick white phlox for my bouquet,
dark red-purple gladioli.

Heat makes everything buoyant.
We float on summer.

You cut the top of a milk carton, fill it
with water
for my long journey home.

— Deborah Leipziger

To have your work considered for the *Lyrical* send it to:
Doug Holder, 25 School St., Somerville, MA 02143. dougholder@post.harvard.edu

Off The Shelf

CONT. FROM PG 22

As with most large families (and this reviewer has some firsthand knowledge of that subject), the odds and ends—marriages, pregnancies, poverty, drinking, union strikes, births, deaths, poker games, and sadness are tallied together with moments of fragile ardency. T.S. Eliot might call this associative device an objective correlative. In any case, it does the trick of turning conflicting emotions into a positive, even celebratory beauty. Consider this charged, detail-laden stanza at the heart of Metras’ poem,

... I remember
counting bricks and piling them as father built
a backyard barbecue for brother number ten,
and mixing mortar for the block foundation
of number eleven’s new house, while we lived
through the noise of the projects. I remember
holidays of whiskey-and-beer breath stories—
brothers in uniform, all in combat—number
three a POW, these brothers mentioned only once
or twice a year in voices charged with pride,
then remorse, then silence,
then tears.

Pointedly, in a second person poem entitled *Making Pierogis*, Metras conjures up a microcosm of labor and love in a mother’s kitchen. Daily cooking routine and repetitive meal preparation (meaning sore fingers and aching legs} merge with a doting mother and comforted, now cooing daughter, distracted by spoons and cups and a magic white dot of floury dough. Later the woman’s husband joins this hallowed scene. Everything seems well with the world! It cannot change. The poet has placed his spell on this composition. Metras conveys the wonder of it all in these lines,

The backs of your hands are splotted
with tiny blisters from the splash of boiling water
as you tossed into the pot raw pierogis.
You rescue each one from drowning and place them,
row upon neat row, in the glass pan that shines
with anticipation. As they cool, you clean.
When you lay the daughter in the crib for a nap,
you whisper that one magic word, pierogis.

Women, at their best, civilize all of us. Continuation
and evolution of our species need the complexity of the

female touch. In *Thanksgivings*, Metras’ tight, celebratory poem lauding clan continuation, mortality vies (or rather, combines) with genetics for spatial supremacy. Mankind, blessed with a higher consciousness, rises to its ritual moment in this very American holyday. The poet lovingly blesses his dual grandmothers in the poem’s opening,

My grandmother, bless her DNA, dead
When my mother was a child.
My fake grandmother, the real one’s twin,
Bless her hugs, also dead many years.
But I give thanks to both, one for
birthing, one teaching my mother
to roast the perfect turkey, bake
the perfect pie crust, delicious
even three days afterward.

Whether you love or lament this strange and affecting world that we live in, you’ll want to read this book and marvel at Metras’ poetic particulars and well-placed particles of dry sentiment and restrained passion. He’s genuine in his emotions and spot-on in his details.

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