

Young Somerville Goes Green!

April 7, 2008 – The Burren, Davis Square

"The world is in our hands..."



Photo courtesy of <http://flickr.com/photos/sushiesque/>

Tonight's Agenda:

- 6:00 PM**
- Gather, get food and drinks
 - Read through materials
 - Check out organizations at tables
- 6:30 PM**
- Greetings from the Mayor's Office
 - Forum: What's Happening in the City?
 - Explanation of Priority Voting
- 7:15 PM**
- More detailed Q&A with organizations at tables
 - Add your priorities to the list before voting
- 7:30 PM**
- Q&A Continues
 - Deadline for adding priorities to voting list
 - Priority Voting begins!
- 7:50 PM**
- Wrap Up
 - Head to front of The Burren for more socializing!

Who's Here:

Tonight you'll have the chance to meet representatives from the following offices and organizations. Each has a table – go visit them to find out more!

City of Somerville: Office of Sustainability and the Environment

<http://www.somervillema.gov/Division.cfm?orgunit=OSE>

The mission of the Office of Sustainability & Environment (OSE) is to identify and implement cost-effective strategies to continually improve the environmental performance of Somerville city government. OSE's objective is to make Somerville a model livable and sustainable city by reducing energy costs and environmental impacts of city operations, by adopting and promoting environmentally sensitive management policies, and by advocating for programs and practices that result in a healthy and enjoyable environment for the citizens of Somerville.



Mayor's Commission on Energy and the Environment

<http://www.somervillema.gov/Department.cfm?orgunit=EUCC>

Somerville's Commission on Energy Use and Climate Change is a voluntary group, appointed by the mayor, whose role is to provide technical and policy advice on sustainability (focusing on energy efficiency and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions) to the administration. The Commission sees municipal government as a very important change agent in educating its citizens and improving the regional climate impact. Commission meetings are public and all are welcome to attend.

Groundwork Somerville

<http://www.groundworksomerville.org>



Groundwork Somerville aims to build sustainable communities through joint environmental action **FOR PEOPLE** creating opportunities for people to learn new skills and take local action **FOR PLACES** creating better, safer, and healthier neighborhoods **FOR PROSPERITY** helping businesses and individuals fulfill their potential. Groundwork Somerville is a community-based organization designed to serve as a catalyst for reuse of former brownfield sites and for community revitalization in Somerville. The organization is an affiliate of Groundwork USA, a network of organizations created by the National Park Service and modeled after the successful network of 43 Groundwork organizations in the United Kingdom. Groundwork Somerville is one of a small number of organizations nationwide that have received planning and startup grants of \$100,000 from the National Park Service and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. It is currently governed by a Board of Directors representing a cross-section of non-profit groups, community-based organizations, public agencies and business interests in Somerville.

Somerville Climate Action

<http://www.somervilleclimateaction.org>

Somerville Climate Action fights global warming by helping Somerville residents, businesses, and the municipality to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. We promote energy-conservation, energy-efficiency and the adoption of renewable sources of power through education, advocacy, and coalition building. We believe that this process will result in Somerville's greater economic, social, and environmental sustainability, building on its strength as a vibrant, diverse, and innovative community.



GoGreen Davis Square

<http://www.gogreensomerville.org>



GO GREEN DAVIS SQUARE is a coalition of Somerville businesses and non-profit organizations that aims to help the Davis Square business district in Somerville, MA, to Go Green with environmentally friendly and economically sound innovations and practices. We seek to make Davis Square a model of business-led environmental leadership. We provide networking and educational services. We hope to replicate this program in other Somerville business districts in the future.

Participating businesses: Arrowstreet ♦ Bloc 11 ♦ Dave's Fresh Pasta ♦ Diesel Cafe ♦ Green Mountain Engineering ♦ John Ciccolo ♦ Johnny D's Restaurant and Music Club ♦ Mostue Associates Architects ♦ Mr. Crepe ♦ Planet-TECH ♦ Orthodontics at Davis Square ♦ Redbones Barbeque ♦ Taza Chocolate

Participating non-profits:

DARBI (Davis Area Resident and Business Initiative) – www.yourdavissquare.com

Groundwork Somerville – www.groundworksomerville.org

Somerville Climate Action – www.somervilleclimateaction.org

Somerville Community Growing Center

<http://www.thegrowingcenter.org/>

The Somerville Community Growing Center is much more than a community garden. Situated on a ¼ acre of gently sloped hillside near Union Square, the site has become a center for both environmental education and cultural performances in Somerville. Initiated in 1994, it is a model for urban land use and collaboration between city government and local nonprofit and community agencies. This urban oasis was designed and built by local residents and is maintained by volunteers. The Center provides a hands-on learning environment for local youth to learn about the natural world, science, community service and cultural issues. After school programs are offered during the fall and spring, and there is a spring vacation camp, in collaboration with local elementary schools, such as the Cummings School. Teachers from Cummings and the High School use this space as an outdoor classroom to support a wide range of educational programs. A volunteer group coordinates a full season of concerts and other events that are free to the public, in addition to educational programming.



Voting on Your Priorities

Mayor Curtatone would like your feedback about resident priorities as he prepares the budget for the next fiscal year. But the city's resources are limited, and so the choices are always challenging. Here's your chance to get in on the process!

7:15 PM - Initiatives List: Posted in this room are a number of initiatives that have emerged from Young Somerville and Young Somerville Advisory Group meetings (also listed below). Some are environment-related; others are not. From 7:15 to 7:30, you can also add any other initiatives you'd like to the voting list.

7:30 PM - Priority Voting: At 7:30, you'll get to vote! Everyone will get a strip with 5 stickers on it, each representing a 'vote'. You can place your votes however you wish (could be all 5 votes for one item, or 3 for one item and 2 for another item, or 1 vote each for five different items, etc.) It may be hard to choose from so many good ideas, but you will experience what it's like to be working with "limited resources"!

What happens next: Your priorities will be combined with other ResiStat groups' priorities to inform both the Mayor and the Aldermen as they move through this spring's budget process. A few of these items are already underway, but knowing that a particular item is a major priority for residents helps prioritize staff time and accountability.

List from previous meetings – add your own!

- Ban plastic shopping bags or create a "bag tax"
- Purchase of reduced-emission and alternate fuel city vehicles
- Use city purchasing power to negotiate discounts or rebates for Somerville residents to make homes more environmentally friendly
- Creation of Affordable housing developments
- Public recycling bins in major business districts
- Expanding the number of trees in the city by 20% over four years
- More bike lanes on major city streets
- Providing city-wide Wi-Fi
- Improved communication about city events and programs
- Implementing Safe-START pedestrian improvements: Pedestrian countdown displays on traffic lights; updated new bike lanes on Somerville Avenue, more pedestrian bump-outs
- Unveiling a more user-friendly city website and improved calendar of city events
- Promote resources for renters and first-time homebuyers
- Continue to push State for Green Line Extension
- Promoting storefront improvement through small business improvement grants
- Continue to prioritize Somerville Community Path Extension from Cedar Street to Central Street