Green Line
Community Corridor Project

Background:
SCC is working in coalition with community groups on a grassroots planning project to create a land use vision, principles, and recommendations along the soon to arrive Green Line transit corridor in Somerville.

Our Challenge: To make sure all residents—particularly low income and immigrant residents who ordinarily don’t think they have a voice—become engaged in community planning around the transit corridor.
Somerville Context

• Somerville, a largely working class city for decades, began a dramatic economic transformation in the 1980’s

• Somerville is the most densely populated city in New England, with mainly 2 & 3-family homes, and less than 2 acres of public space per 1,000 residents.

• 42.5% of Somerville residents are low or very low income.

• Somerville is increasingly a community of new immigrants: 29% of the population, 27% people of color

• Housing prices have soared during that same period, as new subway stops and increasing gentrification brought more young and single people to our city.

• Somerville’s low and moderate income population, as well as its population of color, is concentrated in the eastern half of the city.
The Green Line is Coming!

- As mitigation for the Big Dig and I93 passing through EJ community, Somerville was promised the Green Line
- Legal battles, questions about funding, etc. ensued.
- Somerville community organized, Conservation Law Foundation helped with lawsuit, and in 2005 we got the final approval for a Green Line to be built by 2014.
- There will be 7 new stations created with the Green Line, and 1 new station with the Orange Line, making stations walking distance to 85% of the population (currently, 30%).
What is SCC’s Role?

- *Equitable* Transit Oriented Development
- Community Benefits for low-income population
- Property Acquisition
- Community participation: planning and organizing
Somerville Equitable Transit-Oriented Development Strategy

Prepared for: Somerville Community Corporation
Prepared by: RECONNECTING AMERICA CENTER FOR TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

May 2008
Community Corridor Planning

• A collaborative effort to engage Somerville residents in the land use planning of the Green Line Corridor.

• Goal: to make sure community interests are incorporated into long term plans, including open space, affordable housing, jobs, access to transportation, etc.

• Community partners include: Somerville Community Corporation, Groundwork Somerville, Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership, and Somerville Health Agenda, in coordination with City of Somerville.
Community Corridor Project

1. Face to Face Meetings
2. Interactive Tools
3. Where we are Heading: Our Game Plan
Face to Face Meetings

• Door Knocking
• House Meetings
• Station Area Meetings
• Parties
Community Corridor Project: Mapping Tool

1. Map Library

2. Interactive Layer
   1. Video interviews
   2. Photo Vision
   3. Blog

3. Second Life
Community Corridor Project

What are we trying to find:

• Risk and opportunity sites along the transit corridor for community amenities, such as affordable housing, open space, community centers, etc.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Properties with Buildings</th>
<th>Properties with no building</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ At least one floor is vacant (floor #__)</td>
<td>□ Playground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Building is vacant or abandoned</td>
<td>□ Community garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Used for community purposes:</td>
<td>□ Parking lot, owner______________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circle: church·activity center·other_______</td>
<td>□ Other_________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Owned by City, use:______________</td>
<td>□ Paved, but no apparent use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Owned by MBTA</td>
<td>□ Unpaved, but no apparent use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Has “for sale” sign</td>
<td>□ Owned by City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Has large lot next to building</td>
<td>□ Owned by MBTA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Abuts train line or proposed train station</td>
<td>□ Other apparent owner ____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Building includes units with 3+ bedrooms</td>
<td>□ Can’t tell who owns this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Under current renovation</td>
<td>□ Next to train line or proposed train station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anecdotal:</td>
<td>□ Additional description:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Is next to property that is likely to be redeveloped.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you know?__________________________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Use does not fit in with other nearby properties (use:______________ )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anecdotal: Blighted Properties</td>
<td>Environment/Green Space/Food System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ In disrepair (broken windows, falling apart)</td>
<td>□ Has flat roof (potential for roof top garden)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Junk yard</td>
<td>□ Has active flower garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Pollution is evident</td>
<td>□ Has active vegetable garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Uncared for (overgrown lots, trash)</td>
<td>□ Has significantly large trees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Apparent owner ______________</td>
<td>□ Has permeable (unpaved) ground, % of parcel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ No apparent owner</td>
<td>□ Has potential for garden space or open space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Additional description:</td>
<td>□ Can see or hear highway from parcel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word on the Street:</th>
<th>Other observations about this property:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighbors have made following comments about this property:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Names of people surveying property:
Date:
Where we are Heading:
Our Game Plan

1. Vision and Principles
Community Gathering Spaces

We want to make both indoor and outdoor safe, public gathering places for community members.

Community Involvement

We want to make sure residents are included on an ongoing basis in the planning, design, and zoning changes to the stations and areas around them. Youth, artists, and others should help design stations, with attention to amenities. We need an easy and clear process for residents to address problems as they come up, with ways of immediately resolving unseen impacts.
Innerbelt/Brickbottom
OUTBOUND
Where we are Heading:
Our Game Plan

2. Working Groups: Policy Recommendations
Where we are Heading:
Our Game Plan

3. Community Design
Challenges

• Keeping people motivated over time
• Making sure we truly reach the people we want to reach, and overcoming barriers to do so
• Connecting our grassroots efforts with City and State Planning.