

November 29, 2019

PRESS RELEASE - SIGNING OF COMMUNITY BENEFITS AGREEMENT FOR UNION SQUARE

DATE:- Monday, December 2, 2019

TIME:- 5:30 PM

WHERE:- Office of Union Square Station Associates, 31 Union Square, Somerville

On Monday, December 2nd, the Union Square Neighborhood Council (USNC) and Union Square Station Associates (US2) will sign the long-anticipated Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) for the Union Square Revitalization Area Development adjacent to the new Green Line MBTA station. The agreement includes provisions for more affordable housing built sooner, guidelines for hiring, community standards for construction, incentives for sustainable businesses, additional new open space, energy-efficient construction and operations, funding for job training, and assistance to existing small businesses in Union Square.

The realization of this remarkable achievement has multiple meanings. For some, the CBA marks the completion of a goal after five years of organizing, researching, community building, and negotiating. For others, especially the negotiating team of the USNC and the developer (US2), it's the completion of year-long negotiations. Regardless of the time and effort one contributed to this accomplishment, this CBA truly impacts all of us. It is the most important step in achieving the goal of new development that attempts to minimize displacement of existing residents and businesses. The agreement also represents an attempt to offset the gentrifying effects of a development that covers 15 acres, costs at least \$1.5 billion to construct, and about twenty years to complete.

But, from the perspective of the USNC, it is not the end of the story. The CBA's implementation will serve as the next chapter alongside the cooperative effort to maintain the spirit of community-building that typified the five-year-long effort.

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