

# **Union Square Neighborhood Council**

## **2017 Elections Packet**

**Inside this packet you will find the following information about the USNC:**

- Vision & Goals (p2)
- Boundaries (p3)
- Board structure and candidate eligibility (p4-5)
- Candidate information form and candidate statement (p6-7)
- Signature forms (p8-9)
  - **All candidates intending to run for the USNC board must submit materials by November 9, 2017 at 5pm.**
- Vote counting and ballot description (p10)
- Draft sample ballot (p11)
- **The USNC Elections will be held at the Somerville Public Safety Building, 220 Washington Street.**
  - Candidate Forum —Saturday, Nov 18th, 2-5pm
  - Voting — Saturday, Dec 2, 10am-2pm & Wednesday, Dec 6, 7am-8pm
  - Election Results announced — Wednesday, Dec 6

Please direct all questions to the Neighborhood Council Elections Committee:

UnionSquareNeighborhoodCouncil@gmail.com

Full bylaws can be found here: <http://unionsquareneighborhoodcouncil.org/bylaws>

**Thank you for your interest in being a candidate for the Union Square Neighborhood Council founding board!**

# Union Square Neighborhood Council

## Vision and Goals

### What is the Union Square Neighborhood Council?

The Union Square Neighborhood Council emerged out of a three-year community process around the redevelopment of Union Square. It is a unique opportunity for Union Square community members to influence the redevelopment process, negotiate with developers, educate themselves and their neighbors, and build community.

The Union Square Neighborhood Council will be able to advocate and negotiate for:

- Affordable housing and anti-displacement policies
- Employment opportunities within the neighborhood
- Environmental improvements and green space
- Improved transportation options

And many other issues.

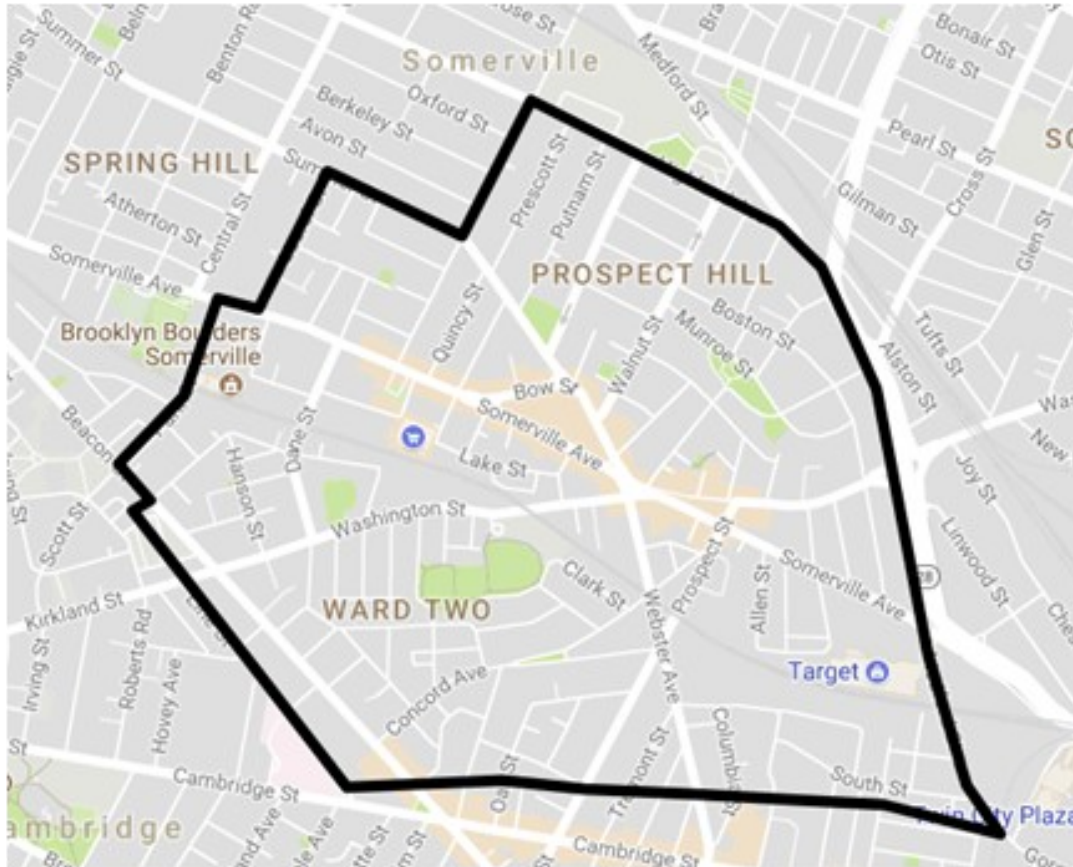
The Union Square Neighborhood Council is the first of what will hopefully be many neighborhood councils throughout Somerville. The first elected board will have an opportunity to create a model that other neighborhoods in Somerville can learn from. It is a space for building community power and knowledge.

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- **Our Vision** for Union Square is a thriving, engaged, enjoyable, inclusive, sustainable, diverse urban neighborhood and vibrant commercial center.
- **Our Mission** is to shape the future of Union Square as an increasingly inclusive and vibrant neighborhood and commercial center built around the aspirations of the people who live and work here.
- **Our Values** are interdependence, inclusion, wellness, participation, equity, enjoyment, stewardship, transparency and civic engagement.
- **Our Goals** are to build community, empower members of the community, minimize displacement and promote affordability, increase economic opportunity, and steward the public realm and built environment.

# Union Square Neighborhood Council

## Boundaries



Consistent with the Union Square Neighborhood Plan adopted by the Planning Board of the City of Somerville on May 5, 2016, the Union Square neighborhood shall be defined as the geographic area of Somerville, Massachusetts within the following boundaries: McGrath Highway, Medford Street, the Somerville/Cambridge city line, Park Street, Somerville Avenue, Laurel Street, Summer Street, School Street, and Highland Avenue. The boundary line shall be drawn down the middle of the boundary streets.

# Union Square Neighborhood Council

## Board Structure & Candidate Eligibility

### Description of USNC Board:

There will be a Founding Board comprised of fifteen (15) members that shall serve and execute the responsibilities of the Neighborhood Council in its first year. All Neighborhood Council Board members must be over 16 years of age and live or work in Union Square. If a Board member is displaced from Union Square, he or she may serve out the duration of his or her term. The Founding Board members shall be elected by eligible members. The master developer shall not have an employee, representative, or consultant on the board of the Neighborhood Council.

The Union Square Neighborhood Council aspires to be representational of the demographics of the community in Union Square. We ask that all candidates for the board be committed to this goal and think creatively about how to achieve it.

<b>Description:</b>	<b># of Seats:</b>
Union Sq. Home Owner <i>*owns primary residence in Union Square</i>	2
Union Sq. Renter <i>*rents primary residence in Union Square</i>	2
Union Sq. Business Owner or Worker	2
Charitable/Religious/Educational/Advocacy/Group or Org. <i>*Open to all formal and informal groups. A group may only run one candidate for this seat.</i>	2
Immigrant <i>*born outside the United States.</i>	2
Open Seat <i>*anyone who lives or works in Union Sq.</i>	5

### To be on the ballot, candidates must:

- Prove eligibility for membership (see below).
- Select the seats for which they are eligible and want to run, including open seats.
- Collect at least five (5) signatures on a nominating petition from eligible Neighborhood Council voters (see pages 8 and 9).
- Provide a candidate statement with a recent photograph (see page 7).
- Submit materials to the USNC Elections Committee  
(UnionSquareNeighborhoodCouncil@gmail.com) by 5pm on Thursday, November 9, 2017.

# **Union Square Neighborhood Council**

## **Candidate Eligibility, continued.**

There are 6 categories of board members: resident renters, resident homeowners, business owners or workers, members of organizations, immigrants, and open seats. Candidates will not be required to "represent" their constituencies; the goal of having different categories is to ensure a diversity of perspectives. All board members are expected to act on behalf of the broader neighborhood to the best of their abilities.

*All board candidates are encouraged to identify themselves with as many of the categories as they are eligible for, to maximize their chances of election.* Many candidates will be eligible for multiple categories: e.g. renter, worker, immigrant, open seat.

If a candidate believes they cannot represent the perspective of a constituency in which they technically belong, they do not have to identify themselves as being in that category. For example, a prosperous property owner who was born in another country might not wish to select the "immigrant" category, believing that the immigrant perspective would be better represented by more recent immigrants.

*Candidates who do not fit into either the renter or homeowner category (e.g. candidates with no fixed abode in the neighborhood, or candidates who live with family and do not own property or pay rent), should identify themselves in the "renter" category.*

Candidates may express preference to be recognized as primarily representing one of the categories, e.g. "immigrant," "homeowner," or "business owner" to attract support as an effective representative of this group. This stated preference will not affect the vote count algorithm. Those identifying themselves in this way should still include the other categories for which they qualify.

Candidates not willing to be considered for an Open Seat must say this. *This choice may reduce the candidate's chances of being elected.*

***Please see the draft sample ballot on page 11.***

# Union Square Neighborhood Council

## Candidate Information Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

\*Check all that apply!

\_\_\_\_\_ I am over 16 years of age  
 \_\_\_\_\_ I live in Union Square  
 \_\_\_\_\_ I am a member of a group/organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ I work in Union Square (If yes, complete the following information).

Employer Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Please indicate which Neighborhood Council Board Seats you are eligible for:**

*All board candidates are encouraged to identify themselves with as many of the categories as they are eligible for, to maximize their chances of election.*

Select all that apply	Description:	# of Seats:
	Union Sq. Home Owner <i>*owns primary residence in Union Square</i>	2
	Union Sq. Renter <i>*rents primary residence in Union Square</i>	2
	Union Sq. Business Owner or Worker	2
	Charitable/Religious/Educational/Advocacy/Group or Org. <i>*Organizations may only run one candidate for this seat.</i>	2
	Immigrant <i>*born outside the United States.</i>	2
	Open Seat (all candidates are eligible for open seats unless they do not wish to run for an open seat)	5

# **Union Square Neighborhood Council**

## **Candidate Statement**

**In 100 words or less describe why you are running for Union Square Neighborhood Council and why you believe you are a good candidate for the board.**

**Candidates are encouraged to discuss their history in Union Square, whether they strongly identify with any of the board categories, and the issues that are most important to them.**

**\*NOTE: If your statement is too long, it may be edited for brevity to ensure it can fit inside the candidate informational packet that will be provided to voters.**

**This may be submitted electronically to**

**UnionSquareNeighborhoodCouncil@gmail.com or sent to P.O. Box 48, Somerville MA 02143.**

# Union Square Neighborhood Council

## Nominating Petitions Form

*\*All candidates must collect a minimum of five (5) signatures by 5pm on Thurs November 9, 2017.*

Candidate Name: \_\_\_\_\_

We the undersigned certify that we either live and/or work in Union Square and nominate \_\_\_\_\_ as a candidate for a seat on the Union Square Neighborhood Council Board.

NAME: Print/Sign		ADDRESS
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		



# Union Square Neighborhood Council

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7.		
8.		

# **Union Square Neighborhood Council**

## **Vote Counting & Ballot Description**

### **Vote Counting**

Voters will be allowed up to fifteen (15) votes, with not more than one vote per candidate.

There is no requirement to vote for 15 candidates.

Ballots with votes for more than 15 candidates, or more than one vote for any candidate, will be discarded.

The fifteen candidates with the highest total number of tallied votes that supports the required distribution of seats described in this packet will be appointed to the Interim Board.

If the top 15 vote-getters cannot meet the distribution requirement among the categories, the candidates with the next highest number of votes will be considered to replace those with the lowest vote counts on the initial list of 15, with the requirement that the total number of votes cast for all selected candidates remains the highest possible.

An algorithm has been designed to ensure the fairness of this process. In the event that there are not sufficient candidates for any specific category, those seats will remain open until a subsequent election.

### **Ballot Forms**

On the ballot forms the categories of all candidates, including their primary identification if selected, will be identified in a grid (see draft sample ballot on the next page).

“Peter” wants to identify primarily as a renter, but is also a member of a local organization, and might win one of the Open seats. If elected to an Open seat, he would still be able to represent the interests of renters, as well as on issues of general interest to the community, although he won fewer votes than two others who identified themselves as renters.

# Union Square Neighborhood Council

## Draft Sample Ballot

This is a draft sample ballot completed by an individual voter, with hypothetical candidates and votes.

Candidate's Name  <b>Note:</b> All candidates must live or work in Union Square.	Categories that Describe the Candidate and in which S/he Wishes to be Considered ("Primary" indicates the category that the candidate most strongly identifies with)						<b>VOTE FOR UP TO 15 CANDIDATES IN THIS COLUMN</b>
	Union Square Homeowner	Union Square Renter or non-owning resident	Union Square Business Owner or Worker	Union Square Charitable, Religious, Educational, or Advocacy Organization	Immigrant	"Open" Seat	
Peter		Yes Primary		Yes		Yes	x
Paul	Yes			Yes		Yes	
Mary		Yes			Yes Primary	Yes	x
Georgio			Yes Primary			Yes	
Franz		Yes		Yes Primary		Yes	
Antonia		Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	x
Meryl			Yes	Yes		Yes	x
Marcia	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	
Eduardo		Yes				Yes	
Leo		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	x
Francesca		Yes			Yes	Yes	
Mona	Yes Primary			Yes			
Lisa		Yes Primary	Yes			Yes	x
Tomas		Yes			Yes Primary	Yes	
Jess		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	
John	Yes					Yes	x
Louise		Yes		Yes		Yes	x
Jerry	Yes					Yes	
Joseph		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes Primary	Yes	x
Mary		Yes		Yes		Yes	
Oliver	Yes Primary			Yes		Yes	x
Andy			Yes Primary			Yes	x
Mark	Yes			Yes			
Keisha		Yes				Yes	x
Susanna		Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	
Jenna	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	x
Mia		Yes Primary				Yes	
Federico			Yes	Yes	Yes Primary	Yes	x
Pablo	Yes					Yes	
Tim		Yes Primary	Yes	Yes	Yes		x

The voting algorithm will select candidates with the most votes consistent with selecting a minimum of two candidates in each of the five categories, and filling five open seats.