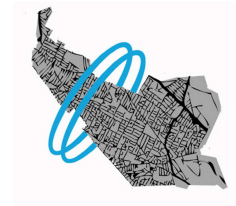


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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the future!

"The history of Somerville, 2010-2100" is a community art project that explores what the future might be like.

Between February 2009 and December 2010, we talked to members of the Somerville community about what they thought might happen in the next 90 years. We did this in a number of ways. First, we set up our Future Information Table on the street in different neighborhoods; this let us collect predictions, and chat with people about the future. We also gave a number of Future Presentations. These talks took place in people's homes, and as part of a number of different public events. When we weren't doing this, we spoke with people over coffee, on the phone, and over email. In all, we talked with a few hundred people about the future, around 50 of whom were nice enough to make their own predictions.

This book presents what we found. In it, you'll also find official government plans, think tank vision statements, and various ideas and concerns about the future from various other sources.

The Timeline section of the book presents all of this material as a single timeline of the future. In the Predictions Archive section, you'll find the actual predictions that people made.

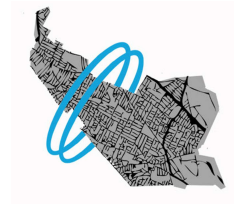
We'd like to give a big Thank You to everyone who took some time to talk to us about the future. We'd also like to thank MN and the wonderful people at the

Somerville Arts Council for all of their help and encouragement.

This project was organized by Tim Devin, and was sponsored in part by the Somerville Arts Council. The project can be found online at: www.timdevin.com/historyofsomerville.html , and on Facebook, with our "The history of Somerville, 2010-2100" Facebook group page.

Thanks!

Note: the copyright for each item in this book is held by its creator. The copyright for the compilation is held by Tim Devin. 2011.



SECTION 2: TIMELINE

Introduction to the 2010s

Besides the destruction of the Universe in late 2012, the 2010s see a great many changes in Somerville.

Many families move out of town, due to the poor quality of city's schools. The vacuum this creates is filled with more and more young people, who bring with them a different set of interests. Suddenly, there is a major push towards community sharing. Mobile libraries circulate through town; these libraries also lend tools, art supplies, and other useful items. A community print shop also opens up, as does an artisan craft and food mart that allows residents to sell the food they make at home. This same shift in demographics also causes the city to sell the old Powder House School to developers in 2010, and to provide even less funding for schools. This, in turn, causes more families to move out. By the end of the decade, East Somerville is the cultural focus of this new Somerville, a dog is its mayor, and Tufts University is its overlord.

The city's residents take a number of steps to protect the environment. Gyms are now powered by the exercise that people do in them. Wind turbines are placed around town, on hills and on top of buildings; some are disguised as sculptures. Microgenerators appear on doors, harnessing power from their openings and closings. Property owners use all of these devices to sell electricity back to the system. To reward these property owners, the city decreases property tax; in turn, owners stop raising rent.

More and more members of the community become environmentally conscious. Many businesses stop offering Styrofoam packages and plastic bags; widespread community composting and recycling help to minimize trash and litter. Bicycles become very popular--so much so that the city creates special bike lanes on every street, extends the bike path to Boston, and converts hundreds of parking spaces for cars into parking spaces for bikes. As a result, more and more people get rid of their cars, and convert their driveways to gardens. Some see this as a backlash against the surge in car traffic that began the decade.

The Green Line extends to Union Square, and to Medford. This takes place twice: in 2014, and then again the next year. The McGrath Highway is lowered, most likely as a result of the extension. Somerville also gets its own Orange Line stop in 2013, as part of the development of Assembly Square; however, this is a temporary gain, as Assembly Square is flooded the same year by rising sea waters. The MBTA's new Somerville service proves unreliable. Fed up and frustrated, the city establishes its own public transit system. This system consists of hybrid vans which cost \$1 per ride, and come every five minutes.

Rounder Records breaks away from its parent corporation, and returns to Somerville in 2017, where it becomes a major force in the record industry.

Rounder workers create an algorithm that identifies illegal file-sharing on the web. Their stock soars overnight, and millions of new dollars are pumped into Somerville's economy.

Nationally, the US government splits its focus between space travel and the environment. NASA continues exploring space, sending missions to Mars and Venus. Solar power competes with fossil fuels in cost. A ban is introduced on incandescent light bulbs. The decade also sees the qualifying age for Medicare reduced to 55; the first woman president of the United States; and wars between the US and Iran, and between the US and North Korea.

While these changes are taking place, the country's economy begins to spiral downwards. Globally, there are drastic changes as well. The US's economic nosedive causes other national economies to begin to fail. With over 7 billion people now on the planet, resources become strained. Water shortages lead to riots worldwide. A large chunk of the population becomes vegetarian, by choice or by necessity.

2010 Community participant predictions

Annual paper boat race on the Mystic begin.
(source: Neil Horsky)

There is a farmer's market one Saturday.
(source: Rosie)

Other predictions

Construction starts on the Assembly Square development.
(source: Assemblysquare.com)

The old Powder House school is sold off for private development.
(source: Ackerman, "Somerville's Powder House school building set for rezoning in 2010," The Somerville Journal)

2011 Community participant predictions

July 2011

Dan Crary gives a free concert at ArtBeat, in Jimmy Tingle's (which has moved back to Davis Square). While the concert was ignored at the time, videos of the performance caused Crary to become an international star. Subsequent sales of his old Rounder recordings bring millions to Rounder, which moves back to Somerville as a result in 2017.
(source: The Dan Crary Fan Club)

No dates given

"The U.S. government, in a special deal with the mayor of Somerville, lowers the qualifying age for Medicare to 55 for all Somerville residents, pulling hundreds of uninsured Baby Boomers back from the brink of death."

(source: Linda Frye Burnham)

Bicycles become very popular. Bike taxis are a common sight; Metro-Pedal Power expands its bike delivery fleet. Market Basket adds bike stands; other businesses follow suit. The City of Somerville adds bike parking spots and bike lanes for every street. Small independent stores rise in popularity.

(source: Maureen Barillaro)

Both car traffic and bike traffic in Union Square have increased greatly from 2010 levels.

(source: Louis Epstein)

Other predictions

None found.

2012 Community participant predictions

Assembly Square is flooded by rising sea levels, caused by climate change.

(source: Maureen Barillaro)

Tufts University expands, and takes over Somerville.

(source: Anonymous)

Somerville now has an artisan craft and food mart where people can come and sell food they've make at home.

(source: Brad)

Other predictions

December 21, 2012

The world ends.

(source: the ancient Mayans)

No date given

The sun reverses its own magnetic poles as a result of reaching the end of the current 11-year sunspot cycle.

(source: Wikipedia, quoting NASA)

2013 Community participant predictions

June 2013

Local ice-cream trucks are joined by a fruit-truck. The fruit-truck has a sound system, too. On Saturday nights, it parks in open lots or empty parking areas and provides music for free neighborhood dance parties.

(source: Alana Kumbier)

No dates given

All exercise equipment in gyms render health clubs energy-neutral.

(source: Adam Olenn)

Windmills on are placed on Somerville's hills and buildings.

(source: Columbine Phoenix)

Fed up with unreliable buses, and delays on the Green Line extension, Somerville unveils its own public transit system. Hybrid vans now circle the city; they cost \$1, can be tracked with GPS devices, and come every 5 minutes.

(source: Maureen Barillaro)

Other predictions

June 2013

The NASA's James Webb Space Telescope is launched.

(source: Wikipedia, quoting NASA)

No dates given

A new Orange Line stop opens up at Assembly Square.

(source: Assemblysquare.com)

ESA ExoMars rover mission to Mars.

(source: Wikipedia)

NASA's Venus In-Situ Explorer mission to Venus.

(source: Wikipedia, quoting NASA)

Solar power is cost-competitive with fossil fuels
(source: Tierney, "The future is now? Pretty soon at least," New York Times)

2014

Community participant predictions

Somerville installs more of the rotating red sculptures currently on display at the Porter Square T stop. They are cleverly-disguised wind turbines.

(source: Adam Olenn)

A woman named Nora moves to Somerville after completing college.

(source: Nora)

The windmills that have been built on top of hills and buildings allow property owners to sell electricity NStar. This reduces property tax; as a result, rents stabilize.

Stabilized rents allow Columbine Phoenix to pay off her student loans, and stop working on the weekends. Columbine pours this newfound time into a cooking and kitchen safety show (Short Order Chefs) on SCTV featuring elementary-school students who have submitted particularly stellar recipes.
(source: Columbine Phoenix)

Other predictions

March 2014

NASA launches the Ares I launch vehicle and the Orion 2 spacecraft on its first manned mission to the International Space Station.

(source: Wikipedia)

December 31, 2014

Green line extension opens.

(source: MBTA website, in 2009)

No date given

The United States Government ban on incandescent lightbulbs to take effect, as part of the 2007 Energy Bill.

(source: Wikipedia)

2015 Community participant predictions

March 2015

Fleet of mobile libraries begins circulating through Somerville. Vans full of books and other print material; home-repair tools; bike-repair tools; gardening implements and supplies; media-making technologies; art supplies; and musical instruments rotate through Somerville's squares on a weekly basis. Community members can borrow from these communal collections for short-term projects.

(source: Alana Kumbier)

No dates given

Every door to every business in Somerville is now fitted with a microgenerator, so every time people enter and exit shops, restaurants, and offices, they will be helping to power the electrical grid.

(source: Adam Olenn)

Tim Devin's old landlady gives him his old apartment on Charnwood for free, because she misses him so much.

(source: Tim Devin)

The Green Line, which is slated to expand to Medford in 2014, opens sometime between 2015-2017. "It's a

shame really when you think about how fast they can build these things in Europe or China."

(source: Andrew Lynch)



(image source: detail of a map by Andrew Lynch)

Zip Car has become a very popular and reliable service in Somerville, causing residents to give up their cars. Driveways become gardens; air quality improves, along with children's health. The newly clean Mystic River Parkway becomes a popular family destination.

Most businesses ban styrofoam, and eliminate plastic bags; composting and recycling minimize litter and trash. People purchase products with minimal packaging, to further reduce waste.

(source: Maureen Barillaro)

Other predictions

October 2015

The Green Line expansion is completed.

(source: MBTA announcement, Summer 2010)

No dates given

There are 550 cities worldwide with populations over 1 million people.

(source: Attali, "A brief history of the future: a brave and controversial look at the twenty-first century")

Resources and food supplies give way. Water shortages. Violent riots worldwide. Security community and right-wing politicians try to cope with breakdown of national governments and rise of international corporations by forming the Alliance for Global Salvation. This attempt causes left-wingers to unite.

(source: Tellus Institute, "The crisis of 2015")

National governments start asserting themselves. Sustainable development is pushed.

(source: Tellus Institute, "The great transition")

The world's population is 7.2 billion. Half live in cities. Half do not have sufficient access to water. Water scarcities in Middle East, Africa, South Asia, and China, causing regional tensions.

The United States continues to be a major force in the world community, but its economy suffers a sustained downturn. This has a deleterious economic and political effect on the rest of the world.

(source: National Institute of Science, "Global trends 2015")

2016

Community participant predictions

January 2016

Community printshop opens in Union Square, with silkscreen, letterpress, and bookbinding workshops open to community members.

(source: Alana Kumbier)

No date given

In 2016 the McGrath Highway overpass is lowered to a ground-level boulevard, forcing the dance party to a new location under Route 93.

(source: Ted Bach)

Somerville becomes a Mecca for singles and especially college students, as families have left due to lack of educational opportunities for children.

(source: Anonymous)

A new bike path runs from Somerville all the way to downtown.

(source: Wesley Heidi)

The first woman president is elected to office. The number of vegetarians/vegans has increased by 20%. The US goes to war against Iran and North Korea.

(source: Ying)

A dog is elected mayor of Somerville. It runs under the slogan: "Vote for the pug with this mug!"

(source: "Tinkerbell's human companion")

Other predictions

None found.

2017 Community participant predictions

As a result of Dan Crary's rise to fame, Rounder Records making millions on his back catalog; this newfound revenue allows them to purchase their old space on the bike path.

(source: The Dan Crary Fan Club)

Other predictions

None found.

2019 Community participant predictions

Summer 2019

East Somerville is the happening part of Somerville.

(source: Sara)

No date given

Rounder Records (once again headquartered in Somerville) creates an algorithm that identifies illegal file-sharing on the web. Its stocks skyrocket overnight.

(source: The Dan Crary Fan Club)

Other predictions

None found.

Introduction to the 2020s

Despite the economic downturn of the 2010s, Somerville residents continue on, still focused on their health, on the environment, and on being nice to people. The city has become the area's vegan capital, a leader in the worldwide uptick in vegetarianism of the 2010s. Davis Square is now carbon-neutral.

Rounder Records, which returned to Somerville in 2017, is now a major force in the record industry; it acquires CBS/Sony, EMI and Virgin. The City of Somerville also expands, taking Porter Square in 2025, in order to help Cambridge stay afloat financially. The city puts a roof over the parking lot, which is made available to residents for community gardens. The city continues to expand, taking Inman from Cambridge in 2027; no reason or justification is given for this action.

This time period sees radical and unpredictable changes in how people are getting around. In the beginning of the 2020s, the city's new (and free) pedal-powered buses prove to be a popular alternative to the city's own public transit system and its ubiquitous bicycles. The Green Line is extended to Union Square and Medford for the third time. The Urban Ring line also opens. But this era of public transport quickly passes, and, by 2022, people are using cars again with a vengeance. A new highway appears through the city to facilitate car travel. A few years after this, the pendulum has again shifted back, and cars are banned completely from the city. By the end of the decade, car culture has returned, and another highway is built through the city.

Nationally, hover cars make their first appearance. Biofuels are becoming more and more common in the US, and a large chunk of our electricity comes from renewables. The federal government passes laws to reduce waste and litter, inspired by Somerville's practices. Styrofoam and plastic bags are now banned; recycling bins and composting are now required. NASA continues along its own expansionistic path by colonizing the Moon.

Interest in the environment is not limited to the US. All new cars produced worldwide are hybrids, and Europe is powered largely by renewable energy. This is important, since the average city dweller lives more than 25 miles from downtown, and does a lot of driving.

Technology continues to make great leaps. Computers are now as intelligent as humans.

More and more jobs are shifting to India and China, as the world becomes more and more wired. Corporations begin to take power from governments; traditional geographical entities such as states, regions, and even countries, lose their importance in global relations. The economies of developing countries such as Brazil surpass those of European countries. There are now more than 1 billion Muslims; as a political bloc, Islamic countries have become very powerful.

These radical changes cause people to reevaluate their lives, and the art of living replaces materialism worldwide in the middle years of the decade.

2020

Community participant predictions

Somerville is the vegan center of the Greater Boston area.

(source: Bambi Good)

The moldy practices of nepotism, favoritism, and back-door-dealing have shrunk under the sunny eyes of scrutiny provided by intrepid reporters and ordinary citizens who've made it their mission to shine on the dark corners where they have thrived.

(source: Linda Haviland Conte)

Davis Square is a carbon neutral business district.

(source: Seth Itzkan)

The Green Line extension is completed.

(source: MJF)

Rounder Records (which is once again based in Somerville, and which created an algorithm to identify illegal file-sharing on the web in 2019) fights a takeover bid from Google. Rounder proceeds to purchase the remains of formerly powerful major labels such as CBS/Sony, EMI and Virgin, cementing its position as the new superpower in the recorded music industry that it maintains for the remainder of the century.

(source: The Dan Crary Fan Club)

The federal government passes laws to reduce waste and litter, based on Somerville's practices. Styrofoam and plastic bags are now banned; recycling bins and composting are now required.

(source: Maureen Barillaro)

In the 2020s, Somerville is more diverse and welcoming than Cambridge was in 2010.

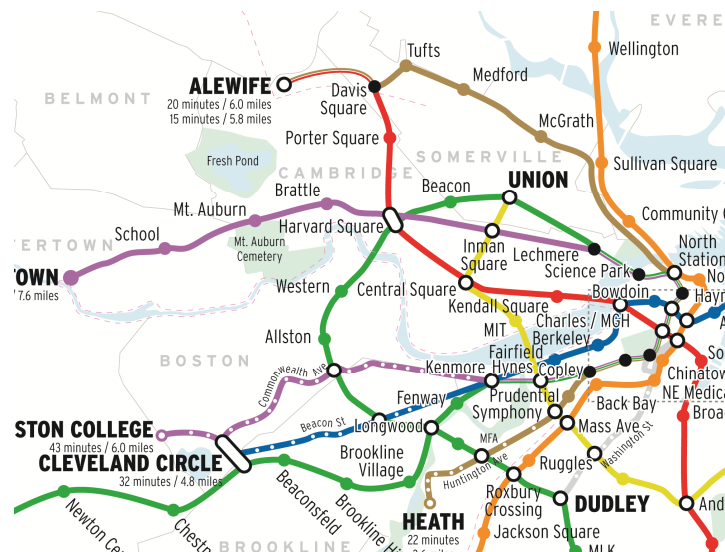
(source: Josh Burchard)

In the 2020s, hover cars make their first appearance

(source: Tim Devin)

The chances of the Green Line being extended are pretty remote. The extension of the Green line to Medford has been talked about for a long time, and may in fact happen, perhaps 2020 is a reasonable date for that one? The other lines (in the below map) could be a project for the 2020s or 2030s.

(source: Bill Rankin)



(image source: detail of a map by Bill Rankin / radicalcartography.net)

All lines through Somerville (Green Line to W. Medford, Urban Ring) are opened by 2020-2025. But that is "best case scenario."

(source: Andrew Lynch)

In 2020-25, there will be pedal-powered minibuses, with flywheels, with routes but no schedule. People will use these to commute, and get exercise. It would have to be pedal-optional, for the disabled/disinclined.

(source: Jim H.)

Other predictions

After the Global Economic Crisis of 2015, economic growth resumes. The entire world becomes wired. Confident that the Crisis is over, national governments let corporations take stronger hold of the economy.

Most students use the internet as their primary tool for communication. More and more technology jobs shift to India and China, to take advantage of lower pay.

(source: Tellus Institute, "The great transition")

All new cars are hybrids, according to an anonymous survey of car industry executives by IBM's Institute for Business Value. 35 miles per gallon is average for the U.S. fleet. 20 percent of the European Union's energy comes from renewables. 15 percent of China's energy comes from renewables. Sweden is oil-free.

(source: Schirber, "Power of the Future: A Timeline to Energy Independence" in LiveScience)

There are 1 billion Muslims, worldwide.

(source: Attali, "A brief history of the future: a brave and controversial look at the twenty-first century")

"The economies of other developing countries, such as Brazil, could surpass all but the largest European countries by 2020; Indonesia's economy could also approach the economies of individual European countries by 2020...Most of the increase in world population and consumer demand through 2020 will take place in today's developing nations-especially China, India, and Indonesia"

"By 2020, globalization could be equated in the popular mind with a rising Asia, replacing its current association with Americanization."

"Political Islam will have a significant global impact leading to 2020, rallying disparate ethnic and national groups and perhaps even creating an authority that transcends national boundaries."

"Production and jobs will be globalized. The transition will not be painless and will hit the middle classes of the developed world in particular, bringing more rapid job turnover and requiring professional retooling...Although the challenges ahead will be daunting, the United States will retain enormous advantages, playing a pivotal role across the broad range of issues-economic, technological, political, and military-that no other state will match by 2020."

"Traditional geographical groupings will increasingly lose salience in international relations" (source: National Institute of Science, "Mapping of the future, 2020")

NASA starts moon colonization for future human exploration to Mars.

(source: Wikipedia, quoting MSNBC)

Global oil production is expected to peak.

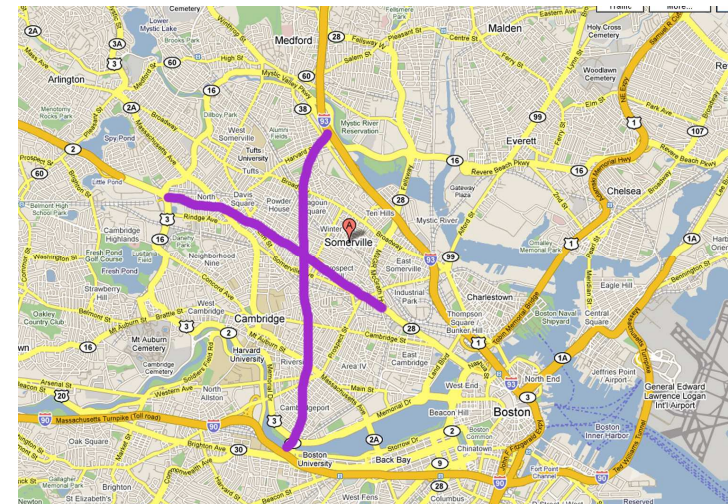
(source: Wikipedia, quoting LiveScience)

The Russian Federal Space Agency is mining helium-3 from the moon.

(source: Wikipedia, quoting Pravda)

2022

Community participant predictions



(image source: LuQ)

Due to increasing population density, increasing number of cars, and crumbling nature of the MBTA, a new highway (Route 2X) is run between Route 2 near Alewife Station in Cambridge and the McGrath overpass near Union Square in Somerville.

(source: LuQ)

Other predictions

36 billion gallons of biofuels sold in the United States, up from 4.7 billion gallons in 2007.

(source: Schirber, "Power of the future: a timeline to energy independence" in LiveScience)

2025 Community participant predictions

Somerville annexes Porter Square, to help Cambridge stay afloat. The parking lot of Porter Square shopping center will have a green roof installed above it which becomes a community garden. People will grow their own fruits and veggies and have a barter-driven farmers' market on Saturdays.

(source: Adam Olenn)

All cars are banned and Somerville becomes a walk/bike only town.

(source: Lauren Schumacher)

The Urban Ring line opens.

(source: Andrew Lynch)

Other predictions

The search for meaningful lives comes to the foreground. Traditional families shrunk in size, people lived longer. Sustainable diets. Art of living replaces materialism. Proliferation of VBOs (value-based organizations), based on desire to be responsible for one's actions. Monitoring of corporate behavior, quality of workers' lives and wages.

(source: Tellus Institute, "The great transition")

25 percent of U.S. electricity comes from renewables (source: Schirber, "Power of the future: a timeline to energy independence" in LiveScience)

US is considered best investment place worldwide until 2025. China is 2nd-ranking economic power worldwide; by 2040, it will surpasses US in GDP. India surpasses China in population. City dwellers people will live more than 25 miles from downtown worldwide. More than 10m Americans will be over 85. Half the world will suffer lack of enough drinking water.

(source: Attali, "A brief history of the future: a brave and controversial look at the twenty-first century")

2027 Community participant predictions

Somerville takes Inman Square from Cambridge. This is only be fair, since Cambridge has several busy business districts close to the T, and Somerville doesn't.

(source: Anonymous)

Other predictions

None found.

2029 Community participant predictions

Due to increasing population density, increasing number of cars, and crumbling nature of the MBTA, a new highway (Route 93X) will cut across Somerville. This new highway will connect 93 in the north with I-90 in Boston.
(source: LuQ)

Other predictions

Computers are now as intelligent as the average human.
(source: Kurzweil, "The singularity is near")

Introduction to the 2030s

The beginning of the decade sees Somerville completely gentrified, and every Victorian home renovated. Long-time residents now speak of the city as completely unaffordable.

In 2036, disaster strikes the city in the form of a horrific earthquake. The expansionistic culture of the 2020s proves to be the seeds of fascism, as many had feared; in the wake of the quake, a police state springs up. In the midst of all of this turmoil, Inman Square (which had been taken over by Somerville ten years earlier) revolts. After ten days of bloody fighting, Inman secedes from the city, and rejoins Cambridge.

In the midst of this turmoil, the ghost of Whitey Bulger appears. He leads an uprising of townies against those who have moved in since the 1990s. These new residents are forcibly evicted; their coffee shops, art festivals, and bicycle lanes are removed; and a wall is built between Cambridge and Somerville.

Throughout it all, Somerville maintains its interest in the environment. City buildings are now all powered by artist-made windmills across town. Flat-top buildings have gardens on them. Perhaps because computers are now as intelligent as they are, Somerville residents are recycling them by using them as body modifications. The Green Line extension is quite popular, with thousands of people boarding at each new station every day. The Union Square branch is extended down Somerville Ave. all the way to Porter Square.

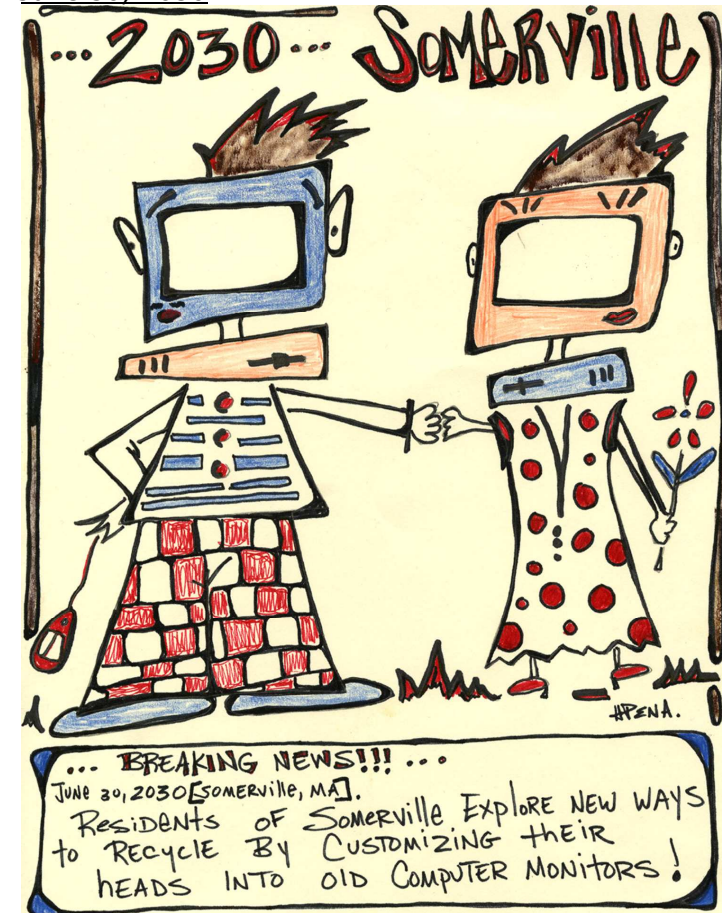
2030

Community participant predictions

Nationally, the government makes further efforts at becoming environmentally friendly, making all federal buildings carbon-neutral. This is important, because US energy consumption has doubled in the past 30 years. Perhaps because of this consumption, the US's debt has become insurmountable.

Worldwide, there is an explosion of learning and written output. Available knowledge now doubles every 72 days. All print media (paper newspapers, paper books) have ceased, and have been replaced by computer files.

June 30, 2030



(image source: Heather Pena)

Other predictions

The new Green Line extension through Somerville has the following daily boardings, per station:

- Lechmere 11,100
- Brickbottom 2,840
- Gilman Square 4,520
- Lowell Street 1,260
- Ball Square 1,890
- College Avenue 2,100
- Mystic Valley Parkway/Route 16 2,000
- Union Square 2,310

(source: MBTA, "Green Line Extension Project fact sheet, Winter 2009")

There is a 50 percent increase in world energy demand, compare to 2005 levels, according to U.S. Department of Energy. All new federal buildings are carbon-neutral, as stated in the 2007 Energy Act. 70 percent of Hawaii's energy comes from renewables, thanks in part to a ban on new coal plants. One-fifth of U.S. power comes from wind, the DOE predicts. One-fourth of U.S. workers wear a green collar, according to the American Solar Energy Society. There are 20 million new jobs created by renewable industry.

(source: Schirber, "Power of the future: a timeline to energy independence" in LiveScience)

India surpasses China in population

(source: "Global catastrophes and trends: the next 50 years")

Available knowledge now doubles every 72 days. The US's debt has become insurmountable. Most print media has been replaced by electronic media. All art uses media.

(source: Attali, "A brief history of the future: a brave and controversial look at the twenty-first century")

2032

Community participant predictions

A windmill tops each of Somerville's seven hills; each windmill is painted by different local artists. Civic buildings now fully powered by wind.

(source: Rachel Strutt)

Other predictions

None found.

2033

Community participant predictions

The Green Line extension to Union Square now goes on to Porter Square.

(source: Lawrence Paoletta)

Other predictions

None found.

2035 Community participant predictions

All flat top apartment buildings in Somerville have community gardens.
(source: Amara Good)

Other predictions

Doubling of worldwide urban populations from 2006 standards means more recycling. 40% of aluminum content comes from recycled sources.
(source: Attali, "A brief history of the future: a brave and controversial look at the twenty-first century")

2036 Community participant predictions

An earthquake devastates Somerville, destroying the Armory, among other buildings. As a result of the disaster, a police state comes into being.
(source: Emily Arkin)

Other predictions

None found.

2037 Community participant predictions

The Great Inman Square Revolt. Inman Square, which was taken over by Somerville in 2027, reclaims its Cambridge status. After 10 days of bloody battle, a peace accord is signed at the former site of Christina's Ice Cream. The shop reopens as "Freedom Cream" and a new flavor "Chunky chunks of

Somervillians" is introduced.
(source: Heather Berlowitz)

Other predictions

None found.

Introduction to the 2040s

After abolishing class and religion, and evicting all non-townie residents, the fascistic state that rose from the ashes of the Great Somerville Quake of 2036 begins to mellow. Although people now have chips in their hands, by the end of the decade, all other traces of the police state are gone. Non-townies are welcomed back, and the wall separating Cambridge and Somerville is removed.

While peace may have been established at home, a nuclear war begins abroad in 2041. The fallout from the bombs, coupled with decades of ecological neglect, causes people to seek shelter underground. However, nuclear winter passes remarkably quickly, and mankind soon returns to the surface-only to experience a Class 4 hurricane in 2045. This hurricane, forever remembered by its name Igor, causes significant loss of life and property.

As there are no more cars in Somerville, all highways are torn down. People get around on foot, on public transit and bikes, as well as on city-provided scooters. By the end of the decade, all streets are torn up and planted with crops. A monorail opens. Pollution and waste are done away with.

But not all is changed for the better in Somerville. The city's aging 2- and 3-family homes, completely renovated by the beginning of the 2030s, begin to crumble--due to the combined effect of owner neglect, the Quake of 2036, the Nuclear War of 2041, and Hurricane Igor. Dozens are killed and injured.

Besides nuclear war, the globe sees a number of major changes. Paper money is now obsolete, as are cars. Computers have surpassed us in intelligence, and have begun designing other machines and computers. This leads to an explosive growth in technology. Robots do most of the manual labor worldwide.

The planet's human population has stayed relatively stable since the 2010s; there are now 7.7 billion of us, 350 million of whom live in the US. Unfortunately, the ocean's population hasn't fared so well; all forms of seafood cease to exist in 2048, the victims of overfishing, and nuclear war.

2040

Community participant predictions

Humans have built-in chips that will have personal and financial information in them. Paper money is obsolete. There are no cars, except as collector's items; people get around on city-provided scooters. Pollution and waste are non-existent. All highways are torn down.

Class and religion are abolished by Somerville government, and then world-wide. Professions are assigned by talent; people are paid according to quality and effort they put in.

The most desirable condos are in Assembly Square. Auditi Guha lives in a studio in Union Square with her dogs to write, paint, make music all day.
(source: Auditi Guha)

Other predictions

The population of Earth is 7.7 billion people.
(source: Wikipedia, quoting the UN)

The population of the US is 350 million. By 2040, more than 15 countries will have atomic bombs.
(source: Attali, "A brief history of the future: a brave and controversial look at the twenty-first century")

2041

Community participant predictions

Due to nuclear fallout and other numerous ecological and economic problems, humans are now all living either in space or underground.
(source: Ben Husk)

Other predictions

None found.

2045 Community participant predictions

Due to neglect and a variety of other reasons, most of Somerville's 2- and 3-family homes are crumbling. A series of collapses this year kills dozens, and hurts dozens more.

(source: Tim Devin)

Class 4 Hurricane Igor strikes, resulting in significant loss of life and property.

(source: Steven Popkes)

Other predictions

Runaway cycle of self-improvement by intelligent machines results in an explosive technological development.

(source: Kurzweil, "Progress at the speed of light")

2046 Community participant predictions

None received.

Other predictions

Most manual labor is now done by robots.

(source: "Kung fu cyborgs")

2048 Community participant predictions

Solar collectors and gardens on roofs. Roads dug up, and planted with wheat and other crops. A giant wishing tree grows in Davis Square. Parking lots are now fields, with free homes for the former homeless. MBTA runs on clean energy, and there are monorails as well. People relax, wear comfortable clothing, drink coffee and tend gardens.

(source: Pam Summa)

Other predictions

The world has run out of harvestable seafood.

(source: "Reforming fisheries: challenges for the millennium")

Introduction to the 2050s

Somerville and Cambridge merge; the new combined city is called "Somerville." Perhaps because of the difficulties of such a merger, there is a major recession in 2052. To cut costs, city hall is sold as condos, libraries are shut, and the Arts Council loses its funding.

To make matters worse, Godzilla attacks Davis Square, destroying dozens of buildings. Due to rising water levels, the city experiences major drainage problems; water quality drops as a result, and many low-lying apartments and businesses are abandoned. Soon after, another hurricane strikes. Many low-lying parcels are flooded, and there is extensive damage to property near the Mystic. To better cope with these catastrophes, political boundaries are redrawn again; the new Somerville now merges with Charlestown and a portion of Medford. This new city is called "Peninsular City."

Union Square is the new high-end neighborhood, and long-time residents are forced to relocate due to rising rents. The city finally addresses the fact that its aging 2- and 3-family homes are crumbling; it passes a law requiring them to be demolished and replaced with mid-rise buildings.

Despite the recession, the Boston area is now a cultural and economic capital. Zoning laws have changed in the urban area; 65% of homes are now multi-family. The work week is reduced to 30 hours, leaving people more free time. Harkening back to the days of the 2010s, residents spend this time in

gardening; Somerville residents grow 20% of their own food. The Mafia and the Freemasons are now hugely influential; they are both involved in city-wide organized crime, and in worldwide philanthropy.

Cars are back in use; but their impact on the environment is offset by popular use of biodiesel. Highways are rebuilt, and designed to accommodate buses, bikes, and scooters. The MBTA is now ultra-efficient, and also offers a limo service; service is free in downtown Boston.

India has become a major global power, while the US's influence has waned. The 2040s trend away from state-centered power has continued to the point that governments can no longer enforce all rights or laws; this role is left to companies and non-governmental organizations. The world population, which remained relatively stable from the 2010s to the 2040s, suddenly explodes. There are now over 9 billion people, 2 billion of which are Muslim. 100 million people now have Alzheimer's.

Greenhouse gases are cut worldwide. Half of the world's energy comes from renewable sources. Perhaps because robots are now more intelligent than the average human, people have started to find their robots romantically attractive; robot-human sex and marriage are now common.

2050

Community participant predictions

Somerville and Cambridge have merged.

(source: Jay O'Grady)

Somerville grows 20% of the food it consumes.

(source: Seth Itzkan)

The city experiences drainage problems in 2050, resulting in significant loss of water quality. Low lying apartments and businesses along the Mystic are abandoned or rebuilt. Assembly Square Mall abandoned.

(source: Steven Popkes)

Union Square is the hot new place to live; artists and students are forced to move because of rising rent. Somerville Hospital has become a world-famous addiction rehab center for the rich and famous.

There is a large tax rebate for those who use biodiesel fuel. The MBTA is ultra-efficient, and offers a limo service.

The influence of the Mafia and the Freemasons is extraordinary; they are not prosecuted for their crime, but are applauded for their charity work.

(source: Ayanna B.)

Sometime between 2050-2060, a major hurricane strikes town. Many low-lying parcels are flooded, and there is extensive damage to property near the Mystic. To better cope with these catastrophes, political boundaries are redrawn again; the new Somerville now merges with Charlestown and a portion of Medford. This new city is called "Peninsular City."

(source: Alex Pirie)

Other predictions

Global greenhouse gas emissions cut in half.

(source: Kuhn, "G8 pledges to halve emissions by 2050," NPR)

Boston metro region is a leading cultural and economic capital, known for environmental leadership.

Zoning laws changed. 65% of all housing is multifamily, almost no new single-family construction; people prefer denser housing. Buildings have bicycle parking. Most live and work near transit hubs. Many employers offer free or reduced public transit passes to employees.

Work week reduced to 30 hours. Community engagement is up. People are more active and healthier. Poverty rate reduced by almost 90%. World is measured by GPI (genuine progress indicator) instead of GDP. This measures quality of life and sustainability.

Highways are redesigned to accommodate public buses, bicycles and scooters. Most of downtown is closed to private cars. Public transit is free downtown.

Energy use is ½ that of 2000, due to more efficient machinery, etc. CO2 emissions reduced by more than 70% from 2000. Water use is reduced by 40%.

(source: Tellus Institute, "Vision for sustainable Greater Boston 2050")

50 percent of the world's energy comes from renewables.

(source: Schirber, "A timeline to energy independence" in LiveScience)

European Union is home to 449m people. Worldwide Muslim population is now 2 billion. India is a major global power, while US's power is greatly diminished.

(source: "Global catastrophes and trends: the next 50 years")

The world has become a market-based democracy, with no central economic power. Nations start to deconstruct. This means states won't be able to enforce rights. NGOs and companies will try to enforce rules--both as law-giving bodies, and with private security forces.

(source: Attali, "A brief history of the future: a brave and controversial look at the twenty-first century")

Humans have begun having sex with, and marrying robots

(source: Choi, "Forecast: sex and marriage with robots by 2050," Fox News)

World population is 9.3 billion. Developing countries see population growth, as industrialized countries remain stable.

(source: Wikipedia, quoting the United Nations Population Foundation)

Number of people worldwide with Alzheimer's disease tops 100m.

(source: Sanderson, "Alzheimer's cases around the world to quadruple by 2050," London Times)

2052 Community participant predictions

Recessions. City hall is now condos. Somerville Arts Council loses its funding. Libraries closed.
(source: Jenn Harrington)

Other predictions

None found.

2053 Community participant predictions

Godzilla attacks Davis Square, destroying dozens of buildings.
(source: Anonymous)

Other predictions

None found.

2056 Community participant predictions

In response to the collapsing 2- and 3-family homes, the city government passes laws stating that the remaining houses must be knocked down.
(source: Tim Devin)

Other predictions

None found.

2058 Community participant predictions

In the 2040s, 2- and 3-family homes began collapsing. The city government ordered the remaining ones replaced with tall green, energy-efficient mid-rises surrounded by parks. One building per 4 lots, with twice as much residential space. The first of these new buildings goes up this year.
(source: Tim Devin)

Other predictions

None found.

Introduction to the 2060s

The recession that began in the 2050s continues to hit the city hard. The DPW goes bankrupt, and Davis Square is taken over by the goats and cows that the city keeps for mowing and trash collection. Alien spacecraft land in Magoun Square; their pilots are hostile at first, but soon become proud residents. Another new resident is a recently brought-to-life Shakespeare, one of the first beneficiaries of the new reanimation technology. He tries to make a name for himself in his new surroundings by writing poorly-crafted graphic novels.

The Urban Ring Line opens again, as does a new Purple Line to Waltham, both of which cut through Peninsular City (the name of the city created when Somerville, Cambridge, Charlestown and part of Medford combined in the 2050s). Perhaps because of all of the goats, cows, and trash, people look for ways to avoid walking on the ground. Hover cars, which have finally become affordable, become popular. Zip wire technology also makes great strides.

The US slips further from its former position of economic and political domination. India and China have become economic powerhouses, and account for half of the world's GDP.

2060 Community participant predictions

The MBTA runs the Purple and Yellow Lines through Somerville.

(source: Bill Rankin)

Hover cars are affordable. New zip wire technology is perfected, and wires are strung between new mid-rise buildings. People rarely walk on the ground as a result.

(source: Tim Devin)

Other predictions

This is the earliest that the world can end.

(source: Snobelen, "Isaac Newton: the apocalypse and 2060 AD")

India and China account for half of world's GDP.

(source: Attali, "A brief history of the future: a brave and controversial look at the twenty-first century")

2064 Community participant predictions

Aliens from a planet not yet known to us land in Magoun Square. Although initially hostile, after coffee and pao de queijo (Brazilian cheese puffs) at Modelo bakery, they become devoted to Somervillians and pledge allegiance.

(source: Rachel Strutt)

"Science" has made reanimation of the dead possibly. A newly brought-to-life Shakespeare moves to Somerville and writes poorly crafted graphic novels.

(source: Paul Johns)

Other predictions

None found.

Introduction to the 2070s

The 2070s begin an era of peace and stability that are very welcome after the upheavals of the last 70 years. Artificially intelligent machines, long smarter than the average human, finally begin to take an interest in the arts; the recently-reopened Peninsular City Arts Council accepts its first artificially-intelligent board member. (Peninsular City is the name of the city created when Somerville, Cambridge, Charlestown and part of Medford combined in the 2050s.) The dead also become involved in culture. The Armory hosts an art show involving the projection of memories of recently deceased people.

2070 Community participant predictions

Water levels are 1 meter higher than they were in 2010.
(source: Steven Popkes)

Other predictions

None found.

2072 Community participant predictions

The Somerville Arts Council accepts its first artificially intelligent board member, Ip/So.
(source: Emily Arkin)

Other predictions

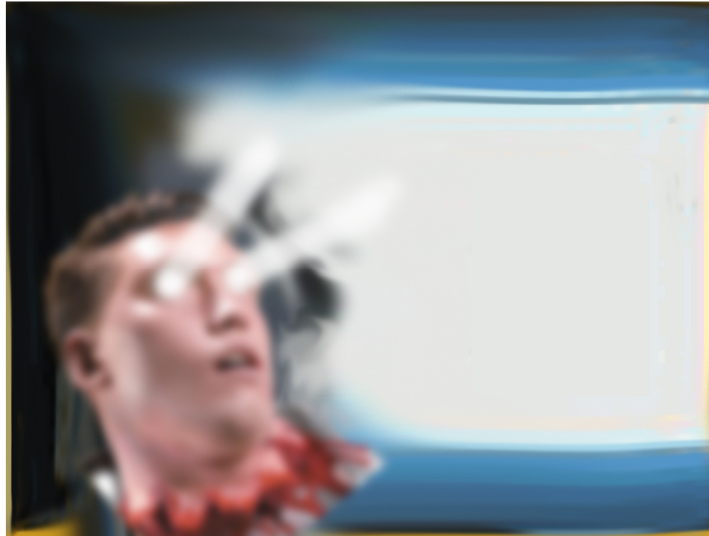
None found.

2074 Community participant predictions

April 27, 2074

The Somerville Holarmory has replaced the ruined Armory by now. It was reconstructed from Google documentation of the original building along with recovered memories of recently deceased seniors. Its current show, Palimpsest of Memory, uses new forensics technology to scrub the surface of a human brain to recover lost memories, the exhibit uses preserved severed heads (of those who died of natural causes) to project images from the former owner of the head's life onto a screen.

(source: Emily Arkin)



(image source: Emily Arkin)

No date given:

Emily Arkin is mayor.

(source: Emily Arkin)

Other predictions

None found.

Introduction to the 2080s

The brief era of peace and stability that began in the 2070s has come to an end. Major floods force residents of the surrounding region to relocate to Peninsular City (the name of the city created when Somerville, Cambridge, Charlestown and part of Medford combined in the 2050s). As a result, the city becomes densely populated.

In spite of these upheavals, Peninsular City continues to grow its own crops. In the last 30 years, city farmers have increased their yield to the point that they are now food self-sufficient.

This time period also sees the beginning of the Green Line extension project again.

2080 Community participant predictions

No more oil-diven cars. People tend community gardens, raise goats and chickens. Somerville is more densely populated, because other area cities and towns have flooded. Instead of watching movies or listening to recordings of music, people create their own plays or play instruments of their own devising.
(source: Jennifer Mazer)

Other predictions

None found.

2082 Community participant predictions

Green Line extension begins.
(source: Karen Krolak)

Other predictions

None found.

Introduction to the 2090s

Having dealt with the rapid influx of new residents in the 2080s, Peninsular City (the name of the city created when Somerville, Cambridge, Charlestown and part of Medford combined in the 2050s) once again experiences a period of peace. In fact, during the 2090s, absolutely nothing occurs.

Introduction to the new century

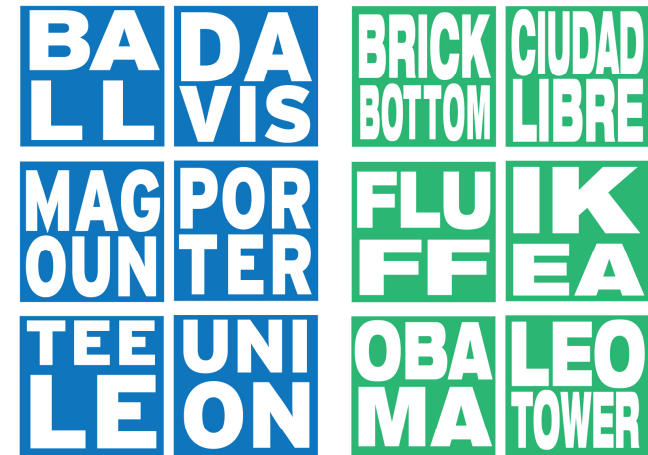
Two-thirds of all people worldwide now live in cities. Temperatures have risen roughly six degrees in the past 100 years; among other things, this has led to a change in the pH of the oceans, and the extinction or near extinction of 12% of the world's birds.

The city's rising floodwaters of the 2070s are channeled into planned waterways. Gondoliering becomes a Peninsular City tradition ("Peninsular City" being the name of the city created when Somerville, Cambridge, Charlestown and part of Medford combined in the 2050s). This new tradition causes a second annual holiday (Gondo Fest) to join the Fluff Fest in citizens' hearts, minds, and calendars.

And those who live in what was once Somerville says hello to a new century, full of hope.

2100

Community participant predictions



somerville squares 2009

somerville squares 2100

(image source: Bill Ritchotte)

Somerville has waterways like Venice. Gondoliering is established as a Somerville tradition. Just like the city has a Fluff Fest, it now also has a Gondo Fest.

(source: Stacy Hill and Erin Leiman)

Other predictions

12% (about 1250) of the bird species existing at the beginning of the 21st century are extinct or threatened with extinction.

(source: Pimm et al., "Human impacts on the rates of recent, present, and future bird extinctions")

Emperor Penguins are pushed to the brink of extinction due to global climate change.

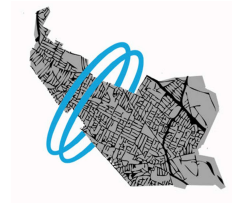
(source: Dunham, "Melting sea ice may doom Emperor Penguins, study finds," Washington Post)

The ocean's pH has declined 0.4 units

(source: "Global catastrophes and trends: the next 50 years")

2/3 of humans live in cities. 6.4 degrees by 2100, compared to 2006 temperatures.

(source: Attali, "A brief history of the future: a brave and controversial look at the twenty-first century")



SECTION 3: PREDICTIONS ARCHIVE

Predictions by Adam Olenn

2025: I predict that the parking lot of Porter Square shopping center will have a green roof installed above it which becomes a community garden. People will grow their own fruits and veggies and have a barter-driven farmers' market on Saturdays. Somerville will have annexed the shopping center to help the city of Cambridge stay afloat.

Also, Somerville will install more of the rotating red sculptures currently on display at the Porter Square T stop. They will be cleverly-disguised wind turbines. 2014

Every door to every business in Somerville will be fitted with a microgenerator, so every time people enter and exit shops, restaurants, and offices, they will be helping to power the electrical grid. 2015.

All exercise equipment in gyms will render the health club energy-neutral. 2013.

Predictions by Alain Jehlen

In 2050, I won't be here--I don't expect to live to 105. But I hope my children will have retired here, partly to be near my granddaughters, who will be in their 40's (which is very hard to imagine today).

I love this city because it has so many different kinds of people who, despite strains, are pretty good at sharing it.

And the biggest question mark for 2050 is whether that will still be true. The Green Line is coming to the

parts of Somerville where rents are lowest. Will the whole city be gentrified? Davis Square is the example everyone thinks of: it's a great place, but many people can't afford it. But in one of many conversations I've had about this dilemma, a friend suggested that the new Green Line stops may not all become little Davis Squares. There are other neighborhoods near T stops in the Boston area where prices are not out of sight. I hope someone will do some research into what happened in some of these other neighborhoods when the T stops opened. It might be very interesting.

I don't feel very good at predicting technological change, but it does seem that gas prices will go up again and stay up as Asia continues to develop. If that happens, we will be forced to build more public transportation, and more cities will gain good connections--more like cities in Europe. If there are many neighborhoods in the Boston area that have good public transportation, maybe the Green Line's impact on housing costs in Somerville won't be as big as many people fear. I hope so!

Predictions by Alana Kumbier

June 2013 - Local ice-cream trucks are joined by a fruit-truck. The fruit-truck has a sound system, too. On Saturday nights, it parks in open lots or empty parking areas & provides music for free neighborhood dance parties.

March 2015 - Fleet of mobile libraries begins circulating through Somerville. Vans full of books & other print material; home-repair tools; bike-repair tools; gardening implements & supplies; media-making technologies; art supplies; and musical instruments rotate through Somerville's squares on a weekly basis. Community members can borrow from these communal collections for short-term projects.

January 2016 - Community printshop opens in Union Square, with silkscreen, letterpress, and bookbinding workshops open to community members.

Predictions by Alex Pirie

OK, a wish instead of a prediction:

That Somerville, Charlestown, that odd corner of Medford, and Cambridge be merged into Peninsular City (everything east of route 16, more or less, and in between the Mystic and the Charles). This would create a mixed, interesting and, most importantly, financially sustainable city. Alternate names: Chamedville, Chamystic, Mysterles? nah...

And while I'm in wish mode - that this new entity be governed by folks who had their eye always on the future of the city rather than on the next job and/or the good will of their campaign contributors!

So timeline: Based on a “key informant” interview I did with an MIT project looking at coastal preparedness for sea level rise and a discussion I had with the interviewer, I’d say somewhere in the 2050-2060 range an incremental but significant rise in sea level combined with a Katrina sized event coming straight into the mouth of the Mystic will precipitate some rapid rethinking of political and geographical boundaries.

Much of what was filled in will be, if not permanently underwater, at least substantially impacted by this megastorm and the accompanying storm surge. MIT will be deploying duck tour like vehicles to transport students, Assembly Square will be awash and a lot of present and planned river side development will collapse or be sodamaged as to unusable.

Worse, and the thing that will precipitate the political reconfiguration, the immediate damage as water is forced back up and into existing (and ancient) sewer and storm drainage lines will create infrastructure collapses (a geyser in Davis Sq.?) that will far exceed any one community’s ability to rebuild. At the same time, the loss of housing, retail, and commercial properties along the river, not to mention land area itself, will require remapping and the MAPC will be empowered to make recommendations (perhaps with some statutory authority) for re-thinking how municipalities are considered.

In an even worse case scenario, the Charles basin will be similarly impacted. The Museum of Science will be

undermined and the present central tower will collapse and Back Bay will become, well, Back Bay once again.

Rappaportville will go from “If You Lived Here, You’d Be Home By Now” to “Dock Space Available.”

As a sidebar, the sudden rush of cold sea water flooding into the Harvard steam tunnels will cause boilers to crack and the rush of steam uphill will, through some freak of physics, launch the statue of John Harvard into orbit.

Bottom line for Bostonians (and Somervillians): check a topographic map before buying a home, lock in your flood insurance now, and don’t use the T after about 2030!

Predictions by Amara Good

In 2035, all flat top apartment buildings in Somerville will have community gardens.

Predictions by Andrew Lynch

As for construction timing, well, it depends. Are we going to base this on how the T does things currently or “best case scenario”? Right now the T is looking at opening the Green Line to Medford in 2014. The way the T runs things I’d say its a better bet for sometime between 2015-2017. It’s a shame really when you

think about how fast they can build these things in Europe or China.



(image source: Andrew Lynch / futurembta.com)

The idea behind my map was that this was something that could be finished and opened by 2050 if all parties decided that this was the plan and put their full support behind it. If you think about when the original subway was planned and opened you get a

similar time frame, planned in 1894, first opened in 1897, last major addition to the original system was in the 1920s.

But for a simple answer, all lines through Somerville (Green Line to W. Medford, Urban Ring) could be opened by 2020-2025. But that is "best case scenario."

Predictions by Auditi Guha

In 2040 we will be digital beings with built-in chips. Apple chips will of course be the most coveted and design-savvy ones - Davis Square will be full of Apple people with the Apple logo embedded under their wrists like a cool tattoo.

A wave of my hand and whatever I need will materialize with a light-screen that is manipulated by touch: bank account, calendar, voicemail, Australian time. So when I need an icecream at J.P. Licks, I'd just walk out with what I want and the store would deduct the money from my bank account instantly. Paper money will be obsolete. Just walking through the Somerville Theatre lobby arch will subtract money for a ticket. Theft will be very very difficult and corruption and black marketing will die. If I tried to walk out of a store with a nailpolish I stole, for instance, the store would take the money out as I passed through the door.

Predictions by Ayanna B.

There will be no cars (except as collector's items and for special shows), only segway-like solar charged green machines that come with a one-touch weathershield for the winter. These will be provided by cities and states with convenient pickup/dropoff locations - only millionaires will own them because of the intensely high taxation on owning personal vehicles. Pollution and waste will be almost non-existent; we will recycle and reuse everything with the use of innovative green technology; the earth will be green and the air healthy. Somerville will be beautiful with bike path-like one-way roads. The most coveted condos will be along the Mystic River in Assembly Square. The I-93 and all other highways would have been torn down by then. I would live in an artist studio in Union Square with many dogs and paint and write and make music all day.

Professions will be assigned by ability and talent. Those who have none will have to work in government doing what they are assigned. Salaries will be paid according to quality and effort, and it will be mandatory for every earner to support a cause or a charity in the course of their lives. The more you do and contribute, the less tax you pay. Education and healthcare will be free.

Our local government will lead the way by abolishing class and religion by promoting humanity and world peace.

By 2050, Union Square will have become the hot new place to live in the Metro Boston Area. The rehabilitation/renovations of crack houses and abandoned churches and retail spaces will bring in the wealthy. Artists and students will be forced out into Davis and Ball Squares. Meanwhile former small business owners will work together and create high end versions of their bakeries, produce markets, meat shops, home goods, and jewelry and clothing stores. The Ghetto Star Market will be remodeled to look like a futuristic European market, and require some sort of membership to get decent prices. An Ikea will move in to the space Target once held. The Target will move underground at Porter Square. The Somerville Hospital will become the home of a state-of-the-art addiction rehabilitation program. Celebrities from all over the world will seek help at its nearby facilities at Highland and Benton. Bullfrog Power will expand beyond Canada and become the electricity company of choice for the North East and West Coast. It will hold the monopoly in Union Square. A significant tax rebate will be given to people who retrofit their cars to accept Jatropa biodiesel. This will quickly become the only fuel available in Somerville, although most people won't use personal cars anymore. The new, highly efficient, MBTA bus and (now) limousine service will run on biodiesel purchased in Somerville. The park at Summer and Bow streets will be expanded to become a great recreation center with a public pool, community gardens and playground. On the downside of these changes, the Mafia and Freemasons will have

an unspoken influence (sometimes collaborative, sometimes competitive) on the neighborhood. They will never be prosecuted properly for drug and escort service-related activity. However they will be commended for their local and international charitable contributions.

Predictions by Bambi Good

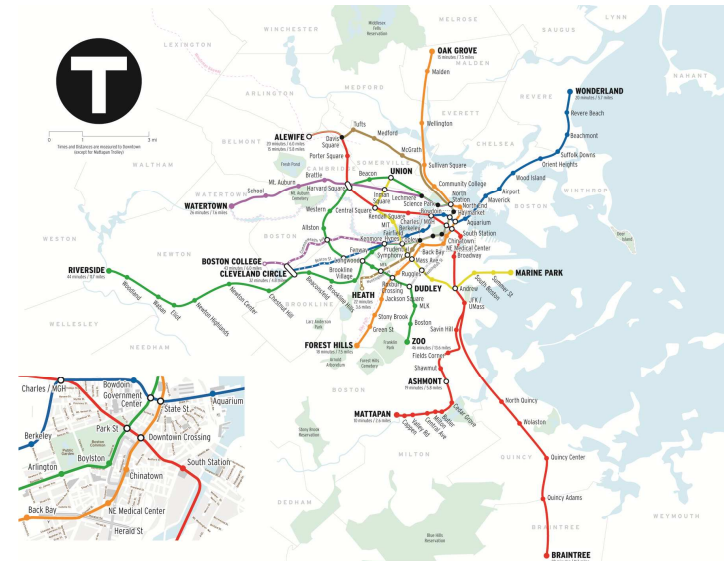
Somerville will become the vegan center of the Greater Boston area by 2020.

Predictions by Ben Husk

By 2041: I think we'll be living in space and/or underground because the world will be ravaged by nuclear fallout and other numerous ecological and economic problems.

Predictions by Bill Rankin

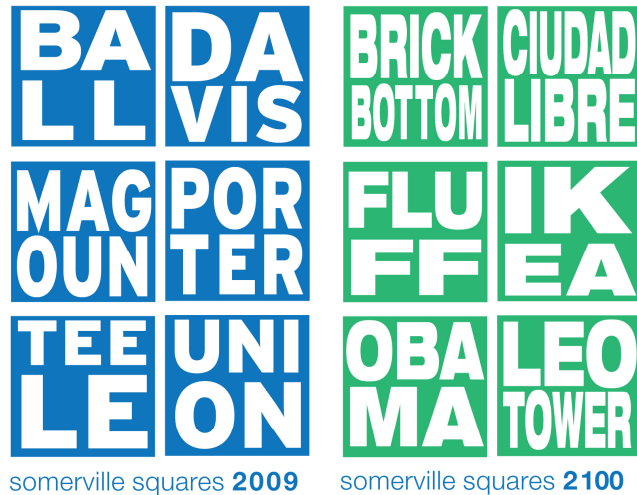
As for the timeline, I have to admit that I think the chances of those lines actually being added are pretty remote. The extension of the Green line to Medford has been talked about for a long time, and may in fact happen, perhaps 2020 is a reasonable date for that one? This project may or may not go through Union Square.. if not, perhaps a separate extension like the one I drew, heading to Harvard Square, could be a project for the 2020s or 2030s. The other lines



(image source: Bill Rankin / radicalcartography.net)

(purple and yellow, on my map) would require much greater population density before they're viable, and it's unclear if Cambridge/Somerville will ever have the density of Manhattan or Brooklyn. Let's say those are projects for the 2060s or beyond?

Predictions by Bill Ritchotte



(image source: Bill Ritchotte)

Predictions by Brad

2012: Somerville will have an artisan craft and food mart where people can come and sell stuff they make at home.

Predictions by Columbine Phoenix

Wage-earner though I am, I'll be able to live the rest of my life in Somerville, because we'll build lovely windmills on our hills and on top of our city buildings, and we'll sell so much power back to NStar that we can lower the property taxes and my rent will stop going up!

This means that I can start taking weekends off again. Maybe I'll host a cooking and kitchen safety show (Short Order Chefs) on SCTV featuring elementary-school students who have submitted particularly stellar recipes. We'll even start from the very beginning, with gardening specials at all the expanded community gardens and a field trip to the new compost yard.

Student: Goats? Seriously, you guys have goats here?

Biosalvage employee: Not many yet, but yeah.

Goats: BAAAAA

Student: What for?

Biosalvage employee: Milk!

(Cut to video of students learning to milk goats, voiceover facts & trivia about dairy goats)

Me: All right, we're going to have a taste test - Somerville goat cheese, Northampton goat cheese, and New York goat cheese.

(Video - Students do taste test, voiceover explains that they unanimously decide all 3 are better with jam, end with shot of student letting goat lick out jam jar)

Join us next week for... (Screen stamped TOP SECRET) (whisper) Marshmallow Fluff recipes even your parents will like! (Screen shows wholesome-looking montage of vegetables with "nothing to see here, folks" across the bottom)

Let's get the windmills up in 2013, and lay the groundwork for citywide reciprocal transmission so my landlord can put a little one and/or some solar panels on the roof too, so he can sell directly back to NSTAR when the city starts doing so in 2014. By then I'll have paid off my debts and be ready to start my cooking show!

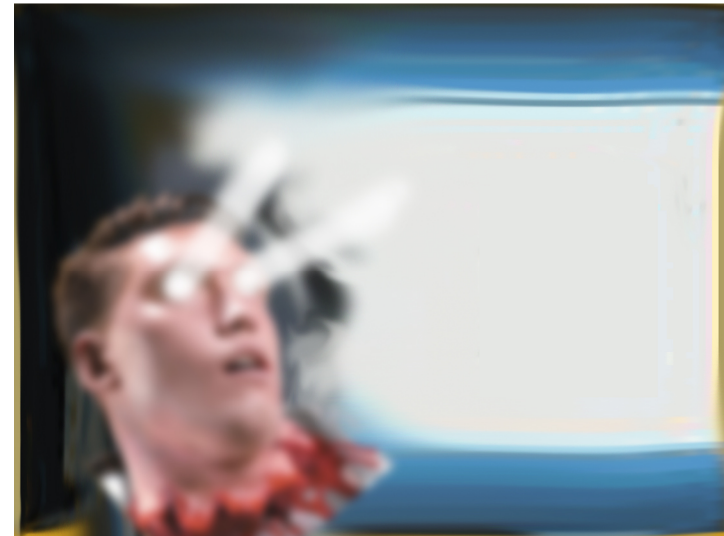
Predictions by Emily Arkin

PRESS RELEASE

April 6, 2074

Somerville MA

Opening Friday, April 27th, The Somerville Arts Council celebrates the kickoff of a new exhibit at the Arts at the Holarmory*, "The Palimpsest of Memory." Using new forensics technology to scrub the surface of a human brain to recover lost memories, the



(image source: Emily Arkin)

exhibit uses preserved severed heads (of those who died of natural causes) to project images from the former owner of the head's life onto a screen**.

The exhibit may prove controversial with privacy activists and the squeamish, but the Arts Council is no stranger to controversy since inducting its first Artificially Intelligent member, Ip/So, onto its board in 2072. Ip/So's reign has been characterized by a bold exploration into what it means to be human, deconstructing age-old ideas about individuality, sentience, bodily fluids--and some claim--old fashioned good taste.

Predictions by Heather Pena

What might be the next frontier in the arts in Somerville? The Arts Council hints at a future exhibit that will harness new technology to project unrealized futures directly from human minds onto a top-secret "canvas." Quoth the Mayor of Somerville, centenarian Emily Arkin: "Not since 'Somerville Speaks Out' was outlawed*** have we had this kind of unfettered look inside the Somerville psyche."

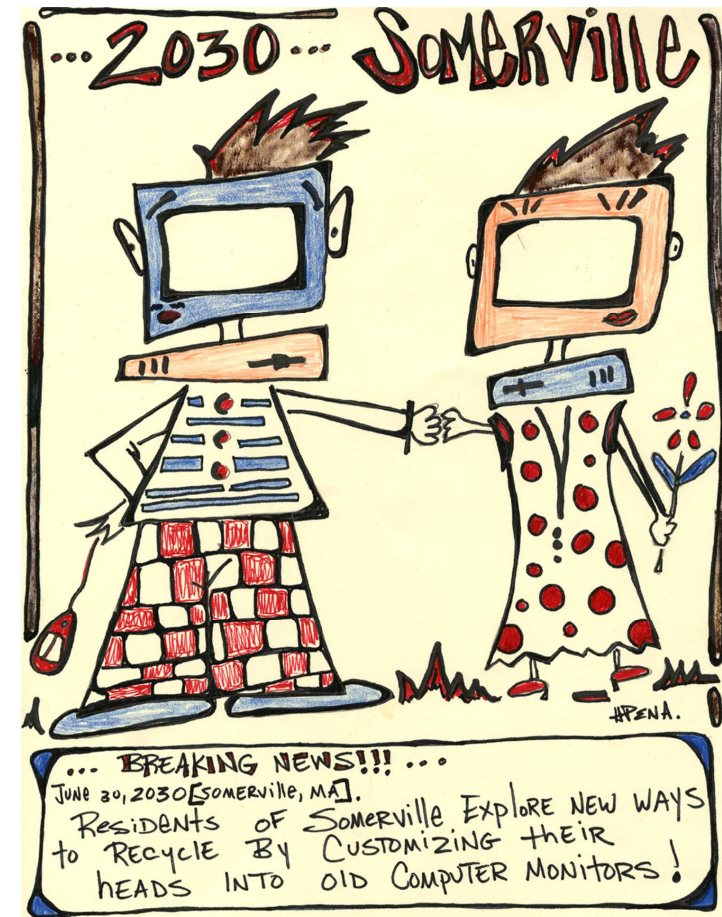
* After the original Armory was destroyed by an earthquake in 2036, an image was reconstructed from Google documentation of the original building along with recovered memories of recently deceased seniors, and projected onto a plain white building-- which makes the Holarmory an ideal setting for an exhibit using recovered memory and projection.

** The process of memory scrubbing is much like scratching a record or sampling the contents of a hard drive at random access points. The resulting movies are fairly indistinguishable from avant-garde 16mm film collages of the 20th century but the ghastly heads and the voyeuristic glimpse into other's memories adds an exciting spin.

***In the post-quake police state.

Predictions by Hannah Beynon Strutt

I would like to add that my prediction for 2060 is that Davis Square is taken over by goats and cows which the town keeps for mowing because the Public Works Dept has gone bankrupt.



(image source: Heather Pena)

Predictions by Heather Berlowitz

2037: The Great Inman Square Revolt.

Inman Square reclaims its Cambridge status from the heathens of Somerville. 10 days of bloody battle and peace accord signed at former site of Christina's Ice Cream. The shop reopens as "Freedom Cream" and a new flavor "Chunky chunks of Somervillians" is introduced.

Predictions by Jay O'Grady

2050: Somerville and Cambridge will merge.

Predictions by Jenn Harrington

hey ben,
dark now, or rather, the sun has set---billions of tiny blazes bobbing in the sky, sometimes i imagine they're fireflies, sometimes i imagine they're fairies, tinkerbells; sometimes they come in, the crack in a window, the bathroom drain, a vent, hovering, teeny little lights blinking, wee propellers buzzing, some're blimps, zeppelins, others're jets, pistons, cargo crafts, copters, yachts- it all started, they say, with some safety now referendum, video taken to flight, into wind, drifting down sidewalks and side streets, got smaller, got sneaky, sly; to placate crowds ranting, raving, they gave the power to 'em---'stead of those model cars of old: model spybots...what a way to gain model citizens...we've always wanted to be the fly on the wall-now we're on the wall, in the

cupboard, the closet, under the bed, a pinky-toe-sized muck truck, snowblower, chrysler windsor convertible, a plow-

yyyyyyyyaaaah, they brought me back to life- after that first year, after the fog had gone, this hazy ache, when i realized what those nutters had done, i was no less than bloody pissed, thought i'd been wick'd to cinder, ash, 'deed that's where my body had gone, but some mortuary creep plopped my brain in a bucket, gave it to the scientists- it is not that i was unique, just timing i suppose, good'r bad, finally won that lottery, random select- hell, don't even know how I died, in order to bring life back, gotta excise death outta mind, they're still trying to figure out how to do it, minus superfantastic-nanoscale cell lobotomy, to the now living-

i was never one for tears; maybe it's this body, an overload of emoticons, but i wailed all through the second year- then they told me i could be blue and the wailing became a moan; then they put this new blue bod in my old brick building, best view in the world, and the moan became mumbled murmur; then they told me what they had in store, i only whimper, slightly, a small sigh, now and then- they're calling it the great un-rebuilding- things got complicated in these years past, more more more the motto---so boom went ball square, broadway; unique left union; teelee's tarnished; quaint got run down on quiet streets; only davis survived- the change wasn't bad necessarily, just wasn't what it was- sidewalks smoothed, trees upheaved, modern molded into

those empty spaces; little things, creaks of doors calmed, a platitude of new-hyper-pantone painted porches, somerville high school's a museum now, classrooms swept of students: the server schools-

we're always on this race towards perfection, thinking change will bring it, but i always thought somerville, my somerville, was the perfect place- if change in a person is at all possible, it is not people that provide for the change---nanas can nag all they wanna, we ain't revising ourselves forever for 'em, no matter how deep our love---but place has power and we all have a sense for it, every breath of every breath of every breath gets taken in by every breath we breathe; the very sound of a city, our womb- but it's not to say nothing came from it all- history erupted right here in this town, f'r good (the nave's nine hundred and ninth exhibit; the rococo-boloco period, the miracle 5 million)...r bad (recessions of '52...city hall cut to condos, sac got sacked, the libraries went to lettuce; the great brain barn burning, burned and burned and burned, the stench of thoughts turned to toast...last straw for the carnivores), there's just too much to catch up on-

but this i know: although i did not stay here, gasped my last (the first time) elsewhere, i became a better person in this city i once knew; it gave me opportunity to try- wandering streets---morning: bulldozers grazing on somerville ave., salvia smiles of pups romping in their park, so many single socks strewn to the sides of things; nights: counting slugs,

racing from that same damn skunk, stoop sitting in the dark, streetlights beaming on tops of tips of leaves, hearing that hum underneath the sound of cabs passing, the hollers hooting, buses belching by---could cure any heartache-

some things can never change, i don't bother telling them this, and some things can never change back, don't bother telling 'em this either---we've always known: we're horrible...just hurts too much to accept we'll always be---no matter how much we're spied on, no matter how "safe," we'll find more sneaky ways to commit to bad intentions---but we still crave to be saved, our only grace---so's our fate to always strive for something different (to be better) all the while looking over the shoulder, yearning for what we left behind (when it seems we were)-

won't be around when they wake you up- put in a request to end my time- i've had some years watching them rebuild some of those things i love---all those coffee, omelet, and cupcake wars reassembled; knit trees; crumble bits under the mcgrath; they even brought back the better half of the abbey...p.a.'s stayed (always the tougher)- and i may have gotten a few white lie requests through too---the fact checkers of the future are weak---but i really do think there should be a del's lemonade and a big blue bug in every town, don't you?

fug. gotta go now. there's a pink mini malibu barbie convertible staring in my eye, trying to find my soul--

i won't let it.

loves,
jenn

postscript: watch out walking behind the aliens, they
poop fluff.

Predictions by Jennifer Mazer

In 2080:

-Hi Alicia, do you want some nettle tea?

Alicia answers yes please. Grandma Elena serves
Mystic harbor snails to go with the tea.

-You wanted to know more about my past. You know
of course it wasn't like now. As you know, Boston and
Cambridge were actual cities. And Somerville had less
people because no one had relocated here from the
drowned cities. Somerville had less space for gardens
because people used oil driven vehicles. Can you
imagine that?

-What a waste of oil...

-Yes...And I remember the first years we nearly
starved. Floods all the time. But we adapted to the
wetter climate and the heat. We had set up an
emergency committee but we had a hard time with

the new diseases. You had malaria when you were
little...

-Thankfully I don't remember...Nicer subject-the
community gardens are awesome!

-Yes! And the chickens and goats! [Elena laughs]. It
was a great challenge changing our ways to be a self
sufficient community.

-I'm glad the neighborhood has some horses. And
blacksmithing [her vocation].

-Oh I liked the do it yourself bike shops and the long
walks.

-Grandma, do you miss anything?

-The cinema. But we started making our own plays.
And the music? We just made our own instruments
and learned from the books.

-What do you like the most?

-After all these years? [smiles] Waking up to
roosters, having my own garden, and being a doctor.
Oh-it's sundown. Contradance tonight! [teasing]-you
like anyone yet?

-Grandma, no! I just like talking with everyone. I've
enjoyed talking with you-you're so busy being a
doctor.

Elena cleans the dishes with filtered rainwater from the tub outside the window.

-Well here come the neighbors. We can all walk together to the Hall.

Predictions by Jessica Straus

2030: Somerville will be totally gentrified. All the Victorian houses will be snapped up and renovated. Somerville will be completely unaffordable...

Predictions by Jim H.

2020-25: Pedal-powered minibuses, with flywheels, with routes but no schedule. People will use these to commute, and get exercise. It would have to be pedal-optional, for the disabled/disinclined.

Predictions by Josh Burchord

I predict that in the 2020s, Somerville will be more diverse and welcoming than even Cambridge is today. This city has a lot of potential!

Predictions by Julia Fairclough

"If you live here, stay here--because it's only going to get better."

-More families will move to town. Although the Green Line will reduce car use by residents without children, the new families will still need cars to get around. The end result: the same amount of cars will be on the road.

-Residents will become increasingly involved in local politics and community life.

Predictions by Karen Krolak

2082: green line project started.

Predictions by Lauren Schumacher

2025: All cars are banned and Somerville becomes a walk/bike only town :)

Predictions by Lawrence Paoletta

2033: I dream that the Green Line to Union Square will also go to Porter Square. A great community requires participation. Get off your ass!

Predictions by Linda Frye Burnham

2011: The U.S. government, in a special deal with the mayor of Somerville, lowers the qualifying age for Medicare to 55 for all Somerville residents, pulling

hundreds of uninsured Baby Boomers back from the brink of death.

Predictions by Linda Haviland Conte

My prediction for Somerville is that by the year 2020 the moldy practices of nepotism, favoritism, and back-door-dealing will have shrunk under the sunny eyes of scrutiny provided by intrepid reporters and ordinary citizens who've made it their mission to shine on the dark corners where they have thrived.

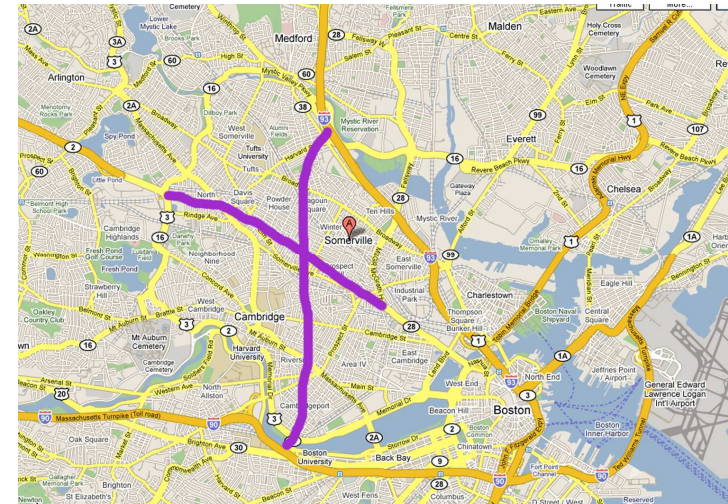
Predictions by Louis Epstein

2011: Car traffic in Union Square will be awful. Bike traffic in Union Square will be awesome.

Predictions by LuQ

2x in 2022, 93x in 2029.

Due to increasing population growth and deteriorating public transportation (due to continued mismanagement and failing government subsidies as MA keeps hitting budget shortfalls, even the proposed gas tax doesn't help much as cars are quickly switching to be ultra-efficient and/or alternative fuel based [including the new bicycle hybrid single-person cars which harness foot energy along with solar charged batteries and night-time microwindturbines



(image source: LuQ)

for electric-assisted propulsion]], traffic congestion in Somerville has grown to the point where government is forced to intervene. As there is no remaining landmass for additional roads, the only solution is to build secondary roads above existing roads. Since much of the congestion in Somerville is getting through the town, the obvious solution was to build in additional highways which can also serve outlying properties.

Thus the new Route 2X extension (which also has the effect of mitigating traffic problems at the Arlington/Cambridge border where Rte 2 splits off) - Rte.2x begins with a ramp preceding the traffic light at the end of the highway portion of Rte.2 and

continues across Somerville and merges with Rte 28 just at the bridge over Union Sq. This new highway will have no less than 2-3 exit/entrance ramps in Somerville for those foolish enough to travel/live in that traffic hell.

Additionally, 93X extension travels due south across Somerville and Cambridge to connect with Memorial Drive, Storrow Drive and end with a merge onto I-90. There will be a new bridge built especially for this purpose (crossing the Charles) as existing bridges cannot handle additional traffic)

Map attached with rough outline of new highways. Additionally, due to the new strategy of multiple-layer roads, all "print" map technology will become holographic to the extent that road layers can be viewed (and computerized maps will feature rotate functions as needed).

Predictions by Maureen Barillaro

My prediction for Somerville 2015 by Maureen Barillaro:

After the permit parking and meter increases of 2010, combined with long delays and cost overruns of the MBTA Greenline project, in addition to the rising cost of gas due to peak oil production, and the massive flood of 2012 in Assembly Sq from rising sea level due to climate change, Somerville finally takes on alternative transportation as a model for cities across

the globe. Citizens no longer able to afford "big 3" cars, gas and fees seek alternate transportation, and small business entrepreneurs and the city join to offer a wide variety of transport services. Beginning in 2011, bike taxis pop up all over the city starting with stands at all MBTA stations. Market Basket adds several stands and offers coupons to customers for the much needed service to alleviate parking and traffic headaches all hours of the day at it's Somerville Ave. location. All shopping centers soon follow suit. Metro-Pedal Power expands its tricycle trucks to a fleet of 20, with delivery services of all kinds of goods to the thousands of carless residents. The city decides to encourage more bike riding by putting bike racks in parking spots and putting a bike lane on every street in the city. Businesses add bike racks and plant much needed trees and stormwater runoff absorbers in the thousands of now unused parking spots. Small specialty shops open up in neighborhoods to provide basic services, just like the way it used to be.

In 2013, finally fed up with the unreliability of the MBTA buses, Somerville unveils it's own citywide transportation system at a fraction of the cost of the Greenline. The city adds a small fleet of hybrid fueled passenger vans and using current bus-stops, continuously circle the city so that residents never have to wait more than 5 minutes for a ride. With fully equipped GPS capabilities, citizens can easily track the vehicles so they are aware of timing and delays. The cost is a mere \$1 so people widely accept this transport and are grateful the city is providing

this service.

Zip Car expands widely to meet the needs of travel outside of the city and people continue to give up their vehicles by the thousands. Residents turn unused paved driveways into raised bed gardens and neighbors trade seeds at spring block parties. Air quality and children's health improves almost immediately. With less cars on the road, families feel safer to take family bike rides, especially to the newly cleaned up Mystic River walkway. Here at the Mystic River families can enjoy boating, birdwatching, picnicing, gardening and riverside sports. The river area is practically spotless with Somerville's aggressive campaign "Don't Mess with Somerville" to reduce waste and litter and increase awareness of the dangers of trash in our waterway. Restaurants, stores and schools are banned from using any styrofoam products which have littered our streets and riverway for many decades. Recycle bins are added across the city and recycling, composting and trash reduction are embraced by the entire community when they see how clean the streets are and even pitch in by picking up a hapless piece of trash. Store-owners participate by eliminating plastic bags, putting up "Don't mess with Somerville" signs in the stores to discourage littering, and reduce the amount of waste given to customers overall. People make healthy choices by choosing food and other products with the least amount of packaging and are ahead of most of the country by the time all of this is federally mandated in 2020.

Predictions by MJF

2020: The Green Line will finally show up.

Predictions by N.M.

I prophecy that Whitey Bulger will return to lead a townie uprising which will culminate in the burning of Tufts and the exodus of all college students, hipsters, artists and young professionals and that the land will be purged of coffee shops, boutiques and lofts! A great wall will be erected along the Cambridge line! art festivals will be banned!

bike lanes repaved! smoking laws revoked! Bulger will reign from high atop Prospect Hill. Menino will look up and cower...

Predictions by Neil Horsky

Annual paper boat race on the Mystic beginning 2010.

Predictions by Nora

2014: I might move here after college. What a great town!

Predictions by Pam Summa

Notes from a time traveler. Written on plain lined paper, found in a decaying leather suitcase in a closet in West Somerville around 1999.

So I accepted the invitation to time-travel to Somerville in 2048. The invitation came from a little bird - a grey bird, like a mockingbird, only smaller. (And then, he spoke to me, in English, inside my head, so I knew he wasn't a regular mockingbird.) He says he will be my travel guide.

As we come flying in over the city, I am dazzled by the rooftops. They are covered with solar collectors of all shapes and sizes. The ones like mobiles wink and glitter when the breeze stirs them. The flat rooftops are green with gardens - grape arbors and climbing roses, vegetables and herbs, even trees. As we circle Davis Square, I can see that the rooftops host a combination of birch and fir, hanging gardens, and open meadows of grass and wildflowers.

No one's using fossil fuels anymore, the bird says. It's changed everything.

He adds that there's no advertising anymore, either - no commercials, no newsprint advertisers dumped in mailboxes, no flyers, no print catalogues, no billboards, no focus groups, no glossy magazines, no spam, no telemarketers, no pop-ups. How did that happen? All the bird will say is that the word yuppie is no longer in use, anymore than the words homeless or 'disadvantaged', because calling people names because of the amount of money they make or don't

make is just 'silly'. As if this tells me anything.

But he continues: Many of the roads have been dug up and planted. The houses in rows are still there, but now the rows tend to curve, and from the air the neighborhoods - like little tribal enclaves - are obvious, even though they run into each other. Streams knit and divide the neighborhoods - he says the streams are all the water that used to run free above ground, released, as well as irrigation creeks, running off every which way, and glinting with the quartz in them.

Highland Avenue is planted as far as I can see with spirals of corn, and tucked in next to the corn are all kinds of plants, that the bird says are vegetables and flowers. Around and off from the spirals are greenhouses for vegetables and fruit; but the greenhouses are in the process of being dismantled for the summer, as the orchards and gardens come in.

In the middle of Davis square is a giant European purple beech, about fifteen feet in circumference. It's a wishing tree, and it's hung with offerings - bells and folded colored paper, tiny bottles, birdseed on sticks. Underneath the tree there is always a storyteller, and there is always a dreamspeaker. Other parts of the square are devoted to music and dancing, and moving or not meditation, and outdoor schools. Apparently all the squares in Somerville - and what used to be Boston and the Cape - are like this now.

The T station is still here, only it's running green on a combo of wind and solar energy. There's a monorail system overhead, zipping around as silent as a dragonfly, and carefully constructed to follow ley lines. I see horses and donkeys - Tufts field has become pastureland - and even more bicycles and bicycle-carts - the bike path that used to end at Cedar Street now runs all the way to ocean in the east, and to New-York-state-that-was in the west.

Meanwhile the parking lots in Davis Square have become live-in parks, dotted at random with small to medium-sized cottages - each one different, but most have grass or flowers on the roof - that turn out to be no-income housing, for those people who used to be called homeless. Now they live among communally owned and tended orchards and gardens, but in their own homes, each stamped with the personalities of it's owners - one is nearly invisible in the bamboo grove around it, another is painted in blue, pink, and green stripes, another seems made entirely of windows in different shapes and sizes, each one curtained in so many colors the house looks like a patchwork quilt.

There are a LOT more birds - even big ones like eagles and cranes, and is that a flock of passenger pigeons? - and fewer people overall, but way more children out and about, playing in the grassy spaces where the traffic used to be. There isn't anything resembling a skyscraper around here, not even downtown; my bird-guide tells me they went the way of the woolly mammoth and the meter maids. And

the big nursing home on College Avenue is part-school, part elder home. Apprenticeship is once again the mode, so there's less 'retirement', and then there's always those elders who are good with kids, and kids who need them.

Across the street and up a block, it seems the West branch library is open 24/7, with plenty of librarians for each shift, and no shift lasting longer than 4 hours. It seems like a joke in poor taste that the library was once closed most evenings, every night, and all weekend, and understaffed besides. In this day and age it has been completely restored inside, and has trees out front and flowers on the roof, like a crown.

People are so much more laid back! Nobody walks around talking on their cell phone and clutching their commuter cup of coffee. They laze in the sun, or weed the gardens, or do Tai Chi, or dance and play music, or read, or write, or eat and drink at little tables on the sidewalk patios, or sit with their own picnics by the creeks and streams, or on benches and stones in the parks. They're paying attention to the people they're with, or to what they're doing, or just watching the world go by. They seem to be enjoying themselves.

They don't dress all alike, either - it's not business suits or jeans and t-shirt. There's a tall, large person of indeterminate sex striding down Holland Street wearing floaty pink robes and headscarf, just for instance. There are people in simple monochrome

colors, and ones in tatterdemalion; there are robes and skirts and trousers, shirts and vests and tunics; but everything is looser and more comfortable looking. Even the shoes look comfy, no toe-pinchers here.

I take off my own shoes to walk barefoot in the grass. The air smells sweet, and the light is somehow different - less brown, more blue. Is that because I'm dreaming? But as the sun sets and a million stars come out, I see that the Milky Way is visible once more in the night sky, and realize, without the bird telling me, that it is simply lack of pollution that has changed the smell of air and the color of light.

The night market is opening. I stand at its entrance, at the old bike path behind the Somerville Theatre. The line of overarching trees is still here, but so tall! And it seems more like an endless forest, this place, than a line of trees. The night market is lit by humming globes of light, floating in the air. They move as if they're alive. What are they?

But the bird doesn't say. I smell grilled fish. A strawberry cart is close by - a young woman is turning the heaped piles of tiny strawberries into juice. Just as I am wondering what to use for money, the bird whispers in my ear, and I am pulled back.

And then I am at home, back in the here-and-now, hungry and thirsty in this particular once-upon-a-time.

Predictions by Paul Johns

2064: "Science" has made reanimation of the dead possibly. A newly brought-to-life Shakespeare moves to Somerville and writes poorly crafted graphic novels.

Predictions by Rachel Strutt

2032: A windmill tops each of Somerville's seven hills; each windmill is painted by different local artists. Civic buildings now fully powered by wind.

2064: Aliens from a planet not yet known to us land in Magoun Square. Although initially hostile, after coffee and pao de queijo (Brazilian cheese puffs) at Modelo bakery, they become devoted to Somervillians and pledge allegiance.

Predictions by Robin Wilcox

Love your ideas and maps.... only suggested addition would be a BIGGER ring line that runs in the middle of 128 (like the BART system in San Francisco that runs down the center of the highways) and links all the suburban rail lines (Gloucester-North Beverly-Reading-Mishawum-Brandeis-Wellesley-Needham Heights-Dedham-Route 128-Quincy Center). And links to the 128 Amtrak station. For now, the only way to get from one suburb to another is to ride into Boston and back out again - way too long. Tens of thousands of commuters live near one part of 128 and commute along it to another, and crowd the

highway instead....

... and as for when, well, the sooner the better, but things are so slow to happen in older cities.....

Following is an image of the BART train - in this case next to, not in the middle of, the highway; and then a map of the system. (It happens to be radial, just like Boston's, however note that the 'node' is not in SF itself but across the bay in Oakland, and that the lines tend to follow the highways; in other words, if you were going from most of the terminal stations on this map to other ones, you'd be following the track lines anyway (with the exception of Fremont to Millbrae - there is a bridge over the bay to the south; and there is also a highway between Walnut Creek-Dublin-Fremont..... maybe they'll add a track there some day).

It supposedly has around 350,000 riders per day....

(Note: These images she mentions are copyrighted, and not included in the book.)

Predictions by Rosie

2010: On Saturday, there will be a farmer's market.

Predictions by Sandra Day Smith

The Green Line won't stop in Union Square. The extension won't happen.

Predictions by Sara

2019½: East Somerville will be the hopping spot.

Predictions by Seth Itzkan

2050: Somerville will grow 20% of the food it consumes.

2020: Davis Square will be a carbon neutral business district.

Predictions by Stacy Hill and Erin Leiman

2100: Somerville will have waterways like Venice. Gondoliering will be established as a Somerville tradition. Like the Fluff Fest, there will be a Gondo Fest.

Predictions by Steven Popkes

Class 4 Hurricane Igor strikes in 2045. Significant loss of life and property.

Drainage problems in 2050. Significant loss of water quality. Low lying apartments and businesses along

the Mystic are abandoned or rebuilt. Assembly Square Mall abandoned.

1 meter rise in sea level by 2070.

Predictions by Ted Bach

2016: In 2016 the McGrath Highway overpass will be lowered to a ground-level boulevard forcing the dance party to a new location under Route 93.

Predictions by The Dan Crary Fan Club

Dear History of Somerville Team,

We have enjoyed reading your historical account of Somerville, detailing the major events between 2010 and 2100. We found no faults within the listed facts, the text is well written, and the images are both illustrative and informative.

However, we were surprised to find that you omitted one of the most prominent cultural and economic developments of the 2010's, namely, the belated rise to prominence of the legendary flatpick guitarist, Dan Crary and the return of Rounder Records to Somerville.

Crary was a musical legend, a pioneer of one of the most intricate, yet powerful, forms of American music, and a master of the guitar; a flatpicking stylist

with an international reputation for innovation, taste and brilliance. With more than 50 years as a performer by 2010, Crary was one of the few artists whose work could be said to transcend the boundaries of style and genre.

Despite these talents, however, Crary eluded mainstream recognition until July 2011, when he selflessly agreed to perform for free at Jimmy Tingle's Off-Broadway Theatre for Somerville's Artbeat Festival . Owing to faults in the theatre's air-conditioning system (the date coincided with one of the most severe heatwaves of the early 2010's), the performance itself was a flop, but when a bootlegged video recording of this performance was uploaded to Youtube shortly after by an anonymous contributor, Crary was elevated overnight to the heights of international stardom, bringing the art of flatpicking guitar to the masses at last. Over the next decade, until his untimely death in the early 2020's, Crary would go on to produce seven full-length albums which would set the tone for popular music for the remainder of the century, and toured extensively worldwide, gaining critical acclaim not only throughout the west, but even in unlikely corners of the world such as India, North Korea and the Middle East.

Although actually a native of Kansas, Crary's public image became inseparable from the city of Somerville, which hosted this ground-breaking performance, and, as it soon transpired, was also the original home of the record label Rounder Records, which had

recorded his first solo album, "Lady's Fancy", all the way back in 1977 (cf. <http://www.discogs.com/Dan-Crary-Ladys-Fancy/release/2149871>).

Crary's break triggered explosive sales of this back-numbered recording that would last for the remainder of the 2010's - a feat that boggled critics' minds after a decade dominated by illegal download of music. The intensity and longevity of Crary's record sales brought so much unanticipated revenue to Rounder, which during harder times had moved out to Burlington, MA, that by 2017, the label's finances had gained enough momentum to move its headquarters back to Somerville.

After buying out the building that housed their original headquarters at 186 Willow Avenue, Rounder bosses Ken Irwin and Bill Nowlin made a career-defining decision. Instead of investing in a hoard of new and expensive artists, they assembled a team of young software engineers. Their mission was simple - to develop a failsafe method of eradicating illegal download of music on the Internet - a the task which major labels had struggled with for two decades without success.

Against all odds, a breakthrough came in 2019, when a Tufts University student, working in the Rounder team as a summer intern, developed an algorithm that could probe and recognize audio waveforms stored in any digital format. Rounder dispatched billions of software robots equipped with this algorithm onto the Internet, and within twenty-three

days had built up a database of all illegal download activity on the world-wide web, which could be continuously updated for the indefinite future, while providing access to the database to the FBI, the CIA, and copyright-law enforcement agencies worldwide.

Rounder stocks skyrocketed overnight, and as a result, fresh capitol flowed into the company, which promptly invested in a state-of-the art computer farm capable of the gargantuan task of maintaining the music-theft database. A large plot of land facing the Charles River in Cambridge was purchased to house the facility, which requires several thousand tons of water per day to keep the massive processor array from overheating.

After dodging a hostile takeover by Google in early 2020, Rounder proceeded to purchase the remains of formerly powerful major labels such as CBS/Sony, EMI and Virgin, cementing its position as the new superpower in the recorded music industry that it would maintain for the remainder of the century.

We would strongly suggest adding some account of these events in your historical account of Somerville.

Sincerely,
The Dan Crary Fan Club

Predictions by Tim Devin

By mid-century, Somerville's centuries-old two- and three-family homes were crumbling. This was due to a number of things. Homeowners hit by capitalism's swan-song couldn't afford repairs. Condo-owners not taking responsibility for the overall buildings' structures. Landlords only caring about rent checks, and not the units the rent checks were buying.

In 2045, a series of collapses killed and hurts dozens of people. By 2048, it had become so common people would joke about it. Finally, in 2056, our speedy government decided to pass some laws, and all of the remaining buildings were knocked down.

In 2058, the first of the new replacement buildings went up-tall green, energy-efficient mid-rises surrounded by parks. One building per 4 lots, with twice as much residential space.

Hover cars, which had made their first appearance in the 2020s, had finally become affordable in the 2060s. The new replacement buildings were equipped with top-floor hover car parking garages. This, coupled with the new zip-wire technology, meant fewer and fewer people walked on the ground any more. Many wondered if this was a good thing.

Also: 2015: My old landlady gives me my old apartment on Charnwood for free, because she misses me so much.

Predictions by "Tinkerbell's human companion"

About three elections from now [2010], a dog will be elected mayor of Somerville. Probably a "lab" or a pug. "Vote for the pug with this mug!"

Predictions by Wesley Heidi

2010: "The history of Somerville" project explodes into popular consciousness.

2016: There will be a new bike path from Somerville all the way to downtown.

Predictions by Ying

2016:

1. The first woman president is elected to office.
2. The number of vegetarians / vegans increases by 20%
3. The US goes to war against Iran and North Korea

Predictions by anonymous people

In 2053, Godzilla will attack Davis Square, destroying dozens of buildings.

In 2027, Somerville will take Inman Square from Cambridge. This will only be fair, since Cambridge

has several busy business districts close to the T, and Somerville doesn't.

2016: Somerville becomes a Mecca for singles and especially college students, as families have left due to lack of educational opportunities for children.

2012: Tufts will expand and take over Somerville.

