



Stroudwater Village Association Board of Trustees
<stroudwatervillageassociation@gmail.com>

Statement from the Stroudwater Village Association regarding proposed rezoning of 1945 Congress Street

Stroudwater Village Association Board of Trustees

<stroudwatervillageassociation@gmail.com>

To: Helen Donaldson <hcd@portlandmaine.gov>

Cc: Edward Suslovic <edsuslovic@portlandmaine.gov>, Paul Bradbury <phb@portlandmaine.gov>, Jeff Levine <Jlevine@portlandmaine.gov>, Mike Murray <msm@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, May 25, 2015 at 5:25 PM

May 25, 2015

TO: Helen Donaldson, Portland Planning Office

CC: Ed Suslovic, Jeff Levine, Paul Bradbury, Mike Murray

Statement from the Stroudwater Village Association regarding proposed rezoning of 1945 Congress Street

The SVA has been actively conversing with residents and SVA members regarding the proposed rezoning and redevelopment of the Elks Club property at 1945 Congress Street. Based on the feedback we have received over several meetings, **the SVA recommends the city deny the request for zoning conversion at this time and instead undertake a comprehensive planning process for the intersection and contiguous properties as a whole** rather than just this one single property.

Specifically:

- The intersection in question (Congress and International Parkway) represents a gateway intersection to Portland and to the Jetport, and redevelopment of this parcel provides an opportunity to shape many visitors' first impression of our city.
- Many Stroudwater residents desire to see the specific property remained zoned as residential, in anticipation of potential residential development similar to the River's Edge and Tide Mill neighborhoods, which would also be in keeping with the city's Comprehensive Plan.
- Almost all Stroudwater residents are concerned about the precedent a potential zoning conversion establishes for numerous other similar properties within the neighborhood.
- There is concern about the visual effect the specific proposed building along Congress Street would have on traffic/speeding as well as on abutting property owners, especially as we complete the Phase II Outer Congress St. traffic and safety improvements in partnership with the City.
- Residents very much appreciate the openness with which the proposed developers and buyer have shared information and we note and applaud their attempts to incorporate some of our feedback into the proposal. On the other hand, it should be noted that the seller (Elks Club), who will be remaining on site, has shown no interest in engaging with the neighborhood in the past or regarding this latest proposal.

To sum up, residents have meaningful concerns about some aspects of the specific development proposal, but our larger concerns relate to the overall zoning conversion and implications for the intersection and the neighborhood. Given the importance of this intersection to the neighborhood, the Jetport, UNUM and the City, **the SVA recommends the city deny the request for zoning**

conversion at this time and instead undertake a comprehensive planning process for the intersection and contiguous properties as a whole rather than just this one single property.

- The Stroudwater Village Association Board of Trustees

The Stroudwater Village Association is a Maine Non-Profit corporation. All residents of Stroudwater are members and invited to participate in all of our activities.

Find us on the web at <http://www.livinginportland.org/stroudwater.htm>

Find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/StroudwaterVillageAssociation>