

Molly McGuire

From: Cynthia Stroum <cynthia@stroum.com>
Sent: Saturday, August 22, 2026 9:33 AM
To: Council
Subject: Support Proposed Zoning Change for the SJCC

To the Members of the Mercer Island City Council:

My name Cynthia Stroum. While I was raised on Mercer Island, I was gone for many years going away for college and beginning a career in Los Angeles before returning home to Seattle. For the last 50 years I have been investing in venture capital, philanthropy and producing theatre for Broadway as well as serving as the U.S. Ambassador to Luxembourg under President Obama.

One year ago, I returned to the Island for the opening of the SJCC's newly renovated Barokas Education Wing. I stepped into the J and was overcome with the warm welcome, the old friends and new members -- and I immediately felt the true sense of community.

My parents, Sam and Althea Stroum, believed in this JCC. They joined so many people in our community over the years in making this building a reality and fostering the creation of that community. It serves thousands and thousands of families. It reaches one-third of Island residents.

But let's face it. It's an almost 60-year-old building and needs some work. A lot of work! It's time to use our founders' vision – and yours – to create a new J for the next 60 years.

I am thrilled that the process to create a new, modern and even more accessible J is on such an exciting path. You have before you the opportunity to make the critical decision to approve a rezone that will allow a new JCC facility to become a reality. Your supportive decision on Sept. 1st, plus the phenomenal momentum that has been building among Islanders and members, will make possible the JCC's future

I join so many others in asking that you support this effort and vote to approve the rezone. Allow this community treasure to be redeveloped.

Sincerely,

Ambassador Cynthia Stroum (ret)

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