

Molly McGuire

From: Elaine Kraft <ejk9151@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 21, 2026 8:16 AM
To: Council
Subject: Let the SJCC improve its facilities and THRIVE

September 1 is my 75th birthday. I was born on Mercer Island and have watched it grow. I have been a member of the JCC all my life. My parents helped build the current JCC. My grandmother and great aunt, my parents, my brothers and I and my children used it for every aspect of our lives. My 14 year old grandson was a Counselor in training at camp this summer. Five Generations.

We do not want to build a 400,000 square foot building. We are planning on building a Bellevue College structure. We will not build huge office buildings and we will not build ANYTHING that does not meet Mercer Island city code. We will be inclusive of our neighbors' concerns. We will have lots of opportunities for public engagement. We will fix traffic. But the building is old. It has no air conditioning, no elevator and little wi-fi accessibility. It must be fixed.

You know the love for the J from the community. Many of you are members. Yes, there are a few very loud voices from the public. They use information that is not correct. They use horror stories and scare tactics. .

.We come before you after nine years of working with the city on what even the planning commission acknowledges is the only path forward for the JCC. Please look beyond the neighbors hysteria (we will meet with all city codes when we know what direction forward we can take.) Please don't listen to the antiSemitism on Next Door. The J is great for Mercer Island -- for everyone. Its doors are open to all. Let it continue to offer so much to so many -- let it thrive.

This is your chance to show leadership for all the Island. I've seen lots of real leadership from Island elected officials over the years --from the first stoplight to I-90 lids and so much more. Make this the latest in outstanding improvements to the Island.