

Molly McGuire

From: E Jimenez <sra.ejimenez@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2026 6:00 PM
To: Council
Subject: A Resident's Perspective on The J's Future

Dear Members of the Mercer Island City Council,

I am writing because I care deeply about Mercer Island and about preserving the places that make this community feel like home. One of those places, without question, is The J.

I have lived on Mercer Island for many years, and during that time The J has become much more than a building or a property to me. It is a place where people come together. I have participated in programs there, attended events, taken fitness classes, and experienced firsthand the welcoming atmosphere that makes The J such an important part of our community.

What strikes me most is the incredible range of people who use The J. You see children and their parents, teenagers, adults, and seniors—all sharing the same space and benefiting from what it offers. For some, it may be a class or an activity. For others, it is a place to exercise, make friends, see familiar faces, or simply feel connected to the community.

That sense of connection matters. As life gets busier and people can sometimes feel more disconnected from their neighbors and community, places like The J—where people can meet, participate in activities, and build relationships—become especially important. The J has quietly been doing that for more than 55 years.

That is why I believe the current single-family designation does not make sense. Whatever the designation may say on paper, the reality is that this property has been serving Mercer Island as a community center for more than half a century. It has never functioned as a single-family property in any meaningful sense. Changing the designation would simply bring the Comprehensive Plan into better alignment with what has been happening there for generations.

I also understand that the building itself now needs substantial investment and improvements. I believe we should give The J the opportunity to make those investments and continue serving our community, rather than allowing an outdated designation to stand in the way of its future.

When I think about what makes Mercer Island special, I don't think only about our parks, neighborhoods, or beautiful surroundings. I think about the places where people actually come together and become part of one another's lives. The J is one of those places.

I hope you will look at this request not simply as a land-use issue, but in the context of the many thousands of people who have walked through The J's doors over the past 55 years. Generations of Mercer Island families have memories there. People have learned there, exercised there, celebrated there, made friendships there, and found a sense of belonging there.

I sincerely hope you will support the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment and help ensure that The J can continue to be part of Mercer Island for many years to come.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to residents and for the care and responsibility you bring to decisions that shape our community. I truly appreciate your consideration.

Warmly,

Evelyn Jimenez

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