

Molly McGuire

From: Dana Weiner <danarweiner@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 4, 2026 10:48 AM
To: Planning Commission; Alison Van Gorp; Deb Estrada; Council
Subject: Support for the SJCC

I am writing to urge you to support amending the Comprehensive Plan to change the designation of the Stroum Jewish Community Center (SJCC) property from Single-Family Residential to Commercial.

I have been part of the J community for more than 30 years. My children attended preschool and summer camp there, and their first jobs were as camp counselors. During the 15 years my family lived on Mercer Island, the J played a central role in our lives and enriched our experience as residents.

For more than 55 years, the J has served as a true community center for Mercer Island. It is much more than a recreational facility—it is a place where people of all ages come together to learn, celebrate, volunteer, build friendships, and support one another. The J also serves as an important feeder to Mercer Island schools, bringing young families to the Island and contributing to the vitality of our community.

What makes the J especially valuable is that it is open and welcoming to everyone. While it proudly celebrates Jewish culture, traditions, and values, its programs and facilities serve people of all backgrounds, faiths, and identities. Families attend preschool, swim lessons and camps, neighbors use the fitness center, seniors participate in social and wellness programs, and community members gather for cultural events, educational programs, and service opportunities. In a time when opportunities for genuine connection are increasingly rare, the J provides an inclusive space where people can build relationships across generations and backgrounds.

Communities are strengthened by institutions that foster belonging, engagement, and mutual understanding. The J does exactly that. It has been an integral part of Mercer Island for decades, and its land-use designation should reflect the way the property has long functioned—as a vibrant community center serving the broader public.

Please align the Comprehensive Plan and land use maps with this longstanding reality by redesignating the SJCC property as Commercial. Doing so will ensure that the J can continue to serve Mercer Island, welcome all members of the community, and thrive for the next 55 years and beyond.

Sincerely,
Dana Weiner