

## Molly McGuire

---

**From:** Jordan Friedman <jordanfriedman@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2026 3:59 PM  
**To:** Planning Commission; Alison Van Gorp; Deb Estrada; Council  
**Subject:** Support amendment in favor of SJCC

To the Members of the Mercer Island Planning Commission,

I am writing to express my strong support for amending the Comprehensive Plan to redesignate the SJCC property from single-family to commercial. This change is not only appropriate; it is long overdue.

Over the past twenty-two years during which I have been a devoted member and supporter of the J, I have watched the organization work tirelessly to be a responsible, thoughtful steward of its property and its mission. I have also watched it face obstacle after obstacle - procedural, structural, and political - despite its clear and consistent commitment to serving Mercer Island.

The J has served as a pillar of the MI community for over 55 years, welcoming generations of Islanders and beyond, providing essential programs for families and seniors, supporting cultural and educational enrichment, and serving as a gathering place for all. Its central and vital role on Mercer Island is undeniable, and yet the land-use designation applied to its property does not reflect that reality, nor does it support the organization's ability to evolve and meet the needs of the next generation.

For years, the J has attempted to establish the right, logical conditions to responsibly redevelop its property, conditions that would allow it to modernize its facilities, expand community services, and continue contributing meaningfully to Mercer Island. Instead, it has been met with delays, shifting requirements, and a lack of alignment between its actual use and the City's planning framework. This mismatch has hindered progress and placed an unnecessary burden on an institution that has done nothing but consistently serve this community with integrity.

We are well past the point of asking whether the J's property should be designated as commercial. The question now is: Why hasn't this already happened? What are we waiting for? The Comprehensive Plan and land-use maps should accurately reflect the J's true role and presence on Mercer Island and support - and in fact, accelerate - its ability to thrive for the next 55 years, just as it has for the last 55.

I urge you to adopt this amendment and bring the City's planning documents into alignment with the lived reality of our community. It is time to remove the barriers that have held the J back and allow it to move forward responsibly, sustainably, and in partnership with our broader Mercer Island community.

Thank you for your service to our community and consideration to this important matter.

Regards,  
Jordan Friedman  
2035 80<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, Mercer Island