

Molly McGuire

From: Rebecca Raphaely <rebecca.a.raphaely@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2026 10:31 AM
To: Planning Commission; Alison Van Gorp; Deb Estrada; Council

To Whom it May Concern

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

My husband grew up on Mercer Island attending the JCC as a child. His parents are still members there 36 years later. Although we do not live on Mercer Island, we still make a point to bring our daughter to the JCC for lessons.

At a time when antisemitism is on the rise and Jewish communities across the country are experiencing unprecedented levels of harassment and hate crimes, spaces like the J are more important than ever. They offer not only programs and services but also a sense of security, belonging, and community. Preserving and supporting these spaces demonstrates our community's commitment to inclusion, religious freedom, and ensuring that everyone has a place where they feel welcome.

The J has been operating as a community center on this site for over five decades. Updating the Comprehensive Plan and land use maps to designate the property as Commercial simply recognizes the reality of how the property has long been used and provides the certainty needed for the J to continue serving Mercer Island for generations to come.

Please align the Comprehensive Plan and land use maps to reflect this longstanding community asset and ensure the J can continue to serve, grow, and thrive on Mercer Island for the next 55 years.

Thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to supporting institutions that strengthen our entire community.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Raphaley MD

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