Molly McGuire

From: Cindy Stratiner <cstratiner@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 15, 2026 8:32 PM
To: Molly McGuire
Subject: Support Proposed Zoning Change for the SJCC

Dear Molly McGuire,
MI Senior Planner,

We are 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 residential to commercial.

The SJCC has been serving the Mercer Island community as a community center for more than 55 years. We respectfully ask that the Comprehensive Plan and land use maps be updated to reflect that longstanding reality and to ensure that the J can continue to serve our community and thrive on Mercer Island for the next 55 years.

Our family's connection to the SJCC spans generations. I remember going to the JCC often with my Dad while he worked out, I did art classes, gymnastics and socialized. We lived in Bellevue but it was a quick commute. Later, after having my own children, they attended preschool, did tons of sporting classes and camps, along with theater programs and other art programs. We live in Issaquah. Now I visit the SJCC to learn from different speakers, connect with old friends, and bring our grandchildren to occasional classes.

Our story also highlights something very important about the SJCC's impact beyond its campus. Families like ours who live off-island make frequent trips to Mercer Island because of the J. Before and after our visits, we regularly shop at Mercer Island grocery stores and pharmacies, buy books, purchase gas, dine at local restaurants and cafés, and use local businesses and services. The SJCC is an economic driver that brings thousands of visitors and customers to Mercer Island businesses every year.

The reality is that the J has operated as a community center for decades and has become an integral part of the social, recreational, educational, and economic fabric of Mercer Island. The facility is also in need of significant modernization and reinvestment to continue serving current and future generations. If the zoning designation is not updated to support the J's long-term viability and redevelopment needs, Mercer Island risks losing not only a cherished community institution, but also the economic activity generated by families like ours who choose Mercer Island because of the SJCC.

We strongly encourage you to approve the Comprehensive Plan amendment and redesignate the SJCC property from single-family residential to commercial. Doing so will align the City's planning documents with the property's actual use, recognize the J's more than half-century of service to the community, and help ensure that this invaluable institution can continue to benefit Mercer Island residents and visitors alike for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cynthia and Gary Stratiner