STROUM JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

Applicant Hearing Examiner Presentation

SJCC Rezone Request from R-8.4 and R-9.6 to Commercial Office

October 19, 2026

Applicant's presentation



Need for remodel/reconfiguration

Single family zone constraints

CO zone requirements

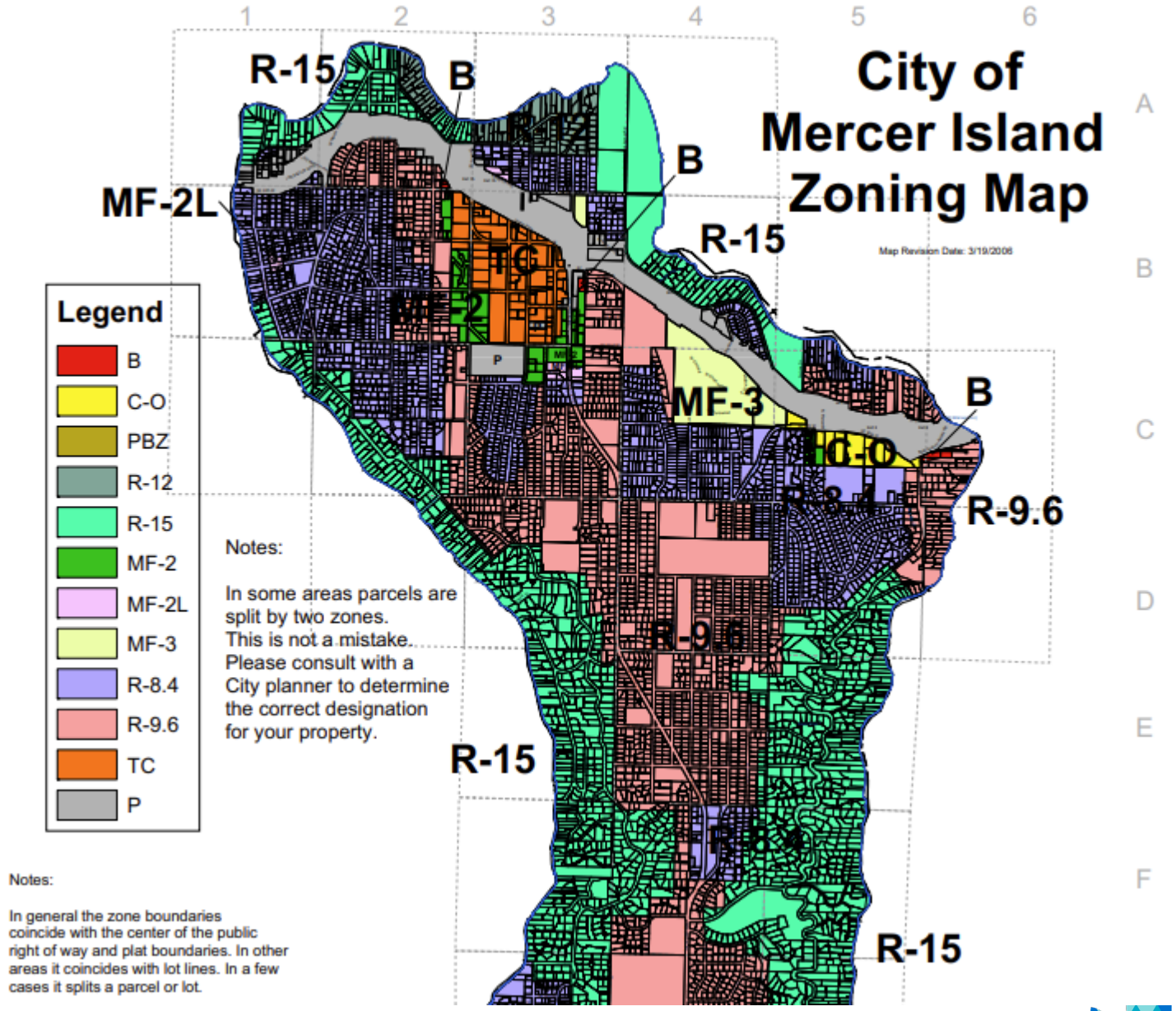
Application meets criteria

Current Zoning Map

Commercial Office (CO) designation only exists in this area of Mercer Island.

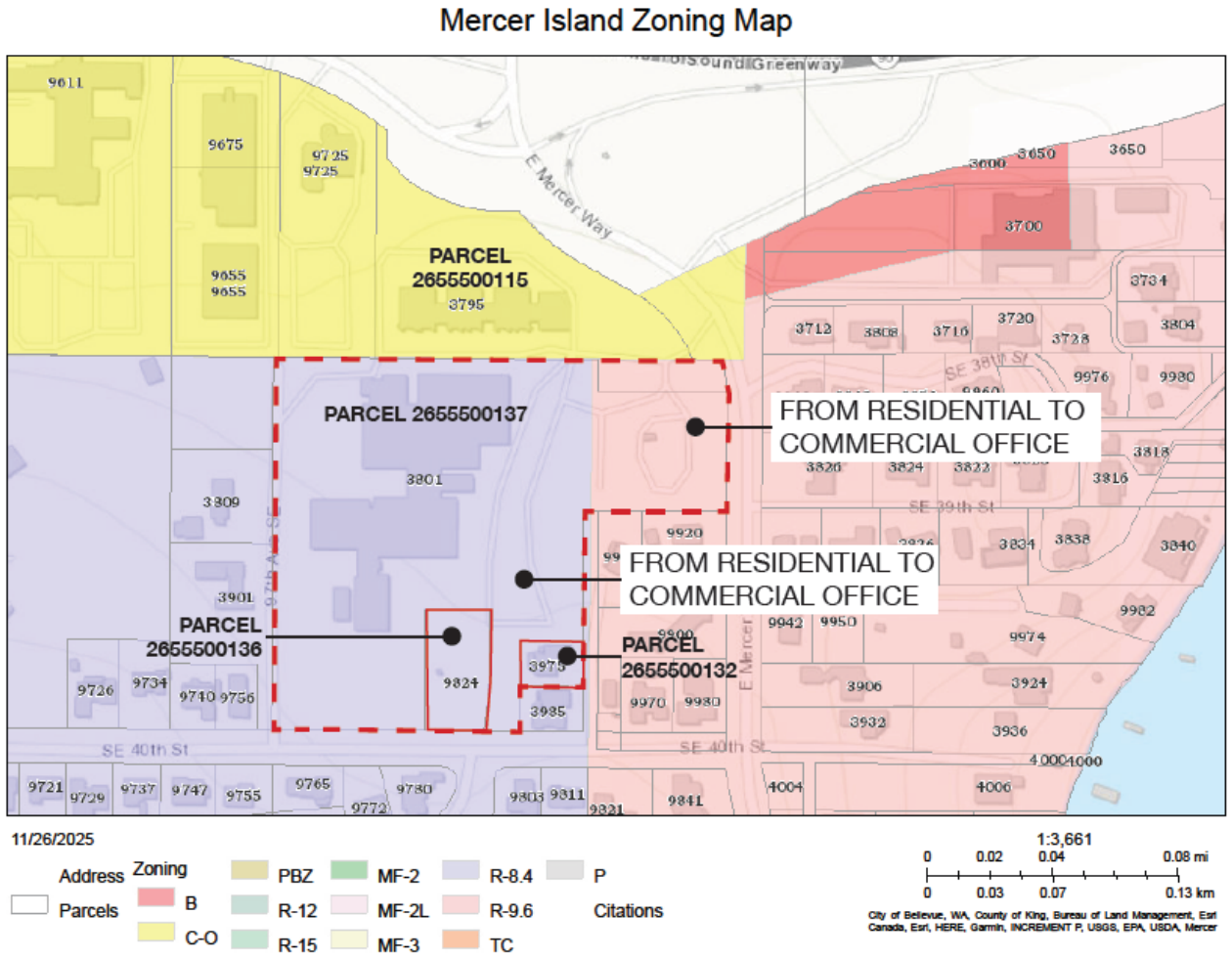
Herzl Property is zoned Business (B).

JCC property is split zoned R-8.4 and R-9.6.



Proposed map change

Note the CO adjacency



What is “the J?”

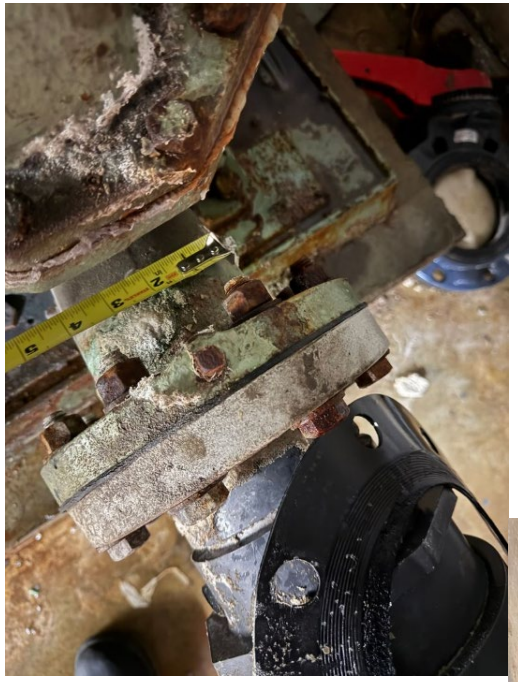
- Opened in this location in 1969
- Nearly 1/3 of Mercer Island Households use the J!
- Support individuals and families at every age and stage
- A place to connect, learn, laugh, recreate, celebrate, eat, dance, and so much more!
- Schwartz ECS and J camp educate and care for over 1000 kids/year
- First employer for hundreds each year
- Extending $175,000/year in scholarships
- Everyone is welcome



Failing Systems/Need for Remodel

$$$ spent on reviving outdated systems at the end of their useful lives

More efficient and cost effective to fully remodel/reconfigure









Land Use Approvals issued over the years

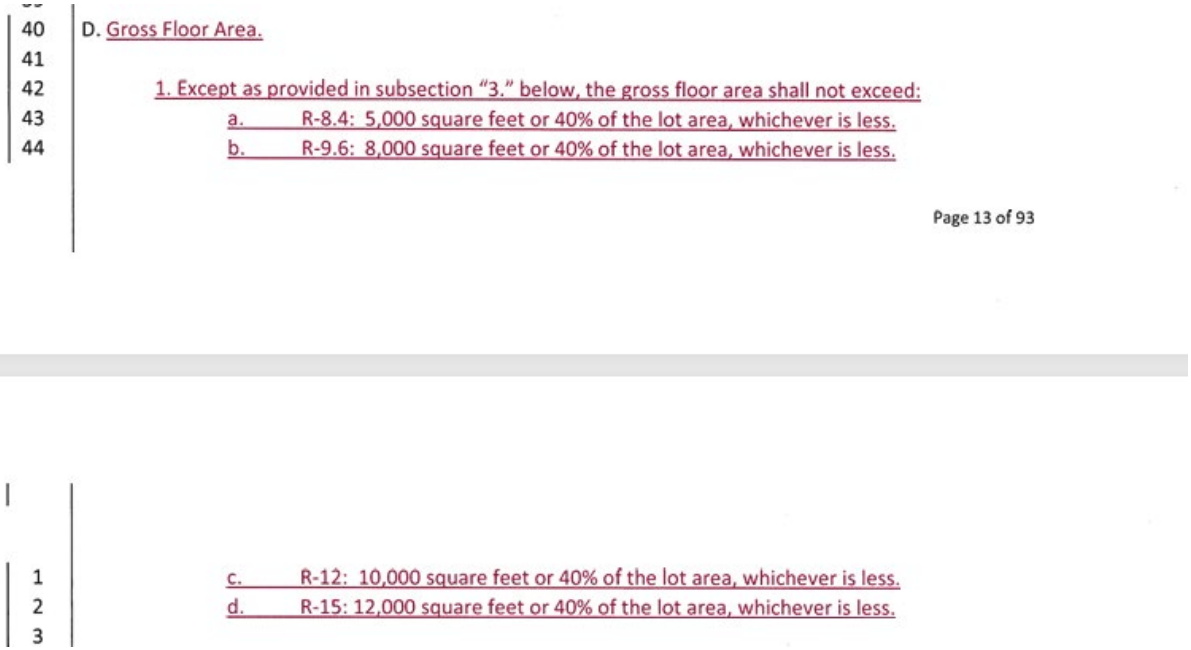
- 1969/70
- 1979
- 1980
- 1981
- 1985
- 2003 (FASPS)
- 2007 (FASPS)

- Conditions of approval related to SEPA, design commission, and CUP



2017 “Mega Mansion” legislation

- Ordinance No. 17C-15
- Created maximum square footage limits for all uses in the residential zones:



D. Gross Floor Area.

1. Except as provided in subsection “3.” below, the gross floor area shall not exceed:
   a. R-8.4: 5,000 square feet or 40% of the lot area, whichever is less.
   b. R-9.6: 8,000 square feet or 40% of the lot area, whichever is less.

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c. R-12: 10,000 square feet or 40% of the lot area, whichever is less.
d. R-15: 12,000 square feet or 40% of the lot area, whichever is less.

2022 Non-Residential Structure interpretation

- SJCC applied for an interpretation of the variance criteria, issued as Development Code Interpretation 22-004, and can be found on the City's CPD website. We would appreciate the Hearing Examiner taking judicial notice of this decision.

"Can the City grant a variance from numeric standards for a non-residential structure sited in a residential zone…?"

Answer:

NO

"The…MICC prohibits variances from numerical standards for non-residential structures in residential zones…"

Current restrictive zoning standards

- Cannot ask for variance from these zoning standards:
- R-8.4: Maximum gross floor area shall not exceed 5,000 s.f.
- R-9.6: Maximum gross floor area shall not exceed 8,000 s.f.

Nonconforming provisions

- MICC 19.01.050.C. Interior remodeling of a legally nonconforming structure is permitted and will not result in loss of legal nonconforming status regardless of cost or extent of the interior remodel, **as long as no exterior alteration or enlargement is involved**.
- MICC 19.01.050.D.3.b. Nonconforming status lost if "intentional exterior alteration or enlargement of the structure over any 3-year period that incurs costs in excess of 50% of structure's current King County assessed value…"
- Current assessed value of bldg. is $26,192,500

Challenges with staying in “existing box”

- Even interior remodels must comply with current building codes
  - ADA compliance
  - Energy code compliance
  - Structural/earthquake codes
  - Fire codes

- Not technically feasible and inefficient to stay in existing walls
  - Piecemeal remodels are not what this building needs.
  - It is a certainty that a substantial remodel of the building will exceed the ~$13,000,000 threshold
  - Staying in existing box also doesn’t allow reconfiguring parking and access/traffic issues

Commercial Office zone requirements

- Height: 36’
- Increased parking requirements
- 60% impervious surface limit
- 35% building coverage limit
- Setbacks:
  - 50’ from all rights-of-way
  - Sum of side yard 75’, not less than 25’
  - Minimum setback from residential property is 50’

Example: Setbacks

Commercial Office project review requirements are clear and apply to all

- Site development permit/design review (public hearing and opportunity for conditions)
  - Compliance with design standards in MICC Chapter 19.12
- State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review (public comment and opportunity for conditions)
- Concurrency and Transportation / Engineering review
- Compliance with all other technical codes (trees, stormwater, etc)

Rezone approval criteria—19.15.240

1. The proposed reclassification is consistent with the policies and provisions of the Mercer Island comprehensive plan.
2. The proposed reclassification is consistent with the purpose of the Mercer Island development code as set forth in MICC 19.01.010
3. The proposed reclassification is an extension of an existing zone, or a logical transition between zones
4. The proposed reclassification does not constitute an illegal site-specific rezone
5. The proposed reclassification is compatible with surrounding zones and land uses
6. The proposed reclassification does not adversely affect public health, safety, and welfare, and
7. If a comprehensive plan amendment is required in order to satisfy subsection C(1) of this section, approval of the comprehensive plan amendment is required prior to or concurrent with the granting of an approval of the rezone.

Please facilitate belonging and community on MI at this vital time.

The proposed rezone:

- Redesignates the SJCC parcels from Residential to Commercial Office (CO)
- Extends the Island's only existing CO designation to an immediately adjacent site
- Enables the remodel and reconfiguration the campus needs to serve the community and stay on Mercer Island
- Resolves the single-family zone constraints that limit current operations
- Meets all applicable requirements and approval criteria
- Any future project is subject to extensive review process