

Ryan Harriman

From: Julien Kern <julien.kern@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 12, 2023 1:07 PM
To: Planning Commission; Andrew Leon
Subject: PERMIT DSR22-014 - Objection to Commercial conversion to Multi-Family

Hello, I am writing on behalf of myself and my husband as concerned community members of Mercer Island.

I understand Baskin Robbins is proposed to be torn down for a 4-story with garage multifamily building. I strongly believe we need to protect the Baskin Robbins location to remain zoned for retail. While tiny, it is perfect for a deli, cafe, boba tea or a spot that does not require a lot of seating. We are slowly losing all the small businesses in town center, and we need to protect the walkability and commercial mix of our downtown center. Without a location like this one, it will be impossible to attract retail tenants. Whereas there are other places on the island where a multi-family can be built.

We should be looking to Kirkland where they have preserved certain areas to remain only at 1 or 2 story maximum height and have shopping and eating blocks with parking. Right now, since we do not have enough offerings, residents go off island to do their shopping instead of supporting local businesses. We need to work hard and intentionally to create our community, not just another disconnected residential suburb.

My perspective is also as a real estate attorney. I know how this story goes. While the city may meet a short-term goal, the long-term effect will be damaging.

Please share the public hearing and comment period for this Permit.

Thank you,
Julien and David Kern
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