

Alison Van Gorp

From: johnmhall@jmhcorp.net
Sent: Thursday, May 11, 2023 1:02 PM
To: Dan Thompson; Council
Cc: Jessi Bon; Alison Van Gorp; Jeff Thomas; Planning Commission; Robert Medved; 'Matthew Goldbach'; Matt Goldbach; 'John Hall'
Subject: B zoning change

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Dear City Council Members: (Please confirm receipt of this email)

I am a neighbor of Hertzl and the adjacent B zone property. I have lived in my current house for 42 years.

I've been trying to follow the CPD on the Hertzl request for the change of zoning for the B zone. I think there were three meetings at the planning commission after the council added this to the docket. The first included changing the property to a commercial zone but was dropped because that was a spot zone.

Next was a discussion of additional setbacks if schools are added as a use to the zone. At the last public meeting the proposed setback was 45' but the CPD and PC discussed reducing that.

At the very end of the last meeting at the planning commission meeting the CPD suggested waiving the setback for properties owned by the same person or business because Hertzl owns its property and the B zoned property. There was virtually no discussion of this idea by the planning commission, and my understanding was there would be another meeting to discuss this idea or any other changes.

I was shocked today when I received an email from Dan Thompson regarding CPD's recommendation to the Council (without any community involvement or discussion) to eliminate the setbacks between different properties in the B zone owned by the same property owner. An ordinary citizen would have never understood this change from the language about "internal lines" in the new proposed ordinance. This appears to be another slight-of-hand of our CPD which has happened so many times over the years, and is why there is such a lack of trust. I thought it was a mission of the City to rebuild trust in our community.

If the council or CPD or planning commission are really considering eliminating any setback for a school in a B zone on the one property it could possibly apply, then the language of the ordinance should honestly say that. My guess is without Dan Thompson's email no one on the council would have understood that this ordinance would eliminate any setback at all between the B zone property and Hertzl for a school. I certainly didn't.

We went from requiring larger setbacks if schools were added as a use to the B zone to eliminating any setbacks, all in secret and in language designed to deceive the ordinary citizen or neighbor.

Please look into this matter for the benefit of Mercer Island.

John Hall



JOHN MICHAEL HALL CORPORATION

11823 SE 32ND STREET
BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON 98005
Contractor License No. JO-HN-MH: 20109

JOHN M. HALL

425 • 641 • 0306 P

206 • 914 • 5599 C

johnmhall@jmhcorp.net

www.johnmichaelhallcorporation.net