

**From:** Jeff Tarling  
**To:** Jean Fraser  
**CC:** David Margolis-Pineo  
**Date:** 1/22/2014 2:49 PM  
**Subject:** 118 Congress Street Project

Hi Jean -

118 Congress Street project / tree & landscape review comments:

**a) Street-trees** - the project proposes to plant (6) street trees, (4) along Congress Street, 'save' the existing Pin Oak and plant (2) new on Saint Lawrence Street. Updated plan shows the trees planted in raised granite tree wells with herbaceous planting. If on-street parking is proposed, the tree spacing or setback away from the curb to prevent the opening of car doors is important. The trees can be placed to match the in-between on-street parking, making sure there is good access to the sidewalk from parked cars. The residential tree standard of one tree per unit would also be a condition. Building overhangs over the public way should be discouraged to allow the street tree growth.

**'Tree Save'** - I was hoping the project could protect or save the large Pin Oak on Saint Lawrence Street, while the recent plan does show this, a recent site visit confirmed the crown of the tree would be severely impacted or one-sided, thus reluctantly yield to the fate of removal due to proposed building location. An additional street tree would be requested. Also, the proposed new tree on Congress Street near the corner of Saint Lawrence should be shifted slightly away from the intersection perhaps 2 - 3'. The recently planted American Elm along Congress Street should be saved and replanted by the city.

**Tree types** - It would be ideal if the tree types along Congress Street are all the same species. I would recommend the Columnar 'Musashino' Zelkova to be ideal due to the narrow space. See <http://www.jfschmidt.com/articles/musashino> and photo below.

The 'Red Sunset' Maple crown shape is too broad for this space. Along Saint Lawrence Street again a more narrow tree is needed, it could be Ginkgo 'Magyar' or 'Autumn Gold' cultivar (seedless), due to narrow sidewalk space. (photo 'Musashino' Zelkova, narrow vase shape crown)

**b) Landscape** - The recent revision adds herbaceous planting to the tree planters and the 'backyard' / rain-garden edge. Additional screening to the adjacent property should be considered, this might be achieved by adding higher branching landscape planting or higher fencing (5'). The rain-garden planting with mostly herbaceous plant material will reach a low height. It does not appear to meet the B-1 Zone landscape standard ( i ) " A densely planted buffer and / or fencing will be required to protect neighboring properties..." Suggestions could including some taller shrub plants along with a higher wooden fence. The Green Wall proposed will also help screen the building. Additional green-wall / landscape planting could be used on the West elevation to the left of the garage door, this area seems blank; and to the left of the center door on Congress Street away from the overhead canopy.

**Granite planters in right of way** - the six granite planters are proposed to be planted with street-trees and 'Cranesbill', perennial geranium. This will add interest to the typical mulched tree well. Long term however it is unlikely the city would be able to maintain these plantings. Ideally, the project could adopt the tree wells and maintain the landscape planting.

**Landscape Comment** - Personally, I was hoping to see additional landscape element along the street frontage along Congress Street and Saint Lawrence Street. Either in the form of behind the sidewalk planter or green wall if the various building facade walls could have jugged in to create a small landscape niche. I noted a variety of past projects where this seemed to work successfully.

Fitting a new project of this scale and prominent location into a neighborhood like Munjoy Hill where everyone walks, homeowners take pride and their landscape with events like the 'Hidden Gardens of Munjoy Hill', landscape should be an important element.