

From: Tony Russo <trusso0819@yahoo.com>
To: "JF@portlandmaine.gov" <JF@portlandmaine.gov>
Date: 1/22/2014 4:06 PM
Subject: 118 Congress Street Project

Dear Jean,

Please take a moment to read my thoughts on the proposed project at 118 Congress Street. I'd like my letter to please be read at the planning board meeting as well.

January 22, 2014

Dear Portland Planning Board |Members,

I hope that you will not allow the development at 118 Congress to proceed as currently proposed. As a licensed real estate broker, property manager and landlord on Munjoy Hill for thirty years plus, I feel uniquely qualified to offer my comments.

This proposed project is not in keeping with the neighborhood in terms of its design mass and scale. It will directly overshadow two streets on Munjoy Hill and its bulk will dominate the neighborhood. The overhangs of the sidewalk will provide hazards in terms of falling ice. The size makes the intersection with Congress Street dangerous.

I take pride in providing a walkable, livable, historic, scenic and safe neighborhood to many tenants and clients, offering affordable housing in buildings I have owned since the 1980's.

There have been many changes since then, including the addition of many beautiful trees. Munjoy Hill is an old world type of neighborhood. Large scale building designs that might be appropriate in the District of Columbia or California are not suited to this section of Portland's highly visible scenic corridor on Congress Street. We have our own character and charm. This massive design takes away from our unique neighborhood personality and the ability to enjoy its scenic and historic perspective from the street level. Pedestrian safety and traffic visibility at this intersection are also threatened with a project of this size in this location.

Please do not allow this project to proceed as it is currently proposed.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful deliberation.

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