

## Caitlin Cameron - Newbury Street project

---

**From:** Christian MilNeil <c.neal.milneil@gmail.com>  
**To:** Caitlin Cameron <CCameron@portlandmaine.gov>  
**Date:** 2/12/2016 3:18 PM  
**Subject:** Newbury Street project

---

Hi Caitlin,

Thanks for letting me look over the plans for the Newbury Street project.

I appreciate that the developers are working on a very constrained site and that they're creating two new workforce units in the deal.

Still, as you may have guessed, the blank parking garage wall facing the ground level of Franklin Street grates on me. Even if it's allowed under the new form based code, that doesn't mean it doesn't violate the spirit of the city's design principles. Franklin Street already suffers from parking garage facades on the office buildings south of Middle Street, and it's a precedent we shouldn't be perpetuating.

I expect that the Historic Preservation Board may share some of these concerns, and I'd like to suggest a possible solution. The Franklin Street Phase II plan will substantially narrow Franklin Street at this location and specifically calls for the creation of new buildable lots between this 167 Newbury proposal and Franklin Street (the hatched areas in the sketch below):



Exhibit 4.7 from the Franklin Street Phase II Study

This new lot will be narrow, but large enough to accommodate an active storefront.

With that in mind, then, I'd like to request that the city treat the Franklin "facade" of 167 Newbury as only a temporary corner lot, with the expectation that there will be a future building going up along the new Franklin Street sidewalk when the excess right-of-way becomes available for redevelopment.

In other words, the developers of 167 Newbury should be allowed the zoning benefits of being on a corner lot for this project, in reflection of existing conditions. However, in recognition of the Franklin Street plan, this building's SW facade ought to be built as a party wall that can accommodate another building on the new corner lot when the Franklin Street reconstruction is complete.

Beyond accommodating better urban design, the party-wall solution also protects the City of Portland's financial stake in the new Franklin Street, by preserving the development value of its land.

What do you think?

-Christian