

Google Groups

New Home2 Hotel

Susan Murphy <smurphy@bates.edu>

Nov 25, 2017 2:38 PM

Posted in group: **Planning Board**

Greetings - Last December my husband and I moved from a house in Lewiston to a condo in Portland, on 185 Fore St., at the corner of Fore and India Streets. We love the location, the neighborhood, its historic buildings and shops, the ocean view, the views of the city and especially the green space across the street on India Street.

On Wednesday, November 15, we attended the meeting with Chatham Lodging Trust management to learn about the proposed 6 story, 128 room Home2 Suites Hotel that will be located at 203 Fore St. The plans showed that the hotel would be built in the green space on the corners of Middle, India and Fore Streets.

We have many concerns regarding the proposed construction of the hotel at this location, including the following.

-With several construction projects in the area currently underway or approved, the building density of the neighborhood will increase. There is or will be a new Marriott Hotel, a new condo building on Thames St., two office buildings next to the water pump station, an office building on Middle St. and the new Wex building.

-The car and truck traffic on Federal St. and the small neighborhood streets is already heavy. With the buildings mentioned above, plus another hotel, the traffic and parking needs will increase.

-The hotel is going to be 6 stories high. This building will be higher than all the other buildings on India Street, which are typically 3 or 4 stories high. Plus, there are no retail establishments planned for the ground floor on India Street, to improve the human scale of buildings. One section of the building will be a solid wall, 6 stories high, made of black or dark brick with a large Home2 sign at the top.

-Neighborhood parking is a concern. According to the presentation, there will be an exit from the hotel's garage onto Middle Street. The presenter indicated that there would be space on either side of the driveway for visibility. With the visibility space plus the width of the driveway, the parking spaces on Middle St. will be decreased. The existing spots are used all day, primarily for those visiting Portland and the restaurants on that section of Middle St.

-Our primary concern is the loss of the existing green space. From our deck, we watch dogs, Portlanders, visitors, and tourists from the cruise boats and bus tours enjoying the green space. Families have picnics on the grass, little visitors run in the open spaces, and dogs frolic in the green space. The hotel plan showed some green space on Middle St. but the area on the India side of the hotel is proposed to be covered with paving. Plus the building is planned to go right to the corner of India and Fore St., which is an area that could be opened to green space. The existing green space is a great addition to the neighborhood and it will be missed by many. Interestingly, a picture of the green space is included in the India Street Sustainable Neighborhood Plan as an example of ample recreation and open space.

The India Street Sustainable Neighborhood Plan addresses many of the issues cited above. The plan includes concerns of the human scale of buildings, the desire to not be dominated by automobiles and the need

for areas with ample recreation and open space.

While we don't have any specific questions, I wanted to let you know about our concerns and share our comments with you. In the short time we've been here, we've come to appreciate the neighborhood as it is. Adding a 6 story, 79246 sq. ft. hotel would really affect the ambiance of the area. Thank you.

Susan Murphy

--

Susan Murphy

--

Susan Murphy