



Baxter Academy
for Technology and Science

June 9, 2017

Dear Richard Nasson,

The purpose of this letter is to update you on the progress made by Baxter Academies in consolidating both of its campuses (561 Congress and 54 York) to a long-term facility being renovated at 185 Lancaster Street in Portland. We also wish to request a short extension in the date by which Baxter was required to widen a corridor under our permit for 561 Congress.

First, however, an apology and a request: Our permit for 561 Congress references a letter to your office dated 8/19/15. Baxter and its architect, Nancy Barba, have been unable to locate that letter; please send us a copy. We are assuming, for purposes of this letter, that the 8/19/15 letter requires Baxter to increase the width of the corridor to 6 feet as a condition of continued use of the space for educational purposes after 9/1/17. That is Baxter's understanding, based on conversations with Nancy Barba and review of her email to you dated 8/17/15.

Beginning in August, 2016, after unsuccessful negotiations on two other sites, Baxter began negotiations with the owner of 185 Lancaster Street with regard to a long-term lease and renovation of that property. The school entered into a letter of intent on 9/18/16 and, after developing plans for the renovated space and negotiating a construction contract, signed a lease on March 20, 2017 calling for the landlord to provide the renovated space on a turnkey basis. Your office issued a construction permit for the renovation on 3/14/17, and construction began after the City issued its permit on 4/19/17.

The agreed construction schedule provided for occupancy of the 2nd floor of 185 Lancaster on 9/1/17. In reliance on that schedule, the school planned to move the classes currently at 561 Congress to the 2nd floor of 185 Lancaster at the outset of the upcoming school year. The balance of the school would move into the 1st floor of the new facility on its scheduled occupancy of 11/17/17.

Because of unforeseen asbestos and other issues discovered during demolition, the construction schedule has now been revised to provide for occupancy of the 2nd floor on 9/18/17. Baxter will therefore need to use 561 Congress Street to house classes for a brief interval at the commencement of the upcoming academic year. Baxter's lease of 561 Congress extends to 6/30/18, so it has the right to continue occupying that space if necessary.

It would make no sense for Baxter to widen the corridor at 561 Congress at an estimated cost of about \$50,000 when it will only use the space for educational purposes for a matter of weeks. Baxter therefore requests that the Fire Marshal extend to 10/15/17 the deadline for expanding the width of the corridor as a condition of any educational use. That would allow

for additional delays not now foreseen. Further delays are hopefully unlikely given the completion of demolition, which should limit further “surprises.”

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I would be happy to answer any questions.



Kelli Pryor, Executive Director

Baxter Academies of Maine

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