

August 5, 2014

Dear Ms. Machado,

We are writing to you regarding the proposed development of the vacant lot at the corner of Taylor and May St. by Barak and Miriam Olins. Our LLC owns the building at 17 May St., which is across the street from the 2 Taylor St./14 May St. corner lot. However, we will be unable to attend this Wednesday's Planning Board meeting, so we are submitting our comments in writing.

After viewing the plans and contacting the architect who created them, we feel that the building would be a great asset to the neighborhood. This thoughtful design is very environmentally conscious and features several high-quality building materials, two features which we feel the Planning Board should actively support and promote in new construction projects in Portland.

We are aware that some residents of the neighborhood oppose the more modern appearance of the new home because the lot abuts the historic district, however we disagree with this dissent. Several similar homes have been built throughout the Portland peninsula in recent years, especially in the East End, and we find that they have blended in well with the older designs. Many of these newer properties have a superb energy-efficient design, much like the proposed plans for the Olins property. More importantly, the May St. neighborhood already has a mix of traditional and modern designs, so the new structure will add to that existing mix. For example, our building also abuts the historic district and we have renovated it over the past 10 years using a combination of modern, energy-efficient materials while retaining the classic design features of the existing structure. In addition, 15 May St., which is also right across the street from the proposed new structure, was renovated several years ago and given a much more modern appearance. Therefore, from an aesthetic perspective, the combination of the new home and the two buildings across the street from it (15 and 17 May St.) will form a nice transition from the historic district to the non-historic district.

The prospect of a high-quality, energy-efficient home being added to the neighborhood is one that excites us, both as owners and neighbors. We welcome this design as a tasteful, modern complement to the neighborhood and we urge the board to support this forward-looking project.

Sincerely,

Erik and Christy Zavasnik
EZ Spanish Immersions, LLC

