

Anthony J. Donovan

27 Riverview Street
Portland, Maine 04103

Home: (207) 774-6732
Mailto: tdonovan@maine.rr.com

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To the members of the **Zoning Board of Appeals**

RE: 476 Stevens Ave Conditional Use Appeal

As a resident of the area around the Deering Center of Portland, and as a long-time taxpayer and resident of the City I am here tonight to express my support for the proposed investment in the commercial property at Brentwood street owned by the Pompeo family.

I could spend some time talking about how this family has invested in the neighborhood for decades and about how the services, whether it was fine Italian dining, pizza or an ice cream parlor have well-served my family, friends and neighbors. Without neighborhood businesses like we have at Deering Center, the value of living in this area would be substantially reduced.

But I would rather focus on the importance of supporting commercial property investments in the City such as this one. As you should all be aware, the Portland City Council passed ordinances last year that imposed severe restrictions on the uses of properties in the business zones. The downtown business center and neighborhood zones were each singled out for zoning restrictions that not only fed into the perception of this city being anti-business, but they imposed severe economic restraints on the owners of these properties.

To the best of my knowledge, neither ordinance, which I refer to as the anti-Formula business and anti-Dunkin Donut laws respectively, were passed with adequate, if any planning board analysis. In fact according to the Traffic Engineer hired by the City, the I-B zone ordinances were based on flawed intelligence. I bring this to your attention because it is important to the tax base of the city and to the economic and social viability of our neighborhoods that we have neighborhood businesses. When laws are passed that appear to single out a business type that some individuals do not approve of, it is the job of this Board to provide a thorough and just analysis of the impacts and to provide relief where needed

I ask the board to approve the application before it and that each of you do your best to support local businesses in your own neighborhoods. The owner's of this property are some of Portland Real residents, so let's support them and Keep Portland Real.

Sincerely:

Tony Donovan