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To: Jean Fraser <JF@portlandmaine.gov>
CC: David Margolis-Pineo <DMP@portlandmaine.gov>, Katherine Earley <KAS@port...>
Date: 6/26/2015 10:38 AM
Subject: Jewish Community Center - Final Traffic Comments

Jean - I have reviewed the revised application materials and the following represents a status update on my previous comments.

* Maine Traffic Resources conducted a Trip Generation Analysis for the project and concludes that the proposed Jewish Community Center will generate less traffic as compared to St Patrick's Church. The applicant should provide an estimated comparison between the former Church use and the proposed project during the weekday AM and PM peak hours. My general sense is that during the AM peak hour the net change may not be significant given weekday morning Church services. During the weekday PM peak hour, I suspect the Church did not have regular weekday activities, while the proposed use will add traffic in conjunction with the day-care use.

Status: The applicant has submitted updated trip generation information and is estimating an increase of 50 to 60 additional PM peak hours trips as compared to the former St. Patrick's Church. The applicant has noted that this estimate is likely high given existing facility conditions, which I agree with given my site observations. I find the trip generation estimate to be reasonable and I have no further comment.

* I find driveway conditions along Congress Street to be improved with the elimination of existing driveways.

Status: I have no further comment.

* The driveway entering the site from Congress Street is noted as having a width of 22.7 feet. This width (in the area where parking maneuvers occur) does not meet City standards and thus a formal waiver should be requested by the applicant.

Status: I find the proposed driveway width to be acceptable given that most vehicles will be passenger cars and that a secondary driveway via the Westgate Shopping Center will be provided. I support this waiver request.

* A detectible warning panel is not required at the site driveway on Congress Street.

Status: The plans have been revised and I have no further comment.

* I would suggest a tip-down curb entering the driveway on Congress Street, as currently provided.

Status: The curb ramp layout should be revised so that the ramp flare does not impact accessibility along the sidewalk route. Having a tip-down design will help to address this issue.

* The applicant shall provide a Parking Supply analysis that documents parking needs both under a typical weekday scenario and during Community Center events.

Status: The applicant has provided an analysis of event parking demand and estimates a need for approximately 50 vehicles. I find this estimate to be generally reasonable and given agreements for use of abutting parking lots, I find the projects parking supply to be acceptable. I have no further comment.

* I find the vehicular connection to Westgate Shopping Center to be an excellent access management strategy that will allow traffic from the Community Center to utilize the traffic signal at Stevens Avenue. I would note that this connection can also serve traffic from the abutting medical office building and traffic from Lassell Street. Accordingly, I would suggest that access use rights be provided.

While I would prefer that the connection to the Westgate Shopping Center to be more direct, given the potential for vehicle/pedestrian conflict, the proposed plan appears acceptable. The applicant should provide a response on this issue and how they see traffic circulation interacting with site activity.
Status: An agreement has been provided and I have no further comment.

* The applicant shall consider the formal delineation of the driveway along the medical office property boundary, when entering from Congress Street.
Status: The site plan has been revised and I find conditions to be acceptable.

* The applicant should provide specifics about how the Daycare pick-up and drop-off activity will be managed from traffic perspective.
Status: The applicant has provided the requested information and I have no further comment.

* I'm concerned that the ITE data is not a good source for estimating traffic for the proposed project. I would suggest that the applicant conduct traffic counts/surveys at existing facilities to better estimate traffic levels. I would also like to get a better understanding on historic traffic activity at St. Patrick's Church. I recognize that traffic volumes are not likely to be available, but information on daily services and other event details would be helpful for my review and understanding of project impacts. The applicant should attempt to provide specific church service information, if available.
Status: As noted above the applicant has provided a reasonable estimate and I have no further comment.

* The pick-up and drop-off of daycare and others will need to be carefully managed. Accordingly, the applicant should provide specific details on how this process will take place. This should include what building entrances will be used, sidewalk facilities between parking spaces and the noted entrance, etc. I would note that the pick-up/drop-off program must be managed such that vehicles are not parking along the driveway off Congress Street.

Status: I have reviewed existing JCA activity at their current Portland site and I have recommended that a barrier be constructed that prevents pedestrians from accessing the building entrance near Congress Street. The applicant has revised the site plan to include a 18" sitting wall along the curb. While the height of the wall is mountable by pedestrians, I do believe the physical presence of the wall will deter drop-off and pick-up activity near Congress Street. Accordingly, I find conditions to be acceptable.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Best regards,

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