

Response to Comments 1342 Congress Street - Proposed Neighborhood Center

To: Jean Fraser, Planner; City of Portland
FROM: Greg Halsey, Tighe & Bond, Inc.
CC: Steve Brinn, Jewish Community Alliance of Southern Maine
DATE: May 13, 2015

The comments below were prepared by T.Y. Lin International and provided to Tighe & Bond by Jean Fraser, Planner, City of Portland on April 29, 2015. Tighe & Bond's responses are in **bold**.

A. Reviewer: Tom Errico, P.E.
Date: April 29, 2015

COMMENTS

- 1) *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.*

Maine Traffic Resources completed an additional trip generation analysis in response Mr. Errico's request. The findings are included in the summary memorandum included with this response. The extent of historic data available regarding daily and weekend activities at the Church was included with the Trip Generation Analysis prepared by Maine Traffic Resources on March 19, 2015. The Church has been closed for the last 2-3 years, so more recent data is not available.

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

Agreed.

- 3) *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.*

The vertical granite curb line proposed will be reconstructed in the location of the existing curb line. In this location the width is 22.7'. The driveway width where on-site parking maneuvers occur widens to 24 feet as required by City Standards. To clarify this item a dimension has been provided on the

Site Plan.

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

The detectable warning panel has been removed from the Site Plans.

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

Agreed.

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

The parking provided is based on the requirements of the City of Portland Land Use Code. Therefore, it is anticipated that the (50) proposed parking spaces will adequate for typical weekday scenarios as well as neighborhood center events. If it is anticipated that parking may not be sufficient periodically for special events, the Applicant is aware they will need to make arrangements for additional parking off site.

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

Agreed.

- 7) *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.*

The Applicant is currently working on a formal Access Easement Agreement with the Owner of Westgate Shopping Center. The formal Agreement will be included with the final Site Plan Submission. The layout of the site took into account pedestrian safety within the parking lot by designating crosswalks and providing sidewalks along the perimeter of the parking lot, so pedestrian travel within the parking lot is minimized. The layout of the parking lot will require traffic to circulate through the lot in the longest route possible so there is no shortcut to the shared driveway with Westgate Shopping Center that exists in the Church parking lot today. The layout of the parking lot also provides a buffer between the traffic circulation and site activities that will predominantly occur within and directly outside the proposed building.

- 8) *The applicant shall consider the formal delineation of the driveway along the medical office property boundary, when entering from Congress Street.*

A single white line has been added to the Site Plan to formally delineate the driveway along the medical office property boundary.

- 9) *The applicant should provide specifics about how the Daycare pick-up and drop-off activity will be managed from traffic perspective.*

The Applicant already has a procedure in place for daycare pick up and drop off activities that are in use at the existing JCA facility at 57 Ashmont Street in Portland. Parents are required to park in the lot and walk the children into the building. The Applicant will not allow queuing in the drive aisle for curb side drop offs and pickups as this is not allowed at the existing facility. Drop off and pick up times are typically staggered in both the morning and afternoons and carpooling is a common occurrence, which will help spread out the traffic volume over a larger time period. It is also important to note that the parking lot at the existing facility is much smaller than the proposed parking provided at 1342 Congress Street, which will provide adequate space for daycare drop off and pick up.