

Possible Collaboration with Our Neighbors on a “Jewish Campus”

Hi all. Some congregants noticed a recent public filing with the City of Mercer Island that seemed to indicate that HNT was planning to swap land with the French American School. We wanted to assure everyone that this is not happening now and would never happen without a full and transparent discussion with our members. We are excited to report, however, that we have begun working with the SJCC and other Jewish community organizations on a potentially exciting concept that would result in the creation of a vibrant Jewish campus housing several other organizations and enriching the entire community. While the possibilities seem endless, we are very early in the process and still exploring what makes sense for HNT and the community. Below is an update prepared by the team working on the project which includes Donna Peha as HNT’s representative. Please, if you have any questions or concerns, reach out to one of us for more information.

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Recently, public discussion has surfaced around the future development of the properties owned by the Stroum Jewish Community Center (“SJCC”), the French American School of Puget Sound (“FASPS”), and Herzl-Ner Tamid (“HNT”) on Mercer Island. While in the early stages of this process, the discussion has included possible options for how to use these properties, how to share resources, and how best to meet the needs of several different organizations. Consideration is being given to those involved and to the Mercer Island community. Along the way, we will work hard to reach out to the community to provide clear and accurate information.

As we set off on this path, here is an overview of where we are at in the process:

- **Early Stage Discussions:**
 - Discussions began in early 2017 with various organizations, including the SJCC, HNT, and FASPS, all of whom currently own property and reside south of I-90 in the northeast section of Mercer Island. From these conversations emerged the idea of creating a campus to house various organizations.
- **Working Teams:**
 - Recently, a working team with representatives from various organizations and community leaders has been assembled.
 - Along with several working sub-groups, this team will devote considerable time over the next few months to evaluate options, review feasibility of ideas, discuss what organizations might be included, review options for the best use of the land, and develop various funding structures.
- **Zoning:**
 - In an effort to facilitate optimal site development, FASPS, HNT, and the SJCC submitted a request for a new zoning designation on Mercer Island, a process involving several

steps. Given the City of Mercer Island Planning Commission's calendar, the initial request for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment was submitted in October 2017.

- As one step in this process, a public hearing was held on June 6, 2018. Additional public hearings will be held in the coming months as calendared by the City of Mercer Island.
- **As part of the zoning review process, a set of illustrative site plans accompanied the review request. These documents were prepared to serve only as an illustration of what the site might look like; the conversations about how the sites will be used continues to be a work in progress and will likely evolve as the dialogue continues.**

As we proceed, we look forward to including our collective communities in the dialogue, and we invite you to share your ideas, questions, and concerns; contact information is noted below. As this plan progresses, outreach to our constituents, communities, and neighbors will continue to be a high priority.

Thank you.