

## 24 st Lawrence street project

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Posted in group: **Planning Board**

Dear Planning Board: I am not sure if I will be able to attend the work shop tomorrow due to work reasons, however I wish to express comments/concerns. If I do not make the meeting please accept this as my public comment I would have made.

I am a property owner on Beckett Street on Munjoy Hill. Although I am not within the 500 feet notification area of the 24 St. Lawrence Street project, I am a resident of Munjoy Hill and care about its future and my neighbors who live here. While I agree that the new version of the proposed building on 24 St. Lawrence is not as bad as the original it still is not a design that belongs in a proposed Historic District. The neighborhood was built in the 1800's by workers that took pride in their construction in appearance, durability, attention to detail and ensured the buildings had a similar cohesive look of the neighborhood. This construction was done without power tools and has stood the test of time and does not deserve to be demolished. Zoning provides the ability for 24 st Lawrence to be modernized/renovated while adding modest compatible expansion. With that being said, I hope that the planning board rejects the construction that is proposed for this site. It is bad enough that an 1850 era house is being torn down but as we know there are many more issues such as: 1. Degrading/eliminating the views of several long term neighbors, 2. Instability of the retaining wall to support the new weight of the building, 3. The potential for damage to other adjacent properties, 4. Dwarfing existing buildings so they will no longer have sunlight in their yards, 5. Loss of privacy with new porches and 6. Degrading the neighborhood with yet another massive ugly out of scale building. This is the neighborhood that has proven to care about retaining it's historic appeal vs. razing and rebuilding box condos. And what is the benefit of this new construction? From my point of view it is only so the current owner can live free and make a million dollars at the expense of his neighbors. Sure a small handful of more people will live in the new Condo. But will the condo's be affordable or will the new people living there even be year round residents? Although speculation, I would suspect after a few years of building this the current owner will bail out and sell their condo for a million leaving behind a massive ugly building. Is this what the city wants for Munjoy Hill, i.e.- no historic buildings? We have ample planned and in process construction going on in the India/Fore street area that should suffice for growth. Can we just leave Munjoy Hill alone except for modest expansion and renovation? Residents of Munjoy Hill like the quality of life we have here. We don't want to live amongst a wall of buildings like in NYC.

Also, As a tax payer I would have to think that if the planning board, acting on behalf of the city, approves this project knowing there is a foundation that is not capable of supporting the massive structure and something happens that taxpayers will foot the massive lawsuit costs. I really don't want my taxes raised for that.

As a multi property owner, I understand I should be able to do certain things to my properties. But I don't agree that should include demolishing a historic in name and heritage building just so I can become a millionaire.

I feel really bad for the surrounding neighbors if this is allowed to happen and they have to watch the destruction of the 1850 building and the erection of a massive light and view blocking box. This is not what Maine or Portland is suppose to be about!! Where has respect for others gone? There has to be some balance left for neighborhood respect vs. sheer profit.

Thank you,

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