

Bonenfant, Janice

From: Sexton, Amanda
Sent: Wednesday, July 08, 2015 9:51 PM
To: Bonenfant, Janice
Subject: Fwd: Letter to City Councilors for July Public Hearing
Attachments: Letter to City Council for July Meeting.pdf; ATT00001.htm

Hi Janice,

Please see attached.

Thanks,
Amanda

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Susanne Smith Meyer <ssmla@comcast.net>
Date: July 8, 2015 at 9:41:09 PM EDT
To: Susanne Smith Meyer <ssmla@comcast.net>
Subject: **Letter to City Councilors for July Public Hearing**

As I am unable to attend the hearing on the hearing for the proposed "splash fountain" I have attached my testimony. I ask that this be publically read into the record at the hearing.
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Susanne Smith Meyer

July 8, 2015

As a longtime Concord resident who is a landscape architect and planning board member, I have great concerns about revived efforts to install a "splash fountain" in front of our State House.

When the City Council was deliberating on the final design components of the master plan they wisely eliminated the proposal for a "splash fountain". I believe they made this decision based on two reasons. First, it added an unnecessary expenditure to the project for a feature that has nothing to do with the original and intended purpose of the TIGER Complete Streets Grant. Second, the long term maintenance costs would be an added burden to the city budget. Currently there are two downtown water fountains that over the years have been turned off for long periods of time due to lack of funds for repair and maintenance.

As a tax payer I agree that these reasons justified the elimination of the "splash fountain". As a landscape architect, I strongly object to the location of this feature. The plaza is a historic civic space that is also an important formal entrance to the State House grounds. On the south side of the plaza facing North Main Street is a memorial to the 14th President, Franklin Pierce. On the north side is a memorial to those who sacrificed their lives in WWII, the Korean War and Vietnam. This site is often the location of memorial services remembering those brave Granite Staters. There is an inherent conflict of use and appropriateness adding a "splash fountain" to this civic space. Its presence is not respectful or compatible with the current purpose, would clutter the space and conflict with passive pedestrian use and circulation.

None of the aforementioned conditions have changed except that now private funds are being raised by the consortium of the Concord Chamber of Commerce, private developers and City Councilors, to pay for the fountain to the tune of about \$500,000. In addition to privately raised funds, a grant proposal has been submitted to the Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA) for \$200,000 to support the fountain. The City Council authorized a letter of support to accompany this proposal which would make it appear as though a decision has already been made if the funds become available. As of now, there are no funds designated for long term maintenance.

The group spearheading this effort is convinced that this "splash fountain" will bring people downtown and is worth the half million dollar cost to create a "wow" factor. I and countless other Concord residents disagree. While the exorbitant costs are one issue, equally as important, is how this addition impacts the purpose, use, and quality of this historic place in our city and our State's Capitol. I would suggest that if one is looking for a "wow" factor at this end of North Main Street, all you need to do is look up to see the gilded eagle and dome that grace our State House.

I implore the City Council to stand by their original position. In doing so, they will not only protect this historic civic plaza that is inherently a part of the formal setting for our State House but also protect tax payers from this unnecessary financial burden on an already strapped city budget.

Respectfully,

Susanne Smith Meyer
14 Shawmut Street

Bonenfant, Janice

From: chamby@comcast.net
Sent: Friday, July 10, 2015 1:55 PM
To: Bonenfant, Janice
Subject: Fwd: Fountains

Hi Janice:

Was this original email forwarded to you for the rest of the council?

Thanks!

B.

From: "Roger Miknaitis" <rogermiknaitis@icloud.com>
To: chamby@comcast.net
Sent: Friday, July 10, 2015 11:32:17 AM
Subject: Fountains

I know, Byron, you are not my representative. I notified the proper councillors but this is FYI.

Good Morning,

We are in support of adding the fountains to the downtown project. We are impressed with the work done so far and think that the fountain addition will make the renovation special, drawing even more people to the downtown district. Please support this proposal.

Roger and Shelley Miknaitis
5 Otter Drive

Sent from my iPhone