



PORTLAND MAINE

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Congress Square Park –

Emails/Letters received (not contained in original

Housing and Community Development packet)

IN SUPPORT OF SALE.

Greg Mitchell - Support for the Rockbridge Proposal

From: Jill Barkley <jbarkley@gmail.com>
To: <kjdonoghue@portlandmaine.gov>, <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>, John Coyne <jco...>
Date: 5/29/2013 12:12 PM
Subject: Support for the Rockbridge Proposal

Hello, Mayor Brennan and Members of the Housing and Community Development Committee,

I am regretful that my busy job of lobbying in Augusta might keep me from attending tonight's meeting regarding the Rockbridge proposal for Congress Square. I am strongly in support of the proposal and gave public comment before the working group last week. I will try to attend the meeting of the full Council when you take up this issue.

In the last week, I have spent time speaking with business owners in my neighborhood, members of my condo association and fellow residents. Across the board, folks I speak with are in support of the proposal for an events and conference center that would occupy part of the space currently known as Congress Square Park. In exchange, we are hopeful for a smaller, more functional and beautiful park at street level.

Opponents to this proposal have argued that we should protect public space. To me, the proposal is a compromise ---- allowing progress and a boost to local business while maintaining a smaller park as public space owned by the city. I am pleased to know the public will be involved in the process of deciding how to renovate the park and even more pleased to know that Rockbridge will match the city's allocated funds for this project.

As a property owner, longterm resident of Parkside, member of Wiliston-Immanuel United Church and small business owner myself, I am hopeful plans will move forward and you will unanimously support the proposal on the table from Rockbridge at tonight's meeting. I am always proud to live and work in Portland --- but I will be even more proud to show off this beautiful new development and much nicer public park at the end of my street.

Thank you for your time and your service to our great city,
Jill

Jill Barkley
198 High Street #8
Portland, ME 04101
jbarkley@gmail.com
207-332-1297

From: Fred Forsley <FForsley@SHIPYARD.com>
To: "mfpb@portlandmaine.gov" <mfpb@portlandmaine.gov>, "kjdonooghue@portlandm...
Date: 5/29/2013 11:42 AM
Subject: Eastland Expansion Plans

Dear Mayor Brennan and Portland City Councilors:

I am writing to say that I strongly support the Eastland renovating the adjacent park area for a convention center.

Their expansion is very much needed in the City and they have invested substantially in that neighborhood. These additional taxes will help fund schools and other needed services.

I urge you to support this expansion.

Sincerely,

Fred Forsley
Shipyard Brewing Company
86 Newbury St.
Portland, Maine 04101
Cell: 207-450-1104
fforsley@shipyard.com<mailto:fforsley@shipyard.com>

From: stephen smith <sa.smith@post.harvard.edu>
To: <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>
Date: 5/29/2013 6:53 AM
Subject: Congress Square Park

Dear Mr. Mavodones --

I'm writing to encourage you to vote against selling Congress Square Park to private interests.

I sat through the discussion of the proposal last week at the Congress Square Study Group meeting, and it's clear that, while there's lots of obscuring rhetoric, the proposal is simply a tactic undertaken by the Westin developer to remove "undesirable" citizens from the park and take control of the public space around the hotel.

The proposed structure, a one-story building that looks like a suburban bank branch, is totally inappropriate for the urban fabric of Portland, and the wide spot in the sidewalk that would be left as a remnant of the park is an insult to the people of Portland.

Business owners and representatives from surrounding interests spoke generally in favor of the sale proposal, apparently because they too would rather have no park users in the area. (Paul Trusiani, owner of Paul's Food Center, an immediate abutter, was not in this group: he spoke eloquently about the importance of public amenities to city, and in favor of retaining the park.)

I believe that if the sale is denied it would put the city in a very good position to go to the Westin developers and negotiate for aid in redesigning the park, since clearly one way or another they want a better front yard for their hotel. A great example of how this could work is Copley Square Park in Boston, which was redesigned and renovated in 1991 to eliminate many of the same problems seen in Congress Square Park. The bulk of the cost of the renovation was provided by the commercial neighbors of the park (via Friends of Copley Square Park, which includes the Copley Plaza Hotel, Trinity Church, the Hancock Tower and many smaller businesses in the area) because they recognized the value to them of a vibrant, popular public amenity outside their front doors.

Please preserve our park.

Thank you...

Stephen Smith
13 Deering Street
Portland ME



May 29, 2013

Dear City of Portland Council Members:

As a Congress Street merchant for almost 19 years (in fact, Coffee By Design was launched at our 620 Congress Street location), we have experienced firsthand the highs and lows of Congress Square. We have seen many businesses – both small and large -- close their doors or move as the promise of improvement to the area flickered and then faded. We believe in the Arts District and the 600 block having renewed our lease even when sales were lean and the activity in the neighborhood returned to less than desirable after years of concerted effort to make positive change happen. At the same time, we believe in the importance of open space being accessible to the public but recognize the need from an economic development and safety standpoint that sometimes a new strategy needs to be implemented.

We believe that RockBridge Capital's request for land to build an Events Center which includes public space in their revised design plans for Congress Square Plaza is the win-win solution the neighborhood needs.

Please let us know if you have any further questions about our experience in the neighborhood or support for this project to move forward.

Regards,

Mary Allen Lindemann

Alan G. Spear

Lori Paulette - Progress in Portland

From: James Buchanan <James@membercard.com>
To: "nmm@portlandmaine.gov" <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>
Date: 5/28/2013 2:52 PM
Subject: Progress in Portland

Hello Nick, We've met a number of times over the years. And, I appreciated your help with Will Thomas when I was Chairman of Zone Labs and we set up the Zone Urban Triathlon in Portland. I am hoping you will support the development proposal for Congress Square. As a resident of Portland, the activity and investment at the new Eastland will serve all of us through new services but importantly an increase to our tax base. Our property taxes, relative to services provide on Pine Street are pretty minimal. We would like to see this go through as an important step for the city. Thanks and please let me know. All the best, Jim

James A. Buchanan | Chief Executive Officer
Member Benefits LLC, 200 International Drive, Portsmouth, NH 03801
MemberCard.com | Ph 603-276-3217 | Fax 888.267.6950 | Mobile 207.650.6865 | James@membercard.com

Lori Paulette - Congress Square Park - Opposed to Sale

From: Ross or Kathleen Fields <fieldsofun@gmail.com>
To: Nicholas Mavodones <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>
Date: 5/28/2013 10:27 AM
Subject: Congress Square Park - Opposed to Sale
CC: Cheryl Leeman <cl@portlandmaine.gov>, David Marshall <damarshall@portlan...>

Dear Nick and the committee for Housing and Community Development,

I am writing to express my opposition to the possible sale of Congress Square Park to Westin Portland Harborview Hotel.

My initial reaction was of favoring the sale because I felt it would bring much needed vibrancy to the area.

After visiting the park and speaking to several long-time residents I have changed my view to that of keeping the park intact, continuing city ownership. However, I feel that Portland's parks, our parks, need attention and a creative solution to actually make them a desirable destination for the public.

I know that several of you have lived and travel in Europe, as have I, and know the feel many of the city parks there have. They have a certain energy, a certain community atmosphere that I know we can create here in Portland as well. Monument Square has some similar characteristics with its cafes and eateries and farmer's market.

Again, I am opposed the the sale of Congress Square Park.

Sincerely,
Ross Fields
46 Turner Street
Portland, Maine

p.s. My wife and I will celebrate our 2 year anniversary as Portland residents in July. We moved here because it was a place where we could live without vehicles. So far that is working out great. We walk all over Portland and I can tell you this, you see a lot more at that pace.

Jan Beitzer

Subject: Congress Square Park - HCDC Meetings

Subject: Re: Congress Square Park - HCDC Meetings

I appreciate having been added to this list, which resulted from a comment I made several months ago supportive of the first proposal submitted by the Eastland developers. I am not aware of the contents of the new proposal, so my comment is a response to the following, submitted by Roseanne Graef.

"I realize you are under a lot of pressure from various business interests; but considering how many times the Eastland has changed hands since the 1970s, it seems to me, at least, that the residents of Portland who have been here and who will be here for the long haul should be paramount in your considerations. An attractive, vibrant public park in the center of the city will provide many more benefits for many more people than a ballroom.

It's glaringly obvious that the park needs work, but selling it isn't the answer. As just one example, I would urge you to consider Bryant Park in New York City. This is definitely prime real estate and it's filled with trees, bistro tables, chairs benches, food kiosks and is a venue for a variety of events. Congress Square could serve the same function in the heart of Portland - it could even be an outdoor craft market on cruise ships days and feed two birds with one seed!"

I am, presumably, one of the "various business interests" allegedly putting Portland city officials "under a lot of pressure." as I own an art gallery on Forest Avenue in the building opposite the Eastland, owned by the Portland Stage Theater. I am not a long-time resident of the city, as I and my business have been in Portland for only six years. In that time I have seen numerous art galleries on Congress Street in the "Arts District" open and close, or move. I believe that this is, at least in significant part, due to the fact that the area is blighted and uninviting to visitors. The two most obvious signs of this blight are the long boarded up building opposite the Museum on High Street, and the de facto uses to which the park is put. I would have closed my gallery long ago, as, despite a lot of lip service about its quality, it has not found favor with the residents of Portland as a place to purchase art. It remains open because it is supported by sales through my website and through out-of-state shows at which I exhibit. Essentially 100% of my business comes from "away."

I believe that the redevelopment of the Eastland into a modern upscale hotel complex provides Portland with an opportunity to bring a social and economic benefit to the area in the form of affluent hotel and event guests who will be eager to find places to eat and shop in the area. I continue to believe that selling the park property and using the funds to create another public amenity is the way to go. I was greatly influenced by Jane Jacob's book "The Death and Life of Great American Cities," in which she deplored public "open space" as being conducive to crime and boringness, and called for streets in which there is a continuing flow of interest and activity from one building to the next.

I understand that so many depredations have been made to the American urban landscape that there is a reason why many think of park space as sacred. The park in question, however, is not at all like Bryant Park in New York. Midtown New York now is a playground for the rich, famous and foreign: it has a base to support the kind of uses to which Bryant Park is devoted. I don't think Portland does. If the kind of "crafts" I see being hawked along Commercial Street in Cruise season, or on Congress Street during the so-called Art Walk are an example of the kind of uses Ms. Graef thinks belong in Congress Square, the "outdoor craft market" which

sounds so picturesque will in reality be an outdoor flea market.

I am not involved with the redevelopment of the Eastland in any way, and don't know the people who are, but I have to wonder how a four or five star hotel can thrive if the current environment or the one envisioned by Ms. Graef is allowed to continue next to it. I also have to ask the question why it is thought that outdoor street vendors and "food kiosks" are thought to be preferable to retail businesses and restaurants that pay rents to keep commercial buildings viable and add revenue to the City's tax base. Finally, I know there is concern about the use of the park by homeless people. I can only say that maintenance of a situation where we think we are helping the homeless by giving them the use of a public park, and protecting them by preventing the conversion of the park to other uses, is a sad and inadequate response to the problem of homelessness.

Edward T. Pollack
A FINE THING: Edward T. Pollack Fine Arts
29 Forest Avenue
Portland, ME 04101

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A FINE THING: Edward T. Pollack Fine Arts
29 Forest Avenue
Portland, ME 04101
207-699-2919 (Gallery)
617-610-7173 (Cell)
www.edpollackfinearts.com
ed@edpollackfinearts.com

We the undersigned businesses and residents of the Arts District support the selling of Congress Square Park to the Westin Hotel to build a ballroom that will bring more customers and jobs downtown.

Name	Address	Business (if applicable)
1. Danny R. Hatt	564 Congress St.	Emerald City
2. Frank Barry	580 Congress St	Springer's Jewelers
3. Lindi A. Gray	580 Congress St	Springer Jewelers
4. Jennifer Reese	580 Congress St.	Springers Jewelers
5. Paul Aguayo	580 CONGRESS ST.	SPRINGERS JEWELERS
6. Kathi Adams	580 Congress St	Springers Jewelers
7. Jenna Grant	580 Congress St	Springers Jewelers
8. William C. Keene	580 Congress St	Springers Jewelers
9. Daniel Kennedy	584 Congress St.	Harmon's & Barton's
10. John Hatcher	6 DEERING St	Hatcher Group
11. Lucielle Hatcher	737 Congress st.	Sawyer & Company
12. Russell D. Wilbur	10 Congress Sq.	Russell Wilbur
13. Dorinda P. Putnam	560 Congress St.	Queen of Hats
14. Christopher R. Gale	564 Congress St	Emerald City
15. Timothy A. PEKART	564 Congress St	Emerald City
16. J.M. FOLLISTE	20 DEERING ST #1	
17. Lon Chouinard	17 Summit St	Emerald City
18. Stephen Mauds	354 Convent St.	EMERALD CITY
19. Nolan Hellen	660 Brighton ave.	AT Hutchins, LLC
20. Ryan Hutchins	660 Brighton Ave.	A.T. Hutchins, LLC
21. Rob & Mary O'D	617 Congress	Congress Bar + Grill.
22. Elizabeth W.	72 Pine St #3	Strategic Media
23. M. Whelan Loretta	111 State St #41	Congress B + G

24. ~~Michael McK~~ MICHAEL B. MCKENZIE 114 PARIC ST. PORTLAND

25. ~~Rhonda Peard~~ Rhonda Peard 568 Congress St. Bridge Galberg

26. ~~Beth Moran~~ Bethany Moran 567 Congress St. Speckled Axe

27. ~~Mat Bolinger~~ MAT BOLINGER 167 Congress St. Speckled Axe

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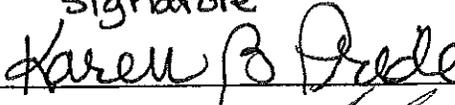
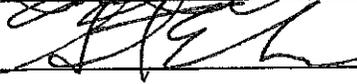
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	Signature	Business (optional)	Print Name
78.		Cross Jewelers	Karen B. Pride
79.		Cross Jewelers	Stephen Pride
80.		Cross Jewelers	JAMES TAYLOR
81.		CROSS JEWELLERS	RALPH PRIDE
82.		CROSS JEWELERS	STAN SCHUBERT

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We support the sale of Congress Square Park to the Westin Hotel
 Those who have signed above live or work in Portland.

Lori Paulette - Westin, Congress Sq. Plaza

From: Jim Brady <jameshbrady@gmail.com>
To: <mfpb@portlandmaine.gov>
Date: 5/27/2013 10:34 PM
Subject: Westin, Congress Sq. Plaza
CC: Gregory Mitchell <gmitchell@portlandmaine.gov>
Attachments: Mayor Brennan letter 20130527.pdf

Dear Mayor Brennan,

Please see the attached letter regarding the proposed event space at the Westin hotel by Rockbridge Capital.

I will be out of town this Wednesday evening and thus, unable to attend and speak in favor of this project and the economic opportunity it brings to Portland.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
Jim Brady

RED Group, LLC
P. O. Box 7486
Portland, ME 04112
(207) 653-9990
jameshbrady@gmail.com



P. O. Box 7486 – Portland, ME 04112

May 27, 2013

Dear Mayor Brennan,

As an active Portland developer, both in my time as president of Olympia Development from 1997-2008 and more recently as a real estate developer on my own since returning from my time living in Italy from 2008-2011, I take a sincere and focused interest in the developments going on in Portland.

Sometimes I wonder if I'm too optimistic about where Portland is headed, but the news, press and world seem to have been waking up to many wonderful attributes Portland has to offer. I must commend not only the guidance of the city council, but that of the local businesses, non-profits and people in general who make up this great place and continue to strive to make it even better.

As you may know, I am a limited partner in several hotels in the market and was heavily involved with the development of the Hilton Garden Inn on Commercial Street along with the Baker Newman and Noyes and CIEE buildings which completed that city block. In addition, I am developing the vacant former Portland Press Herald office building into a boutique hotel.

I am writing to you, to express my sincere support of the proposed project at Congress Square Plaza. While the significant investment Rockbridge Capital is making to a historic landmark, in of itself is impressive, that investment will bring additional benefit to the local community. The arts district is still in the process of being defined and while certain areas could use significant improvements, we know that the available funds are limited. Throughout the city, there are a number of parks and plazas that are in need of capital improvements and with limited funds and challenges facing the City budget each year, it is unlikely that all of these required capital improvements can be made. As I understand it, this proposed development would include an additional 50,000 of funding for the design to improve the remaining city plaza area and reactivate that zone into a welcome and functional space for the public's enjoyment. We also know that this market has a lack of high quality meeting space to host events, be it conferences, weddings or meetings. The proposed event center adjacent to the new Westin hotel, would be a significant and welcome addition to the City and the neighborhood. Not only would this project put a derelict and non-functioning property back on the tax roles, the remaining areas not developed by Rockbridge should be redesigned and rebuilt to make necessary improvements. As I have understood the plan being presented by



P. O. Box 7486 – Portland, ME 04112

the developer, the “new” plaza will be designed in a way to provide ample space for the public as they pass through this heavily trafficked intersection at the center of the arts district.

I recommend that the City council work together with this developer to ensure that a workable plaza remains for the public, while allowing the proposed economic engine they are requesting, significant additional investment with a 5,000 sf event center, be allowed to move forward and come to fruition.

While many in the local community question the addition of so many new hotel rooms to the City, what is becoming clear is that tourism continues to grow in both Portland and Maine while other industries in the state disappear. We all need to embrace this economic shift and take advantage of the opportunities these new properties and industry offer. Hotels provide many jobs and as that supply of guestrooms increases, so does the city tourism capacity, which will ultimately bring more tourist and their dollars into our local community – the retailers, restaurants and events in Portland will all benefit from these new projects coming online.

Portland as a city has many exciting projects on the boards and let’s all hope that they can continue to evolve, as we as a City evolve, to make this a better place for the future.

If I may be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jim Brady

Mailing address:
RED Group LLC
P. O. Box 7486
Portland, ME 04112-7486

Office address:
80 Exchange Street
Suite 30
Portland, ME 04101

From: <amylandry@maine.rr.com>
To: <jduson@portlandmaine.gov>, <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>, <janton@portlandmai...>
Date: 5/27/2013 9:08 AM
Subject: Thoughts on Congress Square Plaza

Mayor Brennan and Members of the Portland City Council,

While I don't have the time to attend council meetings or other public comment opportunities, I wanted to add my opinion and perspective to the debate surrounding Congress Square Plaza. I've lived in Portland since 2001 and first starting visiting regularly as a teenager in 1995 when my father dated a woman who lived on the West End. During that period I can count on one hand the number of times I've seen Congress Square used in a way in which a true public park is intended.

My first memories of the space was as a teenager when I'd shoo my little sister past the suspect characters that often lingered just off the sidewalk there as we walked to find lunch on Exchange Street. As a young adult studying at USM, I'd walk past on my way to shows at the State Theater or to grab a late night dinner at Norms with friends. Again always a "colorful" cast of characters would greet my friends and me as we walked by. Many doing no harm, but others were often panhandling, drinking or yelling at passersby.

Now as a property owner and professional working in this city, my encounters with Congress Square are primarily driving by or occasionally walking past during the day on my way to a lunch meeting or dinner at one of the restaurants close by. I still notice how barren the park is most times sometimes with a smattering of people that look like they may have been there all day or all night.

While I understand the argument for public space, I do not believe this park is worth preserving. There are some lovely public spaces in our city that boast views of the ocean, green space, event opportunities and more. This as currently designed is not one of those. Rockbridge is willing to invest millions of dollars in a city that has a mixed history of supporting private development. We should embrace those that want to invest in our city. The Rockbridge proposal would not only boost our local economy by providing space for events like conferences and weddings, it retains and funds improvements to the park.

I urge you to support this proposal and to weigh the opinions of those who own businesses, commercial property and homes within blocks of this site over those of us (myself included) that do not. Thank you for your public service to our great city.

Sincerely,

Amy Landry
44 Coyle Street, Portland

Lori Paulette - Congress Square

From: "Wayne Duffett" <wayne@tecassoc.com>
To: "Michael Brennan" <mfpb@portlandmaine.gov>, "Kevin Donoghue" <kjdonoghue...>
Date: 5/27/2013 8:27 AM
Subject: Congress Square
Attachments: parksinportland.pdf

Dear Councilors,

I am writing to support selling the vacant lot at Congress and High Streets to the new owners of the Eastland. This "park" wasn't created out of need for more parks. It was created because we tore down some old buildings and had nothing to fill the hole. It's never evolved into a gathering place like Tommy's Park or Post Office Park. In fact, it never even made the list of parks kept by Public Services (attached).

So along comes Rockbridge Capital and invests \$50,000,000 in downtown Portland renovating the Eastland. This increases our property tax base and creates jobs. Most importantly, allowing them to build in Congress Square Park will bring more events to the city and more visitors. This will benefit all the downtown businesses and create more jobs. A rising tide floats all boats.

Regards,

Wayne Duffett
52 East Commonwealth Drive
Portland

P.S. Would need to relocate the Union Station clock. How about Oceangate? Make it part of the deal with Rockbridge that they pay to move the clock.

Wayne W. Duffett, P.E. Tel. 207-767-6068
TEC Associates Fax 207-767-7125
46 Sawyer Street Cellular 207-232-3581
South Portland, Maine 04106 wayne@tecassoc.com

Parks in Portland, Maine

[Open Spaces Map](#)

COMMUNITY PARKS	Location	Acres
Back Cove Trail	Baxter Boulevard	33.36
Deering Oaks Park	Parking lot on State Street, and along Park Ave., EXPO parking area.	55
Eastern Promenade	Parking on Eastern Prom and Cutter Street	68.2
Payson Park	between Ocean Ave. & Baxter Blvd.	47.75
Western Promenade	Along Park roadway	18.5
NATURAL PARKS	Location	Acres
Baxter Woods	parking along Stevens & Forest Avenues.	30
Baxter (Deering) Pines	Ludlow & Leland Street access; corner of Mabel St.	5.9
Capisic Pond Park	Access from Macy St. of Capisic St. & Lucas St off Brighton	18
Evergreen Cemetery Woodlands	At the back of Evergreen Cemetery on Stevens Avenue	
Fore River Park	Hobart Street at Congress Street	
Oatnuts Park	Summit Street	15
	Wooded area behind Portland Arts & Technology School, Allen Avenue	
PATHS		
Pine Grove Park	Ray St. between Virginia St. & Nevada St.	6.5
Presumpscot River Preserve	Overset Road off Curtis Road & via Oatnuts Park Trail	40
Riverton Trolley Park	corner of Riverside St. & Forest Ave.	19
University Park	off Allen Ave. at Yale St. or at end of Harvard from Washington Ave.	8.6
IN-TOWN NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS	Location	Acres
Fort Allen Park / Eastern Promenade	as Fore Street turns into Eastern Promenade	9.33
Fort Sumner Park	North Street	1.25
Harbor View Memorial Park	York & Bracket Streets / Tyng & Tate Streets	2.5
Heseltine Park	Ocean Ave. & Irving St.	0.82
Lincoln Park	Congress St., Pearl St., and Federal St.	2.5
Post Office Park	Spring Street, between Exchange & Market Streets	0.15
Tommy's Park	corner of Spring & Exchange Streets, adjacent to Post Office Park	0.15
GREATER PORTLAND NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS	Location	Acres
Bedford Park	Deering Ave. at Bedford St. near USM	0.52
Belmeade Park	Baxter Blvd. & Belmeade Rd.	0.25
Barrows Park – Baxter Sundial	Baxter Blvd. at Vannah Ave.	0.25
Fessenden Park	corner of Deering Ave. & Brighton Ave. near USM	0.46
Longfellow Park	Longfellow St. & Oakdale St. / Noyes St.	0.34
Nason's Corner / Breakwater School	Capisic Street & Albion Street	
Quaker Park	Forest Ave. at Riverside Industrial Parkway	0.8
Stroundwater Park	intersection of Congress & Waldo Streets	0.75
Stroundwater Park 2	corner of Congress & Westbrook Streets	
Trinity Park	Forest Ave. at Coyle St.	0.1
Winslow Park	Baxter Blvd. at Preble St. Extension	1.26
ISLAND PARKS	Location	Acres
Fort Gorges	Casco Bay / Boat access via Eastern Prom. East End Beach	2
Peaks Island		
OFF LEASH DOG PARKS	Location	Acres
Quarry Run Dog Park	1026 Ocean Avenue at Presumpscot Street	10
Valley Street Dog Park	Valley Street	2.8

From: Penny Stevens <penny.stevens@maine.rr.com>
To: <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>
Date: 5/25/2013 1:46 PM
Subject: Congress Square

I am writing about my support for the Rockbridge Capitol's plans to purchase part of the current Congress Square Park and build an extension to use as a ballroom, events room etc. The current park is providing little benefit to the city. It is poorly positioned to be a real park or plaza. The two tall buildings on two sides take away from the possible ambiance of open space. Now it attracts people who exhibit undesirable behavior. I live nearby and walk across Congress St. every day but i would never walk across the park or linger in it.

Sometimes a bold move, such as this sale, is a boon to the community at large. I urge you to vote for the sale of part of the park to the Rockbridge Co.

Sincerely,
Penny Stevens
260 Vaughan St.
Portland, ME 04102

Lori Paulette - Congress Square Plaza

From: James Erwin <jerwin@PierceAtwood.com>
To: "mfpb@portlandmaine.gov" <mfpb@portlandmaine.gov>
Date: 5/25/2013 1:07 PM
Subject: Congress Square Plaza
CC: "kjdonoghue@portlandmaine.gov" <kjdonoghue@portlandmaine.gov>, "damar..."

Dear Mayor Brennan:

I am writing as a member of the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce to express my full support for the Westin Harborside Hotel's plans to develop Congress Square Plaza. As a life-long resident of Maine with a 25 year professional career in downtown Portland, I am all too aware of the economic development challenges our State faces. A challenge we don't need – one that we sometimes bring on ourselves – is a reluctance to change, to innovate, to take even a small amount of risk. Currently the Plaza is not really a plaza at all, but dead space that is an uninviting, even foreboding barrier between Congress Square and the hotel. The proposed design and repurposing of the Plaza is exactly what is needed to bring the hotel out to Congress Square with an inviting, functional structure, increasing economic activity in the square that will certainly ripple outward. The risk here is infinitely small compared to the likely benefits to Congress Square and the city at large.

I urge the City to approve the proposal and let the renaissance of this iconic property be fully realized.

Thanks to you and the City Council for considering my views, and for your service to the City of Portland.

Jim Erwin
 PIERCE ATWOOD LLP

Merrill's Wharf
 254 Commercial Street
 Portland, ME 04101

PH 207.791.1237
FAX 207.791.1350

jerwin@pierceatwood.com

[BIO](#) ▶

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Lori Paulette - Congress Square Plaza/Park

From: TW AR <twar1104@hotmail.com>
To: Nick Mavodones <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>
Date: 5/23/2013 10:54 AM
Subject: Congress Square Plaza/Park

Dear Councilor Mavodones;

I can appreciate the difficult decision you will soon face regarding the proposed sale of public space to support the construction of private event space at the Congress Square Park/Plaza. While I fully support fixing the space, I no longer believe and thus support the sale as proposed. I would support a long-term lease of a much smaller (50% less) portion provided the purchaser would also provide the necessary funds to pay for the overhaul of the remaining portion of the plaza. I see the sale as a private benefit at public expense. Based on the proposal to the Parks Commission and comments made by the representatives of the developers regarding Tommy's Park, I believe their only goal is to reduce undesirable users of the park to improve the experience of their private guests. I do not oppose their goal, but we cannot sterilize the city for occasional guests. Instead, I urge you to challenge the developers to work with the city for a creative solution that is mutually beneficial as opposed to the easiest (for the developer). We as a community have worked hard to create and support the arts district and a redesigned and revitalized square could complement this vision and enhance tourism. To be sure, Portland has grittiness, but this is part of its charm and should not be eliminated merely to support non-Portlander's idyllic vision what a city should be.

Thank you,
Travis Wagner
22 Codman Street
Portland

Lori Paulette - Congress Square

From: Joe Irace <irace1856@gmail.com>
To: <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>
Date: 5/23/2013 8:52 AM
Subject: Congress Square

Councilman Mavodones,

I urge the city council to approve Eastland Hotel proposal for Congress Square. I travel by this square very frequently. It is nothing more than a giant urinal and huge waste of space. This is not just my opinion, every single person I speak with also agrees. I am a small business owner on Congress St and would love to see something done about that spot.

Regards, Joe Irace