

**PUBLIC COMMENT - EMAIL & WRITTEN  
JANUARY 15, 2019 PUBLIC HEARING - BELFAST CITY COUNCIL  
PROPOSED ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS - CONTRACT REZONING -  
RESIDENTIAL 1 ZONE**

**(Comment Received Since December 18, 2018 First Reading)**

Public Comment Through 3:00 pm On January 11, 2019

- 1) Rick and Sue Cronin, 43 Church St, December 18, 2018 email
- 2) Petra Hall & Rhonda Feiman, 86 Union St, December 19, 2018 email
- 3) Dorothy Odell, 47 Church St, December 21, 2018 email
- 4) Patricia Hagerty, 36 Church St, January 9, 2019 email.

The following comments were not submitted directly to the City as part of the record, and were provided to the Council by Wayne Marshall, Director, Code & Planning.

- 5) Linda Buckmaster, Huntress Ave, December 27, 2018 Letter to Republican Journal
- 6) January 8, 2019 letter to the editor, Republican Journal, from Emilio Corrado, Tenant Advocate & Housing Consultant, Saco, and Melody Tallchief, Acting Executive Director, Midcoast Rental Association, Brunswick (Note: There is some question regarding these letters. In speaking with members of Reservoir Ventures, LLC, they never met with these persons, unlike as is stated in their letter. Further, there is no evidence that the Midcoast Rental Association is a functioning organization.)

The following public comments were received after 3:00 pm on January 11, and by 4:30 pm on January 14, 2019.

- 7) Letter from Harriet Clark, Assessor, Town of Searsport, received on January 11, 2019 submitted by Reservoir Ventures.
- 8) Letter from individual who lives on Reservoir Street in Searport (abutter to Reservoir Ventures property in Searsport) received on January 11, 2019 submitted by Reservoir Ventures.
- 9) Email from Rick Cronin, 43 Church Street, dated January 14, 2019.
- 10) Letter from Ann Fernald & Joel Lee, 87 Union Street, dated January 14, 2019.
- 11) Email from Allison Beards, 34 High Street, dated January 13, 2019.
- 12) Email from Gloria Guyette, 77 Church St, dated January 14, 2019.
- 13) Letter entitled Delve Deeper, that was published in the Republican Journal on January 10, 2019, that is signed by a number persons who state that they own property or live in the Church Street area own property, that was hand-delivered to the Code & Planning Department on January 14. The letter hand-delivered to the Department is signed by more persons than the letter (opinion piece) that appeared in the Republican Journal (copy of earlier letter provided to Council by Wayne Marshall).

B) Public Hearing on the First Reading of the proposed amendments to the City Code of Ordinances for Contract Rezoning for the former Pierce School property, the James B. White House property and the former Group Home Foundation property. This is a courtesy Public Hearing because we've had some public comments on the Pierce School project we want to give people an opportunity to weigh in early on these proposals.

Mayor Paradis asked for proponents and opponents.

1. Rick Cronin, 43 Church Street, spoke in favor of the proposal informing the Council that he looks forward to hearing more about this redevelopment.
2. Kirk Moore, 6 Church Street, spoke in opposition of the proposed density of the project.
3. Bob Adler, 16 Church Street, discussed concerns with the Contract Rezoning process.

---

Page 3

---

Regular Meeting #12 – December 18, 2018

Minutes

4. Christopher Hyk, 34 Church Street, discussed concerns with the ability of the interested party to put in the financial work needed to update the facility.
5. Matt Francis discussed his proposal to redevelop the Pierce School into apartments.
6. Jessie Francis discussed more detail and research that she and her partners did on the positive impacts that multifamily housing can have on communities.

Mayor Paradis declared the hearing closed.

City Director of Code & Planning, Wayne Marshall, noted public comments that were submitted to the Council as part of the public process.

Councilors discussed in length public comment, disclosing any communication with abutters regarding the proposed project.

City Manager, Joseph Slocum, discussed the Contract Rezoning process and Councils role.

Councilor Hurley, seconded by Councilor Harkness, made a motion to accept the First Reading of proposed amendments to the City Code of Ordinances for Contract Rezoning for the former Pierce School property, the James B. White House property and the former Group Home Foundation Property, with the Second Reading scheduled for the January 15<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting. This motion was approved, 4-0.

CC Minutes - Dec 18, 2018



**City of  
Belfast**

**PB Hearing <public@cityofbelfast.org>**

---

**Fwd: Pierce School**

3 messages

---

**Wayne Marshall** <planner@cityofbelfast.org>

Thu, Dec 20, 2018 at 10:14  
AM

To: PB Hearing <public@cityofbelfast.org>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Wayne Marshall** <planner@cityofbelfast.org>

Date: Tue, Dec 18, 2018 at 5:08 PM

Subject: Re: Pierce School

To: Rick Cronin [REDACTED]

Thank you for submitting your letter. I will provide it to the Council for tonight's meeting.

Wayne

On Tue, Dec 18, 2018 at 11:36 AM Rick Cronin <croninme47@gmail.com> wrote:

Mr. Marshall,

We are writing to support the conversion of the Pierce School into apartments by Reservoir Ventures. We live close by, at 43 Church St., and have lived there long enough to have enjoyed kids going past our house to the school daily. Our son John started his education there. The building needs a new life. It didn't make it as a music school and fell into disrepair as a grow house.

This is an opportunity. The Pierce School is a building in decline, with a difficult history of not finding a suitable use ... and we have a shortage of available apartments in Belfast. The solution is at hand. We have a group of young people from Belfast with the energy and resources to convert the building's use and add to the stock of quality housing in town.

There are and have been rentals on all of Church St. for the 32 years we've lived here. The house next door is now rented and the renters have been every bit as good a neighbor as the five previous owners who were in residence during our years. The house across the street has an apartment. Three doors down, toward the center of town, is a building with multiple rentals. Renters aren't second class citizens who will blight a neighborhood. They are and have always been part of the city. Eight more quality apartments with plenty of on site parking will have nothing but an enlivening effect on this end of the street.

My wife and I have met with Matt and Jessie Francis and had a chance to see their plans and ask questions. They have given us answers that encourage us to enthusiastically support the project. This is the next generation trying to do something positive in our city. I hope the council will support their project.

Yours respectfully,

Rick and Susan Cronin

--  
Wayne Marshall  
Director, Code & Planning  
City of Belfast  
131 Church St  
Belfast, ME 04915  
207-338-1417 x 125 (phone)  
207-338-1605 (fax)  
wmarshall@cityofbelfast.org

--  
Wayne Marshall  
Director, Code & Planning  
City of Belfast  
131 Church St  
Belfast, ME 04915  
207-338-1417 x 125 (phone)  
207-338-1605 (fax)  
wmarshall@cityofbelfast.org



City of  
Belfast

PB Hearing <public@cityofbelfast.org>

### The Peirce School

3 messages

Petra Hall [REDACTED]  
To: public@cityofbelfast.org

Wed, Dec 19, 2018 at 10:53 PM

Hi Wayne,  
I already sent this to all, individually, but just received an automatic message from you that I should send to you at the public@cityofbelfast.org email, so I am complying.

Best,  
-Petra  
\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Mayor Paradis, Belfast City Councilors, City Manager Joe Slocum, and City Planner Wayne Marshall,

We live over on Union St. and walk and drive by the nearby Peirce School quite often. It's only a few blocks away... and we've often wondered why it wasn't being turned into housing units.  
(We had no idea no idea it was a grow house! Wow!)

We don't understand the judgmental opposition that we have read about, before and after the hearing on Tuesday. We definitely need more housing here, and we agree that turning it into apartments would be a good use of such a large building- even if this is not the more affordable housing which Belfast desperately needs.

Furthermore, we don't understand how the idea of renting an apartment versus owning a condo, equates with more noise and disruption or crime, in an area. Yikes! A very unfortunate characterization, truly.

The Peirce School had a lot more traffic and activity when it was in operation, and anyone who was there then, surely must recall that this was so, even in this "charming" neighborhood. And those who moved in since, would have been wise to see the building as something that eventually could be used in a way which expanded its activity and traffic. Just seemed logical, to anticipate that this could happen...

8 units are not that much, but certainly could be helpful to those who are generating enough income with local employment, and who otherwise can't find housing.

We would, however, agree with those in opposition, regarding not wanting it to be used for short-term renting. We would want it to be zoned in such a way that does not allow short-term rental/AirB&B use. There are several of those non-owner-occupied rentals right around Union and Bayview, and we are concerned about any increase in those

types of rentals in residential areas. (We know several people who either rent their homes out when they're out of town, or act as hosts, using AirB&B or Vacasa to rent out part of their house, and we have no problem with that. We know how it helps them with income, and paying property taxes- and it means we still have neighbors around.)

A zoning change (preferably with a restriction regarding the non-owner-occupied, short-term rental issue) seems to be in order, to facilitate the opportunity to create more units for housing, by converting the Peirce School into apartments.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Petra Hall & Rhonda Feiman

---

**PB Hearing** <public@cityofbelfast.org>

Thu, Dec 20, 2018 at 9:38 AM

To: Petra Hall <[REDACTED]>

Hello Petra

I was just sending you a note (in response to your other email) to let you know that your letter will be included as part of the official record for the upcoming Council meeting on January 15 that is associated with the Second Reading of this amendment. If you do choose to submit additional comment, I ask that you always include me on the comment list because I am responsible for maintaining the official public record.

Wayne

[Quoted text hidden]

---

**PB Hearing** <public@cityofbelfast.org>

Thu, Dec 20, 2018 at 9:39 AM

To: Sadie Lloyd <slloyd@cityofbelfast.org>

[Quoted text hidden]

---

**Wayne Marshall** <planner@cityofbelfast.org>  
To: PB Hearing <public@cityofbelfast.org>

Fri, Dec 21, 2018 at 2:42 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Wayne Marshall** <planner@cityofbelfast.org>  
Date: Fri, Dec 21, 2018 at 2:41 PM  
Subject: Re: Pierce School  
To: Dorothy Odell [REDACTED]  
Cc: Mike Hurley <mike@pilut.com>, Samantha Paradis <mayor@cityofbelfast.org>

Dear Ms. Odell

I am sending you this email to acknowledge receipt of the public comment that you have offered. Your comment will be provided to all members of the City Council in advance of the upcoming January 15 public comment. I also have attached a copy of the letter that the City is sending to property owners today regarding the proposed Ordinance amendments.

Wayne

On Fri, Dec 21, 2018 at 2:11 PM Dorothy Odell <dorothy.odell@gmail.com> wrote:  
My husband Scott and I live at 47 Church Street and we think it's a great idea to convert the building to apartments - especially if they might entice some younger families to move in to Belfast. Please suggest to the developer that they include some swings and climbing bars in their landscape plan - and no shuffleboard courts!

If this sounds like ageism, I apologise. I have nothing against seniors - I am one! What I am afraid of is mono-culture of elders and these apartments are a good step away from Belfast becoming only a destination for pensioners and tourists. The few renters that I've known on Church Street have enriched the neighborhood, so bring them on!

--  
Wayne Marshall  
Director, Code & Planning  
City of Belfast  
131 Church St  
Belfast, ME 04915  
207-338-1417 x 125 (phone)  
207-338-1605 (fax)  
wmarshall@cityofbelfast.org



City of  
Belfast

PB Hearing <public@cityofbelfast.org>

---

## To Belfast City Council

2 messages

---

Patricia Hagerty [REDACTED]  
To: slloyd@cityofbelfast.org, public@cityofbelfast.org

Wed, Jan 9, 2019 at 9:51 AM

To Belfast City Council  
Cc Belfast City Planning Board  
Date: January 2, 2019

My name is Pat Hagerty. I own 36 Church St as of June 2015.

Full Disclosure. I am a long term renter since 1975. I have never considered myself a criminal. Currently, when not in Belfast, I reside in a 400 sq ft rent stabilized New York City apartment. I am hoping to complete my move to Belfast later this year. I fell in love with Maine, Belfast, and this tree lined street a number of years ago. I am opposed to the current proposal as is, to repurpose Peirce School.

When Peirce School opened its doors on Church and Elm streets in 1915 it's classical architecture reflected the dignity and stature of the gentile homes surrounding it. Church St was and still is a major gateway into the city of Belfast. The architecturally significant homes lining Church Street today look much the way they did in 1915. These beautiful old homes are among many 19c homes lining the streets of our community; homes which have been lovingly cared for, restored, and maintained for decades at great expense by a succession of concerned and responsible owners with a nod to and respect for the past. These often grand reminders of yesterday illustrate the story of a glorious commercial past. They serve to promote not only a sense of local pride and a sense of history but also to create a beautiful and harmonious tourist attraction. Together with other well conceived and realized community projects such as Heritage Park, Harbor Walk and United Farmers Market, all promoted by generous foresighted civic minded individuals, Belfast today is enjoying a renaissance of significant proportion. It has become a major tourist destination. The city needs to continue to make good decisions to advance this end.

But the newly proposed rezoning of Church St to include 8 multi family rental units in the former Peirce School threatens this picture. A high density commercial property was never meant to be realized in this quiet neighborhood. Non of us who bought into the area did so with the prospect of having to fend off a large scale big city development totally incongruous to its location. As described, the proposal threatens the peace and sanctity of our way of life....the very quality of life we bought into when we purchased our homes. Many of us are in retirement and have made significant financial decisions based on this fact. Eight rental apartments will not be a welcomed addition to our neighborhood. It will increase pollution in the form of traffic, light, and noise. An outdoor lighted parking

lot will be a visual distraction. Our neighborhood was led to believe a smaller condo development of high quality units would be considered when the time was right. The sudden rush to overpower neighborhood concerns relative to this project citing community need is frightening and smacks of big government under-sight and insensitivity. There is land a plenty throughout Belfast and beyond that is suited to a large scale development. Much needed apartment housing can be built without severely disrupting and devaluing a 19th c historic neighborhood by decree.....and forever. Just because you can does not mean you should.

Lastly, I find it fitting and appropriate to bring to mind the kind hearted and very generous bequests made to various local Belfast organizations from the former homeowners of 36 Church Street , Marilyn and Jim Duane . Marilyn, a Bangor native, traveled frequently for many many years through Belfast and down Church St each summer to her family's Bayside camp. During those years Marilyn fell in love with Belfast and in particular Church St. She and her husband Jim lived happily in retirement at number 36 for over 30 years. I would like to do the same.

Respectfully yours,  
Patricia Hagerty  
36 Church St  
Belfast, Maine

---

**PB Hearing** <public@cityofbelfast.org>

Wed, Jan 9, 2019 at 10:25 AM

To: Patricia Hagerty <[REDACTED]>, Sadie Lloyd <slloyd@cityofbelfast.org>

Dear Ms. Hagerty

I want to let you know that we have received your email and that it will be provided to the Council for the upcoming January 15 public hearing on the Ordinance amendment that applies to the Peirce School, White House and former Group Home Foundation properties.

Wayne  
[Quoted text hidden]

*Belfast**Journal letter***Pause/reset needed**

As renter advocates, we spent the past few weeks interviewing community members about the Peirce proposal for inclusion in a white paper. We enjoyed a Christmas party where the Francis team and their Realtor discussed market strategies. We were warmly received by neighbors opposed to the project.

What we found is that no one has been well-served by this process. For the sake of the larger community as it moves forward to address the housing crisis, we hope city officials recognize a pause/reset is needed.

There's been significant municipal acrimony in Belfast over the past year and it would be a shame to impact this work. We are neutral and want all sides served as well as renters' rights addressed.

Following the lead of other localities, we are asking that next Tuesday the council form a "Renters Task Force" to analyze the reservoir proposal, at least three others in the pipeline (to include a nonprofit art and housing plan), and identify long-term rental strategies for Belfast in general — to include all properties in Level 1 (2 to 10 units) and then Level 2 (10-unit buildings and above, including high-density developments).

To really combat the crisis, the city must identify 10-plus-unit sites, because at this level we make exciting progress.

This task force should be easy to assemble and last no more than six to eight months. It will improve dialogue and community relations. This quick time frame is important because it's rapid for such comprehensive stakeholder work to:

- identify Level 1 and 2 sites as corollary to the Comprehensive Plan (with more specificity), thus expanding September's goals
- define terms "affordable" v. "workforce" specific to Belfast demographics
- gather empirical data to ensure proposals meet affordable/workforce metrics, establishing barometers for success
- update empirical data, using outreach to hospital/business HR and analysis of open units on the market, historical vacancy rates and saturation points — establishing market demand data
- establish best practices for vetting proposals to ensure consistency — does the city solicit proposals more in line with the RFP model to increase transparency?
- establish protocols for dialogue with abutters/community in general
- establish potential limits to zoning language to counter community apprehensions, and
- establish entity to foster continual community input and encourage dialogue among all proposal partners and community members.

We are happy to facilitate this task force, pro bono. We encourage attendance at upcoming Avesta events in Portland. They have an exemplary record in this sector. Based on our interviews, more sustained dialogue is needed. This

We are in favor of appropriate development, and recognize we may all have different notions of what belongs in this building. But our diversity is our strength, and it's what makes Belfast special.

We don't want history to repeat itself. The zoning changes being considered are overly broad, and that leaves the neighborhood in a perpetually defensive position.

It is unfair to our neighborhood, and does a disservice to Reservoir Ventures LLC, to move forward without the benefit of more time, outside professional analysis, impact studies, specific project information and a broader discussion of rental housing needs in Belfast.

*Claire Aaron*

*Amy V. Aaron*

*Caleb & Misty Aaron*

*Dimitri "DT" & Amy Ames*

*M.M. Burke & C.M. Burke*

*John Devine & Cam Devine*

*Patricia Hagerty*

*Arthur & Sara Hayes*

*Christopher & Diana Hyk*

*Dennis Nickerson*

*Karen & Delores Niles*

*Cibby Niles*

*Amanda W. Sutherland*

*Gerry Sommers*

*Rory Kieth-Thomas*

*Franklin Thomas*

*Gloria Dunn-Thomas*

*Michael & L. "Lizzie" Torre*

*Emily Tower*

*Ayas Walker & Gottlieb Walker*

*L. Scott & Catherine A. Walker*

*Lorenzo Walker*

*B.G. Walker III*

*Rose Woodford*

*Gordon & Jenny Young*

*K. S. Zorach*

initiative should engender community excitement, and something divisive because of poor municipal rollout requires a pause — otherwise rental initiatives that come later may have less support.

Without a pause, Belfast is not serving the needs of renters. This would insert tenants into community tension, and that is not fair to your rental community and may hurt advocacy going forward. Please follow the lead of surrounding communities: Pause, Reset, Analyze, Renew — with community buy-in and a brighter future for rental housing in your community.

*Emilio L Corrado*

*Tenant Advocate & Housing Consultant*

*Saco*

*Melody Tallchief*

*Acting Executive Director, Midcoast Rental Alliance*

*Brunswick*

## Letters, Dec. 27, 2018

Dec 27, 2018

---

### **The problem is process**

It seems to me that turning the old Peirce School in Belfast into housing is a perfect use for that building. It is already in a neighborhood and the historic exterior would be preserved. There is plenty of space for off-street parking and an open front lot that could be landscaped and be a lovely addition. What would be a better zoning for it — commercial or industrial?

It's just the kind of housing, location, and price range we need in Belfast for working people and retirees who are downsizing. Restrictions could be made to not allow short-term rentals. Those who say that rentals mean people living there are more likely to engage in criminal activity are prejudiced and wrong, and they should apologize publicly.

The problem isn't the project; it's the process. As a 35-year abutter to the hospital, I know that by the time the public officially hears about a project, it is too late to make any real changes. I consider myself lucky if I get some lighting restrictions or a couple of trees at the Planning Board meeting for a new hospital parking lot. There is no way in the current process to have community discussions about a proposed idea before the specific plans are drawn up and the contractors are waiting in the wings.

Compounding the problem these days is "spot zoning," which allows the five-member council to be the last word for zoning changes anywhere in the city. It is capricious, undemocratic, and allows a small group to choose winners and losers. Although the council must listen to public opponents, there is no stipulation that it must take into account anything the public says. And there's nothing to stop it from coming to your neighborhood.

This is exactly what happened when this closed group turned 98 acres of rural and residential zones in the Little River area into an industrial zone. Even with hundreds of pages of testimony and hundreds of hours of comments questioning the Nordic project, the council made only fingernail concessions. Although almost a third of the votes in the recent elections were for opposition candidates, the council is still on the same track.

Add to that the fact that the city hijacked the existing Comprehensive Plan and did a sleight-of-hand with a new one, bypassing the legal process.

Belfast is expanding at a fast pace. We need to put a moratorium on new zoning changes until a new comprehensive plan can be developed through the state-mandated process of community input. Yes, this will take time and slow things down, but we need to get ahead of the curve, not behind it. It's too important for the future quality of life in Belfast.

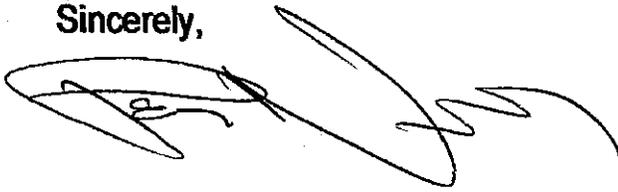
*Linda Buckmaster*

To The Belfast City Council:

I am writing to show support for the Pierce School Property project proposed by Reservoir Ventures. I am familiar with Reservoir Ventures after they purchased a building on my street in Searsport. This home previously sat empty for multiple years.

Since its purchase the building has improved through exterior improvements including repaired front steps, new side entrance, new walkways, and the addition of shrubbery. I understand the apartments inside have also seen updating. The building owners and tenants have been respectful neighbors and I have not had any concerns in my interactions with them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized name, possibly "Reservoir Street".

Reservoir Street  
Searsport, ME 04974

Received 1/11/19  
4:40 PM  
via Reservoir Ventures  
NEM



# Town of Searsport, Maine

P. O. Box 499 Searsport, Maine  
04974 548-6372 • 548-2300

Good Morning Tyler,

On Saturday, December 15, 2018 I drove by your building at Reservoir Street. The grounds look great and everything is neat and there is nothing outside as far as trash/debris or anything. The entrances all look nice and clear and there is plenty of parking for tenants.

Since your ownership the building appears to be very well taken care of. The property taxes have been paid on time and are current.

I spoke to Randy Hall, our code enforcement officer as well and there have been no concerns.

Sincerely,

*Harriet E Clark*

Harriet E. Clark, Assessor  
Town of Searsport  
(207) 548-6372

*Received 1/11/19  
3:10 pm  
Via Reservoir Ventures  
WEM*



City of  
Belfast

PB Hearing <public@cityofbelfast.org>

---

## Fwd: Pierce school proposal

2 messages

---

Manda Cushman <managersasst@cityofbelfast.org>

Mon, Jan 14, 2019 at  
10:40 AM

To: PB Hearing <public@cityofbelfast.org>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Susan Cronin [REDACTED]  
Date: Mon, Jan 14, 2019 at 10:27 AM  
Subject: Pierce school proposal  
To: <managersupport@cityofbelfast.org>  
Cc: Rick [REDACTED]

*Last week a piece appeared in the Republican Journal entitled "Delve Deeper," opposing the changes to allow conversion of the Pierce School to eight rentals. I have written the below response to that in support of the proposal. It will probably not appear until after the Tuesday meeting, so I have copied my letter below for the consideration of the Mayor and the City Council. I hope this add to the discussion.*

I read the piece, Pierce School Conversion "DELVE DEEPER" by the Church Street Neighbors. You know what? I am a neighbor and when I got to the end of the piece I didn't see my name. Nor did I see any of my immediate neighbor's names, so I wondered, "Who are all these people?" I knew six of the names and another 32 I didn't recognize. So I took their advice and decided to "delve deeper" and looked at the City's web site that lists property owners. I found only seven of the names on the 2017 tax records. Maybe the other 31 have moved here more recently and the city's web site hasn't caught up? Or maybe the list is puffed up a bit? It wouldn't be the first piece of hyperbole or scary rumor that has been produced by the designated "Church Street Neighbors".

They complain that there hasn't been enough time to make an informed decision, that somehow they've been railroaded by holidays and blind sided by other inconveniences. But, they've had plenty of time to stir up chimeras of "sober houses", "affordable housing," and to insinuate that renters wouldn't keep the property up to the standards of "this stately neighborhood, with its elegant single family homes." (There are apartments up and down Church St. already.) They suggest that we need "outside professional analysis" which I assume means they're unhappy with the way things have gone with the planning board and city council so far.

They are worried about the traffic for 8 apartments? Obviously they didn't live here when Pierce was a school and there were buses coming and going, PTA meetings, sliding boards, swing sets, and very noisy recesses. Or maybe those few who were here have forgotten how nice it was to have kids in the neighborhood?

I didn't see any acknowledgement that Belfast needs housing. Or for that matter any suggestions that add to civic sustenance. How do we encourage young entrepreneurs? How do we provide attractive housing for the talented young people that are this city's future?

Tenants for eight new apartments will generate taxes, will eat in our restaurants, will need their plumbing fixed, their hair cut, they will buy bicycles, and pizzas, and movie tickets. Maybe they'll even buy a house and raise a family. I did. In 1984 I rented an apartment on High Street and then, 33 years ago, I bought our house on Church St., then my son was born, and eventually he started school down the block at the Pierce School.

Oversight, questions, and standards are appropriate for all development. We have functioning mechanisms for this. But obstruction, simply to maintain an idyllic neighborhood that frankly never existed adds nothing.

Rick Cronin, Church St. Belfast

--

**Manda Cushman**

Administrative Assistant to the City Manager

Belfast, ME

mcushman@cityofbelfast.org

managersasst@cityofbelfast.org

p) 338-3370 x 110

f) 338-2419

---

**PB Hearing** <public@cityofbelfast.org>

Mon, Jan 14, 2019 at 10:54 AM

To: Manda Cushman <managersasst@cityofbelfast.org>, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Rick and Sue Cronin

The purpose of this email is to acknowledge that the City has received your email regarding the Peirce School and to let you know that your comments will be provided to the Council in advance of the upcoming January 15 public hearing, and that the comments will be included in the formal record for the hearing.

Wayne

[Quoted text hidden]

Ann Fernald & Joel Lee  
87 Union Street  
Belfast, Maine 04915

DECEMBER 31, 2018

Wayne Marshall,  
Director, Code & Planning  
City of Belfast  
131 Church Street  
Belfast, Maine 04915

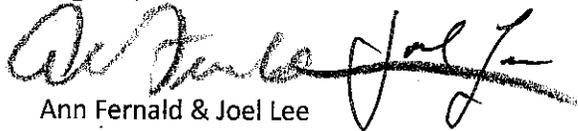
Dear Sir,

Our home at 87 Union Street is within 200 yards of both Church Street properties subject to the proposed amendment to Chapter 102, Article X, Division 3, Section 102-1401 (c). We are writing in support of the proposed changes to both paragraph c and paragraph d.

Belfast needs more affordable housing within the by-pass. Allowing renting of dwellings rather than requiring ownership of condominiums will open the market for housing to younger families and others who often have less capital for the purchase of homes in areas convenient to places of employment, the local hospital, and the downtown. We also have no issue with the other potential uses of the properties listed in the amendment as none would substantially change the character of the zoned district.

Thank you very much for requesting our input.

Regards,



Ann Fernald & Joel Lee



City of  
Belfast

PB Hearing <public@cityofbelfast.org>

---

## Proposed Zoning Additions To White House, Peirce School & Group Home.

2 messages

---

Allison Beards [REDACTED]

Sun, Jan 13, 2019 at 8:04 PM

To: public@cityofbelfast.org

Dear Mr. Marshall and Ms. Lloyd-Mudge,

Thank you for sending me the letter regarding proposed Contract Zoning changes for the 3 properties in question. I support them. In May it will be 24 years since I moved into 34 High Street. I have seen many changes over the years. When I moved here the owners of the White House were divorcing and the house was for sale. It was purchased by Terry Prescott & Robert Hansen. They worked with the Belfast Planning Board to open a B&B. The White House B&B was a fabulous addition to our neighborhood and the entire city. The owners contributed to the community by hosting the Hospital Aid Garden Tour, the Holiday Silver Tea and the Garden Walk Luncheon in addition to hosting weddings and many other private events. In 2009 when Terry & Bob retired and moved back to Texas.. Diana & Santiago Rich assumed ownership but paid too much for the property amidst the financial downturn and decline of B&B's in town. We all know how that tenure ended. Now it is currently a private home again. This zoning in place provides tools for current and future owners to retain ownership of the property amid potentially higher mortgages and property taxes. There is no requirement to use it. I see many possibilities for the property and have no objections to it being used in the numerous ways allowed by the zoning.

Peirce was still an active elementary school when I moved here..with it's school bell ringing and children flooding out into the playground for recess. Laughter and young voices filled the air. The High/Church St. area from just North of my gate wrapping around the point onto Church was a school zone. There were flashing school zone lights on the utility pole out front here. The sidewalks were full of life morning & afternoons with parents walking younger children to the crosswalks & older kids on their own. So much activity and sense of place. Then one day it all stopped. I attended the September 2013 auction of Peirce and after touring the interior I assumed the buyer would want to turn it into condo's or apartments. Now the opportunity has come again. I just read the plan put forth by the prospective owners and find it very well thought out. They do need to spell Peirce correctly...I wonder if they know it was built as a bequest by the daughter in honor of her parents? We have an apartment building just 5 doors down at 3 Northport Ave. Former renters there include neighbor Elizabeth Chase who now owns 10 Church St. and the late Dorothy Lightner. We all know her son Ned. The summer of 1995 my new phone number turned out to be Dorothy Lightner's old number at her home in Northport..so for 2 weeks while she notified friends of the change I received calls from various parts of the world and relayed a few messages to her. People from all walks of life rent apartments. I see diversity as enhancing this neighborhood as it has before. I

can see the Peirce parking lot from my kitchen window all winter. I have a birds eye view of the lot and north side of Peirce from my 2nd floor SW windows year round. After seeing it so full of life it is still strange to only see cars there on Sundays. After reading the letters regarding Peirce and speaking with some of my neighbors.. I am concerned that there is an orchestrated attempt to thwart the proposed project using underhanded tactics.

I am not as familiar with the former Group Home but know many of the residents lived there for years.. were like family to each other and are now missed in the community. I appreciate your dedication and late hours. Some day..hopefully while we are all still living..there will be a proposal for Bradbury Manor!

Best,  
Allison Beards

---

**PB Hearing** <public@cityofbelfast.org>

Mon, Jan 14, 2019 at 9:22 AM

To: Allison Beards [REDACTED]

Dear Ms. Beards

My email is to acknowledge receipt of your email. Your email will be included in the public record for the upcoming January 15 public hearing and will be provided to the Mayor and Council in advance of the hearing.

Wayne

[Quoted text hidden]



**City of  
Belfast**

**Wayne Marshall** <planner@cityofbelfast.org>

---

## Change to Rezoning provision

2 messages

---

**Gloria Guyette** <gloriainmaine@yahoo.com>

Mon, Jan 14, 2019 at 2:57  
PM

To: "Ward1councilor@cityofbelfast.org" <Ward1councilor@cityofbelfast.org>,  
"Ward2councilor@cityofbelfast.org" <Ward2councilor@cityofbelfast.org>,  
"Ward3councilor@cityofbelfast.org" <Ward3councilor@cityofbelfast.org>,  
"Ward4councilor@cityofbelfast.org" <Ward4councilor@cityofbelfast.org>,  
"Ward5councilor@cityofbelfast.org" <Ward5councilor@cityofbelfast.org>,  
"wmarshall@cityofbelfast.org" <wmarshall@cityofbelfast.org>

This email is to respectfully request you postpone action on the proposed change to City Contract Rezoning provision for Residential 1 Zoning District.

It appears that work should be done to define what the city will apply and enforce if "rental" is added. As the provision now stands condos are allowed and Condo Docs that allow for rentals most always stipulate a minimum one year lease. Is that what the city will enforce for rentals in R1?

Changes to an ordinance that was passed only 4 years ago should be researched, justified, and detailed. There are at least 3 forms of rentals: Short term rentals (rentals of 30 days or less that include Airbnb, inns, B&Bs, boarding houses, etc.), rentals of over 30 days and less than one year (seasonal rentals), and long term rentals (rentals of 1 year or more). All should have regulations defined and enforceable in relation to this change. Loopholes and omissions in city or state regulations/ordinances should not allow for any lease to override the intent of the ordinance.

Please consider setting up a work session and/or work group of city councilors, planning dept., interested and informed property owners in R1, and real estate/property management people to research and come to agreement on the scope and issue of rentals before making changes to the existing ordinance.

The lack of workforce and/or affordable housing is not unique to Belfast. Housing problems exists in almost all areas of the country so it is imperative to explore, learn from others, propose solutions, apply to Belfast and make every effort to get it right. Zoning ordinances are an important part of expectations of a property owner, a neighborhood and city as they affect a community's character, services, infrastructure, economy and residents.

As a licensed real estate agent for 20 years, and having specialized in residential rentals for 6 years (in a state other than Maine), I support long term rentals. When the ownership negotiate and comply with terms that they and the city have agreed on, follow extensive vetting of prospective rental tenants, present and enforce the terms of a strong lease that includes Rules and Regulations, offer responsive management, and take pride in ownership rentals can be positive. I strongly oppose short term rentals.

The historic properties along Church Street were built many years ago by people proud of their ownership by those knowledgeable and competent in their trade and survive as testaments to that today. Please, lets not lose that pride and workmanship to quantity verses quality in a hasty discussion.

With appreciation for the time and effort you offer the city, Thank you,

Gloria Guyette

Belfast, ME

---

**Wayne Marshall** <planner@cityofbelfast.org>  
To: Gloria Guyette <gloriainmaine@yahoo.com>

Mon, Jan 14, 2019 at 3:27 PM

Dear Ms. Guyette.

The purpose of this email is to acknowledge that I have received such and that it will be included in the formal record for the upcoming January 15 public hearing. You have emailed your comments to the Council and I will ensure that they have printed copies for the meeting as well.

Wayne

[Quoted text hidden]

--

Wayne Marshall  
Director, Code & Planning  
City of Belfast  
131 Church St  
Belfast, ME 04915  
207-338-1417 x 125 (phone)  
207-338-1605 (fax)  
wmarshall@cityofbelfast.org

Repub. Journal online 1/10/19  
Print 1/17/19

## Peirce School conversion

# Delve deeper

25 properties  
40 signers  
\* Signature Process Organi

By Church Street Neighbors | Jan 08, 2019

We represent approximately 25 properties along Church Street and the surrounding neighborhood — all in close proximity to the Peirce School. Some of us have lived in the area for decades, while others have purchased properties over the last 10 years.

In some cases, we worked closely with the city regarding zoning and permitted use for months prior to purchase. We were all attracted to the stately neighborhood, with its elegant single-family homes and friendly neighbors. For most of us, these homes are our single most important investment.

The prospect of Belfast approving the conversion of Peirce School into a multi-unit, long-term rental building with six two-bedroom apartments and two one-bedroom apartments has us concerned, and we have asked for more time to gather information.

To be clear, we are not anti-renter (in fact, many of us are renters in other localities). Rather, our concerns also include the open-ended zoning changes that may open the door to future development without appropriate limitations, and without the need of neighborhood input.

The city notified us about this proposed project, helmed by Reservoir Ventures LLC, during the busy holiday season. We spent the past few weeks trying to follow facts, and despite apprehensions we tried to remain open-minded. We are as much focused on the "process" that brought us to this point as on the analysis of a specific project.

As a result of 2014 zoning discussions, the Peirce building is currently R1 zoned for two condos, although a buyer may request a change in use for a four-unit conversion. There are a variety of non-residential uses currently permitted as well, some of which also may cause concern, primarily because the city has limited mechanisms to control "quality of life" issues once a project has been approved.

To that end, we wish to correct the public record related to the most recent occupant of the building. Once the neighborhood was aware of the marijuana grow farm (an entirely different discussion should occur about why it came as a surprise to many of us), we all tried to be good neighbors.

It is not accurate to say there were no complaints. When we made calls regarding any issues, because of the current zoning we were told there was nothing the city could do. We don't want to be in a similar situation with this or any other project.

Our neighborhood was struck by the size change at the center of the Reservoir proposal as much as by the rental versus condo issue, because allowing eight units in the building would represent a 100-percent increase over the units allowed under current zoning.

A project of this size — keeping in mind the 24/7 nature of any apartment building which differs from its previous incarnations as a school or music conservatory — may have a negative impact on the neighborhood by increasing street traffic, quantity and quality of lighting, and noise levels.

An unsightly lighted parking lot with 18 to 24 parked cars might be a visual blight on this verdant and gracious neighborhood, not to mention the prospect of maintenance-related noise (dumpster retrieval, delivery trucks, day-to-day operations and repairs).

Hand-delivered to Dept on 1/14  
early afternoon work

Additionally, as of this writing, there are no zoning caps or limits on the number of units in the building or expanded construction on the grounds — so the eight proposed today could expand to 10 or even 14 (as the original abutter's notice seemed to suggest).

Aside from floor plans and pre-renovation drawings, there are no interior unit mock-ups or exterior renderings depicting the finished project in the 60-page proposal submitted to the city. These tools would be valuable, especially as we evaluate potential repairs to the large, historic windows and the placement of HVAC and electrical equipment.

Overall, we have sought information regarding the scale of the project, in addition to the type of conversion allowed under new zoning rules, because we have a natural concern over the potential impact to home values. We believe this impact warrants careful, impartial study by outside experts.

We are also unclear about the definition of "affordable" versus "workforce" housing as it pertains to the Belfast market, and believe the city should clarify these terms in tandem with any proposed zoning change.

Additionally, will the city separate regulations that govern long-term rentals from short-term rentals like Airbnb, which are currently unregulated? These become significant requests for a project of this scale in our neighborhood.

A renter, by definition, has a different obligation to their respective living environment and relies on property managers to maintain living standards. We have requested information on this particular manager's track record and reputation — not out of malice, but because several of us are experienced property managers and have questions about the operational numbers.

This is an old, historic building with unique renovation challenges, to include ADA compliance and the incorporation of new ramps and appropriate parking. It will require qualified experience and a great deal of money.

On this front, because project scrutiny should never be portrayed as vindictiveness, we are requesting that the city delve deeper into the phased-renovation portion of this project and consider a performance bond requirement to certify that the venture is appropriately capitalized prior to final approval.

In other localities, this type of project — given Reservoir Ventures' lack of large-scale work to date — would warrant such a move. This is not a punitive measure; it is simply a community safeguard.

We are in favor of appropriate development, and recognize we may all have different notions of what belongs in this building. But our diversity is our strength, and it's what makes Belfast special.

We don't want history to repeat itself. The zoning changes being considered are overly broad, and that leaves the neighborhood in a perpetually defensive position.

It is unfair to our neighborhood, and does a disservice to Reservoir Ventures LLC, to move forward without the benefit of more time, outside professional analysis, impact studies, specific project information and a broader discussion of rental housing needs in Belfast.

*Claire Aaron*

*Amy V. Aaron*

*Caleb and Misty Aaron*

*Dimitri "DT" and Amy Ames*

*M.M. Burke and C.M. Burke*

*John Devine and Cam Devine*

*Patricia Hagerty*

*Arthur and Sara Hayes*

*Lucy Hingle*

*Christopher and Diana Hyk*

*Dennis Nickerson*

*Karen and Delores Niles*

*Cibby Niles*

*John Ostrand*

*Manley Rogers*

*Amanda W. Sutherland*

*Gerry Sommers*

*Rory Kieth-Thomas*

*Franklin Thomas*

*Gloria Dunn-Thomas*

*Michael abd L. "Lizzie" Torre*

*Emily Tower*

*Ayas Walker and Gottlieb Walker*

*L. Scott and Catherine A. Walker*

*Lorenzo Walker*

*B.G. Walker III*

*Rose Woodford*

*Gordon and Jenny Young*

*K.S. Zorach*