

From: steve@knipmeyer.org <steve@knipmeyer.org>
Sent: Sunday, March 27, 2022 9:43 AM
To: Heather Shand
Cc: 'Sharon Knipmeyer'; steve@knipmeyer.org
Subject: IFS Settlement March 28, 2022

Councilor Shand,

Our family lives at 4 Otis Place where we are direct abutters to the proposed expansion of the Institution for Savings. We are writing to express our strong opposition to a settlement.

Our small house and neighborhood would be negatively impacted by the proposed building. Our house is literally in the shadow of the proposed addition, dwarfed by a structure that is far too large and inharmonious with our historic neighborhood. So many of our fellow neighbors have given thoughtful and informed opinions about the many ways the proposed design misses the mark. We agree.

We moved to Newburyport for many reasons. We were especially drawn by the beauty and architectural heritage of the city, protected by the oversight processes of the permitting boards. We trusted this commitment to historic preservation would deliver the right outcome to the proposed expansion. The Planning Board was correct in May, 2021 when it denied the proposal.

We are greatly disappointed that the city is once again considering a settlement, reversing the thoughtful decision rendered by the Planning Board. The citizens of Newburyport deserve the right to have the IFS appeal heard and judged in Land Court where we fully expect the Planning Board decision to be validated. It is a troubling distortion of process for the city not to support the Planning Board by allowing the Land Court to hear this case.

Thank you for your consideration.

Steve and Sharon Knipmeyer

4 Otis Place

Newburyport, MA 01950

From: Claire Papanastasiou <claire.p.claire@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, March 28, 2022 9:17 AM

To: Jennie Donahue <JDonahue@CityofNewburyport.com>; Mark Wright <MWright@CityofNewburyport.com>; Constance Preston <CPreston@CityofNewburyport.com>; Ed Cameron <ECameron@CityofNewburyport.com>; ecameronnbpt@gmail.com; Christine Wallace <christinewallace.ward4@gmail.com>; byron@byronlanenbpt.com; Sharif Zeid <SZeid@CityofNewburyport.com>; Bruce Vogel <bruce@vogelatlarge.com>; Afroz Khan <AfrozK@cityofnewburyport.com>; mccauleyward5@gmail.com; Heather Shand <HShand@CityofNewburyport.com>

Cc: Richard Jones <RJones@CityofNewburyport.com>; Claire Papanastasiou <claire.p.claire@gmail.com>

Subject: Opposition of IFS settlement order

Dear City Council members,

In the event I am unable to dial-in to tonight's City Council meeting as I am traveling, I am writing to ask City Council members to support my position now. The current settlement proposal reflects the same size of the bank's expansion that was rejected by the Planning Board. The bank has been told to reduce the size of the structure as it fails to comply with the Downtown Overlay District, yet the bank is ignoring the concerns of concerned citizens, and our city officials. Now, our very own city leadership is encouraging councilors to accept and recede from a playbook for any one seeking to circumvent the DOD by simply suing and expecting the city to agree to an unfair settlement against public faith and opinion. Sadly, it will make constituents and those considering public office to think twice about our city's future. A determined and fiscally secure opponent, it compromises the spirit of "good" government. In short, this lengthy dispute is a disservice to the community. I seriously wonder if we would be at this point if the IFS was a run-of-the-mill developer seeking to expand.

I would like to provide background to our new city councilors as they are in the position of approaching this issue with the IFS and the City of Newburyport concerning the bank's desired expansion plans to its State Street headquarters. Over 14 years ago, the Historic Commission spent numerous hours trying to negotiate with bank officials to address the massive size of the expansion. Ultimately, the Planning Board rejected the bank's request to build since the size of the proposed 2-story, 16,000-sq-ft structure, however, the size of the proposed IFS expansion still falls short of DOD requirements.

It's important to note for context that abutters, of which I was one at the time, accepted and still accept the bank's right to build the most to the community: Size. And now, even with this proposed settlement, size remains the issue because once again the bank is ignoring the concerns of concerned citizens, and our city officials.

It's understandable that the city thinks it would lose in court, thus dismantling the DOD, though the city is better off letting the bank build this one-sided proposal. Any entity, large or small, who wants to challenge the DOD can do so now by following the bank's lead, even if it means agreeing to terms that do not comport with the DOD. I am truly disheartened by how this has played out. The Planning Board again deny this project in its current form. Unless there are meaningful revisions to the size of the IFS and the bank is willing to fairly while the City Council revisits the DOD.

Thank you for your consideration.

Claire Papanastasiou
3 Orange St., Newburyport

(Formerly of 4 Otis Place)

Claire Papanastasiou
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