

NEWBURPORT PLANNING BOARD:

As direct abutters to the Institution For Savings Bank, we object to their construction proposal.

Since the neighborhood first voiced the desire to provide input on the IFS proposal for a large 2-story addition in February 2020, not much has changed except for some cosmetic revisions. For a year now abutters and South End neighbors have objected to the massive size and scale that would dwarf our homes and completely change the historic neighborhood.

Repeatedly the Planning Board has requested the bank reduce the height and massive size. The Historic Commission did not approve of the bank's proposal and ruled that it did not meet their requirements because it is still too high and too big. The aerial views clearly show that the massive footprint, closer to neighbors than the State Street historical bank, is still larger than the original building and the 1980's addition combined.

Despite some cosmetic changes and finally some improvements in setbacks, the latest bank proposal does not significantly decrease the mass or the height of the large structure. The bank owns the property and we don't oppose their right to grow, but we live here 24/7. The IFS current plans extend well into the residential neighborhood and completely change the residential environment. For a year now the bank has shown little empathy for the consistent neighborhood request to reduce the size.

We ask that the Newburyport Planning Board reject this proposal.

Thank you,

Maureen & Peter Mackin
13 Prospect Street

Dianne Boisvert

From: Claire Papanastasiou <claire.p.claire@gmail.com>
Sent: February 15, 2021 3:50 PM
To: Dianne Boisvert
Subject: [Ext]Institution for Savings Proposed State Street HQ expansion

external e-mail use caution opening

Dear Chair Sontag and Newburyport Planning Board members,

As a resident of 4 Otis Place, right next to the Institution for Savings' proposed expansion to its 93 State St. headquarters, I have weighed-in on this matter since its onset more than a year ago. While I appreciate that the process before the Newburyport Planning Board and the Newburyport Historic Commission has made a significant and positive impact on the bank's most recent design, I am writing yet again to express my concern over what remains the most significant issue: the size of the proposed structure.

The current plan still falls short of the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's size and massing requirements, according to the most recent NHC report. While I understand that the report is advisory opposed to binding relating to the Planning Board's decision, I found interesting the recent Newburyport Planning Department staff report concluding that the current design is the only way the IFS can remain viable and that further size reductions would impact them severely. This assumes that the parking lot footprint is the only location where the bank can expand as it would like. I would accept that reasoning if the bank has considered other locations, though to my and my neighbors' knowledge, that has not been the case.

I understand city officials' charge to fairly balance the needs of downtown neighborhoods and businesses, though the bank continues to dance around the main issue of size while refusing to consider other locations for the expansion's footprint. Yet, an ideal solution appears to be right under our noses: the corner of State and Prospect streets, right in the heart of our beloved downtown. If bank officials have considered that location and dismissed it, it would benefit all for them to share their findings. If they have yet to consider it, I, for one, am curious why. Transparency builds trust, and we could all use a dose of that right now to finally resolve this issue.

It's been more than a year, and it's safe to say that all parties are tired, though my hope is that our fatigue will serve as a reminder of what is at stake if the bank is held to different standards because of its influence and power. This goes beyond the aesthetic of Newburyport and cuts right to our sense of collaboration and community.

Thank you for all of your work on this matter.

Claire Papanastasiou
4 Otis Place
Newburyport, MA 01950

--

Claire Papanastasiou
617.416.3377
claire.p.claire@gmail.com

Dianne Boisvert

Subject: FW: [Ext]Institution for Savings proposed expansion

From: Melinda Cheston [<mailto:mkcheston@gmail.com>]
Sent: February 16, 2021 1:31 PM
To: Dianne Boisvert; Katelyn E. Sullivan; Andrew Port; Dianne Boisvert
Cc: Colleen Turner Secino; Pete Mackin
Subject: [Ext]Institution for Savings proposed expansion

external e-mail use caution opening

Bonnie Sontag
Planning Board Chair
c/o planning@cityofnewburyport.com

Andrew Port
Planning Director
c/o aport@cityofnewburyport.com

Reference: Public Hearing for Special Permit(s) made by the Institution for Savings in Newburyport for property located at 93 State Street/ Assessor's Map and parcel 14-40. 1. Site Plan Review (2020-SPR-02), 2. ITIF Special Permit (2020-SP-01), 3. DOD Special Permit (2020-SP-09)

Dear Ms. Sontag, Mr. Port, and the Newburyport Planning Board,

I ask that you consider the recommendation of the Newburyport Historical Commission and vote no on the special permit request made by the Institution for Savings.

Much good work has been done in review of numerous draft proposals from IFS over the past year. Neighbors, your office, and the Newburyport Historical Commission have offered constructive feedback and suggestions to help make the proposed expansion fit in the back lot at Otis and Prospect streets. Despite these efforts, the problems of impact on a historic neighborhood, size/massing, and the inability to comply with the Secretary of the Interior's standards remain.

While I feel it is time to deny the special permit, I also urge you to encourage the bank to follow up with requests to examine another location that will better accommodate their program needs.

Please confirm receipt of this message and its addition to the public record.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Melinda K. Cheston
10 Fruit Street

Newburyport, MA 01950

Dianne Boisvert

From: Aaron Clausen <anaclausen@yahoo.com>
Sent: February 16, 2021 10:27 AM
To: Dianne Boisvert
Subject: [Ext]Institution for Savings' proposed building structure

external e-mail use caution opening

Dear Chair Sontag and Newburyport Planning Board members,

Thank you for continuing to take the time to read another letter voicing our apposition to the Institution for Saving's proposed building structure. It has been over a year now that our community has been stating how a structure of this size will effect our neighborhood as well as this Historical town of Newburyport. My husband, daughter, and I live directly across the street from this property and understand the effect a building of this mass and size will have on Prospect St, Otis Place, and Garden St.

The Historic Commission has contributed greatly with offering their prospective on the new building plans. Institution for Savings' original, historic building is much smaller in size and mass than the new proposed construction. The plans as currently shown would overpower not only the historic building of the IFS facing State Street, but it will overpower the surrounding homes of the entire neighborhood. My family and I have heard a need to create space for an additional 7 people, our question all along has not yet been answered, why are alternative locations not being considered?

Clearly, this has been a long process and demonstrates the passion of the residents regarding the hope in keeping the historical integrity of Newburyport by following the requirements of the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's requirements for size and massing. It is my confidence that the planning board will strongly take the recommendations of the Historic Commission by not allowing such a project of this overall massing to come to fruition.

It is very discouraging that the IFS does not seem to understand how their patrons are continuing to be affected by their request to build such a large structure on these neighborhood streets. The building plans are very disjointed from the existing homes and their architectural integrity.

Please confirm receipt and addition to the public record.

Thank you again for your support,

Anne, Aaron and Sydney Clausen
3 Otis Place
Newburyport, MA

Dianne Boisvert

From: Margie Larzelere <marglarzelere@gmail.com>
Sent: February 16, 2021 8:47 AM
To: Dianne Boisvert
Subject: [Ext]Institution for Savings Addition Proposal

external e-mail use caution opening

To: Newburyport's Planning Board

Date: February 16, 2012

Subject: Institution for Savings Addition Proposal

Good morning to all of you,

I have followed all the Historical Commission's and your meetings as the Institution for Savings has presented several plans for expansions at their 93 State St. site over the course of a year's time. I own a home and live at #18-20 Prospect St, just steps from the current plan's location.

My neighborhood has consistently voiced our deep concerns with the mass and height of the bank's desired addition and its location.

The Historical Commission's report states that MA guidelines are not met in regards to the original Bank structure.

I urge you to encourage the bank to consider using the corner of their property, State St and Prospect St, as a much better location for their addition, as it would blend in with current brick business buildings on State St. and allow parking to the rear.

This is a monumental decision for you since any structure built will forever change the neighborhood and set future possible city precedence.

Thank you for your efforts as you consider this request by the bank.

Sincerely,

Margaret Larzelere

Dianne Boisvert

From: Mary Lyon <melyon59@gmail.com>
Sent: February 16, 2021 1:31 PM
To: Dianne Boisvert
Subject: [Ext]Institution for Savings Expansion

external e-mail use caution opening

Mary Lyon
23 Otis Place
Newburyport, MA 01950

February 16, 2021

Attention: Newburyport Planning Board

The Institution for Savings has the right to expand their property and they have taken steps to make improvements and concessions to their original plans. However, their most recent expansion is still too **massive** and encroaches on the historic Prospect Street and Otis Place neighborhoods. Also, the use of brick only enhances its commercial purposes in a residential neighborhood with primarily clapboard siding.

The Proposed - Arial Northwest view (pg. 44 of 74) illustrates how the structure overshadows the neighborhood. Why can't they expand on State Street, which is the primary business area? With creative design, they could incorporate a new structure into the old one and relocate the clock tower so that most of the addition is on State Street.

Their latest expansion plan will have the same dominating and obliterating impact on Prospect Street and Otis Place that the Newburyport Housing Authority's massive brick complex has at Charter, Fair, and Temple Streets.

This latest plan demonstrates that The Institution for Savings is attempting to meet the requests of their neighbors. They are getting closer.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mary Lyon

Dianne Boisvert

From: Rick Pollak <rpollak2@yahoo.com>
Sent: February 16, 2021 9:05 AM
To: Dianne Boisvert; glennprichards@comcast.net; Dianne Boisvert; Katelyn E. Sullivan; Andrew Port
Subject: [Ext]Opposed - Institution for Savings Recent Paln

external e-mail use caution opening

2/16/202

Bonnie Sontag, Planning Board Chair, Office of Planning and Development

c/o planning@cityofnewburyport.com

Glen Richards, Newburyport Historical Commission

c/o kesullivan@cityofnewburyport.com

Andrew Port, Planning Director

c/o aport@cityofnewburyport.com

Reference: Public Hearing for Special Permit(s) made by the Institution for Savings in Newburyport for property located at 93 State Street/ Assessor's Map and parcel 14-40. 1. Site Plan Review (2020-SPR-02), 2. ITIF Special Permit (2020-SP-01), 3. DOD Special Permit (2020-SP-09)

Dear Ms. Sontag, Mr. Richards and Mr. Port:

As an abutter of the proposed Institution for Savings Bank, we would again like to state our opinion of this most recent plan. We have sent a number of letters concerning the effects of this new structure on our property and the neighborhood. If this recent design was presented to the neighborhood a year ago our comments would have been that it is too massive in addition to our previous stated concerns. In appearance this structure does not fit into the historical character that Newburyport tries to maintain and certainly does not belong in a neighborhood setting. With the several plans that have been presented, not one changes our objections, too big, too tall, too massive, too close.

It is disheartening to know that our neighbor, Institution for Savings, has so little disregard for the area that they reside and the neighbors that live around them. As a long time bank doing business in Newburyport, it would seem that the management would be more concerned about the effect that this plan would have on the nature of the city and direct surroundings.

Just to repeat my objections mentioned in previous emails:

After review of the latest IFS plans on 10/20/2020, and recently I continue to be opposed for the following reasons:

1). The new proposed addition ignores the scale and massing concerns I originally conveyed. The roughly 16,000-square-foot (??) addition is too large, too tall and lacks reasonable setbacks on all abutting sides. Even though its zoned commercial the structure is going into a neighborhood when 10 foot setbacks are the norm.

- 2) Concerns about noise and air pollution from the generator, air conditioning units and garage parking.
- 3) Drainage issues into my yard due to the new structure occupying all the land mass being right up close to the lot/fence line.
- 4) Limited natural lighting due to the height of the structure.
- 5) The brick wall facing my back yard does not seem to blend with the character of the historic neighborhood. The proposed structure is replacing a view of trees and open space. (Parking during the work day).

Just because you can build on or close to lot lines does not mean you should when it impacts the quality of the neighborhood.

Please confirm receipt of this message and its addition to the public record.

Sincerely.

Richard and Mary Pollak, owner abutters

1, 3, 5, and 7 Garden St.

Phone 978-884-2995

Dianne Boisvert

From: Colleen Turner <turnstyler@gmail.com>
Sent: February 16, 2021 9:17 AM
To: Dianne Boisvert
Cc: Colleen Secino
Subject: [Ext]VOTE NO: 93 State Street Site Plan Review, Feb. 17, 2021

external e-mail use caution opening

Dear Chair Sontag and Newburyport Planning Board members:

First and foremost, thank you each of you for all the hard work you all do on behalf of the City of Newburyport. I'm guessing yours is - more often than not - a thankless job, but as a neighbor and abutter of the proposed plan for 93 State Street, I have watched and listened as you all made keen observations, provided direction and took very seriously the concerns of abutters, neighbors and all of Newburyport.

Despite over a year of input by both this board and the Historical Commission, the IFS continues to put forth plans that not only dwarf the original historic structure, but also throw a vibrant, historical neighborhood into the dark ages...literally, the height, scale and massing is still too excessive for the location that abuts Prospect Street, Otis Place and Garden Street.

Ironically, the IFS has stated this expansion was all about growth and expansion of programs...yet, it is those very items that are getting more and more diminished in each and every iteration, with an end result that amounts to nothing more than a private parking garage.

The IFS has spent over a year of your time and mine, throwing bones via concept designs, but never making a true and real compromise that addresses the scale, height and mass...not an easy task when the one thing they refuse to compromise on is having covered, private parking.

I respectfully request you vote no on this current proposed site plan.

Please confirm receipt of this letter and its inclusion in the public record. Thank you.

Colleen Turner Secino
15 Otis Place - Unit 1
Newburyport, MA 01950



38R Merrimac Street, Newburyport, MA 01950
O: 978-462-6680 F: 978-465-4145

www.newburyportchamber.org
info@newburyportchamber.org

Ms. Bonnie Sontag, Chair
The Newburyport Planning Board
60 Pleasant Street
P.O. Box 550
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Institution for Savings Proposed Expansion Project

Dear Chairwoman Sontag and Members of the Planning Board:

On behalf of the Greater Newburyport Chamber of Commerce (the "Chamber") and the Chamber's Economic Development Action Committee (EDAC), we are writing to express our support for the Institution for Savings' expansion project and to urge the Planning Board to approve this project, which we firmly believe is vital to the economic stability and prosperity of the City of Newburyport, and particularly the City's downtown business district.

The importance of having a vibrant downtown business district cannot be overstated. The charm and beauty of the City's downtown historic red brick buildings are dependent upon those spaces being occupied and maintained by a mix of successful retail shops, restaurants, cafes, businesses and residential uses. It was not so long ago that Newburyport's downtown was filled with boarded-up, run-down buildings, and a depreciated housing market. The current pandemic has shown the fragile financial reality of the downtown district, as closed and empty store fronts again dot the streets. For over fifty years, the Chamber has worked tirelessly with business leaders and government officials to promote a diverse economic environment that will support positive growth and development, which benefits businesses and residents alike.

The Institution for Savings plays a critically important role in the City's stability and prosperity, serving as a much needed anchor of dependable financial strength, with a demonstrated commitment to investing in our local community through residential and commercial loans, deposits, employment opportunities, and millions of dollars in philanthropic support of the City's numerous non-profit organizations. The Bank has worked diligently and responsively with its architect, City officials and neighbors, for over a year, and at considerable expense, to design a beautiful red brick addition with on-site parking, that will complement surrounding structures, while addressing the 21st century needs of this landmark financial institution. The historic 93 State Street property is a stunning gateway into our City, and attracts visitors year-round who enjoy its meticulously maintained grounds, clock tower fountain and handsome architecture.

The Bank's proposed project creatively takes into account the unique architectural, economic and cultural character of Newburyport's downtown, consistent with the City's historical preservation plan and master plan, as contemplated in the City's Downtown Overlay District. We are extremely fortunate as a community that the Bank is headquartered in downtown Newburyport, and seeks to remain and expand at its current location, a decision that will greatly benefit the entire City, and should not be hindered or delayed by one small group of abutters.

We would like to take this opportunity to highlight some of the substantial benefits that the Institution for Savings and its proposed expansion provide:

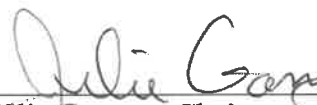
- The main office has 23 full-time employees, which is expected to grow to 30 employees.
- There are 12,655 accounts, totaling \$525 million in deposits at the main office.
- The Bank's State Street Lending Office services \$2.2 billion in loans.
- The Bank provides local, personalized banking services to Newburyport residents and businesses.
- Bank employees and customers come downtown for their banking needs, and shop and dine in Newburyport, supporting local businesses.
- The Bank paid the City of Newburyport approximately \$69,000 in taxes in 2020.
- The Bank estimates that the proposed expansion will cost over \$6 million, further augmenting the City's tax base.

We thank you for your consideration, and we respectfully request that the Planning Board approve the Institution for Savings' proposed expansion project.

Respectfully submitted,



Frank G. Cousins, Jr., President
Greater Newburyport Chamber of Commerce



Julie Ganong, Chair
Economic Development and Action
Committee

February 16, 2021

Newburyport Planning Board

Attn: Bonnie Sontag, Chairperson

60 Pleasant Street

Newburyport, MA 01950

Re: New IFS Plan; November 4 Hearing; 93 State Street; IFS DOD Special Permit and Site Plan Review Application.

Chairperson Sontag:

I wish to address two topics in this letter. The first has to do with the latest plan for expansion by the bank. The plan is without doubt an improvement over what has been presented in the past. While reasonable minds can differ I do prefer the brick façade over the clapboard previous iteration. The reduction in size is appreciated as is the setback from Otis Place. That said, it is still a massive addition with a very large footprint. I agree with the NHC Historical report which said just that and recommended that the DOD special permit be denied. I realize we are now at the one year point in this process and there is likely a certain amount of sentiment to just get this project approved and over with. I understand this. The last thing I wanted to be doing was participating in this process continuously for a year. I am sure that when neighbors oppose this plan there will be voices that say the neighbors aren't going to be satisfied with anything. To that I would respond that this plan is the first plan to make any measurable reduction in size. The bank's unwillingness to reduce size and height or choose a different location has caused them to continuously return to the Planning Board with different designs which did little to reduce size even though this is something we have been advocating for – and which board members have requested – all along. Had the bank actually worked with the neighbors to come up with a design a lot of time and expense could likely have been avoided. I would also point out that this latest iteration was done without any neighborhood participation. And this brings me to my second topic which relates to Attorney Mead's statements during the November 4th meeting implying that the neighbors were unwilling to work with the bank.

So much time has passed since that meeting that it may seem unimportant at this point. I submit that the truth is always important regardless of the lapse of time. During the November meeting Attorney Mead misled the board by characterizing the neighbors as unwilling to work with the bank to come up with a mutually acceptable project plan.

- 1. At 2:13:35 Attorney Mead begins what purports to be a chronology of the Bank's outreach. She states that she "got a plan from the bank. Mark Griffin and I work in the same building. I took the plan up to see Mr. Griffin. We had a short discussion and that was the end of it."**

The way this is stated makes it appear that as soon as Attorney Mead received plans from the bank she revealed them to me. This is false. In fact, during our discussion she revealed to me that the bank had already filed with the planning board for site plan review and an ITIF parking permit. I asked if there was any room to move on the setback from my house at 4 Otis Place and she told me there wasn't. Clearly, the bank had already settled on the plan without any input.

- 2. At 2:13:50 Attorney Mead states "Then the neighborhood started having meetings. We attempted to attend the meeting and were asked to leave."**

This is true. But the reason they were asked to leave is because it was a neighborhood meeting to discuss the bank's project which was already filed with the planning board; this was our first meeting as neighbors and it was private. The bank was not invited – although they clearly were notified of it by someone. The purpose of the meeting was for a strategy session informing all affected. Attorney Mead – who – as she noted – is in the office downstairs from me neglected to notify me that the bank members would be showing up. If she had I would have told her it was an internal meeting and not to bother showing up.

- 3. At 2:13:58 Mead states "We then had to have a meeting that was moderated by a city councilor. It was really nothing more than hearing us and having people tell us why we weren't doing the right thing."**

This again has some truth but leaves out important context. This neighborhood meeting was something I requested after meeting with Mike Jones and Kim Rock on or about January 22nd. The bank obliged to the request and continued its hearing to allow for the meeting. The bank requested Councilor Jared Eigerman moderate the meeting. The bank presented its project and showed that they had slightly amended the plan to pull the addition off of Otis Place somewhat which resulted in a small reduction in size. It should be noted that during the meeting bank President Michael Jones was specifically asked if the bank was open to further changes to its plan. He responded that the bank was not willing to make further changes.

- 4. At 2:14:25 Attorney Mead states: "...[Y]ou can't turn people away when they try to sit down."**

The assertion that the bank was willing to work out a plan but the neighbors refused is simply false. During the entirety of initial communications, the plan was presented to me and the neighbors as a virtual *fait accompli*. This is evidenced by the fact the plans were already filed before any community interaction took place. The meeting was not give and take. The bank was simply showing us what they were going to do. There was never any willingness by the bank to make fundamental and significant (size, height, location of the addition etc.) plan changes to accommodate the neighborhood concerns. The bank's continual unwillingness to address the size of the project due to the need for "programmatic space" is consistent with its stubbornness in its meeting with the neighbors.

When it comes to deliberations regarding the bank's plans, whether neighborhood outreach occurred is beyond your evaluation of the project based on the permit criteria. However, the veracity of applicants

and their representatives is certainly something that the Planning Board should care about. For that reason I have brought this to your attention.

Sincerely,

Mark Griffin

Dianne Boisvert

From: David <oceanartistdt@gmail.com>
Sent: February 16, 2021 3:32 PM
To: Dianne Boisvert
Subject: [Ext]Institution for Savings Project

external e-mail use caution opening

Good afternoon.

As a local business owner on Prince Place and as a homeowner on plum Island, I have two reasons to voice my disapproval of the long-running Newburyport drama of the Bank vs David.

The size and design are an insult to everyone who lives and works here...just not making a silk purse...!

They can arrogantly and repeatedly brag about their dollars put into the local community but, unlike a one shot "payola" gift, this brick and mortar blockhouse is permanent... everlasting and really not needed or wanted!

Our entire city is a 'quaint' place. Let's keep it like that...before it's too late... there's no reversing it!

Thank you, planning board for your patience and understanding.

Sincerely,
David Ten Eyck
Prince Place and Plum Island