

February 16, 2020

Claire Papanastasiou
4 Otis Place, Newburyport
617.416.3377

Reference: 2/19/2020, Public Hearing for Special Permit made by the Institution for Savings in Newburyport for property located at 93 State Street / Assessor's Map and parcel 14-40

I live on Otis Place roughly 6 feet from the Institution for Savings parking lot, the proposed site of its two-story, 16,000-square-foot expansion. I share my Victorian home of about 1,500 square feet with my husband Mark and 86-pound yellow lab Sturgis. Through the sliding door in our kitchen and two upstairs-office windows we can see the glorious steeple of the First Unitarian Church on Pleasant Street. I often stop whatever I'm doing when passing by those passages to absorb the view with a deep appreciation of Newburyport's unique beauty and the city that I've adopted home.

To say that I am disappointed, saddened and concerned about the Institution of Savings' proposed expanded footprint is an understatement, though I respect the bank's right to pursue building upon its land. In fact, I wish the bank continued success because our money is parked there. However, if the expansion's current design is approved – and especially in light of how it has been pursued – its unfortunate impact will be felt well beyond the bank's immediate neighbors.

I've accepted that the bank will expand in some form and a brick wall may well replace the views of the magnificent spire, though I hope that the bank will listen to abutters and consider revising its plans. I also trust that the Newburyport Planning Board will ponder the long-term influence the building's massive size and incompatible design will have on the neighborhood and Newburyport's entire fabric. In addition to the inappropriate and insensitive design, what's also disturbing and equally important is the entire process thus far. It defies the very characteristics of why we love our community, specifically transparency, collaboration and respect.

Everyone deserves to be heard and treated fairly. In this case, the bank's neighbors' views were disregarded, and all we can hope for is fair treatment going forward. The bank filed its plans with the city without a heads-up to abutters for input (positive and/or negative). To paraphrase the bank, though, that's how it's

always operated so its actions were appropriate. Quite the opposite, and if the expansion shoe was on the other foot, it would be interesting to see how the bank would appreciate that practice.

Before news of the plan was reported in these pages, bank neighbors met to share concerns and invited bank officials to meet to learn more about the expansion and provide feedback. The offer was accepted, yet neighbors, including me, were perplexed that the bank took it upon itself to revise the plans *before* the meeting *without* hearing neighborhood feedback. When an Otis Place resident asked if the bank would consider revising the plan based on concerns expressed that evening, IFS President Michael Jones said that the plans presented that night were the final plans to be filed with the city.

Ultimately, this is not just about me, my family, our home, our quality of life, our loss of enchanting views and our neighborhood. It goes well beyond all that. While the bank did absolutely nothing wrong in wanting to pursue approval from the Planning Board, it's *how* the bank pursued its right as well as its subsequent actions that are unsettling. And now, as we look to city officials to decide on the proposed expansion, it comes down to how they will act in the spirit of what is best for those directly affected, specifically the neighborhood and the bank, *and* the community as a whole.

On Feb. 19, the bank will seek approval for its massive and architecturally insensitive addition before the Planning Board. It's my hope that residents who care about our community will attend the public hearing to voice their opinions. I also hope that city officials will do what the bank has neglected to do from the start. Consider what's in the best interest of the city, not just the bank, and listen.

Claire Papanastasiou
Newburyport

2/14/2020

TO: Planning Board – Newburyport

RE: Reference: 2/19/2020, Public Hearing for Special Permit made by the Institution for Savings in Newburyport for property located at 93 State Street / Assessor's Map and parcel 14-40

Dear Members:

I would like to express my concern regarding the Institution for Savings plans to expand their headquarters on State and Prospect St.

First let me say our family has used the Institution for many years, and they have been very good to us. I would like to think they really try to live up to their motto, "To positively affect the lives of every person, business and organization in the communities we serve."

I hope they had the motto in mind when they proposed the addition. I'm afraid though that they may have lost their way a bit here. The bank benefits, surely, but not the community at large, and the impact on the historic neighborhood abutting the bank will be tremendous.

To make up for the lost parking they propose using the Harris Street lot and 4 spaces at Lunt and Kelly's, over 3/4 of a mile away. It's a 20-minute walk. Who's going to do that? Why not have everyone just walk from their homes. I

see that currently employees are asked not to park in the Harris Street lot. If that's the case, it should not be used as part of the special permit.

The addition will be here for a long time, while rules change all the time. The special permit should not need smoke and mirrors to appear viable.

The bank needs to look at the issues that have been brought up, look at their motto, and revise their plans accordingly.

Thomas Pelsue
158 State Street
Newburyport, MA

February 13, 2020

Newburyport Planning Board
Attn: Chairperson Bonnie Sontag
60 Pleasant Street
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: 93 State Street - Institution for Savings - Special Permit for Parking Waiver, Downtown Overlay District Special Permit, and Major Site Plan Review.

Dear Chairperson Sontag and members of the Planning Board,

I am writing in reference to the proposed project located at 93 State Street by the Institution for Savings (“IFS”) seeking a Special Permit under the Downtown Overlay District (Section XXVII), Site Plan Approval (Section XV), and a Special Permit seeking waiver of parking requirements as allowed under Section VII.A.1.

As I understand it, the project proponent seeks to build an approximately 8,800 square foot addition of office space to the existing bank, extending out from the 1980s addition. The 8,800 square feet of floor area is to be located above an 18 space parking garage located roughly in the area of the existing surface parking lot along Prospect Street and Otis Place.

I’m writing to voice my opposition to the project as it is currently proposed. The project is not consistent with the historic scale and character of the Newburyport Historic District encompassed by the Downtown Overlay District (“DOD”), and particularly, with respect to the residential character of Prospect Street, Otis Place, and Garden Street. I submit the following observations and comments for the Planning Board’s consideration relative to the review process established with DOD discretionary Special Permit.

DOD Determinations & Purpose Statement

In establishing the DOD and DOD-Special Permit, the City made the clear determination that maintaining the historic character of downtown Newburyport is critical to the preservation of the City’s heritage. Section XXVII.A “Determinations” enumerates a series of events and policy actions summarizing a nearly 60 year legacy and commitment to historic preservation. This section further states that land use regulations established with the DOD are adopted in order to ensure this commitment is carried into the future. Specifically, paragraph nine reads as follows:

“The Preservation, rehabilitation and enhancement of the city’s historic downtown is critical to the preservation of the city’s heritage and land values, its recently state-approved Cultural District, and otherwise to benefit the general welfare of its citizens and property owners” (Section XXVII.A.9).

The Purpose Statement (Section XXVII.B) expands on this overarching objective by stating the following:

“a downtown overlay district (DOD) and discretionary DOD special permit (DOD-SP) are hereby established due to the unique land use pattern, and architectural, economic, and cultural character of the buildings, structures, and lots, both individually and as a group, that are located in downtown Newburyport.”

The statement goes on to state that the DOD is intended to implement the historic preservation plan, master plan, and waterfront strategic plan, and to promote the health, safety and general welfare “by... protecting the land use pattern, and architectural, cultural, economic, political, and social heritage of the city through the rehabilitation, preservation, and enhancement of its historic downtown”.

The DOD Determinations and Purpose Statement place considerations as to building scale, form, and architectural detail of new construction at the center of the decision making process for issuing a discretionary special permit. Importantly, in the context of this project and review process, building form, scale and design are considered in relation to the subject property, the district and the surrounding built environment.

Special Permit Criteria

To carry out the intent of the ordinance the DOD establishes multiple criteria in the decision making process for new construction, alternation and additions that consider a project proposal’s scale, and design. Section XXVII.F (Procedures and Criteria) refer all projects seeking a DOD discretionary special permit to section X.H.7(a) relative to use special permits whereby the granting authority shall make nine (9) findings of the project proposal with regard to the nature and condition of all adjacent structures and uses, and the district within which they are located. Although all nine of the conditions are relevant to the subject property, and the proposed project, two are particularly relevant to building scale and design. These two conditions are:

6. “The requested use will not impair the integrity or character of the district or adjoining districts, nor be detrimental to the health and welfare.”

I refer to the DOD Purpose Statement, where the district was specifically created, in part, “to promote the health, safety, convenience and general welfare of the inhabitants of the City of Newburyport”. Health, convenience and general welfare was later directly linked in the Purpose Statement with the rehabilitation, preservation, and enhancement of its historic downtown. As I referenced above, consideration in the Purpose Statement is

applied to the protection of land use patterns, architectural, economic and cultural character of the building, structures, and lots; both individually and as a group.

8. “The proposed use is in harmony with the purpose and intent of this ordinance”.

Again, the DOD Purpose Statement makes clear that historic preservation and considerations related to scale and building design in relation to the site, and surrounding neighborhood are central to the intent of the DOD, and are core considerations in review of the of IFS project proposal.

A detailed procedure and set of development requirements are established in Section XXVII.F of the DOD. These criteria must be met in addition to those set in Section X.H.7 and are aligned with the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (Section XVII.F.3), providing more specificity around building form and design. Guidelines related to Preservation as defined and enumerated in the Standards apply in the context of this project as it proposes an addition to an existing historic property.

Section XVII.F(5) establishes specific criteria relative to projects that propose new construction and alterations within the DOD that complement and enhance the Secretary of Interior Standards. Subparagraph (a) states:

- New construction and alteration within the DOD shall not disrupt the essential form and integrity of (i) historic building, (ii) lot where it is located, and (iii) *its setting within DOD* (emphasis added).
- New construction and alteration within the DOD shall be compatible with the size, scale, height, color, material, and character of the (x) subject historic building, structure or exterior architectural feature, (y) the lot where it is located, *and (z) its setting within the DOD* (emphasis added).

I take the time to reference the various sections of the zoning ordinance because I find it instructive that great care has been taken to establish a careful and comprehensive development review process that is embedded within the broader policy objectives of the City and an enduring legacy of historic preservation. The ordinance creates a framework that requires development that is responsive to the existing built environment, history of downtown Newburyport, and preservation of its essential character that makes it a generator of economic and cultural activity. The basis for the DOD, its review process, and decision criteria make clear that the discretionary special permit is contingent on a development project meeting detailed design standards not only to the historic building it is accessory to, but must at a minimum, be compatible with the surrounding built environment.

I am in opposition to the project as it currently stands as it does not meet the standard of design promulgated by the Secretary of Standards for Rehabilitation, or the criteria established in the DOD for new construction or alterations. I offer the following

observations and comments related to the current project proposal and relation to these design review criteria:

- The proposed addition includes approximately 8,800 square feet of office space located on the second floor of the proposed structure with parking provided in an enclosed area located on the ground floor. This calculation is somewhat misleading in that the ground floor, although not included in the gross floor area calculation, will be experienced by the pedestrian as if it is nearly a 17,400 square foot building.
- The scale of the addition when taking into consideration the enclosed ground floor parking area is much larger in terms of floor area and volume when compared to the original historic building. For reference, the footprint of the existing historic building is approximately 3,500 square feet while the proposed addition is over twice the size of the original building at approximately 8,800 square feet. When including the 1980s addition with the current proposed addition, the total alteration to the historic building is approximately three times the size of the original, historic, building.
- In addition to the footprint, the proposed building is much greater in scale to the historic building when considering the total volume of the two building. As noted above, the floor area of the proposed addition is approximately 17,400 square feet when considering the enclosed parking structure. The total floor area of the historic building considering including the finished basement and first floor is approximately 6,000 square feet. The proposed addition is nearly three times the floor area of the historic building.
- The height of the proposed addition appears to be approximately the same height as the historic building at 31.75 feet high, roughly 2 feet shorter than the tallest point of the historic building. The cornice line for the side and rear wings of the historic building are lower than the primary cornice line of the proposed addition. In other words, although the historic building is taller than the proposed addition at its highest point, the addition will feel taller and more massive from the street.
- The ground floor use of the proposed building presents an enclosed parking garage to Prospect Street and Otis Place. Parking garage uses or enclosed parking facilities on the ground floor do not present an active and engaging front to the street. Consider the surrounding context whereby the ground floor uses along State Street are occupied floor area, either commercial or residential. The surrounding streets include street facing buildings with many and varied openings, consistent and well articulated fenestration, and architectural details that create an engaging street realm.
- The architectural detail and form of the proposed building does little to minimize the scale and mass as it presents itself to the street. The building carries a straight line down Prospect street with no modulation of the building façade to provide relief or variation. Contrasted to the residential buildings that although similar in height provide great variety in modulating height and façade along the street.

In view of the forgoing submit that the IFS project as it is currently proposed does not meet the intent of the DOD ordinance, it doesn't meet the design considerations of the Secretary of Interior Standards relative to Rehabilitation, and is inconsistent with DOD special permit requirements with respect to the site and its surrounding context. I thank the Planning Board for the opportunity to comment on the proposed project and hope you take into consideration the scale of the proposed building in relation to both the existing historic building, and the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aaron Clausen', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Aaron Clausen, AICP
3 Otis Place

To:
Planning Board Commission

From:
Alex Adrian
Garden Street
Newburyport, MA 01950
kentstandby@gmail.com

Reference: 2/19/2020, Public Hearing for Special Permit made by the Institution for Savings in Newburyport for property located at 93 State Street / Assessor's Map and parcel 14-40

Proposed Headline: "Win-Win-Win-Win"

To the Editor:

Reflecting on the IFS proposal to build a massive addition that covers their entire rear parking area at 93 State Street, causing customers, abutters, and even their own employees significant inconvenience, I've tried to keep an open mind and a neighborly attitude, but it's clear now the bank has taken a stance for battle.

Rather than strongarm their neighbors because they think they can, wouldn't the IFS get better results all around if they moved the whole HQ to the Business & Industrial Park? Some key talking points for bank honchos to discuss amongst themselves:

1) The neighborhood is arming itself for a FIGHT: pooling our own funds, we've hired a prominent land-use attorney at great expense and will take this conflict as far as we can before releasing our final breath.

2) The Newburyport Business and Industrial Park is an underutilized resource and the city would love to see the bank move their corporate HQ there. One possibility is that this move would INSPIRE a number of other companies to

follow the bank's lead and do the same.

3) Another point on the Business Park: on February 5th, 2020, bank President and CEO Michael Jones told "a small group of thoughtful concerned citizens" meeting at the Library (about 40 of us) that the bank's "By-laws" require that their HQ always remains in Newburyport!! Is the Business Park not worth a closer look, Mr. Jones?

3) Sources have informed us that Pete Kelly, owner of Kelly's True Value Hardware, is offering his parking lot near the traffic circle to help the bank with the required number of spaces. In a world where many folks hardly leave their computers or cars if they don't have to, do ya'll really want us to believe that bank employees are going to park a half mile away, carry what they bring to the office every day, and walk 12 MINUTES to work, especially in rain or snow?! I'd have to see it to believe it.

4) The entrance to the Business Park is only about 8/10th's of a mile from the bank's current location at 93 State Street. If they're going to propose their employees park a half mile away, wouldn't it make better business sense and ultimately boost profits to embrace a completely new location that provides the bank open-ended growth and expansion opportunity for decades to come? Many bank customers would drive to a new IFS branch there just to AVOID FIGHTING FOR A PARKING SPACE downtown.

5) Thanks to full page ads in the Daily News and other media outlets informing the world of the bank's generous contributions to hospitals, non-profits, and other causes, we are well aware of the difference the bank makes in this way. And we are grateful. But what if this FIGHT with neighbors became sufficiently DISTASTEFUL to bank customers and shareholders that some of them decided to move their money and take their business to competitors who will soon

appear a whole lot friendlier? How much would have to go away before a \$3.7 BILLION dollar bank began to feel it? \$100 million? Half a billion? It could happen.

Summary: The Special Permit and all Building Permits the bank has applied for for this project should be denied and the bank should design an inspiring new headquarters with multiple drive-throughs in the underutilized Newburyport Business and Industrial Park. Heck, we might even get a Walmart. Win-win-win-win.

Alex Adrian

Newburyport, MA

February 13, 2020

Planning Board of Newburyport
Newburyport City Hall
60 Pleasant Street
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Public Hearing for Special Permit made by the Institution for Savings in Newburyport for property located at 93 State Street/Assessor's Map and Parcel 14-40.

My wife and I became Newburyport residents in 2018. We purchased our retirement home on Otis Place. We were attracted by the vibrant ambiance of downtown Newburyport and especially the quaint and historic nature of Otis Place.

IFS's property was not an issue for us. We appreciated the separation from downtown that the current parking lot afforded. We did not bargain, however, for the monolithic intrusion of the proposed downtown-like structure into our very desirable neighborhood, especially the prison-like façade that will extend to the Otis Place sidewalk. The placement of the proposed IFS structure negatively and permanently alters our enjoyment of the retirement home and the total Newburyport experience that we enthusiastically anticipated.

Additionally, has the town considered the extent of the detrimental impact of the proposed structure on the property values to the property owners on Prospect and Garden Streets and Otis Place? The town should conduct an independent assessment, funded by IFS, and communicate the results of this impact to each property owner and how IFS would compensate us for any and all losses prior to the town's final decision on the construction.

We believe the proposed IFS structure should not be approved.

Sincerely,

Deb and Dale Ritter
11 Otis Place
Newburyport, MA 01950

February 12, 2020
Tim and Carol Piper
12 Otis Place
Newburyport, MA 01950

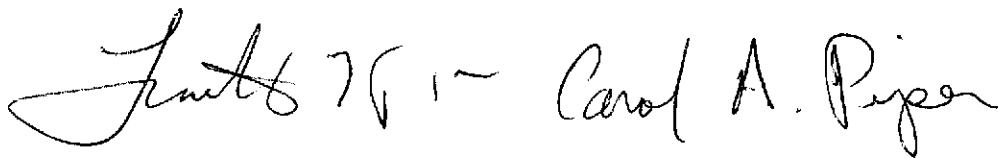
Bonnie Sontag, Planning Board Chair
Office of Planning and Development
Newburyport City Hall
60 Pleasant St.
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Public Hearing for Special Permit made by the Institution for Savings in Newburyport for property located at 93 State Street / Assessor's Map and Parcel 14-40.

My wife and I moved to Newburyport over 10 years ago and have made many neighborhood friends. As you can tell by all the letters of concern being submitted, our neighborhood is very important to us and we want to preserve its historic character and style in every way possible. It was disappointing when representatives for the Institution of Savings met with concerned neighbors of Otis Place, Prospect and Green Streets. We live here. Anything that's going to negatively impact the neighborhood concerns all of us. The bank reps had no interest in hearing any of it. They dismissed our concerns regarding parking and congestion, not to mention the dramatic change in historic character our neighborhood will have to accept. The bank's demeanor was somewhat insulting to those of us that respect the historic nature of our neighborhood.

Residential green space is in part what makes our neighborhood special. When the trees come down to make room for big buildings with added employees and less parking, something is very wrong. Besides the damage to the historic character of our neighborhood, the Institution for Savings has totally whitewashed the parking problems that will be created. To suggest that bank employees will park in municipal lots is naive at best. They will park wherever it's most convenient. We know this for a fact, it's already happening today. They are taking up precious spots that we rely on for residential parking. To propose a significant bank expansion, with additional employees being brought in, along with a 31 car deficiency in onsite parking, is just asking for problems. For the city to allow itself to be paid off for accepting a fools approach to parking in our neighborhood is disingenuous at best. I hope you consider our concerns before letting this project proceed any further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tim & Carol A. Piper". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Tim and Carol Piper

February 12, 2020
Collene Sheeran
17 Otis Place
Newburyport, MA 01950

Planning Board of Newburyport
Newburyport City Hall
60 Pleasant Street
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Public Hearing for Special Permit made by the Institution for Savings in
Newburyport for property located at 93 State Street/Assessor's Map and Parcel 14-40.

Please consider this letter an endorsement of the collective outrage of the residents and businesses of Garden, Prospect and Otis Streets regarding the proposed building addition planned by the Institution for Savings at their downtown Newburyport location.

Simply stated, it's a brick eyesore that clashes with the residential architecture of the surrounding neighborhoods for the ostensible purpose of lending additional retail bank space for customers of the bank. It would be 8800 square feet for 7 new employees, a museum, a gym and parking for select executive employees.

Completely aside from the aesthetic considerations, the congestion and parking issues for the three streets in question, as well as State Street, have been largely ignored. It has been suggested employees would be required to park in the waterfront municipal garage on Merrimac Street or at Kelly's True Value located at the rotary as you enter Newburyport. However, no mention how this restriction would be enforced has been put forth.

A museum is place for beautiful, historic and cultural items to be displayed. Why would it be a place to have our neighborhood turn unsightly and uninviting.

Collene Sheeran
17 Otis Place
Newburyport, MA

Mark W. Griffin
Claire M. Papanastasiou
4 Otis Place
Newburyport, MA 01950
978-973-4424

February 12, 2020

City of Newburyport
Planning Board
Attn Bonnie Sontag, Chairperson
60 Pleasant Street
Newburyport, MA 01950

Re: 93 State Street, IFS Special Permits for Parking (2), DOD Special Permit and Site Plan Review Special Permit

Dear Chairperson Sontag:

We are writing to you as immediate abutters to the proposed project by the Institution for Savings. We write as customers of the bank and abutters who have had a generally favorable experience living next to the bank for years. The bank has been a good neighbor. We are also aware of the significant contributions the bank has made to the community. It is perhaps because of these positive attributes that we are so disappointed with the current project proposal by the bank. It is certainly far below the standard of achievement we have come to expect. Accordingly, we oppose the project as it is presented. It should be noted that we approach this from the perspective that we want a better project rather than no project. That said, we think the bank has failed to meet the legal standard for its permits as set forth below. This is submitted to inform the board that the discretionary permits are just that – discretionary. And if the bank cannot meet its legal obligations – arguably – it should revisit its project plans and try to make this project better while concurrently meeting the legal criteria. This will make the project better for the neighborhood and for the City of Newburyport. The main issues are discussed below from our perspective as abutters and as residents; they include, but are not limited to: setbacks, screening, light and air, form, location, massing, design and historical compatibility, as well as parking.

Our Concerns as Abutters – setbacks, screening, light and air

Our home at 4 Otis will be approximately 6 feet from the proposed building wall of the bank's addition. This building wall will block our view from our only window (kitchen) on that side of the house. It will further block our view from two windows in our bedroom/study on the second floor. Prior to this we could see all the way to the graceful steeple of the Unitarian Church. More importantly is the diminution of light and air from this proposal. We want increased setbacks and property screening (preferably arborvitae

on the bank property to be maintained by the bank). Are we entitled to setbacks and screening? No, but neither is the bank entitled to discretionary permits. We request the board to direct the applicant to provide them as a condition for it to obtain its permits. Also, the “transition” between the bank property and the Otis Place residential neighborhood is unsatisfactorily addressed by the rear of the addition protruding into that street. We further request the board to direct the bank to provide an Otis Place setback and screen in order to obtain its discretionary permits. Aside from our immediate concerns there are other overriding concerns associated with the application.

Our Concerns as Newburyport Residents – Form, location, massing, historic respect to original building

Fundamentally, the addition looks like a really big boxy parking garage. The form – i.e. the shape, massing, footprint, height and relation to streets and the 1820 building all should be reevaluated. We believe that this addition which will serve as the headquarters for the bank can be an important asset and a building of which the City can be proud. We want this project to be the best that it can be. The current proposal misses that mark. We urge the Planning Board to direct the applicant to revise its plans to change the addition to be subordinate to the original 1820 building and to pay respect to its historic character and to the DOD and the adjacent historic neighborhood. This will require reduction in some places but perhaps addition in others to fit the bank’s needs. All aspects should be on the table with respect to placement of the addition (if in fact it needs to be connected at all). While we are not in the business of designing an applicant’s project some of our neighbors may submit sketches to guide the board toward what would be more palatable.

Our Legal Concerns

1, This is not a retail banking use

First, we note that the bank has made its application under the use code for retail services – use #404 relating to retail banking. However, the predominant use after this proposal is constructed will not be retail banking – it will be for the bank’s corporate headquarters. The retail service use will be subordinate to the corporate HQ use. It should be noted that retail services are described as follows in the Newburyport Zoning Ordinance (NZO)

Establishments providing services or entertainment, as opposed to products, to the general public including but not limited to banking - including integrated ATMs, real estate and insurance, and establishments providing personal services including but not limited to barber shop, beauty shop, shoe repair and cleaners.

Clearly, this will not be the overriding use of the locus if this project is approved. The bank has admitted in its application and in letters to the Daily News that this expansion is primarily designed to keep the headquarters of the bank in Newburyport and to administratively support its operations. Since there is no clear use code associated with this new use it should be incumbent upon the applicant to justify it. Otherwise, the

planning board is within its rights to deny the application where retail use is not what is being proposed and this is no longer a so-called by right use.¹

2. This design does not comport with the intent of the Downtown Overlay District (DOD)

There are certain procedures required for a special permit in the DOD:

Procedure, requirements and criteria for review of proposed new construction and alterations:

New construction and alterations must be compatible with existing historic buildings and structures within the DOD: New construction and alteration within the DOD shall not disrupt the essential form and integrity of (i) the subject historic building, structure or exterior architectural features, (ii) the lot where it is located, or (iii) its setting within the DOD. Moreover, new construction and alteration within the DOD shall be compatible with the size, scale, height, color (excepting paint color), material, and character of the (x) subject historic building, structure or exterior architectural feature, (y) the lot where it is located, and (z) its setting within the DOD, as the case may be. (emphasis added)

This section provides the Planning Board significant discretion in determining whether a project meets the criteria of being compatible with the original building and the DOD. In this instance the Board should exercise its discretion and deny the permit if the bank does not change its design since its proposal does not meet the above criteria. It is not compatible with the existing 1820 building nor is it compatible with the setting within the DOD – i.e. the neighborhood.

The reasons are as follows

- The proposed addition includes approximately 8,800 square feet of office space located on the second floor which fails to account for the walled-in parking area which constitutes an approximately 17,400 square foot building. This overwhelms the 1820 building.
- In addition to the footprint, the proposed building is much greater in scale to the historic building when considering the total volume of the two buildings. As noted above, the floor area of the proposed addition is approximately 17,400 square feet when considering the enclosed parking structure. The approximate total floor area of the historic building considering including the finished basement and first floor is approximately 6,000 square feet. The proposed addition is nearly three times the floor area (counting the garage) of the historic building.
- The parking area of the proposed addition presents an enclosed parking garage to Prospect Street and Otis Place. This is inconsistent with the setting in the DOD which is largely within a residential historic neighborhood.

¹ Note that Corporate Headquarters Use #612 is not permitted in the B-2 Zoning District.

- The architectural style and form of the proposed building do not acknowledge the surrounding residential neighborhood.

3. The Planning Board has discretionary permit granting authority over all the permits the applicant is seeking

The special permit procedure vests the Planning Board with significant discretion as to whether to grant or deny a permit. Indeed, although an applicant must meet all of the legal criteria to obtain a special permit, the Planning Board need not grant the special permit even if the criteria are met. Humble Oil v. Board of Appeals of Amherst, 360 Mass. 604, 605 (1971)(“The mere fact that the standards are complied with does not compel the granting of a special permit...”). The Planning Board should exercise this authority primarily to bring about changes to this important project.²

- a. Site Plan Review – The Planning Board should seriously consider some of iterated purposes of site plan review when reviewing this application.

Land use planning: To ensure that proposed uses are reasonably compatible with surrounding uses and are consistent with city zoning and master plan goals. To discourage unlimited commercial "strip development" and curb cuts along highways, to provide for commercial development that is sensitive to Newburyport's distinct community character and diverse but consistent architectural framework, and to provide for industrial growth in nodes and clusters.(emphasis added)

As set forth herein above this design is not compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhood.

- b. The Special Permits for ITIF parking and shared parking.

The Planning Board has the discretionary permit granting authority to deny proposals that technically meet zoning but will still have adverse practical impacts on the neighborhoods. Such permits should be denied or revised to reduce or eliminate adverse impacts.

For example, the bank has proposed a 35-space parking deficit from what is required by zoning. Realistically, the bank cannot provide these spaces to its employees for actual parking. The only municipal lot (library lot) contains 31 spaces which cannot

² Note that Section X-H7A of the Newburyport Zoning Ordinance (“NZO”) provides that the SPGA make findings that certain conditions are fulfilled prior to granting a Special Permit. The bank has noted these findings in its supporting memoranda. However, the introduction to the enumerated findings in the NZO is helpful in reviewing the applications:

Special permit findings. Before granting an application for a special permit, the SPGA, with due regard to the nature and condition of all adjacent structures and uses, and the district within which the same is located, shall find all of the following general conditions to be fulfilled... (emphasis added)

accommodate the bank's employees and the space deficit. Not to mention the fact that all spaces are currently filled almost daily by library customers and employees of businesses on Harris Street. Accordingly, the bank's employees will likely park in proximity to the locus further clogging streets and exacerbating existing parking problems.

It is of no moment that the bank will pay for the right to use the municipal lot. This money will not alleviate neighborhood impacts. If the board considers there will be an adverse impact from this proposal the permit may still be denied even if a (very large) check is being written.

Further, the bank has sought a shared parking special permit for parking at Kelly's True Value. While the NZO does allow the Board to grant such a permit, it is within the Planning Board's discretion to deny it. This discretion should be exercised where there is virtually no chance anyone from the bank will actually park there. It is too far from the locus for employees to utilize it. The parking problems will be worse. Accordingly, this permit can (and should) be denied.

Conclusion

We strongly suggest that the Planning Board send the bank back to the drawing board to design a project which is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, the historic 1820 building and the DOD. In the alternative if the bank is unwilling to provide such an alternative plan the Board should deny the bank's applications.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Griffin

Sincerely,



Claire M. Papanastasiou

February 9, 2020
Paula A. Renda
16 Otis Place
Newburyport, MA 01950

Planning Board of Newburyport
Newburyport City Hall
60 Pleasant Street
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Public Hearing for Special Permit made by the Institution for Savings in Newburyport for property located at 93 State Street/Assessor's Map and Parcel 14-40.

I have been a resident of Newburyport since 2004 and have lived at my current address for that length of time. Our neighborhood is one to be proud of with a variety of unique homes built from 1775 to the mid-1800's. We take pride in keeping our historic neighborhood of Otis, Garden, Prospect and State Streets looking pleasant and well-kept. We are the entry to the beginning of the historic South end. We are proud of that!

Within the past few months, we have learned of a major project proposed by the Newburyport Institute for Savings, a bank supportive of our fair city in many ways. I would expect with such a reputation as theirs, that a project of any magnitude would be collaborative, cooperative, and mindful and respectful of its neighbors, many of whom are their clients. This is their reputation.

However, I have learned differently. The Newburyport Institution for Savings has had a plan in place "for the past ten years". Our neighborhood heard nothing about this plan until January 18, just three weeks ago. Their plan to

build a major structure of over 8,000 square feet, completely “fortressing” the corner of Otis Place and Prospect Street. The building, all though perhaps within legal specifications, is ostentatious and far from tasteful. Its design makes it look like that of the congested streets of downtown Haverhill near the commuter rail. Is this what we are trying to emulate?

We, as a historic neighborhood, district, and city have made choices, opposite that of Haverhill which conformed to Urban Renewal of the 1960’s. We, the city of Newburyport, were foreseeing, making intelligent choices to build a city, honoring its historic flavor and fabric. We have done well and this is why tourists flock to Newburyport.

The Newburyport Institution for Savings has been part of our growth. They have built their reputation around being there for the people of Newburyport. That being said, there is a confusing disconnect with the Institution’s plan to build a monstrosity of a building. It doesn’t match our city’s commitment to maintain a unique landscape of historic features and one in harmony with its neighbors, keeping our city attractive, quaint and one in which people love to live in and visit. A building of that magnitude shuts out our neighborhood, literally and figuratively darkens our view, and creates an atmosphere of an institutionalized setting.

I ask you to please be our voice, our guide and our protectors of the fair city of Newburyport. You have the power to maintain the reputation of our Historic City, to keep it beautiful and therefore prosperous. I want to be able to respond favorably to my friends and family who visit when they say, “Wow, how lucky you are to live in such a beautiful city!”

Sincerely,
Paula A. Renda

February 9, 2020

Bonnie Sontag, Planning Board Chair
Office of Planning and Development
Newburyport City Hall
60 Pleasant St.
Newburyport, Ma. 01950

RE: 2/19/2020, Public Hearing for Special Permit made by the Institution for Savings in Newburyport for property located at 93 State Street/Assessor's Map and parcel 14-40.

Dear Planning Board Chair and Members:

Our circa 1880 Victorian home is located on the corner of Prospect Street and Otis Place and we are a listed abutter, in very close proximity, to the Institution for Savings extensive plan for expansion. Our home is physically situated a mere 45 feet from the Institution's massive expansion plan and we also own a business on State Street.

After thoughtful consideration and substantial research, we are writing to express our fervent opposition to the Institution's plans for the following reasons:

1. The 8,800 square foot, two-story, 33 ft.-high addition with a one-story, above-ground exposed garage depicted in the bank's renderings is contextually inappropriate in design and scale for our historically significant and well-preserved neighborhood. Their recently revised plan represents modest changes and is equally offensive to us and to our neighborhood. A neighborhood which contains Victorian, Greek Revival and Italianate homes listed as "contributory" to the Downtown Historic District. If the Institution's plan is approved, our treasured neighborhood will be entirely overpowered and dwarfed by such a monolithic, insensitive and irresponsible modern addition.
2. The Institution's plan creates a 31-space parking deficiency which our homeowners, renters, visitors, local businesses and Newburyport Library patrons cannot withstand. Simply being located within 300 feet of a municipal lot (a lot which contains only 30 spaces, two of which are designated solely for electric vehicles); and, the bank's willingness to write a \$232,500 to the City's Intermodal Transportation Improvement Fund (which to a \$3.7B bank earning \$40M per year is the equivalent of the average Newburyport homeowner writing a \$70 check) will do nothing to solve this newly created, and permanent, parking deficiency. The municipal lot, as with other municipal services, is designed for 'the public good' and not for a private enterprise (irrespective of how successful, wealthy, influential, and philanthropic) to entirely occupy. Additionally, we personally use the municipal lot when friends and family members visit and during citywide snow parking bans, as do many of our neighbors, and parking is already in scarce supply. Using the municipal lot located on the corners of Harris and State Streets for overflow parking will leave a deficiency and completely occupy the lot, a lot that many local businesses and library patrons rely on for their employees, customers, shoppers, patrons of the library and others every day of the week. Thankfully, according to the City's 2017 Master Plan, parking deficiencies resulting from proposed expansion plans are evaluated on a case-by-case basis and not simply rubber-stamped subsequent to being within 300 feet of a municipal lot and an applicant's willingness to write a one-time check.
3. Other than the economic development aspects, albeit they are only proposing to add seven employees and an archive to house their historic artifacts, the Institution's plans appear

significantly incompatible with several tenets of Newburyport's 2017 Master Plan. These inconsistencies are numerous throughout the Master Plan relative to preserving historic integrity; scale of further development; density and congestion; avoiding additional parking deficiencies (especially within the downtown district); and, sensitivities to increased traffic and flow patterns.

4. Currently, without the newly proposed 8,800 square foot addition, we already hear humming throughout the evening emanating from the bank's building services' equipment which is located hundreds of feet from our home. Common sense dictates how amplified the noise will be with additional building services' equipment needed to maintain this massive addition which, rather than hundreds of feet away, will be located only 45 feet from our home.
5. If the monolithic addition is approved, 11 windows of our historic home will directly face a two-story wall of brick and windows and an unsightly first-floor garage. Their proposed building is fashioned in an entirely inappropriate 1980's-architecturally-styled wall of brick and glass and will limit sunlight to our home, and others', and completely change the character of our neighborhood forever.

Generally, we are in favor of responsible development. Sometimes, however, a project is simply wrong and this excessive development project by the community-beloved Institution for Savings epitomizes insensitivity, heavy-handedness, and offensive over-development.

Gratefully, in the 1970's many residents, business owners and community leaders exercised the courage, good judgement and the will to do what was right for our wonderful city and thwart off similar, modern, excessive commercial development; especially, within the oldest and densest areas of our great City. They were exceptional stewards of historic preservation; and, we are all the benefactors of their principled, steadfast resolve. We are hoping for the same now.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincere regards,

Steve & Renee Charette
16 Prospect St.
Newburyport, MA 01950

Phone: 978-269-4764

Email; schar1964@gmail.com

**Kimberly Neely
20 Otis Place
Newburyport, MA 01950**

February 8, 2020

Bonnie Sontag, Planning Board Chair
Office of Planning and Development
Newburyport City Hall
60 Pleasant St.
Newburyport, MA 01950

Reference: 2/19/2020, Public Hearing for Special Permit made by the Institution for Savings in Newburyport for property located at 93 State Street/ Assessor's Map and parcel 14-40.

Dear Ms. Sontag,

As a 30-year resident of Otis Place, I am extremely troubled by the Institution for Savings' proposed expansion in our neighborhood and urge the board to consider the bank's neighbors when reviewing the proposed plans:

1. Density and Congestion - The scale of the addition dwarfs the neighboring homes and overshadows the neighborhood. The scale is intrusive and needs to be downsized.
2. Parking Deficiencies - Our neighborhood is tightly occupied consisting of multi-family homes, condominiums, and apartments. Parking has always been challenging. The parking deficit acknowledged by the bank cannot be fixed by the city accepting a check. I'm surprised the city has an option that allows a business to pay its way out of required parking. If the city accepts payment, how does that payment help the neighborhood's parking issues?
3. City Services and Traffic - Having lived on Otis Place for 30 years, I can tell you that Garden and Otis have never been repaved during that time despite repeated requests. As one of the only dead-ends in Newburyport, we have had our share of construction vehicles, and traffic trying to avoid the State Street light. Our streets have taken a toll and yet our streets and sidewalks do not receive attention. I've been told that it is because streets that connect a school or hospital take precedent. Now, the bank intends to add more construction and more traffic. This is a further detriment to our neighborhood roads.

I invite the Board to visit our streets before approving plans that the neighborhood strongly opposes.

Respectfully,



Kimberly Neely

February 8, 2020

Dear City of Newburyport Planning Board:

Reference: 2/19/2020, Public Hearing for Special Permit made by the Institution for Savings in Newburyport for property located at 93 State Street/ Assessor's Map and parcel 14-40.

I respectfully request that you accept this letter from me as I am unable to attend the 2/19/2020 Planning Board Meeting.

I attended the informational meeting at the Newburyport Public Library on 2/5/2019 when the Institution for Savings (IFS) presented their proposed drawings for a new addition to their historic building at 93 State Street. This proposed addition clearly overwhelms the historic building built in the late 1800's. The proposed addition is too high, too large, too close to the sidewalk and basically...just too much! Although the addition they constructed in the 1980's did not match the historic building in any way, aside from the use of brick, at least it was hidden behind the original structure. What they are proposing now, as a second addition, would be very visible from State Street. It does not fit into the historic structures on Prospect Street or Otis Street in any way and clearly overwhelms that lovely, residential neighborhood. It is basically a very large and unattractive brick box.

I am also very concerned that their addition would not provide adequate parking for their new expanded employee pool. It is not realistic to think that the IFS employees would walk 1/3 mile to use the new city parking lot at the corner of Titcomb and Merrimack. They would end up using the municipal parking lot across the street on State Street from 8:00 AM-4:00 PM. The State Street lot is the primary parking lot that people use for the Public Library. If that lot is filled by a business and not available, many parents with young children or elderly people would simply not go to the Public Library.

The IFS needs to provide adequate parking for all their employees if they expand their building, but that proposed building can not be considered as it overwhelms the Prospect Street/Otis Street residential neighborhood. The IFS needs to take this proposed plan back to the drawing board.

Please do not let this addition go forward in this present state.

Sincerely,

Barbara Oswald
158 State Street
Newburyport, MA 01950

Mrs. Mary E. Lyon
23 Otis Place
Newburyport, MA 01950

February 7, 2020

Ms. Bonnie Sontag - Chair
Ms. Leah McGavern - Vice Chair
Mr. Don Walters - Secretary
Anne Gardner, James Brugger, MJ Verd, Tania Hartfor, Rick Taintor, and Elisabeth DeLisle - Members
The Newburyport Planning Board

Dear Colleagues:

Newburyport has grown into a charming historic city through careful planning, foresight and hard work. My husband and I purchased our retirement home on Otis Place so that we could walk to restaurants, enjoy the waterfront and take advantage of local events. Now that the Institution for Savings has proposed a massive, intrusive expansion, I am concerned that we will lose the neighborhood charm and on-street parking will become even more competitive. However, there is another bigger issue to consider besides the loss of this historic neighborhood.

Five years ago Boston Magazine published an article by Rachel Slade titled, "Why is Boston So Ugly?". Mayor Marty Walsh (a one time builder) said, "Too often, in recent decades, new buildings have been merely functional,...". Is this what is happening in Newburyport? The Institution for Savings has proposed a large "functional" addition which does not blend with the historic neighborhood or accommodate necessary parking. When one business is allowed to take advantage of its wealth and position in the community others will follow. They did in Boston and the city is now trying to figure out how to lose its "ugly" reputation.

After the 2/5th open meeting, I feel like David staring up at Goliath. The bank refused to consider adjusting their plans in consideration for their residential neighbors. All for a "museum", a workout area, and additional office space. Does this really have to be located in downtown Newburyport? Allowing this massive ugly addition gives credence throughout Newburyport that businesses desires outweigh respecting community concerns.

Newburyport is not Boston. It is a small community where businesses and residential neighborhoods should co-exist and support each other. The Institution for Savings and other businesses need to work with neighborhoods and the town to expand so that all stakeholders concerns are considered. Newburyport should not lose its historic charm that has helped the community grow and thrive.

Thank you,

Mary Lyon

Colleen Turner Secino

15 Otis Place - Unit 1 • Newburyport, MA 01950 • 617.429.2217 • colleen@btc-boston.com

February 7, 2020

Newburyport Planning Board

RE: Public Hearing for Special Permit made by the Institution for Savings in Newburyport for property located at 93 State Street/ Assessor's Map and parcel 14-40.

As a 15-year resident of Otis Place in Newburyport, Mass., and a direct abutter to the Institution for Savings, I want to go on record heartily opposed to the proposed expansion at 93 State Street that is presently up for consideration with the Newburyport City Planning Board.

Aside from the Institution for Savings' blatant disregard for their neighbors that abut the property on Prospect Street, Otis Place and Garden Street prior to submission of their plans, the project as it stands is too massive, too intrusive, too modern, too tall and too much.

Our group of 40+ went to 2/5/2020's meeting with the bank optimistic we would have a collaborative discussion, but it quickly became apparent our concerns mattered not.

Prospect Street, Otis Place and Garden Street boast a beautiful, historic collection of Victorian, Greek Revival and Italiante homes constructed of wood and built between 1775 - 1897.

That the Institution for Savings would even submit a proposal that expands completely to these three abutting historic streets; fails to take into consideration the existing style of homes; and instead mimics its modern 1980 addition of brick and steel encased windows is both insulting and incongruous.

That the suggested height of said proposed 1980s-designed structure as shown in the updated rendering is now approximately 28-feet (versus the original 33-foot-high-wall) and continues to press much too close to the sidewalk, dwarfing all other homes, as well as presenting as bland and lifeless.

Couple these objections with the significant decrease in the bank's parking footprint and its taking advantage of the City's own rule that they may count the municipal lot on Harris Street to handle their newly created 30-plus-parking-space-deficit (currently a very important parking area for the Newburyport Public Library, businesses adjacent to the Harris St. Municipal lot and their customers, residents who count on this lot when a snow emergency is called, as well as visitors to our city) is untenable.

When pressed during 2/5/2020's meeting as to whether the bank would work with us, their neighbors, to find an alternative that would be acceptable and fit in with the existing historic homes, the bank's answer was a hard "no." Even the minor changes to the 8,800-square-foot behemoth pictured in 2/7/2020's Daily News fails to address the proverbial elephant in the neighborhood...the structure's mammoth size.

Despite our requesting the meeting on Feb. 5 and wanting to work with the bank, our most basic concerns continue to remain unheard. I can't help but shake my head and kindly ask, "Institution for Savings, why won't you be a good neighbor?"

Colleen Turner Secino
15 Otis Place – Unit 1 | Newburyport, MA 0195
colleen@btc-boston.com | 617.429.2217

February 5, 2020

S

To: Newburyport Planning Department

RE: Public Hearing for Special Permit made by the Institution for Savings in Newburyport for property located at 93 State Street/ Assessor's Map and parcel 14-40.

As a Prospect Street neighbor of the bank and closest home to the proposed new garage entrance, we would like to submit the following as our major concerns of their construction proposal. We are disappointed to be learning of this project so late in the bank's planning process and wish to ensure that all affected Newburyport parties are properly informed and their concerns considered before any approvals are granted.

We would like to be on record that our **2 Top Issues** are:

1. **Building Size of the New Construction** - A 2 story building is unacceptable – it dwarfs the neighborhood. The proposed parking garage construction footprint is too close to the street on Prospect Street (and Otis Street) and dramatically changes the character of the neighborhood and downtown historic NBPT. A two-story height is unacceptable and totally changes the appearance & character of the street. Prospect Street is currently a narrow one-way street with parking on the bank side and 1 lane of one-way traffic. This construction proposal will result in a “tunnel-like” perception of what is currently an appealing street in our downtown historical Newburyport.

2. **Parking Impact** - The impact of the parking cannot be minimized. Currently resident street parking is already impacted by The Institution of Savings lack of employee parking. Today they have 24 employee spaces in the proposed construction area and 12 spaces near State Street for customers. Daily, they also squeeze 4-5 employee cars across the street behind their other State Street Leasing HQs building directly across from the library. This is obviously not adequate for employees today. Every weekday, employees double & triple park in the current 24 space employee lot.

In addition, the current 30 space NBPT Public Lot across State Street is already to capacity serving the bank, other businesses on Harris Street, the Library & other commercial patrons, parents picking up children in afternoons after school and any visitors to Newburyport.

During & Post the Proposed Construction, resident parking availability will be extremely difficult. This is based on their proposal of additional bank employees and ultimately being a total of 35 employee spaces short of what Institution of Savings Bank will require. Short even more than the current situation.

Parking in Downtown Newburyport is / has been a major concern for City Government and all parties for some time. This proposal only aggravates the city's parking problem without a solution on how to compensate for the increased parking shortage issue.

Thank you for your consideration,

Pete & Maureen Mackin
13 Prospect Street (Owners)
petemackin@gmail.com

TO:

Bonnie Sontag, Planning Board Chair
Office of Planning and Development
Newburyport City Hall
60 Pleasant St.
Newburyport, Ma. 01950
February 3, 2020

Reference: 2/19/2020, Public Hearing for Special Permit made by the Institution for Savings in Newburyport for property located at 93 State Street/ Assessor's Map and parcel 14-40.

As a resident of Newburyport, I have long admired the efforts of its elected and appointed government officials, various volunteer board members and advisors, and business owners to work together with residents to preserve the history and beauty of this beloved city and its neighborhoods.

That is until the scale and scope of the nearly 9,000 square foot building addition proposed by the Institution for Savings recently emerged, which reveals an expansion plan for its State Street location that astonishingly bears little resemblance to the composition and character of the historic homes that surround it and certainly offers no discernible benefits to the individuals and families who live in them, in particular, or Newburyport's downtown community, in general.

If allowed to proceed as proposed, the addition would, inconceivably and among many other adverse impacts, result in a subtraction of the already too-few employee parking spaces on the site, forcing even more staff members to park (presumably all day) on already too-crowded adjacent neighboring streets and in the too-small Harris Street municipal lot that is routinely and reliably used by numerous residents, visitors, library patrons, and customers of other area businesses.

Compounding the detrimental effect on parking is the outward indifference or insensitivity exhibited by the bank in its construction plans regarding setbacks, step backs, screens, and buffers that are essential to protecting and respecting EXISTING privacy, quiet, view, and sunlight for the many homes and properties that abut or border the planned expansion.

If indeed the bank and its president truly are interested in being "the best neighbor we can be" it will rethink and revise its proposal to ensure the affront that it now poses to a historic residential area becomes, instead, an asset to a treasured neighborhood whose personality, quality, and dignity are on the line ... literally.

William T. Welch
High Street
Newburyport

TO:

Bonnie Sontag, Planning Board Chair
Office of Planning and Development
Newburyport City Hall
60 Pleasant St.
Newburyport, Ma. 01950
February 2, 2020

Reference: 2/19/2020, Public Hearing for Special Permit made by the Institution for Savings in Newburyport for property located at 93 State Street/ Assessor's Map and parcel 14-40.

To whom it may concern,

My wife Laura and I wish to record our opposition to the proposed expansion of the Institution for Savings.

Otis, Garden and Prospect Streets are already severely congested. Every time I drive past the IFS parking lot currently, every space is filled with some folks parking outside designated spaces. This leaves little doubt that the current parking is insufficient and logic dictates that bank employees and customers are already parking on the streets.

According to the renderings we've seen, the project proposes adding at least another two dozen office spaces which reasonably translates into parking and traffic pressures from this project that will far exceed the 18 new spaces being proposed.

In deliberating this project the city has to ask itself: Why permit even more customer and employee traffic and parking for a business whose demands have already far outstripped supply.

Have you spoken with the trash haulers about the difficulty they have navigating these streets under existing conditions? They've told us Otis is the most onerous street in the entire city. So the city also has to ask itself what happens if the additional traffic burden results in situations where emergency vehicles cannot access homes suffering a health or fire crisis. Package delivery traffic over the past holiday was nightmarish. Can anyone in City Hall possibly say this building is not going to greatly exacerbate these problems in what DPW staff will confirm is already one of the city's most congested neighborhoods?

At the same time IFS has 14 locations throughout Essex County, including a brand-new facility on the other side of Newburyport. IFS is clearly doing very well, and many within our community bank there, and are grateful for its service. However, that same community should not be asked to bear the burden of hosting a rapidly expanding business' headquarters at its own increased inconvenience and cost when so many alternatives exist—let's face it the views out our windows will not be the better for this project.

We wish IFS all the success in the world, and should it be so fortunate eventually it will have to move its headquarters out of Newburyport. Why not ask it to do so now, rather than ask the surrounding community to permanently suffer the costs of what is clearly going to be a temporary headquarters for IFS.

I've consulted with my neighbors, and they feel as strongly as we do: that any IFS expansion at this site makes no sense. But now that our concern is a matter of public record, I have little doubt should such a

misfortune arise from the increased traffic burden from the IFS project, this letter could serve to support any legal action taken against the city for allowing this project to move forward in a neighborhood so ill-suited to host it. Not when so many other locations are so much better suited.

Sincerely,

Tim & Laura Wacker
13 Otis Pl.
PO Box 1481
Newburyport, MA
01950
(631)-484-1130
tiwack@comcast.net

Bonnie Sontag, Planning Board Chair
Office of Planning and Development
Newburyport City Hall
60 Pleasant St.
Newburyport, Ma. 01950
1/22/2020

Reference: 2/19/2020, Public Hearing for Special Permit made by the Institution for Savings in Newburyport for property located at 93 State Street/ Assessor's Map and parcel 14-40.

Dear Bonnie Sontag,

We are away from the area and will not be able to attend the meeting, thus I am voicing my concerns in this letter as suggested by Katelyn Sullivan, City of Newburyport Planner.

We have the following concerns being a major abutter to the Bank as owner of 1,3,5,7 Garden St.

- 1) **Noise Pollution.** At present there is constant noise from the air conditioning system right at ground level beyond the fence of number 1 and 3 Garden St. from the bank's first addition. This noise makes it hard to enjoy the back yard during the warm months and requires the windows in the back of the house to be closed. This new proposed addition most likely will also have additional air conditioning system that will affect the 5 and 7 Garden St. There is also a huge generator presently very close to the fence of 5 and 7 back yard that also contributes to the noise when started up on a periodic basis. This is less than 10 feet away from the lot line. I noticed that the new proposal moves the generator along the fence line but does include any protection/ insulation to reduce the noise level.
- 2) **Natural Lighting.** Height of the structure will affect the natural lighting. The bank's first addition has eliminated any chance of growing a decent lawn in the back of the house of 1 and 3 Garden St. Also the structure being so close to the lot line caused some of my original trees to fail because of the root systems were affected during foundation preparation. This new structure will eliminate the natural light to the back of the house and the present view as did the old . The new view proposed will be a brick wall and windows. There are some trees on the bank's property that looks like they will be removed, further eliminating natural landscaping. If the bank moved the new structure further back from the property line there could an opportunity for some landscaping between the properties.
- 3) **Water drainage.** Since the structure seems to be covering the entire bank lot, my property will become the natural drainage for the bank.
- 4) **Character of the neighborhood.** The proposed bank structure does not fit with the historic Newburyport neighborhood. Because of the reduced setbacks and height this new structure which reduces the privacy, solar access, and character of the residential historic neighborhood. The set backs should be at least 10 feet for landscape buffer of trees and greens.

- 5) **Property Value.** This proposed structure will definitely have a negative effect on our property values and others in the neighborhood. There are nine families that live in our property that will be negatively affected by the view of a 2 story brick wall in addition to the above concerns.

Please call, or write if you have any questions. I would also appreciate verification that you received this letter.

Richard and Mary Pollak
Owners of 1,3,5,7 Garden St., Newburyport

6 Ward St., Ipswich, Ma 01938
Phone 978-884-2995

Dianne Boisvert

From: Dawne Studzinski <dawnestudzinski@gmail.com>
Sent: March 15, 2020 8:38 PM
To: Dianne Boisvert
Subject: [Ext]Institution for Savings Expansion

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To the Newburyport Planning Board,

As an employee of the Institution for Savings, I have been following with interest the process and discussion surrounding the bank's plan to expand its building at 93 State Street. While a few neighbors may object, I would suggest that the expansion is good for the City of Newburyport as a whole. The Institution for Savings has been a solid citizen of Newburyport for 200 years. The bank employs hundreds of people in the region and is consistently recognized as one of the top employers in the state. Institution for Savings has grown considerably over the last few years and has shared its success with Newburyport and surrounding communities. The bank donates millions of dollars annually to local charities and causes, and its employees spend many hours in charitable endeavors in Newburyport and the surrounding area. These efforts will most certainly continue.

However, in the increasingly competitive business environment in which it operates, the Institution for Savings must expand its facilities to maintain its envied position among community banks. I hope that the community as a whole appreciates the benefit of having the Institution for Savings succeed in Newburyport as much as the bank appreciates the benefit of being in Newburyport.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dawne Studzinski

Dianne Boisvert

Subject: FW: [Ext]93 State Street Site Plan Review (2020-SPR-02) and DOD Special Permit (2020-SP-09)

From: Stephanie Niketic [<mailto:niketic@airkiosk.com>]

Sent: Saturday, May 30, 2020 8:38 AM

To: Andrew Port; Katelyn E. Sullivan

Cc: Steve & Renee Charette; Mark W. Griffin

Subject: [Ext]93 State Street Site Plan Review (2020-SPR-02) and DOD Special Permit (2020-SP-09)

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Andrew Port, Planning Director

City of Newburyport

Re: 93 State Street Site Plan Review (2020-SPR-02) and DOD Special Permit (2020-SP-09)

Dear Director Port,

1. I am concerned that the revised architectural plans submitted for 93 State Street are incomplete.

- Site Plan Review requires, for both existing and proposed structures, "dimensions, footprint, total gross floor area, number of stories, floor elevations, and building height(s)." (*NZO Section XV-E a. 2.*)

- DOD Special Permit applications require: "Architectural plans, elevations, or renderings depicting the proposed new construction, demolition, or alteration. Plans shall include all measurements. An architectural scale or ruler should not be necessary to determine dimensions." (*City of Newburyport Planning Board Instructions for a DOD Application.*)

Most of these measurements are not provided on the plans. Could they all please be provided, along with floor plans, which have been eliminated since the original submission?

2. Could the Planning Office please confirm that the information provided for rooftop mechanical systems is complete and accurate?

3. I'm concerned there may be other required submissions missing, for example, landscaping and signage. I could not find these on the City website.

4. At the last public hearing, February 19, the Planning Board granted the applicant's request to withdraw their DOD-SP (2020-SP-05) application, which was reviewed by the Historical Commission on February 13. On February 24, the applicant submitted a new application, and I assume this is the current DOD Special Permit (2020-SP-09). The only difference seems to be the inclusion of architectural elevations dated 1/27/20 (the same plans the NHC had reviewed).

Since the NHC-reviewed application was withdrawn and, since the plans in the currently-filed application are no longer accurate, should this application not be revised and return to the Historical Commission for another Advisory Review?

Thank you,

Stephanie Niketic
93 High Street
Newburyport, MA

Dianne Boisvert

From: Steve <schar1964@gmail.com>
Sent: June 01, 2020 12:41 PM
To: Dianne Boisvert; Katelyn E. Sullivan; Andrew Port; Dianne Boisvert
Subject: [Ext]Opposition to the Institution for Savings expansion plans as most recently proposed

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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:

Our home is located a mere 45-feet from the Institution for Savings massive plans for expansion. As close abutters, we oppose IFS's initial and revised plans as the project is simply too large and inappropriate in both scale and massing for our well-preserved historic neighborhood. As proposed, the project will have a deleterious affect on our quality of life and the enjoyment of our property living and working in Newburyport - just two of the many reasons we fervently oppose the project. Our opposition is so strong, we have hired legal counsel to represent us and our property interests - Attorney Bill Sheehan - at notable personal expense.

We also strongly oppose having a decision of this magnitude determined via a digital, audio-only forum. Being rightfully heard and due process concerns are at stake.

We ask that you vote against the proposed site plan as presented.

Please confirm receipt of this message and confirm that our request for consideration has been added to the public record.

Thank you,

Steve & Renee Charette
16 Prospect St.
Newburyport, MA 01950

email: schar1964@gmail.com

Dianne Boisvert

From: Aaron Clausen <anaclausen@yahoo.com>
Sent: June 01, 2020 12:44 PM
To: Dianne Boisvert; Katelyn E. Sullivan; Andrew Port
Subject: [Ext]Opposed - Institution for Savings Expansion

external e-mail use caution opening

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 Chairperson Sontag,

As a downtown Newburyport resident for 22 years, I've witnessed development generally consistent with the character of the city and neighborhoods in which it takes place. I have appreciated the value the city has put on the quality of development and historic preservation. The proposed building addition to the historic Institute for Savings diverges from this path, in my perspective, it does not complement how Newburyport presents itself as a city. Newburyport has successfully added buildings and grown business' while still maintaining the core values of the city's historic footprint.

The addition looks out of character with the architecture of the original Institution for Savings, the Newburyport Library, and the adjacent Five Cent Savings Bank. I am sure you have taken into consideration how out of place the addition would appear when surrounded by the current buildings. As you know, the reputation Newburyport has is a destination spot as well as being the quent assential New England Port Town. If Newburyport has a desire to remain as such, it seems that a building of such stature should not be considered for the proposed prime location.

I appreciate the difficult position the Planning board is in given the current dynamic with COVID-19, however I feel a decision of this magnatude should be deliberated in an open forum, in person rather than an online virtual audio only meeting. That not withstanding, I would like to offer my primary concerns with the latest proposal. I do feel there are many outstanding questions that have not been addressed with the latest proposal including, visual and noise impacts of mechanical systems, parking, traffic and circulation, and the building set-back from adjacent properties. My primary concerns are related to the addition's scale, and building design. In terms of scale, the height and massing of the addition overpowers the historic building as well as the neighborhood. The latest plan appears to be larger in scale than the original proposal, and features a ground floor parking garage facing Prospect Street and Otis Place. In this way it is inconsistent with the Downtown Overlay District design standards.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on and ask that you find the current proposal does not meet the objectives, design standards, nor the decision making criteria of the DOD.

Anne Clausen
3 Otis Place
Newburyport, MA

Dianne Boisvert

From: Claire Greensmith <clairel3@hotmail.com>
Sent: June 01, 2020 3:24 PM
To: Andrew Port; Dianne Boisvert; Katelyn E. Sullivan
Subject: [Ext]Opposed - Institution for Savings Expansion

external e-mail use caution opening

To:

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)

I'm a residence of Newburyport, and value it's historic charm and beauty. Having lived at Propsect Street, within a stones throw of the banks parking lot, I cannot concieve how the town of Newburyport would allow the beauty and historic significance of this town to be scarred.

Please don't allow this.

Thank you.

Claire Greensmith

June 1, 2020

City of Newburyport
Planning Board
Attn Bonnie Sontag, Chairperson
60 Pleasant Street
Newburyport, MA 01950

Re: 93 State Street, DOD Special Permit and Site Plan Review

Dear Chairperson Sontag:

As you may know, we reside at 4 Otis Place and we are the closest abutters to the Institution for Savings Property. We have been engaged in this process from the very beginning and we have spent time and money in attempting to get the bank to build an addition that we can live with. Our coalition of neighbors has also been very active in this regard. Our attempts at engagement in the process will be limited by the forum you have chosen for the next hearing. We do not think a virtual “zoom” hearing is proper for a project this size. It does not provide any of the traditional aspects of a public hearing. Indeed, one cannot even see the people that are speaking in the current format. Moreover, this mode of hearing tends to benefit the applicant which has a tight and compensated team that can be relied on to be on the hearing. This is not the case when you are trying keep a neighborhood coalition organized during a stay at home advisory. We understand that you have the discretion to do this and we ask that you use that discretion to continue the hearing until a full in-person public hearing can be held. Other cities and towns have not held any hearings during this time for many of the reasons set forth above.

In any event, in our initial letter to the Planning Board we had hoped that the bank would have come back with a plan downsizing its addition and providing additional setbacks from our property¹ as well as landscaped screening, such as arborvitaes. We presumed that this would be relatively easy to do and that the bank would comply and counter with a reasonable plan that we could support. This did not happen.

The new plans show an addition that has been marginally reduced in square footage. The total is probably in the neighborhood of 15,000sf counting the first-floor parking area – which one must do to get an actual picture of the proposed size.²

¹ Ten feet is a common setback in Newburyport. To obtain this would only require pulling the building wall back four feet.

² This is difficult to calculate because there are no floor plans and no calculations in the plan set that sets forth the gross floor area. This is relevant for determining size and absolutely necessary to determine the bank’s parking requirement.

Since the bank has forged ahead with such a large addition in spite of the concerns of neighbors we do not believe any further changes will be forthcoming. Accordingly, we oppose the project and urge the Planning Board to deny it for the reasons set forth below.

1. The Planning Board should deny this permit because the proposed use is not allowed in the B-2 Zoning District

The bank has made its application under the use code for retail services – use #404 relating to retail banking. However, the predominant use after this proposal is constructed will not be retail banking – it will be for the bank’s corporate headquarters. The majority of square footage on the lot will be devoted to supporting the banks operations at its multiple branches. This is not in dispute and has been articulated by the bank in open hearing.

The retail service use will be subordinate to the corporate HQ use. It should be noted that retail services are described as follows in the Newburyport Zoning Ordinance (NZO)

Establishments providing services or entertainment, as opposed to products, to the general public including but not limited to banking - including integrated ATMs, real estate and insurance, and establishments providing personal services including but not limited to barber shop, beauty shop, shoe repair and cleaners.

This is an appropriate use for the B-2 Zoning District. That District’s purpose is as follows:

B-2 downtown business district. The downtown business district is composed of all those areas so designated on the official zoning map. It includes retail, service, and office uses. The scale is intended to reinforce downtown’s role as the focus of activity in Newburyport. Multi-use development is encouraged, such as the combining of residential and business uses. Activities shall be oriented to pedestrian traffic and to centralized parking. Businesses which consume large amounts of land and interrupt pedestrian circulation and shopping patterns, single- and two-family principal buildings or uses which would otherwise interfere with the intent of this ordinance are prohibited.

Nowhere in this description is there a reference to corporate headquarters. Clearly such a use would not fit the intent of the district as it is not one that is oriented to service and retail matters where pedestrians are the majority of the traffic in and around the business. The NZO already has a use code for what the bank is proposing and that is the Corporate Headquarters Use #612. This use is not permitted in the B-2 District.

When the bank’s attorney was questioned about this at the last hearing her response was basically that the Zoning Administrator had determined that retail banking was the correct use code. That may be so, but the Zoning Administrator does not have the last word on this matter. The Planning Board in its role as Special Permit Granting Authority (SPGA) can amend this decision pursuant to Section X-H3 or it can simply vote against the

application for the reason set forth above. We urge the Planning Board to reject the construction of a Corporate Headquarters in the B-2 Zoning District.

2. The Planning Board should deny the permit as the addition is too large and will adversely affect the surrounding neighborhood with respect to light, air, noise and views.

The bank's plan will adversely affect our property specifically and also our neighborhood on Otis Place as well as properties along Prospect and Garden streets. The looming proposal will diminish light and air to our property and will block views from our first and second floor. The setback proposed is minimal and there is an employee entrance/exit walkway proposed right at the bank's property line next to our house. Further, the generator – already a noisy unit where it is – will be moved closer to us, and we will also apparently have the roof HVAC units on our side of the proposed structure. Not to mention the potential noise associated with the puzzle parking in the lower level of the structure. The mechanical lift noises, generator noises and HVAC noises will be what we will be expected to live close to if this is approved. Our neighbors at the corner of Otis Place and Prospect Street will have their views blocked and will now face a parking garage. Meanwhile our neighbors on Prospect Street will now stare at a large hulking structure and be subjected to the increased traffic in and out of the garage.³

The Board attempted to engage with the applicant on a reduction in size by reviewing interior space at the last hearing but it was obvious that the applicant's attorney considered that to be "off limits" for discussion. That is a legally untenable argument.

The Board as SPGA must find that the applicant meets the permit criteria to approve the special permits for site plan review and for the DOD. However, just because the criteria are met does not mean that the board has to approve the permit. The discretionary permit granting authority vests the board with the discretion to deny the permits for other reasons that may not be associated with the criteria. Therefore, inquiries into size of the addition, setbacks and screening are all proper in exercising this authority. We urge the Planning Board to continue to make these inquiries and to deny the project as it has been presented.

Sincerely,

Mark W. Griffin
Claire M. Papanastasiou

³ Photos of the area in question and a video of the generator noise have been sent by separate cover.







AD
ND

↑
DS RIVER



Dianne Boisvert

From: Margie Larzelere <marglarzelere@gmail.com>
Sent: June 01, 2020 2:15 PM
To: Dianne Boisvert; Katelyn E. Sullivan; Andrew Port
Subject: [Ext]Opposed- Institution for Savings Expansion

external e-mail use caution opening

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

The city, in which I have been a property owner for 23 years, is experiencing an extraordinary challenge as it fights the coronavirus. We can not at this time safely meet in-person to examine and decide on plans that will affect the future characteristic of the neighborhood surrounding the Institution for Savings with its massive plan to expand. Holding a virtual meeting will not be the correct way for making a decision this momentous or hearing the concerns of neighbors and other citizens. I ask that the hearing on the bank's proposal be postponed until we can have a face-to-face hearing where people will feel safe and can hear all arguments.

Additionally, the currently proposed addition ignores the scale and massing concerns. The 16,000-square-foot addition is too large and lacks reasonable setbacks on all abutting sides. I ask that you vote against the proposed site plan as presented.

Please confirm receipt of this message and its addition to the public record. And thank you for seriously considering my concerns.

Margaret Larzelere
18-20 Prospect St.
Newburyport, MA

Dianne Boisvert

From: Mary Lyon <melyon59@gmail.com>
Sent: June 01, 2020 12:06 PM
To: Dianne Boisvert; Katelyn E. Sullivan; Andrew Port
Subject: [Ext]Opposed - Institution for Savings Expansion

external e-mail use caution opening

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

I strongly oppose that a decision of this magnitude be determined via an audio-only, digital forum out of accessibility and due process concerns.

Additionally, the currently proposed addition ignores the scale and massing concerns. The 16,000-square-foot addition is too large and lacks reasonable setbacks on all abutting sides. I ask that you vote against the proposed site plan as presented.

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

Mary Lyon
23 Otis Place
Newburyport

Dianne Boisvert

From: Ed Maciejewski <edgmack@hotmail.com>
Sent: June 01, 2020 12:09 PM
To: Dianne Boisvert
Subject: [Ext]

external e-mail use caution opening

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

I strongly oppose that a decision of this magnitude be determined via an audio-only, digital forum out of accessibility and due process concerns.

Additionally, the currently proposed addition ignores the scale and massing concerns. The 16,000-square-foot addition is too large and lacks reasonable setbacks on all abutting sides. I ask that you vote against the proposed site plan as presented.

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

Thank You,
Ed and Ann Maciejewski
3 Garden Street #1
Newburyport, Ma 01950

Dianne Boisvert

From: Peter Mackin <petemackin@gmail.com>
Sent: June 01, 2020 6:34 PM
To: Dianne Boisvert; Katelyn E. Sullivan; Andrew Port; Dianne Boisvert; Colleen Turner
Subject: [Ext]Opposed - Institution for Savings Expansion

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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:

I strongly oppose that a decision of this magnitude be determined via an audio-only, digital forum out of accessibility and due process concerns. To date the bank's information submitted on the building structure is incomplete and somewhat deceiving regarding the overall size and height. It will be difficult to discuss those specifics without a public face-to-face, open forum.

Additionally, the currently proposed addition ignores the scale and massing concerns. I live directly across the street from the proposed new building and the 16,000-square-foot addition is too large, too high and lacks reasonable setbacks. I ask that you vote against the proposed site plan as presented.

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

Peter Mackin
13 Prospect Street
Newburyport, MA 01950
petemackin@gmail.com

Dianne Boisvert

From: Maureen Mackin <mackinmom@gmail.com>
Sent: June 01, 2020 8:03 PM
To: Dianne Boisvert; Katelyn E. Sullivan; Andrew Port; Dianne Boisvert; respectourhistoricneighborhood@gmail.com
Cc: Peter Mackin
Subject: [Ext]Opposed - Institution for Savings Expansion

external e-mail use caution opening

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:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE that a decision of this magnitude be determined via an audio-only, digital forum because of concerns of accessibility and due process. Throughout this process the residents have been at a disadvantage. The lack of candor and the refusal of IFS to maintain any ongoing dialogue with the residents demonstrates their lack of empathy to our concerns. We now have to defend and fight for our neighborhood blindly on an audio planning board meeting. Our neighborhood will be permanently transformed if this monolithic addition is allowed to be constructed. This meeting format benefits IFS while it ties the hands of the residents pleading to be heard. It makes it easier for IFS not to have to be face to face with their neighbors, not to have to look them in the eye as they push forward their plan to obliterate our neighborhood. I ask that the playing field be equal, that this impactful meeting be postponed.

I also implore that you VOTE AGAINST this construction proposal as it stands. The size is ludicrous. The setback is ludicrous. The scale is ludicrous.

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

Maureen Mackin
13 Prospect Street
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dianne Boisvert

From: John J Maher <jjmaher@mit.edu>
Sent: June 01, 2020 11:03 AM
To: Dianne Boisvert; Katelyn E. Sullivan; Andrew Port
Cc: Lisa Sanchez
Subject: [Ext]Opposed - Institution for Savings Expansion

Importance: High

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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:

I strongly oppose that a decision of this magnitude be determined via an audio-only, digital forum out of accessibility and due process concerns.

Additionally, the currently proposed addition ignores the scale and massing concerns. The 16,000-square-foot addition is too large and lacks reasonable setbacks on all abutting sides. I ask that you vote against the proposed site plan as presented.

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

John J. Maher, CPA
10 Otis Place
Newburyport, MA 01950
978-255-1523

Dianne Boisvert

From: Claire Papanastasiou <claire.p.claire@gmail.com>
Sent: June 01, 2020 10:00 AM
To: Dianne Boisvert
Subject: [Ext]Opposed to Institution for Savings expansion

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Dear Chairperson Sontag,

I am an Otis Place abutter to the Institution for Savings. My husband Mark Griffin and I submitted a joint letter, though I also wanted to submit my own to express my opposition to the bank's proposed 16,000-square-foot addition. As it stands now, the massing and scale of the building are out of character with the immediate neighborhood and Newburyport. I oppose the expansion as proposed because the bank can do better, and we as a community deserve better.

Aside from the building's size, I am also concerned about the sense of urgency surrounding the approval process. The virtual, audio-only Zoom hearing on June 3 hearing will exclude people who are either hard of hearing and/or are unable to access or navigate Zoom to voice their opinions. What's more, because of COVID, people are confined and are unable to have a neighbor or family member help them get access. Regardless of where someone stands on the expansion, it shouldn't have to be so hard for Newburyport citizens to be heard. Out of fairness, please consider continuing the hearing until we can have an in-person public hearing in the City Hall auditorium. The venue is large enough to accommodate COVID guidelines, and the issue at hand is important enough to wait to ensure that all parties regardless of where they stand are heard.

Thank you.

Claire Papanastasiou
4 Otis Place
Newburyport, MA
617.416.3377
claire.p.claire@gmail.com

--

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

Dianne Boisvert

From: THOMAS PELSUE <pelwald@comcast.net>
Sent: June 01, 2020 11:56 AM
To: Dianne Boisvert; Katelyn E. Sullivan; Andrew Port; Dianne Boisvert; respectourhistoricneighborhood@gmail.com
Subject: [Ext]Opposed-Institution for Savings Expansion

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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:

This is my second email stating that I oppose a Digital Forum to decide the proposed addition of the Institution for Savings on State Street.

This meeting should be postponed until concerned citizens on both sides can voice their opinion in person. Why is there such a rush to move this project forward during this unprecedented time when we can not meet in person? Please respect the guidelines of due process and let people attend a meeting!

I strongly oppose that a decision of this magnitude be determined via an audio-only, digital forum. There is a strong likelihood that many people will not be able to access a meeting in this manner due to technology issues.

The currently proposed addition is different, but no better, than the original proposal. It continues to ignore the scale and massing concerns voiced by those in the neighborhood and those who are concerned citizens. I am not an abutter to the bank but I am a very concerned Newburyport resident. This 16,000 square foot addition on this piece of property is too big...plan and simple. It is too large and lacks reasonable setbacks on all abutting sides.

As an aside, I have done my banking with the IFS for almost 40 year. They do a tremendous amount of good work in and for the community. But let us not muddy the water. Those generous acts should have no impact on the approval of this project.

I ask that you vote against the proposed site plan as presented.

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

Sincerely,

Barbara Oswald
158 State Street
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dianne Boisvert

From: Tim Piper <ttpiper@comcast.net>
Sent: June 02, 2020 9:32 AM
To: Dianne Boisvert; Katelyn E. Sullivan; Andrew Port; Dianne Boisvert; respectourhistoricneighborhood@gmail.com
Subject: [Ext]Opposed - Institution for Savings Expansion

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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:

My wife and I strongly oppose that a decision of this magnitude be determined via an audio-only, digital forum out of accessibility and due process concerns.

Additionally, the currently proposed addition ignores the scale and massing concerns. The 16,000-square-foot addition is too large and lacks reasonable setbacks on all abutting sides. I ask that you vote against the proposed site plan as presented.

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

Tim Piper
12 Otis Pl
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dianne Boisvert

From: Carol Piper <cr|ppr@yahoo.com>
Sent: June 02, 2020 11:25 AM
To: Dianne Boisvert
Cc: Katelyn E. Sullivan; Andrew Port; Dianne Boisvert; respectourhistoricneighborhood@gmail.com
Subject: [Ext]Opposed - Institution for Savings Expansion

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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:

It is outrageous that a project of this size will not be brought to a review without having a public meeting. Everyone needs to see the plans and be part of the discussion. This can't be done through a zoom meeting. This building is going to change the neighborhood (and Newburyport) forever. It's only fair to proceed with an open meeting with all voices heard.

I ask that you vote against the proposed site plan as presented.

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

Carol Piper
12 Otis Pl
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dianne Boisvert

From: James Charles Roy <jcroy8888@gmail.com>
Sent: June 01, 2020 3:52 PM
To: Dianne Boisvert
Subject: [Ext]Virtual Meeting re Insitution for Savings Proposal

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Hi Bonnie:For the record, I think the proposed virtual meeting re the bank proposal scheduled for this Wednesday is really kind of outrageous. I have difficulty enough arranging to zoom with our daughters, and I can imagine that probably half, if not more, of the people opposed to this project are equally ill prepared to cope with thing electronically. It is arrogant to assume that everyone will be heard, or their opinion registered. This is a big win for the bank.

All that said, my wife and I are diametrically opposed to this proposal. The bank has made zero effort to communicate with the neighborhood. The one meeting they attended was a picture-book display of arrogance.

The building is too big, too overbearing, and incompatible with the three of the four streets it will loom over. It should be rejected.

All the Best

Jim & Jan Roy
4 Fruit St.
Newburyport, MA 01950

P.S. Please confirm receipt, and add this note to your records re. this proposal.

Dianne Boisvert

From: Jack Santos <iam@jacksantos.com>
Sent: June 02, 2020 8:07 AM
To: Dianne Boisvert; Katelyn E. Sullivan; Andrew Port; Dianne Boisvert
Cc: Colleen Turner Secino
Subject: [Ext]Opposed - Institution for Savings Expansion Virtual Hearing Process

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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)

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

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

The decision to allow major controversial items to be reviewed and approved through audio only remote citizen input is a travesty of the public input process for the city of Newburyport. Doing so misses

- a) a visual indicator of the amount of citizen opposition to proposals
- b) the nuances associated with facial expression, body language, and vocal intonation that one would only get in person.

By this time, our city should be determining a process for safe, social distance compliant public hearings, which should be used for major controversial decisions such as this.

I strongly oppose that a decision of this magnitude be determined via an audio-only, digital forum out of accessibility and due process concerns.

I have already submitted, for the record, my concerns regarding the proposal's impact on the neighborhood streetscape, which is in the purview of the planning board's decision-making process.

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

--

Jack J. Santos
10 Spring Street
Newburyport, MA
603.674.7454
iam@jacksantos.com

Dianne Boisvert

From: Deb Silke <info@debsilke.com>
Sent: June 02, 2020 11:18 AM
To: Dianne Boisvert
Subject: [Ext]IFS proposal and meeting format

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To all concerned,

I am writing to register my disappointment and opposition to the IFS current oversize plans for expansion, their clear disregard for the effects their plan has on the adjacent homes and neighborhood, and the fact that something as important as this rehab construction plan of a historical building on a main street is being handled through an online meeting as if it is urgent. Come on people, the city is opening up, it'll only be a few weeks until we are meeting face to face again. What's the hurry?

As much as the city would not want to appear to be complicit in the pushing through of this construction project onto the neighborhood in the face of pretty obvious disregard by IFS, I wonder what the urgency is to have a meeting that will exclude a lot of people online who would have come to a face to face. Lots of people aren't Zoom literate, don't have computer savvy and will be excluded. Lot's of people are very stressed by months of isolation, having the city closed and now national unrest. Is this really the time to add this to the stress burden.

You have heard from neighbors that feel unheard and bulldozed by the bank. You have heard from faithful IFS customers that don't like the look and smell of this project. You have heard from people around Newburyport that have no dog in this fight except to recognize that we are about to set a number of precedents here that will be cited in future projects and we should want to proceed patiently and carefully.

Do the right thing for the citizens of Newburyport and let's have their interests ahead development for a change. Reschedule until a proper meeting can be held that encourages instead of discourages attendance and participation.

Thanks, Deb Silke
Newburyport

Dianne Boisvert

From: Jennifer Sullivan <jashwood.sullivan@gmail.com>
Sent: June 01, 2020 9:09 PM
To: Dianne Boisvert
Subject: [Ext]Opposition to Bank's Construction Plan

external e-mail use caution opening

Newburyport Planning Board:

It is my understanding that new construction, remodeling and additions to existing structures within a Historic District in Newburyport are subject to certain restrictions and requirements. It appears that some of these might not be in consideration with the Institution for Savings' expansion plan.

As a Prospect Street neighbor, I am most concerned about the size and height of the proposed structure and the real probability of its restricting the light and air flow in the immediate neighborhood. It is quite obvious that if the latest two story plan is implemented, a tunnel effect will be created on Prospect Street... dark, claustrophobic and in fact dangerous for drivers as well as pedestrians. The traffic flow currently at best requires extremely vigilant attention to vehicles exiting the bank's property but with the very limited building setbacks proposed in the plan, there will also be the increased danger of a lack of visibility at the corner of Prospect Street and Otis Place. This area will become a potentially hazardous traffic blind spot in both directions.

While safety is my main concern over the bank's expansion project, I also wish to express how the current architectural plans do not seem aesthetically in keeping with the beautiful original State Street building. The immense size and expansive lot coverage of such an addition detract from the stand alone historic beauty and individuality of the original structure as well as eliminate most of the existing open space area. How can this be in keeping with the goals of our Historic District? I object to the Institution for Savings' proposed plan for expansion.

Thank you for your consideration,
Jennifer A. Sullivan

Dianne Boisvert

From: Colleen Turner <turnstyler@gmail.com>
Sent: June 01, 2020 8:55 AM
To: Bonnie Sontag; Dianne Boisvert; Dianne Boisvert; Colleen Turner Secino; Katelyn E. Sullivan; Andrew Port
Subject: [Ext]RE: IFS Revised Plans Still Do Not Address Scale or Massing

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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
Newburyport City Hall
60 Pleasant St.
Newburyport, Ma. 01950
June 1, 2020

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:

First, I do not in anyway approve or condone that a decision of this magnitude - and opposed by many people - be determined via an audio-only, digital forum.

Second, as a 15-year resident of Otis Place, I want to further express my deep concern for the Institution for Savings complete disregard for suggestions from this Planning Board's members, the Historic Commission and we, their abutting neighbors, with regard to the proposed site plan currently before you.

The most recently submitted plans still to do not address the proposed structure's excessive scale and massing. Citing 5/21/2020's Daily News, Mike Jones is incorrect. The new design continues to in no way be "compatible with the abutting neighborhood." It is, in fact, larger by more than 20% and dwarfs every building near it. Its massing and scale, was originally - and continues to be - completely overwhelming.

Prospect Street, a one way, narrow road is particularly impacted. An approximately 30-foot high brick box consisting of more than 16,000-square-feet and spanning the majority of the block with little to no setback from the existing sidewalk is unacceptable. It literally throws Otis Place, Garden & Prospect Streets into dark and shadow.

I'd like to cite exact numbers, but measurements and floor plans have conveniently been left off the most recently submitted files (5/20/2020).

Despite Planning Board and Historic Commission requests, the Institution for Savings continues to advance its own agenda with no regard for neighbors, our appointed boards and the community as a whole.

The currently proposed addition does not address scale or massing and is too large, as well as lacks reasonable setbacks on all abutting sides. I ask that you **not** support the proposed site plan as presented.

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

Colleen

Colleen Turner Secino
Respect Our Historic Neighborhood
15 Otis Place - Unit 1
Newburyport, MA 01950

colleen@btc-boston.com
617.429.2217

Dianne Boisvert

From: Melinda Cheston <mkcheston@gmail.com>
Sent: June 02, 2020 1:55 PM
To: Dianne Boisvert; Katelyn E. Sullivan; Andrew Port; Dianne Boisvert
Cc: Colleen Turner Secino
Subject: [Ext]Opposed - Institution for Savings expansion

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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,

I strongly oppose that a decision of this magnitude be determined via an audio-only, digital forum out of accessibility and due process concerns. Everyone deserves to be heard. A true public in-person hearing format is critical to ensure that everyone can participate in the discussion. It is hard to understand why a decision that will have such a large impact on the neighborhood would be made without a forum for robust dialogue.

Additionally, the current proposed structure ignores the scale and massing concerns. The 16,000-square-foot addition is too large and lacks reasonable setbacks on all abutting sides. I ask that you vote against the proposed site plan as presented.

Many corporations are now working on plans that consider how best to restructure and downsize in-person work operations and shift to new ways of working that are productive, supportive, and safe for all. It is surprising that the Institution for Savings is continuing with expansion plans that feel very outdated.

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

Sincerely,

Melinda K. Cheston

10 Fruit Street
Newburyport, MA 01950

--

June 2, 2020

Newburyport Planning Board
Attn: Chairperson Bonnie Sontag
60 Pleasant Street
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: 93 State Street - Institution for Savings - Special Permit for Parking Waiver, Downtown Overlay District Special Permit, and Major Site Plan Review.

Dear Chairperson Sontag and members of the Planning Board,

I am writing in reference revised plans submitted in connection with the proposed project located at 93 State Street by the Institution for Savings (“IFS”). My understanding is that the revised plans include additional parking spaces primarily provided in a lift system located within the proposed addition. Based on the plan revisions and cover letter provided by attorney Meade the applicant is now seeking a Special Permit under the Downtown Overlay District (Section XXVII), and Site Plan Approval (Section XV).

The revised proposal as outlined plan set dated May 20, 2020 seeks to address parking concerns raised previous public hearings, and includes some revisions to the building architecture, primarily along Prospect Street. I appreciate that the applicant has made effort to address concerns raised by the public, and I believe, by Planning Board members and Newburyport Historic Commission. That said, the revised proposal has changed little in terms of scale and dimension, and continues to introduce approximately 16,000 square feet of additional building volume to the site.

As I had stated in my previous letter to the Planning Board the DOD Purpose Statement place issues related to scale, form and architectural detail of new construction at the center of the decision making process as it relates to the issuance of a discretionary special permit. The proposal remains inconsistent with the purpose statement and special permit criteria, specifically those requiring consistency with the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (Section XVII.F.3), and Special Permit Criteria enumerated in Section XVII.F(5).

I am in opposition to the project as it is currently proposed as it does not meet the Secretary of Interior Standards, or DOD Special Permit Criteria for new construction or alterations. The following elements of the proposal remain at odds with these criteria and standards:

- The scale of the addition when taking into consideration the enclosed ground floor parking area is much larger in terms of floor area and volume when compared to the original historic building. The proposed addition is approximately twice as large as the historic building.

- The proposed building is much greater in scale to the historic building when considering the total volume of the two building. As noted above, the floor area of the proposed addition is approximately 16,000 square feet when considering the enclosed parking structure. The total floor area of the historic building considering including the finished basement and first floor is approximately 6,000 square feet (this does not include the 1980s addition). The proposed addition is nearly 2.5 times the floor area of the historic building.
- The height of the proposed addition appears to be approximately the same height as the cornice line for the side and rear wings of the historic building. although the historic building is taller than the proposed addition at its highest point given the size and volume of the proposed addition, it addition will feel taller and more massive from the street.
- The ground floor use of the proposed building presents an enclosed parking garage to Prospect Street and Otis Place. Parking garage uses or enclosed parking facilities on the ground floor do not present an active and engaging front to the street. Consider the surrounding context whereby the ground floor uses along State Street are occupied floor area, either commercial or residential. The surrounding streets include street facing buildings with many and varied openings, consistent and well articulated fenestration, and architectural details that create an engaging street realm.

The revised proposal remains at odds with the purpose and intent of the DOD, and does not meet the standards set out in the special permit criteria. The City of Newburyport has shown a tradition of infill projects that complement the character of its surrounding neighborhood, reflect the values of historic preservation and include good urban design principles. This ethic has been baked into the requirements of the DOD. These objectives should be carried out in this project given its prominent location, and contribute to this tradition and ethic going forward for this site as well as the rest of the Downtown Historic District. For these reasons I write in opposition to the project and respectfully request the Board vote in opposition to the discretionary Special Permit.

Sincerely,

Aaron Clausen, AICP
3 Otis Place

Dianne Boisvert

From: Ursula Pennell <urspennell@gmail.com>
Sent: June 02, 2020 7:18 PM
To: Dianne Boisvert; Katelyn E. Sullivan; Andrew Port; Dianne Boisvert;
respectourhistoricneighborhood@gmail.com
Subject: [Ext]Opposed-Institute for Savings Expansion

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June 2, 2020

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:

I strongly oppose that a decision of this magnitude be determined via an audio-only, digital forum out of accessibility and due process concerns.

Additionally, the currently proposed addition ignores the scale and massing concerns. The 16,000-square-foot addition is too large and lacks reasonable setbacks on all abutting sides. I ask that you vote against the proposed site plan as presented.

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

Ursula Pennell
16 Otis Place
Newburyport, MA 01950

respectourhistoricneighborhood@gmail.com
617.429.2217



Dianne Boisvert

From: Rick Pollak <rpollak2@yahoo.com>
Sent: June 02, 2020 4:40 PM
To: Dianne Boisvert; Katelyn E. Sullivan; Andrew Port; Dianne Boisvert; respectourhistoricneighborhood@gmail.com; Rick Pollak; Mary Pollak
Subject: [Ext]Opposed -Institution for Saving Expansion
Attachments: Garden IMG_4088 (1).jpg

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SUBJECT LINE: Opposed - Institution for Savings Expansion

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)

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Additionally, the currently proposed addition ignores the scale and massing concerns. The 16,000-square-foot addition is too large and lacks reasonable setbacks on all abutting sides. I ask that you vote against the proposed site plan as presented.

Please see my previous emails, letters and photos regarding this expansion. Concerns involve noise pollution from the generator and ground level air conditioning, set backs, high structure blocking sun on my property, flood water into my backyard (drainage), and the banks removal of the previous tree view we had from the back yard. See my present view attached.

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

This might be a duplicate copy since i had problem noted in my first sent email.

Richard and Mary Pollak, owner abbutters
1,3,5,and 7 Garden St.
phone 978-884-2995

Dianne Boisvert

From: paula renda <paularend24@comcast.net>
Sent: June 02, 2020 6:59 PM
To: Dianne Boisvert; Katelyn E. Sullivan; Andrew Port; Dianne Boisvert;
respectourhistoricneighborhood@gmail.com
Subject: [Ext]Opposed- Institution for Savings Expansion

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June 2, 2020

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

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

Paula A. Renda
16 Otis Place
Newburyport, MA 01950

DAVID A. TIBBETTS, Esq.
davidtibbetts@comcast.net

*26 Titcomb Street, #1
Newburyport, MA 01950
Tel.: (978) 358-7534*

June 2, 2020

Bonnie Sontag, Chair
Newburyport Planning Board
City Hall
60 Pleasant Street
Newburyport, MA 01950
Email: planning@cityofnewburyport.com

RE: Institution for Savings, 93 State Street

Dear Chair Sontag, and through you to the members of the Planning Board:

I am writing in support of the efforts by the Institution for Savings to build a two-story addition to its building in downtown Newburyport, at the corner of Prospect Street and Otis Place. I am aware that several neighbors have objected to the expansion, for a variety of reasons, since the first plans were submitted several months ago. Since the initial plans were submitted, the Institution has worked with its architects and historical consultant to address a number of concerns expressed by the neighbors, by the Planning Board and the Newburyport Historic Commission. The Institution has now submitted significantly revised plans to the Planning Board. I hope that your thoughtful review of the revised plans will result in their approval at the June 3rd meeting.

On a personal note...I first moved to Newburyport in 1974, left for law school in 1979, and returned to Newburyport in 1982, living in an apartment on the corner of Prospect Street and Otis Place...right where the proposed addition will be built. I then lived just around the corner on Orange Street from 1985 – 2002 and walked my golden retriever countless times past the bank, admiring the historic brownstone building and the impeccably maintained grounds. Although I now live on Titcomb Street, I am quite familiar with the neighborhood abutting the bank.

My own involvement with the Institution for Savings began as a customer in the mid-1970's. In 2000, I was asked to become a corporator, and in 2003 I was elected a Trustee, and have been re-elected six times since then. I have supported the bank's growth on the North Shore, beginning with the building of the Salisbury branch in 2006, through the merger with Ipswich Cooperative Bank in 2007 and the acquisition of Rockport National Bank in 2014. And while other community banks chose to convert to stock ownership, the Institution for Savings changed its bylaws to guarantee that we would always remain a mutual savings bank, and would always keep our headquarters at 93 State Street in Newburyport. The Bank's charitable contributions in Newburyport and beyond are well known in this, the bank's bicentennial year, I hope that we will be able to break ground on a new addition that will reflect the Institution's long-standing commitment to Newburyport.

Sincerely,

David A. Tibbetts