

August 23, 2013

Dear Acting Chairman Sargent and Members of Camden's Planning Board,

We have been closely following the proposed zoning amendment to allow a 24 hour a day, seven day a week business into the Bay View and Chestnut streets portion of the Coastal Residential neighborhood, and are very concerned about the potential effects of the proposal on all districts of Camden.

This zoning change proposal would benefit a group of, reportedly, 24 investors who want to make money. These investors purchased Fox Hill with full knowledge that it sits squarely in the Coastal Residential District, which does not allow these types of medical facilities. For over 100 years, Fox Hill has been a residential property, and there is no reason for the town to allow this property to be converted into a business.

Furthermore, we have no way of knowing who will be the future owners of this property should the current publicly stated use fail. This proposed zoning ordinance change creates a slippery slope for Fox Hill and all other properties in Camden's residential areas. This commercial use is inappropriate for the Bay View and Chestnut streets neighborhood, which has been a residential area since the early 1900's. Over 20 years ago, the voters of Camden agreed and voted that certain sections of the town were appropriate for commercial use, and other sections for residential use. Since then, no new commercial uses have been allowed in residential districts. Simply put, the traffic, noise, and other attendant issues associated with running a business are incompatible with a residential area.

Camden citizens should be concerned with the long-term implications of this zoning change proposal submitted by this group of unidentified investors. First, a zoning ordinance is not designed to protect future property tax revenues; should the property subsequently be sold to a non-profit it would be removed from the tax rolls. The town would lose significant property tax income. Second, no one can ensure that the property will not be converted to a different use once a commercial enterprise such as this is allowed to operate on this site. Third, anyone interested in preserving Camden's residential districts should be concerned about this proposed change being allowed and its opening the door for more proposals within all of Camden's residential districts.

Finally, legal issues being considered by the Planning Board are enough to tie our town in knots and lawsuits for years to come. Is this proposal too narrow? Is it too broad? Is it spot zoning? Is it contract zoning, which is not allowed in Camden? Is this discrimination? Would allowing this treatment facility mean that we must allow all other proposed treatment facilities in any Camden residential district? Let's face reality; these legal contortions are so complicated because the business simply does not belong in residential neighborhoods.

Efforts to make this proposal "work" are doomed to fail. We appreciate your service to the town and respectfully urge your vote against this zoning ordinance amendment for all the reasons stated.

Sincerely,

Leonard Abramson	Beth Chamberlin
Rachel Bok Goldman	Wynne Phelan
Frank Scofield	Debbie Tucker
Madlyn Abramson	Christine Clossey
Allen S. Goldman, M.D.	Nancy Padgett
Lorraine Scofield	Mr. and Mrs. Pat Wack
Jim Bleakley	Jeff Clossey
Faith Hague	Winfield Padgett
Nancy Scofield	Franklin M. Walker, Jr.
Carey Cameron	Leslie Curtis
David Hague	Don Peccerill
Rupert Scofield	Laurie Adams Warren
Ken Carlson	Rebecca Sawyer-Fay
Robert Merrill, M.D.	Alyce Rideout
Lee Sculley	Russell F. Warren, M.D.
Nancy Carlson	Giovanni Ferrero
John Phelan	
Charles Stifter	