

Don't risk a lawsuit

The purpose of this letter is to implore the Camden Select Board not to follow the same path as the Portland City Council did with the Williston-West Church. After the city spent countless dollars and nineteen months in litigation, the Maine Superior Court held that the special arrangement between the City Council and a foreign investor violated Portland's comprehensive plan and was inconsistent with the residential neighborhood in which the church was located. The facts and circumstances of the Portland case are strikingly similar to the Fox Hill proposal, with the exception that Camden does not even allow conditional zoning agreements in the first place.

As we repeatedly informed the Planning Board, the Fox Hill proposal is nothing more than a request for special treatment that violates Camden's comprehensive plan and zoning code, greatly diminishes the value of the surrounding homes, places all of Camden's neighborhoods at risk of commercial development, and is unnecessary.

Camden already allows for hospitals to be located in the B-2 and B-3 zones, and McLean would certainly be welcome to build a suitable rehabilitation facility there. Please do not risk burdening the taxpayers who elected you with the expense of defending a lawsuit, when the chances of a court victory are slim at best, and the benefits of such victory are speculative, accruing mostly to a small group of investors from outside of Camden. It would be a waste of Camden's precious resources, both financial and reputation.

Sincerely,

Philip D. Fowler, III
Camden