

December 9, 2013

To: Mr. Lowrie Sargent
Vice Chairman
The Town of Camden
Planning Board

From: Mr. John Phelan

Subject: The Planning Board's upcoming vote Re The FHRE / McLean proposal

Message:

Our family has maintained a residence in Camden for approximately 80 years. It is located several addresses down Bay View Street from the Fox Hill property.

We are strongly against the proposed changes to the CR Zoning Ordinance as proposed and supported by the 24 investors associated with the Fox Hill Real Estate LLC, and McLean Hospital. Upper Bay View has always been a residential neighborhood which has not only been enjoyed by its residents but also by many other Camdenites who jog, walk [with children's carriages & dogs], cycle, etc.. Additionally tour buses are not an uncommon sight.

In the recent edition of the proposed changes to the CR ordinance, FHRE claims that if approved there will be 48 additional vehicle trips in & out of Fox Hill property. Previously they thought that it would be 56 trips. Our estimate is that it might be as high as 70 trips. The point is that the safety for all kinds of pedestrian use on that street will be endangered. During the public "walk through" of the property, I asked one of the primary FHRE investors if they had considered any Camden prime commercial location for the McLean Alcohol & Drug Abuse operation and was told that they had not because McLean had to have that location. That response begs the question of why not. Instead FHRE / McLean chose, come hell or high water, to threaten the Town's residential neighborhoods by seriously weakening its zoning ordinances and put the Planning Board and the many of us who oppose the changes through a time consuming and expensive process.

I'm not going to reiterate the many good reasons that have been proffered over the past 7 months as to why the Planning Board should reject the FHRE proposal, but trust that its members will weigh them heavily.

In closing, I'm reminded that this situation has a good parallel in the historical story about the war between the Greeks & Troy. The leaders of Troy decided to bring in to its gates the giant "Trojan Horse" as they felt it was a fitting gift from the Greeks as they departed. That decision proved fatal for Troy.

FHRE & McLean tell us that there will be many benefits in allowing an Alcohol & Drug abuse operation in our residential neighborhood. We believe to the contrary. The benefits, primarily substantial profits, will go to the FHRE investors & McLean; any trickle down benefits to the Town will be overwhelmed by the future problems and related expenses caused by the operation of that business on Bay View Street and by the terrible precedent that it will create going forward.

Along with the more than 150 people who have jointly signed on to various advertisements published in & around Camden, we urge the Planning Board to completely reject the FHRE proposal now & make it clear that such attempts to ruin the Town's residential neighborhoods in the future will not be welcome.

Respectfully,
John Phelan