



CITY OF PORTLAND
Executive Department
Jon P. Jennings

May 7, 2019

Henry Berg
General Manager, Casco Bay Lines
56 Commercial Street
Portland, ME 04101

Dear Hank,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me about the proposed new ferry, islander parking and residents' concerns about the infrastructure on Welch Street, Peaks Island. Since I became City Manager in 2015, I have made many visits to Peaks Island at various times of the year, and have experienced and witnessed first-hand some of the congestion issues that islanders are referring to.

As Casco Bay Lines moves forward with the design of the new ferry to Peaks Island, please know I am committed to a full review of the ferry landing area, along with improvements that will enhance the boarding experience at Peaks Island. Some of the critical areas that need to be addressed are:

- **Passenger Queuing:** CBL, the City of Portland, and MDOT need to work in a collaborative fashion to ensure that passengers waiting to board the ferry to Portland do so in a safe, orderly manner. All persons, especially those with young children and those with mobility issues, need to feel safe as they wait to board the ferry..
- **Passenger Separation:** Again, the three entities listed above need to work collaboratively to provide direction to passengers offloading the ferry, separate from those waiting to board, in order to provide a safe transition for all. In addition, signage is needed to better manage the flow of pedestrians and vehicles.
- **Welch Street Infrastructure:** It is apparent that the current configuration of Welch Street is not adequate for the needs of residents and visitors. Sidewalks are under-utilized because their design is not pedestrian or handcart friendly; people prefer using the street as it is a safer alternative.

- Welch Street Parking Lot Area: While there is a defined amount of space in the parking lot, options may exist in which to create additional parking spaces, depending on the type of vehicle. The entrance/exit of the parking lot is a source of confusion/frustration for motorists, and alternatives will be explored.
- Vehicle Queueing: The queueing of vehicles along Welch Street and Island Avenue adds to the congestion that the area experiences during the summer months. A review needs to take place to explore options for queueing in this area.

I have already engaged with traffic engineers with the city's Department of Public Works, and have charged them with coming forward with conceptual alternatives to address these areas. In addition, we have asked our consultant working on the Commercial Street study to include the ferry terminal area on the island and at the Maine State Pier. Once draft conceptual designs are available, staff will be reaching out to Peaks Island residents to solicit their input and feedback. As concepts evolve into plans, I also expect that the City of Portland, MDOT, and CBL will meet to determine the sequencing of any improvements proposed.

In summary, the City of Portland is committed to making its public areas safe, accessible, and user friendly for residents and visitors alike. Please feel free to share this letter with your Board of Directors.

Sincerely,



Jon P. Jennings,
City Manager