

Ali Spietz

From: Katharine Lamperti <klamperti@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 1, 2018 12:20 PM
To: Council
Cc: Thomas Lamperti
Subject: Support for YTN and MICA

Dear Mercer Island City Council Members,

I am unable to attend the meeting on February 6th because as co-chair of the 2018 MIYFS Foundation Breakfast, I will still be setting up at the Community Center. In lieu of my speaking at the city council meeting, I would like to share my strongest support for YTN and MICA.

My support for arts in our community comes from my role as a private citizen and community volunteer: I am concerned for the well being of all in our community and beyond and believe that a thriving artistic community benefits all of us.

My support for arts in our community comes from my role as a physician and public health advocate: data shows that arts education can impact not only individual students, improving literacy and math skills, and also improving community cohesion. (Rand report, 2005)

My support for arts in our community comes from my role as parent. As a fellow YTN parent noted, "I wish I could adequately describe how important YTN is to my family. I can't, but I'll just say: in a community full of race horses, YTN has provided a place that is not only safe, but downright magical, for my unicorn." YTN has been a safe haven and source of joy and community for our unicorn too.

I believe that Mercer Island has the resources and leadership to start changing the conversation from "either/or" to "yes/and." Let our community be leaders in supporting the arts as well as athletic fields, in inviting children and adults who may not otherwise have access to the arts to join us, and in showing that the world is not a zero-sum game.

I believe in you, our elected leaders. I believe that you have a vision for Mercer Island that goes beyond providing the bare minimum, and over the bridges to help build a world that is larger and more colorful and rich in diversity.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kate (& Tom) Lamperti

--

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." - Martin Luther King, Jr

Ali Spietz

From: Mark A Hall <m.a.hall@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, February 2, 2018 8:41 PM
To: Council
Subject: Mercedale Park

Honorable Council Members

First I appreciate that you are trying to serve the people in a time where Islanders we have many challenges - both financial as well issues of trust in our leadership as the outcome of the ST3 / I-90 negotiations were not deemed positive to most islanders.

As a long term resident of MI (almost 60 years) I can remember when the park had a pool in it! I also have seen many groups advocate for both Pioneer Park and Mercedale Park for other uses from golf courses to new fire stations. Bless the prior CC that did not move forward on those requests.

This has become a divisive issue for many Islanders. Personally, we support YTN in contributions directly and our church supports them in renting them space below our operating costs for that space. We simply do not support them going into the park. I would hope you would see the benefits of a better funded private location that does not become a burden to the city down the road. We have more than enough capital and operating commitments than we can handle today ie failing water infrastructure that is not properly funded as well as forecasted operating deficits.

As a former CPA and a numbers guy, the rents the primary tenant (YTN) was agreeing to I do think are sustainable. Please review the prior lease with the MISD or current lease with EEC. The projections look pretty rosy for other tenants too.

I also believe the streams around us ie new federal tax law will impact many of us in our planned charitable contributions as many islanders will be up against the \$10,000 limit on RE taxes especially when you add in McLeary and ST3.

I am requesting you not support MICA in the Park. If you must do that I suggest you avoid taking the bullet yourselves and put it on the ballot for an all island vote.

Respectively

Mark A Hall

Ali Spietz

From: Lisa Chin <lchin@positiveplace.org>
Sent: Saturday, February 3, 2018 10:24 AM
To: Council
Subject: Support for MICA

To the Mercer Island City Council:

Boys & Girls Clubs of King County has as its mission:

To inspire and enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens.

We do this through extensive programs and community-focused activities that serve families and youth ages 4-22. Our Mercer Island club serves over 66% of the Island's children. We provide over 65 programs ranging from childcare to teen career services, athletics to arts programs.

I write to you today to ask you to support MICA. BGCKC devotes significant time and resources to arts programming, because it is critical to helping us achieve our mission of inspiring and enabling young people. Our own arts programs encompass the following areas:

- **Fine Arts** – Visual art created and judged for its beauty and meaning. It may include painting, sculpture, drawing, printmaking, collage, mixed media, graphics and architecture.
- **Digital Arts** – Two- or three-dimensional visual media that uses computers and other technology as an essential part of the creative process. This may include graphic design, animation, photography, movie making, Claymation, game design, music composition and digital illustration.
- **Performing Arts** – Arts that involve public performance, including playing instruments, acting, singing and dancing. This includes performance support roles, such as creating scenery, costumes, lighting and sound manipulation.
- **Applied Arts** – Any art form that applies artistic design to functional objects. This includes industrial design, bookmaking, illustration, printmaking, jewelry making, wood working, ceramics, fashion design, culinary arts, creative writing and commercial art.

Having a thriving MICA would answer the need to support children's innate curiosity and creativity. At a time when school budgets are stretched and many dollars are devoted to STEM, we see even more of a need for arts education and attention to the whole child. You can train young people to be engineers, but they are still people who need to experience and express creativity in all of its forms.

As an Islander, mom, and CEO of a community pillar, I ask that you support our children and families in our creative learning with MICA.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very best,

lc

Dr. Lisa Chin
President/CEO
Boys & Girls Clubs of King County
603 Stewart Street, Suite #300
Seattle, WA 98101
Assistant Penny Eccles peccles@positiveplace.org
206.436.1836 direct
206.461.8449 fax

Ali Spietz

From: Sarah Fletcher <fletchsa1@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 4, 2018 10:46 AM
To: Council
Cc: Scott Greenberg
Subject: MICA Study Session

Hello, I just cannot get an answer from anyone so perhaps, you can get the answer from someone at the Study Session. In four years, MICA have raised \$4,8 million. The cost of the construction of the MICA Performance Theater is between \$25 million and \$30 million. So, I ask, where is the \$20 million or so going to come from? Is the City supposed to make up the \$20 million shortfall? As far as community outreach, they sent out a brochure to citizens over a year ago, and yet, they did not seem to receive anymore money. If the City is expected to pay in the \$20 million, you need to ask the citizens to vote on that.

I am looking at the MICA webpage, but it doesn't show where the café/bar and Gallery are going. The City are looking at changing the Code to allow for alcohol in the Park which is so that MICA can have a bar, but they are not showing a cafe/bar in the design. So, with the plans that you have received today, where does it show the café/bar and gallery are going? Imagine, if you had changed the Code to allow for alcohol in the Park, but then when it comes to MICA, they didn't show where in the plans that café/bar will be going, so then would that mean they would have to build an additional building? Perhaps the plans that the City received show where the café/bar and gallery are going and will children be allowed to be in the area where alcohol is served?

And with regard to MICA's stormwater plant, they are going off an outdated Stormwater Manual. They are going off the 2005 Edition, but the Dept of Ecology has come out with a 2012 Edition and the City is going off a 2014 Edition or something. And does that mean that they will be vested under the old Code? There is a lot of water that collects by the Native Garden. I do not believe for a minute that a retaining wall will suffice. What other plans do they have for water retention?

And with regard to the Freshy's site, how much money will the City be giving MICA?

And I hope you make it clear that the MICEC is off limits because of the traffic congestion that that will bring to the area. It is a pity that Sound Transit's light rail station allowed for a Theater to be built in that building.

Thank you.

Sarah Fletcher

Ali Spietz

From: Paul Shoemaker <shoe@paulshoemaker.org>
Sent: Sunday, February 4, 2018 6:02 PM
To: Council
Cc: Parker Bixby; Julie Underwood
Subject: Forwarded on behalf of Parker Bixby ---

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Parker Bixby** <parker.bixby@mercerislandschools.org>
Date: Sun, Feb 4, 2018 at 4:41 PM
Subject: Re: Support for MICA
To: Mercer Island City Council

I am sorry that I am not able to be at the February 6th meeting to share my thoughts in person. Below are some thoughts I hope you will consider.

MIHS PAC, JCC, Churches, YTN and the MICC; all of these facilities have functioned to support an arts culture on Mercer Island that serves its children, citizens, and the broader community. Over the course of my twenty years as a performing arts educator in MISD I have come to see that while each of these facilities have done their best to serve the Mercer Island population, there is still an important need for a grand idea; a center for the arts that can serve the local and broader community in ways these other facilities cannot.

I hope that the city council will consider pursuing this grand idea for Mercer Island. The arts are an expensive endeavor with creative differences at the very heart of their process. The return on investment, however, can transform communities in many ways including:

- Encouraging and providing a venue for local artists and performers
- Serving as a hub for arts education programs
- Partnering with the local government to provide programs, speakers, and classes in alignment with city initiatives.
- Providing a performance facility worthy of attracting world-class artists
- Collaborating with local businesses to promote events and offerings that attract consumers

For the students of Mercer Island School District, our greatest limitations are the size of our facilities and the acoustic quality of the spaces. There simply does not exist a performance space on Mercer Island that can accommodate our larger programs. Respected speakers are forced to address kids in gymnasiums rather than theater spaces or group sizes are limited in order to accommodate the size of the theater. Artists provided through community funding perform in spaces that do not give them an acoustic venue worthy of their performance. At the high school, we are unable to fit families of band students in the PAC for a combined performance forcing some parents to stay home or to listen from outside the door.

It is almost certain that any new facility will fall short of meeting all of the community's needs. If pursued thoughtfully, however, it can result in an enriching of the fabric of the Mercer Island community in a way no other venue can. I hope that you will consider pursuing this grand idea.

Thank you for your time,

Parker Bixby

Director, Mercer Island High School Bands

[9100 SE 42nd](#)

[Mercer Island, Washington 98040](#)

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Ali Spietz

From: LE Hardisty <lehardisty@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2018 5:25 PM
To: Council
Subject: Protecting Our Mercedale Park

To the MI City Council:

Re: the issue of keeping Mercedale Park 'natural', or ceding property to MICA for an arts center: since I'm unable to be at your upcoming meeting on Feb. 6th, may I convey two thoughts by email, on this issue:

1. As a long-time MI resident who's appreciated our parks for decades, I urge you to **direct MICA to find land for an arts center, somewhere else**. None of our beautiful park lands should ever be given to a private group without this being submitted to a citizen vote.
2. We - Mercer Island - can demonstrate our commitment to environmental stewardship, by **keeping the footprint of built-structures within our park lands "as is" - not larger**. There are always persuasive short-term reasons for expansion; there are better, longer-term, wider-scale reasons for restraining our urge-to-build within existing limits. We can indeed do better with less. We do it as individuals, we probably already do it as a city, and we can surely create of this a civic opportunity and public example of our values.

With thanks for your leadership and service,

Elizabeth Hardisty

Ali Spietz

From: Jenny Mac <jmcperson05@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2018 11:29 PM
To: Council
Subject: MICA meeting

Hello Mercer Island City Council Members,

I am unable to attend the important meeting held Tuesday evening at 6:00PM as I will be rehearsing for the MIYFS Foundation Breakfast taking place early on the morning of the 7th. But I wanted to ensure my thoughts and feelings were heard!

As the Co-Chair for the Mercer Island Youth & Family Services Foundation Breakfast this year I have had the opportunity to really get to know the ins and outs of MIYFS and all the amazing big and small ways they positively impact our community. One of YFS's core missions is to support lifelong health in our community, from youths to seniors (cradle to grave, you might say).

What does this have to do with MICA you ask? Well I believe MICA will provide a wonderful space that will also promote lifelong health and wellness in our community - from cradle to grave! Currently there is no venue on Mercer Island that supports art and culture for all. I truly believe having a central venue that includes stage(s) and classrooms along with gathering spaces for socializing and communing together is a necessity for any community - especially in our current day and age of technology and constant movement forward. People need a place to breath, create, share and perform.

Our island has shown great commitment to sports and athletics. Not all children, teens, adults and seniors view athletics as the best and only outlet for health and creativity. An arts center is needed. Please continue your good work and move the MICA project forward.

Thank you,

Jenny McPherson

(Mother of a 16 year old Drama student and a 13 year old ballet dancer and pianist)

Ali Spietz

From: Gretchen Paletta <gretchenpaletta@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 5:57 AM
To: Council
Cc: thestaff@sugarmtn.net; scott.mcmanus@the-islander.com; orders@mercerislandflorist.com; eatmopizza@gmail.com; info@mercerislandbooks.com
Subject: YTN, MICA and the arts on Mercer Island

Dear Mercer Island City Council,

I am writing to express my support for your swift creation of the Mercer Island Center for the Arts. I am a Newcastle resident, and my entire family has been heavily involved with Youth Theatre Northwest since 2009, when my then-7-year-old daughter performed in her first mainstage show at the original facility on 40th Street. Currently, I am a board member at YTN, and my husband (a professional drummer who consistently volunteers to play in the pit for the musicals), son, and daughter have participated in at least one show or class, usually two or three, each year since 2009.

I did some quick research in my financial accounting software and my current records only go back to 2012. Since 2012, I can directly account for a total of \$3650 that I, my husband, my son, and/or my daughter have spent in the following Mercer Island businesses: Baskin & Robbins, Bennett's, Freshy's, The Islander, Mioposto, Mo's Pizza, Mercer Island Florist, and Island Books. There is likely an additional \$1,000 spent over those years (at least) in McDonald's, Starbucks, Tully's, QFC, Walgreen's, Menchies, and Subway, but since I shop at those stores in other locations and my records do not specify which location I shopped at, I can't accurately portray those amounts spent in the Mercer Island locations. Suffice it to say that when my daughter is there every day in the summer for a rehearsal, our typical routine is to buy her lunch at the Mercer Island Subway, and then after a performance, she typically goes to Menchies or Baskin & Robbins with her friends for a treat. If I have work to do and don't want to fight the 405 interchange on the way home, I will stop at The Islander, get dinner, and work on my laptop until her rehearsal is over.

My son is in college now and has aged out of YTN's programs. My daughter is 16 now and if YTN is no longer able to serve my daughter's educational needs, as is happening this summer, my money will not be spent on Mercer Island but will be spent in whatever other community houses her theater educational needs. Will those places go out of business without my patronage? No. But I am one parent of MANY families who come from Bellevue, Issaquah, Seattle, West Seattle, Sammamish, and Renton to participate in classes and shows at YTN. Let's say we have 25 such families (a low, rough guess). Multiply my \$3650 by that number, and it starts to make a bigger impact.

While these are all great businesses, I know I would not have visited any of them nor spent the amount of time and money I have over the years in them if Youth Theatre Northwest had not brought my family to Mercer Island on a regular basis. I hope you will imagine the revenue that MICA can generate for your local business community. I hope you will continue to support YTN keeping its classes and shows in the Mercer Island location and assist them in whatever way they may require to continue the quality productions of their past.

Sincerely,

Gretchen Paletta
9237 117th Ave SE
Newcastle, WA 98056
425.271.5364

Ali Spietz

From: Jonathan Shakes <jonathan.shakes@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 8:49 AM
To: Council
Subject: Comment on this evening's MICA discussion

Dear City Council members,

Issaquah has the Village Theatre. Kirkland has its Performance Center. Everett has a Performing Arts Center. Renton has the Civic Theatre. Bainbridge Performing Arts has Hodges Hall. Monroe has the Wagner Performing Arts Center. Bellevue has the Meydenbauer Center. I won't bore you with the long list for Seattle.

If we want Mercer Island to be a great place to live, we too should find a place for community members to put on a show. We used to have Youth Theatre Northwest's building, and then we lost it.

MICA has offered to organize and fundraise for our community to replace the YTN space with a new, better performing arts center to serve a large range of artistic interests for all members of the community, youthful and not-so-youthful. To succeed, given the strident criticism from a small group of community members, MICA will need vocal support from community leaders like you. Unfortunately, I have the impression that most city council members have been quiet on the extent of their support for MICA's mission.

At this critical juncture in MICA's journey, please tell the community clearly: do you want MICA to succeed, or would you rather the group gives up and goes away?

Jonathan Shakes
9211 SE 33rd St, Mercer Island

Ali Spietz

From: Sanjay Bhananker <sanjaynellie@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 10:14 AM
To: Council
Subject: Youth Theatre Northwest

I cannot attend this meeting today but definitely not for lack of interest . I would love to have been there to voice my immense support for YTN and MICA. My children who have been a part of this beautiful organization for 9 years join me in voicing their support for YTN which is indeed their second home.

It is that place where they have grown in their pursuit of the arts. This has indeed been that safe and enjoyable place for them to spend their countless evenings preparing , perfecting and performing with so much enthusiasm I cannot fathom that a city would turn away such an organization which has helped so many youth find their passion and run with it. And this is only the theatre that I refer to so far. What about all the other organizations that would benefit from having their services at this center for the arts?.We could have first class musical performances, concerts and theatre right here on our wonderful island and here we are squabbling about finances and letting people hold us hostage with their petty concerns.It will be an investment that would pay back immensely in ways that we will never be able to measure just monetarily.

I really hope that better judgement prevails in letting us the residents of Mercer island and their children have the opportunity to have a premier institution for the arts on the island.

It is nothing short of vital.

Thank you for reading this,

Manuela

Sent from my iPhone

Ali Spietz

From: Jackie Wood <cjwoodmail@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 10:40 AM
To: Council
Subject: Please support MICA and YTN!

Dear Council Members,

As a parent of a former Youth Theatre Northwest student, I cannot encourage you enough to please support YTN's efforts to find a new location. My daughter Madeline started with YTN as an eight-year-old who had attended a few theatre camps through other programs, but who never found them to be satisfying. Over the next four years she experienced wonderful years of kinship with like-minded friends, outstanding education by enthusiastic instructors, and gained a wealth of knowledge to use for the rest of her life. Madeline went from a nervous third grader on a empty rehearsal stage to a confident actress, fearless of even the longest Shakespeare monologues.

And while her performance direction has changed, she credits the years at YTN as the preparation she needed for her current and future pursuits. She is now a confident soprano, who excels in choir and solo competitions. Her choir director, voice teacher, and accompanist have expressed that they never have to worry about her being prepared for a rehearsal or performance. Amy Ferguson and Phoenix Smith can take a huge part of the credit for helping her come to this point. And beyond performing, the lessons she learned at YTN show up in so many other parts of her life. Last fall, when her literature teacher told the class they would be reading Romeo and Juliet, she was the only student who was excited. She can't wait for Seattle Shakespeare Company to come to her high school for in-class instruction. This will probably be the first exposure to Shakespeare (or possibly any other form of theatre) for most of her fellow students. For her, it's just another example of the richness YTN has provided to her life.

Please support Youth Theatre Northwest to find a new location. I can't believe it has been almost four years since YTN lost its building and started its journey to create the Mercer Island Center for the Arts. I remember speaking at a City Council meeting all those years ago and never imagined that MICA would not be a reality by now. Please give other children the same life changing experiences that my daughter had.

And it would be hard to disagree that MICA would be an outstanding way to fulfill Mercer Island's Comprehensive Plan's Community Values:

“Our community’s values are reflected by safety and freedom from fear, physical and environmental attributes, and the cultural and recreational opportunities of our Island. This translates into the feeling that Mercer Island is ‘the nicest of places for everyone to live.’”

And how it would address the plan's requirements to fulfill these needs as part of the city's Community Services:

“Mercer Island will continue to provide a wide range of education, cultural and municipal services for the community’s varied population. Balanced and flexible programs will be necessary to meet the community’s evolving needs in education, recreation and cultural enjoyment.”

All my best,

Jackie Wood

Ali Spietz

From: Megan Nichols <megannichols@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 12:18 PM
To: Council
Subject: Youth Theatre Northwest

Dear City Council Members,

I cannot attend the meeting tonight, but want to show my support for keeping YTN on Mercer Island. I believe MI City Council should do all they can to support the arts on the island. If not for arts sake, then for our children's futures.

My son graduates from college this year as a four-year Division I student athlete. As an athlete, Chase does not have much time for job searching. Luckily for him, he has three different job offers from lacrosse parents on his team resulting from chatting during the after-game tailgate/dinner. **I credit YTN for these offers by giving Chase self-confidence, the ability to speak in groups and a great stage presence.** I do not believe any other young men on the team have been offered jobs by these parents. Chase accepted one of the offers and will be moving to Denver after six-months traveling abroad.

Chase started acting at Youth Theatre Northwest in third grade and had to give it up in eighth grade because of sports conflicts. We think he was in nine shows, his favorite being 'Once Upon a Mattress.' Chase is still using his talents and is known as the Andrea Bocelli of the college locker room.

Please continue to support Youth Theatre Northwest so other Mercer Island children will have every opportunity available to them!

Sincerely,

Megan Nichols York
MIHS Class of 1984
206-232-6105 Home
206-730-1363 Cell

Ali Spietz

From: Jennell Fuchs <jennelfuchs@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 12:56 PM
To: Council
Subject: Youth Theatre NW and MICA

Hi. Although I'm not able to attend the City Council meeting, I want to express my support for Youth Theatre Northwest and MICA. YTN is a wonderful resource for our community, and I believe in the value of a thriving arts program, venue, and community on Mercer Island. My children have been involved with the youth theatre and have attended many performances. Let's move forward with finding a way to make MICA happen and to provide YTN a permanent home on the island!!

Jennell Fuchs, Mercer Island native and mother of 4 children who attend school on Mercer Island.

Ali Spietz

From: Tom Lofton <tdlofton@msn.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 1:29 PM
To: Council
Subject: Re: Youth Theatre NW and Mercer Island Center for The Arts

To The City Council of Mercer Island:

I am a long time advocate of Youth Theatre Northwest ("YTN") and a long time member of the YTN Board of Directors.

I understand you are having a Council session tonight related to YTN and the ongoing efforts of Mercer Island Center for the Arts ("MICA"), to find a permanent home on the Island.

As you know, YTN has been a fixture on Mercer Island for nearly four decades. I found it when I first moved to the Seattle area in the mid-1990's and then my daughter found it about 5-6 years ago. She is now a senior at Bellevue High School, but has participated in over a dozen YTN productions and has also volunteered for YTN and worked there during the summers.

Over the years, my relatives and friends on Mercer Island, as well as my immediate family (which has lived off Island the entire time) have traveled to Mercer Island and easily spent tens of thousands of dollars grocery shopping, eating at all of the Island restaurants, attending plays at YTN and other venues, as well as supporting the high school and junior high sports and theatre programs by attending dozens of their events, all for fee. This includes tuition we have paid for our children to participate in the YTN programs, which support many jobs for people who work in the organization, all of whom also spend their dollars on the Island.

I have seen this wonderful organization literally change and transform lives of our youth (and adults who love those youth) for the better. Many are adults now and are doing spectacular things all over the US and the world.

It has been quite a struggle watching YTN lose its theatre, and now have to be in a small, inadequate interim facility with no permanent home. The abandoned, dilapidated and unsightly recycling center offered a wonderful new start and alternative to that, and several hundred people worked tirelessly over the last 1500+ days to make it a reality. We had much support from the City Council, but even as we met every single requirement put before us and kept all of our promises to get MICA off the ground and built so that YTN, nearly 10 other arts organizations on the Island and the Farmer's Market, all of which enhance our lives every week, would have a permanent home and not have to liquidate or move to off island sites, we have been stymied, delayed and put off. This has been discouraging.

For the economic and cultural reasons summarized in this e-letter, I urge you to not leave these vital organizations twisting for a 5th or 6th year.. YTN/MICA need a permanent location and home, not several more years of litigation and opposition. If you look around the region, you will see that virtually every other city has completed a Town Center and built an Arts Center while Mercer Island has languished these last 5-7 years, during an economic resurgence and boom that is ideal for approval. This investment will create an economic and cultural multiplier effect that can only be considered a "win win" for everyone on the Island and within 25-50 miles of the Island.

Thank you for supporting YTN via creating a permanent solution that will allow MICA to proceed. I look forward to confirming that constructive, forward looking and definitive solutions and decisions were made and found at tonight's meeting.

Thomas Lofton
YTN Board of Directors
Supporter of YTN since 2000

Ali Spietz

From: Knievel, Danica <danica@amazon.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 1:34 PM
To: Council
Subject: Youth Theater Northwest

Hi.

Although I'm not able to attend the City Council meeting, I want to express my support for Youth Theatre Northwest and MICA. YTN is a wonderful resource for our community, and I believe in the value of a thriving arts program, venue, and community on Mercer Island. Let's move forward with finding a way to make MICA happen and to provide YTN a permanent home on the island. Let's move past "should we?" and onto "how will we?"

Thank you.
-Danica Knievel

Ali Spietz

From: Paula Holtzclaw <pbynan@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 1:36 PM
To: Council
Subject: Support YTNW MICA

Hi. Although I'm not able to attend the City Council meeting, I want to express my support for Youth Theatre Northwest and MICA. YTN is a wonderful resource for our community, and I believe in the value of a thriving arts program, venue, and community on Mercer Island. Let's move forward with finding a way to make MICA happen and to provide YTN a permanent home on the island. Let's move past "should we?" and onto "how will we?"

Thank you.

Paula and Grover Holtzclaw

Ali Spietz

From: Jen Sadlier <jen@johnstoneps.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 1:48 PM
To: Council
Subject: Youth Theatre Northwest

Hi. Although I'm not able to attend the City Council meeting, I want to express my support for Youth Theatre Northwest and MICA. Both of my daughters have done classes and camps there, and my youngest just finished her 4th show with YTN. It is an incredible resource for our community, and I believe in the value of a thriving arts program, venue, and community on Mercer Island. Let's move forward with finding a way to make MICA happen and to provide YTN a permanent home on the island. Let's move past "should we?" and onto "how will we?"

Thank you!

Jen, Ryan, Audrey and Ellie Sadlier

Ali Spietz

From: Rachel Lenington <rplenington@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 1:53 PM
To: Council
Subject: Support for YTN and MICA

Hi. Although I'm not able to attend the City Council meeting, I want to express my support for Youth Theatre Northwest and MICA. YTN is a wonderful resource for our community, and I believe in the value of a thriving arts program, venue, and community on Mercer Island. Let's move forward with finding a way to make MICA happen and to provide YTN a permanent home on the island. Let's move past "should we?" and onto "how will we?"

I grew up here too and YTN was an important part of my childhood and something that makes this community special (I tell people about it when I tell them why they should move here). Like our schools, resources like YTN make Mercer Island a desirable place to live. Thank you.

All the best,
Rachel Lenington
(206) 619-3623

Ali Spietz

From: Suzanne Riley <suzanne-riley@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 2:32 PM
To: Council
Subject: Please support MI Arts and YTN

Dear Council Member,

I've heard much about the pros and cons of using the old recycling center land for a new arts center which would house YTN. Our 2-voter household feels it is greatly worth supporting the MICA/YTN building project.

Not everyone is interested in playing sports and the arts have so much to offer children and adults with other opportunities to learn and grow. Our tax dollars just went to turf a mid island park for football and baseball. Now it's time to be equitable and move forward with supporting/building an arts center. I'm positive the very intelligent and creative people on our MI City Council can find a way to accomplish this. An arts center would greatly enhance our community.

You have our support to support YTN and an arts center on Mercer Island.

Sincerely,

Suzanne and Dan Riley
Mercer Island Residents since 2003.

Ali Spietz

From: Kristina Crothers <kcrothers@aya.yale.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 3:29 PM
To: Council
Subject: Letter to City Council regarding YTN and MICA

Dear Mercer Island City Council Members:

I am writing as a Youth Theatre Northwest (YTN) parent and board member to advocate for the preservation of YTN on Mercer Island, and for the development of the Mercer Island Center for the Arts (MICA), two issues that go hand-in-hand. MICA will be the future home for YTN, but after 4 years, this future needs your help – or the survival of YTN on Mercer Island is in question.

YTN has enhanced our community on and surrounding Mercer Island for nearly 35 years. Thousands of children and adults have learned and had their lives enriched by classes and live theatre experiences – either as a student or audience member. Theatre – and all the performing arts – teach children valuable life skills, including communication, responsibility, accountability, humility, and how to work together. The community that is created at YTN is a nurturing, supportive environment that embraces differences, and teaches inclusion and respect for others. These lessons are so valuable, particularly in our world today. Theatre also allows children the space to question and discuss difficult topics, and to develop to their full potential. At a recent performance, I was again impressed by the value of YTN and its importance to the development of children in our community, as the students emphasized the nurturing and supportive environment created at YTN that provided him or her with a safe space to grow and learn.

While some kids choose to find this environment by participating in a sports team, many children such as my own prefer the arts. The City of Mercer Island supports sports in numerous ways, including providing space for and maintaining game fields on Mercer Island parks. Why cannot the City of Mercer Island also support the arts in a similar fashion in order to preserve the future of YTN on Mercer Island? After 4 years, there is still no viable permanent home on Mercer Island for YTN after the demolition of the theatre on 40th Street. MICA would provide such a home.

City Council members, I urge you to take action to support YTN. We have only one YTN on Mercer Island, and its future is in jeopardy. Further, we have no dedicated space for performing arts on Mercer Island. While there are stages at the schools, these are utilized at near maximum capacity by their tenants, and others performance spaces such as at the Jewish Community Center are available only at a substantial fee – not a viable option for the long-term future of YTN and other organizations. Musicians, dancers, and other artists also need and deserve a community home. MICA will directly and positively impact the quality of life for many members of our community.

Please protect our precious resources on Mercer Island that include YTN, and take concrete, productive steps to support and keep YTN on Mercer Island.

Sincerely,

Kristina Crothers, MD

4805 84th Ave SE

Mercer Island, WA 98040

Ali Spietz

From: Indra Trujillo <indra.mariah.trujillo@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 3:29 PM
To: Council
Cc: Kelsey Joyce
Subject: YTN and MICA

Hi. Although I'm not able to attend the City Council meeting, I want to express my support for Youth Theatre Northwest and MICA. YTN is a wonderful resource for our community, and I believe in the value of a thriving arts program, venue, and community on Mercer Island. Let's move forward with finding a way to make MICA happen and to provide YTN a permanent home on the island. Let's move past "should we?" and onto "how will we?" I look forward to hearing about your support and plans moving forward. If not YTN and MICA then I'd love to hear your thoughts about alternatives. Thank you for all you do for our city!

*Indra Trujillo
Parent of Nica and Theo
Mercer Island resident
8559 85th Ave se*

Ali Spietz

From: deborah cragen <dcragen@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 3:30 PM
To: Council
Subject: Support for Youth Theatre Northwest and MICA

Hi. Although I'm not able to attend the City Council meeting, I want to express my support for Youth Theatre Northwest and MICA. YTN is a wonderful resource for our community, and I believe in the value of a thriving arts program, venue, and community on Mercer Island.

Let's move forward with finding a way to make MICA happen and to provide YTN a permanent home on the island. Let's move past "should we?" and onto "how will we?" Thank you.

Deborah Larsen

Ali Spietz

From: Jaimie Shea <jaimie_o@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 3:35 PM
To: Council
Subject: Support of YTN & MICA

Dear City Council,

Although I'm not able to attend the City Council meeting, I want to express my support for Youth Theatre Northwest and MICA. YTN is a wonderful resource for our community, and I believe in the value of a thriving arts program, venue, and community on Mercer Island. Let's move forward with finding a way to make MICA happen and to provide YTN a permanent home on the island. Let's move past "should we?" and onto "how will we?" Thank you.

Jaimie Shea

Ali Spietz

From: Patti Fersch <patti@ferschfamily.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 3:42 PM
To: Council
Subject: Youth Theater Northwest and MICA

Hi. Although I'm not able to attend the City Council meeting, I want to express my support for Youth Theatre Northwest and MICA. YTN is a wonderful resource for our community, and I believe in the value of a thriving arts program, venue, and community on Mercer Island.

Our granddaughter has enjoyed acting in many of their productions, and it's been such a great experience for her. Let's move forward with finding a way to make MICA happen and to provide YTN a permanent home on the island. Let's move past "should we?" and onto "how will we?" Thank you.

Patti Fersch

Ali Spietz

From: Bert Loosmore <bert.loosmore@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 5:41 PM
To: Council
Subject: support for YTN and MICA

Dear Council:

Although I'm not able to attend tonight's City Council meeting, I'm writing to express my support for both Youth Theatre Northwest and MICA. YTN is a wonderful resource for our community, and I strongly believe in the value of a thriving arts program, venue, and community on Mercer Island. MICA would be a fantastic community asset. And I say this as someone who strongly supports the parks and natural outdoor spaces.

Please find a way to make MICA happen and to provide YTN a permanent home on the island. Thank you.

Bert Loosmore
4639 Forest Ave SE

Ali Spietz

From: Rebecca Wells <rebeccawells@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 6:17 PM
To: Council
Subject: Youth Theatre Northwest and MICA

Hello,

I cannot attend the City Council meeting tonight, but I would like to express my strong support for YTN and MICA. YTN is a vital, enriching part of our arts community, and it has been four years now that they have been striving to keep their commitment to the community and their students while operating in a displaced environment. Please, please find a way to proceed with MICA and provide YTN a permanent home on the island and continue the tradition that is so much a part of my family, my neighborhood and my city.

Thank you,
Rebecca Wells

Ali Spietz

From: Janet Piehl <anderpiehl@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 6:51 PM
To: Council
Subject: support for MICA

Hello.

As the mother of Kari Anderson, Girl Scout Gold Award recipient whom you recognized 2 weeks ago, I am sorry that I am not able to attend tonight's City Council meeting. My husband, Lindsay Anderson, and I strongly support MICA, Youth Theatre Northwest and a thriving Mercer Island arts community.

Thank you very much, Janet Piehl

Ali Spietz

From: Jeremy Knievel <jeremykn@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 7:13 PM
To: Council
Subject: YTN and MICA

Hi. Although I'm not able to attend the City Council meeting, I want to express my support for Youth Theatre Northwest and MICA. YTN is a wonderful resource for our community, and I believe in the value of a thriving arts program, venue, and community on Mercer Island. Let's move forward with finding a way to make MICA happen and to provide YTN a permanent home on the island. Let's move past "should we?" and onto "how will we?" Thank you.

Jeremy Knievel

Ali Spietz

From: Stacy Harrington <stacyhar@microsoft.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 8:35 PM
To: Council
Subject: Support for YTN and MICA

Although I wasn't able to attend the City Council meeting due to child related matters, I want to express my support for Youth Theatre Northwest and MICA. Specifically, YTN has given my autistic son a voice and strong supportive community where he has been able to grow and thrive. My other children have also benefited from seeing the support my son has received, the group of friends he has made and have appreciated the productions these kids have produced. Theatre has given kids of all walks of life a common purpose and ability to make others happy, which is precious in a world that can seem so tragic. We continue to provide emotional and financial support to both YTN and MICA and feel passionately about the benefit the arts brings to an entire community. We will continue our support of these initiatives and I strongly encourage everyone to work together with a solution focused mindset on how we will create a permanent home here for YTN.

*Thanks,
Stacy & Mark Harrington*

Ali Spietz

From: Tasya <natasyag@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 8:45 PM
To: Council
Subject: Mica

As a parent of two young kids on Mercer Island and a working parent I can't say how excited I was to discover Youth Theater NW. We have taken advantage of the convenience of after school classes and summer camps we would not have otherwise done. It introduced my daughter to theater, which has become her favorite out of school activity to participate in, and seek out the arts in the wider Seattle area. I cannot attend the Council meetings recently as I am generally squeezing in a little time with my kids and putting them to bed at the same time but I wanted to make my voice heard. We love Youth Theater NW and the plans to date that I have read for a MICA. Having only lived on Mercer Island for 5 years I hope that one day we have a more transit amenable, walkable town center with great amenities that draw islanders as well as people from our neighboring cities here and I'd love MICA to be part of that vision.

Thank you,

Tasya Gray, MI resident, home owner, and public school parent

Ali Spietz

From: Ann Connolly <annconnolly@centurylink.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 9:46 PM
To: Council
Subject: FW: MICA decision

Sent this to wrong address – now I forward for your consideration. Thanks, Ann Connolly

From: Ann Connolly [mailto:annconnolly@centurylink.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 9:15 AM
To: 'info@mercerislandarts.org' <info@mercerislandarts.org>
Subject: MICA decision

I truly hope that the MI City Council can work out a compromise decision soon to go forward with the construction of MICA. I would love to see it built at the rear of the Mercerdale DT Park, incorporating the hillside! Our downtown area lacks a “soul” – as taller buildings dominate, there is no gathering space, no balance to commercial/residential growth. I do have concerns about parking access for an arts center and would not want to see the major part of grass area consumed and paved over for parking. Maybe the scale of the current plans for MICA could be revised. Though this is my first choice of a location, I would also suggest consideration of the field at Luther Burbank Park between the two parking lots. This would add the amenity of waterfront views/patios/maybe development of tax-generating food concessions. A thoughtful, aesthetically pleasing development in this location would be a great community asset! I urge you to make this project a priority before we lose YouthTheatre and other groups who have committed to MICA. Thank you for your consideration. Ann Connolly (32 year MI resident)

Ali Spietz

From: Shelley Lumaco <slumaco@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2018 11:55 PM
To: Council
Subject: YTN

Hi. Although I'm not able to attend the City Council meeting, I want to express my support for Youth Theatre Northwest and MICA. YTN is a wonderful resource for our community, and I believe in the value of a thriving arts program, venue, and community on Mercer Island. Let's move forward with finding a way to make MICA happen and to provide YTN a permanent home on the island. Let's move past "should we?" and onto "how will we?" Thank you.

Shelley Lumaco

Sent from my iPhone

Ali Spietz

From: Denise Thomas <dnathomas@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, February 7, 2018 8:34 AM
To: Council
Subject: Arts for Mercer Island

Although I'm was not able to attend the City Council meeting, I want to express my support for Youth Theatre Northwest and MICA. YTN is a wonderful resource for our community, and I believe in the value of a thriving arts program, venue, and community on Mercer Island. Let's move forward with finding a way to make MICA happen and to provide YTN a permanent home on the island. Let's move past "should we?" and onto "how will we?"

I have watched a young man thrive under the training and guidance of YTN. Mercer Island should be a place that young people understand that the arts has an equal as sports. We continue to invest in ball fields, stadium repairs, and turf -yet struggle to find a way to build a performing arts center that will benefit Islanders of all ages. We can do better.

Thank you
Denise Thomas

Sent from my iPhone. Please excuse any embarrassing grammatical errors or misspelled words.

Ali Spietz

From: Ken Glass <kenglass@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 7, 2018 8:40 AM
To: Council; Julie Underwood
Cc: Ken Glass
Subject: MICA study session

Thank you so much for hosting the MICA study session.

I'm sorry I was unable to attend the MICA (due to illness). But I was able to watch and wanted to share my comments with you:

Our own resident Paul Allen summed things up nicely:

"I have seen the critical role that the arts play in stimulating creativity and in developing vital communities....the arts have a crucial impact on our economy and are an important catalyst for learning, discovery, and achievement in our country."

My thoughts to share with you:

1. A city cannot be considered great unless it has an Arts Center.
2. The city should contribute financially – much as it has contributed financially to sports fields, PEAK and other endeavors.
3. I have been fortunate to visit over 50 countries and 47 US States. In every case I can remember, great downtown parks have great buildings – many of those are art-centric buildings. In fact, many downtown parks are great because they have arts buildings.
4. We are fortunate to have many parks for hiking, exploring, etc. Mercedale isn't that kind of park. It's a downtown park for gathering and enjoying. During the past two years, I have observed that almost all use of Mercedale park is on the human-made (skate park, walkway) structures with the grass area used primarily during major arts events (e.g. Music in the Park, Summer celebrations). MICA at Mercedale would extend this typical use.
5. If it's not built in Mercedale, I hope MICA can be built somewhere accessible to the community. Folks before made mistakes by putting the city hall, the library and the community outside of the city center, Let's end that trend!
6. Parking and safety are, of course, real issues, and I know your leadership will help address these as things more forward.

I close again with Paul Allen's words:

"I have seen the critical role that the arts play in stimulating creativity and in developing vital communities....the arts have a crucial impact on our economy and are an important catalyst for learning, discovery, and achievement in our country."

I agree completely.

Thank you for all you do and helping make Mercer Island the great place it is!

Ken Glass

Ali Spietz

From: Nancy Lee <NancyRLee@msn.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 7, 2018 8:49 AM
To: Council
Cc: Carol Friends
Subject: MICA

Dear Council Members,

I wanted to share the following regarding my thoughts on MICA.

Based on last night's city council meeting, and prior community input, it seems clear to me that the community supports MICA and that the council does as well (thumbs up last night indicator).

The issue seems to be location and city financial support. Trying to keep this simple, I wanted to offer one recommendation.

When evaluating the options (e.g., Mercedale for MICA versus Mercedale for the Native Garden), I'd stick to objective data and numbers.

“How many people will benefit/use MICA in that spot on Mercedale versus keeping it like it is with a garden and recycle center spot and perhaps, as I understood once, and the loss of a 10 foot widening of the path on the west side into the grass area?”

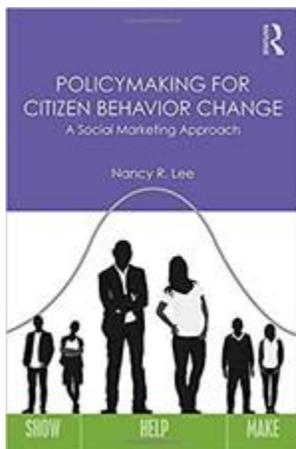
I've heard rough estimates are that between 500-1000 people a month (youth, families, MI citizens) will utilize MICA at Mercedale. As a daily walker through Mercedale, I have maybe seen 1 person a month in the garden. I can't imagine that number would grow close to 500/month.

It would also include numbers benefiting local retailers (e.g., Pagliacci and restaurants near Rite Aid).

Let the numbers guide your decision. It will be easier to decide and defend.

Thank you,

Nancy R. Lee
Teaching Associate, Univ. of Washington
206-232-8768 m206-714-4039



Ali Spietz

From: Melissa K Neher <mkarpouzes@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 7, 2018 10:02 AM
To: Council
Subject: Support for YTN and MICA

Dear Councilmembers,

Although I was unable to attend the City Council meeting last night, I want to express my support for Youth Theatre Northwest and MICA. YTN is a wonderful resource for our community, and I believe in the value of a thriving arts program, venue, and community on Mercer Island.

I heard that the turnout was amazing, and I am so pleased to learn that my friends and neighbors were able to join you in person to show how important this project is to our community. As we work together as a community around issues of social and emotional learning for our kids, places like MICA could be the hub and home of activity for many children on the island.

Let's move forward with finding a way to make MICA happen and to provide YTN a permanent home on the island. Let's move past "should we?" and onto "how will we?" Thank you.

Thanks as always to all of you for your service!

Best
Melissa K Neher

Ali Spietz

From: Lynn Abulhosn <lynnabulhosn@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 7, 2018 11:04 AM
To: Council
Subject: Yes on Recycling Center site for MICA

Hello City Council members,

I know there are passionate and vocal neighbors who oppose the Mercedale Park / Recycling Center site option for MICA, and I want you to know that I'm fully supportive of that site. An arts center on that site will anchor MI's town center, and perhaps inspire further development of shops, restaurants, work spaces, apartments and public spaces. This location celebrates Mercedale park and the arts and creates a gathering space for the community. It saves time and money because it draws upon research, studies and plans that have already been developed. It is a limited piece of underutilized city land. It gives YTN a shorter timeframe to find a permanent home and not spend their limited resources looking in other communities. I know that MICA is committed to a reset, as I heard last night at their presentation. I support MICA's approach and additionally support developing the performing arts center on the recycling center site.

Thank you for listening.

Best regards, Lynn Abulhosn
4625 89th Avenue SE