

Tonight was a big win for us in our battle against Ascend. We had a total of 170 to 180 people show up for the rally and meeting. 110 people were allowed inside as we had exceeded the fire-code capacity of the building. Another 60 to 70 people in orange hats were left outside, unable to attend their community meeting.

Ascend showed us that they are not the partner to our community that they claim to be. Instead, they demonstrated that they are an aggressive, hedge fund backed, for profit business that will ignore withering opposition from the local community to force their marijuana mega store into our small neighborhood to make big profits.

Among the sea of orange hats and steady stream of speakers, I counted only two people who spoke in favor of Ascend's plans. Every other speaker and the overwhelming majority of those in attendance were against Ascend's plans for our neighborhood.

I was surprised at the approach that they had taken with us. First as they tried to deny us entry into the building and then by having their security officer stand mere feet away from each speaker, looming over them as they spoke to keep the speaker within 3 minutes. It was intimidating.

I can't imagine a community meeting at the Busy Bee or Taberna or Wholefoods looking anything like what I experienced tonight.

Ascend is the wrong company in the wrong industry looking to place their ill-fitting store into the wrong neighborhood.

So what's next? We need to increase our strength through numbers. We currently have 497 signed opposition letters. We need to grow this number in the next week as we prepare to deliver the letters to the Select Board. ***Multiple opposition letters can come from each household.*** Has everyone in your home signed one? It is locate here <https://fs4.formsite.com/E4qRKX/form1/index.html>

The noon rally that was planned for this Thursday has been cancelled. Save Saint Mary's Neighborhood organization will have no formal presence at Ascend's meeting on Thursday. Ascend has proven that they are not responsive to our requests for additional information and have instructed our community to wait until the Cannabis Commission releases the information that Ascend provides them. So we will wait.

In the mean time, stay tuned for the announcement of our next rally.

As always, I will alert you to important hearing dates and updates on Ascend's application and our continued efforts to defend our neighborhood.

Be encouraged.

We will win this fight.

Paul

www.savestmarysnow.org

