

2/26/2019

Commercial Building Owner/Businesswoman

Shelagh Walker [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Grand Forks BC V0H 1H0

RECEIVED

FEB 28 2019

THE CORPORATION OF  
THE CITY OF GRAND FORKS

Brian Taylor  
C/O City Hall  
7217 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Grand Forks, BC V0H 1H0

**Attention: Mayor in Counsel**

It has been brought to my attention that Whispers of Hope entered into a lease with [REDACTED], commercial building owner of 7229 5<sup>th</sup> Street with the intention of running a Soup Kitchen. See attachment 1 of a letter stating the WOH intention and intention to lease. This was hand delivered to me at my commercial building [REDACTED] just yesterday. I'm a firm believer in "Win-Win" relationships for our community. This does not foster a "Win-Win" situation for my intended business plans. If the soup kitchen opens it will be detrimental to my business, the surrounding businesses, Gyro Park, the park outside City Hall, and the Splash Park, including all of City Park. The Wispers Of Hope association has proven themselves to be irresponsible in the past and cannot be allowed to create a "Win-Lose" situation where the community will suffer. I'm firm that 7229 5<sup>th</sup> Street is not an appropriate location for this Soup Kitchen because of the following:

1. The past history of heroin / fentanyl needles left all over surrounding area. See Attachment 2. The reality you cannot find needles in snow and in Grand Forks, BC we experience snow 6-8 months of the year. [REDACTED] kids playing in nearby park making snow men and Snow Angels. It is not reasonable to deprive the children of the community of this simple pleasure.
2. The WOH association has proved themselves irresponsible in neglecting to manage the outside of their facility. They remove people from the inside as needed, but the people they removed only go so far as to camp outside and occupy nearby areas. I have concerns these people who are removed will start to occupy the sidewalk, common areas on MY property and roof surrounding MY building [REDACTED]. This is not an acceptable location and I do not have training to deal with people who have proved in the past to be violent, have drug addictions, or individuals that are suffering from with-drawl symptoms. It will be very traumatic for me or my family to find someone who has slit their wrists or overdosed outside my side entrance or that has taken up residence on the roof of my building. Keeping homeless people off my roof has been an issue in the past. It is unfair to expect me and my customers to keep my door shut at all times to avoid theft, and also unfair to expect me to deal with difficult and high risk individuals when I don't have a social work degree, nor do I have anger management training, nor do I have training in how to deal with drug addicted individuals who will be venting to me, my family and my customers about their current emotional and mental challenges. I will be especially offended if my daughter [REDACTED] has to witness some violence, or a death.
3. It is especially cruel to me to have this Soup Kitchen next door as my plans and vision included:
  - having a 'family orientated' business offering services that would encourage families to walk up from the Splash Park to buy ice cream, bikinis, or flip flops, during the summer months and;
  - Having a seasonal room. I've already purchased about 30 Halloween costumes for next year

FILE CODE

WEY  
C/O - Whispers of Hope 5<sup>th</sup> St  
Business Location  
Walker, Shelagh re

- I've been practicing making cupcakes and birthday cakes for children. If the parents want to throw a birthday party at the splash park, I might provide the service of making unique Birthday Cakes. (probably made off-site in a commercial kitchen elsewhere but a longer term goal)
  - Possibly a drop-in daycare service provided by a certified caregiver between 11-2 so Mom's can go for lunch (Summer Time ONLY)
  - I currently have a room dedicated to studio related activities where I paint with acrylic and create children's books and do photography. See attachment for Birch Tree series in progress and camel paintings for my next children's book.
  - I perceive my commercial building as a very small, but very diverse center for art, children and culture. [REDACTED] my books I planned on reading/selling to the kids)
  - I had planned on giving free story time for children and toddlers (My own books)
  - I had plans to host something similar to 'Paint Night' for adults, but instead the kids would bring a sippy cup and paint. It would be called "Paint and Sippy Cup Night"
  - I also had plans for adult based activities including Wine Tasting (my own wine and also collaborating with other local breweries or wineries, selling my own honey, and my own art work during December and allowing others to rent a small space for their own craft.
  - Weekly art shows in the fall or early spring to give new and emerging artists the spot light!
  - My ideas for business are not fixed and are evolving but I do know whatever it evolves into will have a positive impact on our community and the children. The children being priority.
  - Providing services and products to people also want a safe place to shop and drop off their kids. If the soup kitchen goes in next door I don't think they will feel safe coming [REDACTED]
4. It is not a 'responsible' action for the counsel to approve the WOH Association Soup Kitchen at 7229 5<sup>th</sup> Street because it is will deter potential investors and retail customers to this neighborhood
  5. The City cannot allow people who don't have proper training in dealing with addictions provide support to individuals who have proved to be a nuisance in the past. We need the homeless, mentally ill and drug addicted individuals to be taken care of people who are licensed and certified in rehabilitation. Feeding hungry people has always been on my priority too. But I believe in a different approach that does not include allowing people who previously 'failed' to be responsible in the past, repeat their atrocities in yet another quadrant of the city. See Attachment 3 for evidence of garbage, needles and increased homeless population.
  6. I also have concerns that if the WOH association set up next door, it will increase the dog population that will be frequenting my sidewalk. I have small children coming and going so I don't think it's particularly safe to have big dogs tied to my railing or sitting unleashed waiting for their owner to come out of the soup kitchen. Dogs get territorial and dogs bite and children do not listen to adults that say don't touch. I don't want my own children being bit or my customer's children.

A potentially "Win-Win" situation could be serving food and coffee at the Seniors Center or other location. I propose finding a location for LOCAL Seniors ONLY. People who are NOT seniors and who suffer for addictions could be housed and fed elsewhere, away from the children, parks, and commercial areas. It is NOT ok to foster and approve a situation that has proved to fail. The entire staff at City Hall is well aware that in the past it created piles of litter, tents, luggage, garbage, 'homeless individuals' with nowhere to go, needles, and dangerous drugs like fentanyl became the culture on the surrounding streets and parks. Fentanyl in front of my store or in the alley adjacent to my store is NOT acceptable. A small piece of Fentanyl merely the size of a grain of salt can kill an adult let alone a toddler or baby who is teething and constantly putting things in his mouth. I am terrified for [REDACTED] children and this cannot be approved or allowed to happen.

My understanding is that 7229 5<sup>th</sup> Street is NOT zoned for a soup kitchen. My understanding is that my Party Wall agreement that I have with the owner of 7229 5<sup>th</sup> Street, gives me the right to approve or disapprove the proposed construction, plumbing and renovations they have planned. Yesterday the Board Members of WOH verbally expressed their intent to do extensive renovations, build a fence on top of their building and mine. This fence was to be built along my party wall and surrounding areas. I DO NOT APPROVE any permits, construction, fencing, or zoning changes to the attached building. My Party Wall agreement is also supported by the common laws of the LAND TITLE ACT. These changes that the WOH are proposing will cause me financial and emotional stress. My insurance will increase, my anxiety will increase as the safety for my children and customers will diminish, and I will constantly worry the patrons of 7229 5<sup>th</sup> street will start a fire, or leave fentanyl somewhere that [REDACTED] toddler [REDACTED] will pick up and put in his mouth. [REDACTED] I feel very strongly it is NOT acceptable to approve 7229 5<sup>th</sup> street as a location for this activity. I'm confident there are other buildings away from children and parks that are currently for lease. [REDACTED] children and others deserve a safe place to walk and play. We as business owners deserve a happy, healthy, safe environment to run a business that will attract, not deter investors. We deserve a "Win-Win" situation. The seniors CAN win, the businesses CAN prosper, and the hungry CAN get fed. But the soup kitchen needs a different location. 7229 5<sup>th</sup> Street is not an acceptable or safe option.

Yours Truly,

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Commercial Building Owner/Businesswoman  
Shelagh Walker [REDACTED]



Dear Residents,

Our organization is new to the neighbourhood, as we have just signed a lease for 7229 5<sup>th</sup> street, previously the Little House of Bohemia Yoga Studio. We plan to set up our Community Kitchen and are still working on all the necessary permits and licenses.

We as a group believe strongly in access to basic necessities, nutrition, and comradery to keep our community healthy. We have been working with the community to strengthen relationships and gather feedback to ensure that our services are understood and welcomed. If you have not done so already, I encourage you to visit our website and see more about our projects, governance, and even news articles about us over the years: [www.whispersofhope.ca](http://www.whispersofhope.ca)

We empathize with those who have concerns, and would especially like to hear from you. Our policies have always been strong against criminal activity or any aggressive or threatening behaviour, and thankfully we don't encounter much of either. As a public service we see a diverse group of citizens and families using our facilities. We believe in inclusivity and the right to fair and equal treatment, regardless of anyone's background, and instead base our reaction on an individual's actions in or around our facility. We stand strong behind our "right to refuse service to anyone" and will not hesitate to use it. In addition to our policies and management of the space, we also include measures such as surveillance and lighting, and strong relationships with health service providers, RCMP, and neighbours to ensure our space is respected and clean even outside operating hours. Prevention is better than cure.

As a Community Kitchen, we rely on involvement from everyone in some shape or form. We encourage volunteerism, donations, and even thoughtful feedback as it all contributes to the positive wellbeing of our organization and community as a whole. If you support our efforts and want to get involved please get in touch with us. And, if you don't support our initiatives, please reach out to us and tell us how you feel and what you want to see. If there is any way we can improve our services we are motivated to do it!

I can best be reached via email at: [whispers.coordinator@gmail.com](mailto:whispers.coordinator@gmail.com)  
or during our Thrift Store hours at: 250-442-2006

Respectfully,

Melissa Shulga

Center Coordinator

Whispers of Hope Benevolence Association

[www.whispersofhope.ca](http://www.whispersofhope.ca)

Thrift Store - 7463 3<sup>rd</sup> St. - Phone: 250-442-2006  
Hours: Mon-Fri 9a-4p, Sat 10a-2p, Sun Closed

[whispers.coordinator@gmail.com](mailto:whispers.coordinator@gmail.com)  
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2/26/2019

# Attachment #2

Screenshot\_20190223-073228-6.png



Fentanyl?  
Heroin?



Photos from Previous  
Whisper's of Hope location..



