

March 5, 2019

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

Grand Forks BC V0H 1H0

Mayor and Counsel Members
C/O
City Hall
7217 4th Street
Grand Forks, BC V0H 1H0



Attention: Brian Taylor and Counsel

Subject: Solution (Have Ultimate Hockey Relocate to 7229 5th)

This is the third letter I am writing to the 'Mayor' and 'Counsel Members'. While writing my first letter I felt panicked and scared. I wanted to express how concerned I was that my building would become a fire hazard if WOH moved in next door to me and felt concerns for my own safety and for my kid's safety. While writing my second letter I felt 'Angry' at the violations that WOH campers and garbage might pose to grieving people transporting urns and coffins, or those attending a funeral service. In writing my third letter, I feel a little relieved and have a feeling that I might have found a solution for relocating WOH Soup Kitchen. Please try have an open mind.

I feel I have a solution that would solve some of the issues surrounding people being upset about Whispers Of Hope moving into 7229 5th Street with the intention of opening a Soup Kitchen. As I previously mentioned, I personally feel its disrespectful to the dead and grieving to allow WOH to foster an environment that might encourage garbage, rubble, tents, and groups of people to congregate during funerals or transportation of bodies/urns. There are laws that currently prohibit such violations with fines of up to \$10,000. People are not allowed to do the following:

1. Leave garbage 100 m of a funeral home
2. Cause a disturbance 100m from a funeral home
3. Gather in groups 100m from a funeral home

This however, would be very hard to enforce as it will be hard to make anyone accountable. However, I do have a suggested solution and path forward to prevent the disrespect and also so that my own building doesn't become an eye sore and fire hazard. I suggest the following:

1. Have someone contact the owners of the Ultimate Hockey Store in Grand Forks, currently located next to the Whispers of Hope Thrift Store and ask him if he will give up his lease to the Whispers of Hope Soup Kitchen.
2. Then have the Ultimate Hockey Store relocate next to my commercial building at 7223 5th Street where we can both commence with children and toddler related activities where the walk-by traffic supports the Splash Park. And the Splash Park traffic supports our business endeavors.

3. Everyone should be happy if this happens. [REDACTED] will have a renter and generate monthly income, the Soup Kitchen will be located next to their affiliated counterpart, patrons can also pick up warm jackets and household items all in a more discreet location where MOST IMPORTANT, the people going to the Soup Kitchen will feel more comfortable and less under scrutiny. It's a discreet area, slightly off the beaten path and is close to the doctor's clinic, mental health clinic and shopping.
4. I would also like to say that the proposed switch allows for the odd camper and for small groups of people to wait for the soup kitchen to open in a more discreet area. Perhaps the WOH Association can put up a decorative fence in the alley with some picnic tables. That option doesn't exist here at [REDACTED] 7229 5th Street as there is NO area behind our buildings and just a small sidewalk out front. Unfortunately if things are located here, patrons and groups of people WILL congregate within 100 m of the Funeral Home.
5. If the 'Switch' is a success, we could also consider building a beach at the end of the road (behind the Dr. Clinic) as it leads directly to the river with a bathroom and shower in a hut so that homeless have some self-respect and dignity. There they could have some stairs to the beach and a wharf. This would be a new beach, but it looks like something that would be appreciated by all.
6. The people who come to the Soup Kitchen would have the wonderful option to hang around in the WOH Thrift Store when the soup kitchen is closed to get warm until a bus or other source can get them food or to a warming center and can also be a check-in place for when the kitchen is closed instead of having people at the park or on top of my building [REDACTED].
7. Perhaps less people with addictions would frequent the soup house if we could also build a multi-step detox facility where the old wild life hall used to be (20 odd years ago). It is my understanding that we have a 'Club House' down Riverside, but one must get 'clean' first and stop doing all drugs to enter. I think a facility to assist people getting off of drugs is MUCH needed. Perhaps a mobile building could be hauled to the old parking lot at the old Wild Life Hall location and the water and sewer could be re-attached. I think ideally the area could be fenced and people who check-in could commit to signing a waiver/contract to finish a full detox and agree to be locked in until it is complete. With showers and a few perks it might attract people to join and regain their dignity and control over substances. I do strongly feel the detox centre should not be affiliated to Whispers Of Hope. The detox centre should have new strategies, new staff and be proven leaders in their area of expertise.

At the very least we should commit to the Hockey Store relocating to 7229 5th Street and the Soup Kitchen taking over the Ultimate Hockey Store lease and then see how the other steps unfold. This should be the #1 priority to be actioned and discussed as it is a very sensible solution and action can be taken quite quickly to relocate the Hockey Store.

I think an effective model for getting people off of drugs can be built in this town and should be built in others to prevent people all moving here as we need to support locals first. I read an article the other day that there is a new implant that can be placed under the skin in the upper arm to assist people to get off opium based drugs and heroin and I do see more hope after reading this article.

I too want to be compassionate and care about people who are hungry, tired, cold, confused and feel hopeless. I want to be a part of the solution. In the future I hope I can assist more with volunteering and possibly donate a sea can to be converted for some sort of use if it is applied to my suggested model. Perhaps a Sea Can can be used for a bathroom or shower? Perhaps I can run a non-certified colour therapy

painting class and on occasion bring in a certified colour therapy instructor for people with addictions to contribute to the 'Well Being' of our locals. The possibilities are endless if we band together.

We need solutions, ideas and brainstorming and I think we will get there if we all try be diplomatic, sit down for coffee and listen to each other. I am trying to have an open mind and hope that the WOH Association too will have an open mind and switch locations with the Hockey Store so that we can have family orientated activities here at City Park, up on 5th, and also keep the parks and streets free of disruptions to people who are grieving or transporting a casket.

In the mean-time, I am still putting out a plea to 'not approve' the permits and licenses for the WOH moving into 7229, 5th Street as I KNOW we have options and that we will find them a more suitable home that will allow us up here on 5th to compliment the Splash Park, City Park and the 'well-being' of children and families that will assist with our revitalization of this gem of a town. Let's keep Grand Forks beautiful and healthy!

I can be reached to discuss the issues at any time. I would enjoy getting out for coffee with almost anyone as long as it is for a diplomatic and constructive brainstorming or conversations to clarify statements I have made.

Yours Truly,

Commercial Building Owner/Businesswoman and Resident

Shelagh Walker [REDACTED]

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