

Bryant, Shellie

From: Kim Rempel [REDACTED]
Sent: September 30, 2019 11:05 AM
To: City Council
Subject: Form submission from: Write a Letter to Council
Attachments: farmers_market_building_-_kim_rempel.pdf

Submitted on Monday, September 30, 2019 - 11:05

Submitted by anonymous user: 142.165.218.208

Submitted values are:

Date Monday, September 30, 2019

To His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

First Name Kim

Last Name Rempel

Email [REDACTED]

Address [REDACTED] 7th Street East

City Saskatoon

Province Saskatchewan

Postal Code [REDACTED]

Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable)

Subject Farmers Market Building

Meeting (if known) September 30, 2019 meeting

Comments

I do not wish to speak. I wish to share my thoughts via this letter only. I realize I am submitting this a bit late, but if my letter could still somehow be shared with Councillors today that would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Attachments

farmers_market_building_-_kim_rempel.pdf

<https://www.saskatoon.ca/sites/default/files/webform/farmers_market_building_-_kim_rempel.pdf>

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

<https://www.saskatoon.ca/node/398/submission/340111>

His Worship, The Mayor, and Members of City Council,

I am writing in regard to the Farmers' Market Building and the current negotiations between the City Of Saskatoon and the Saskatoon Farmers' Market Co-operative Ltd (SFMCL). I am not representing any particular group; this is my perspective only.

My husband is a member of the SFMCL, a vendor, and a small business owner so we, like the other 100+ SFMCL vendors, are directly impacted by the City's decision to terminate our lease, effective December 31, 2019. Our business will be uprooted and we will likely lose a large portion of our clientele. The City has indicated that "Administration has received unsolicited interest from other third parties expressing an interest in the development and management of the Farmers' Market Building". Perhaps the City should disclose who exactly is pressuring them for this prime piece of Real Estate?

When the City issued a RFP (now conveniently cancelled due to roof repairs), they continually focused on 'animation' and ensuring the building was occupied 6 days per week. My impression is that the City is more focused on appearances than authenticity; they want the allusion of 'local' even if it means displacing local small businesses. The "Farmers Market Building Lease and Operating Agreement Renewal" indicates: "Proponents may include products not grown or produced in Saskatchewan" and they want to see that "Vendors are open for business six-days-a-week, year round". To me, this sounds like a Superstore-like entity that has some local produce. No, we can't compete with that. My husband spends two days a week at the Farmers' Market, receiving orders, making sales, and interacting directly with clients. The rest of his week is spent producing his product. I think Saskatoon residents appreciate the direct interaction with an authentic producer, because they keep coming back. And tourists always seem to write rave reviews about the SFMCL. I don't know if any City Councillors have been to the Market on a Saturday, but it is absolutely packed. To say that we haven't fulfilled our obligations as tenants is a huge slap in the face. I would argue the SFMCL success has actually made River Landing into what it is today. It's definitely played a vital role in bringing foot traffic and revitalisation to the Riversdale/Downtown area over the past 12 years. To simply kick us out when there is increased investor demand shows where the City's priorities lie.

The City has indicated "As an alternative, (to the Recommendation outlined in the "Farmers Market Building Lease and Operating Agreement Renewal") the City could renew the lease with the SFMCL and hold them accountable to meet certain targets and metrics, within a set time period". This is my recommendation. That the SFMCL and the City continue to work together to keep 100+ locally owned small business in their current location. Even though we can't offer a Supermarket-like atmosphere that's open 6 days per week, I do think there is room for us to make some changes. And I'm not opposed to pressure from the City that encourages us to grow and evolve, as a cooperative. However, in turn, the City needs to listen to it's residents, farmers, and small business owners. We want an authentic market . Does the City also value authenticity or does it value investor interests, trends, and the allusion of local content? We aren't interested in compromising our values. However, I do think with more time and increased communication, the City and the SFMCL can work out a solution that works for everyone and allows us to stay in our current location. Displacing 100+ locally-owned small businesses is not the solution.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my thoughts on this matter.

Kim Rempel, Resident of Haultain