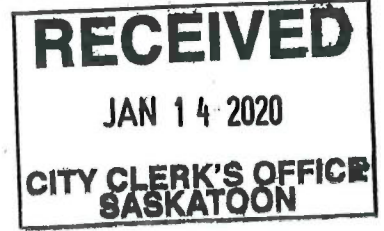


4110-45

To: Bryant, Shellie
Subject: RE: WCA letter of support for meeting tues jan 14



From: Michelle Miller <[REDACTED]>
Date: January 13, 2020 at 10:27:40 PM CST

Subject: WCA letter of support for meeting tues jan 14

Morning,

Here is our letter for Tuesdays meeting about Boarded up houses. If you haven't already, I would encourage you to take a look at Hamilton's Bylaws, since we may be moving in that direction down the road.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email me back here and I can pass it along to the group.

Thanks again,
Michelle Miller
Westmount Community Association

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

To the Planning Development and Community Services Committee

The Westmount Community Association recognizes (especially over recent years), that empty and boarded up houses are becoming increasingly prevalent in Westmount. It devalues the properties in the area, decreases morale of area residents and leads to increased gang activity in Westmount as well. A quick count this past weekend put the estimate for empty &/or boarded up houses at close to a dozen in Westmount alone. Aside from Wayne Rodger coming to our December 2019 meeting, the WCA feels largely ignored in these types of issues. Considering we are an 'inner-city' area with lower incomes and rent/mortgages we also need to be consulted on the issues plaguing all inner-city areas.

There has been an increase of gangs, graffiti and police service calls to Westmount. We feel this can be attributed to the low cost of rent and empty/boarded up houses in the area in recent years attracting these problems to our beloved area. There are many, many property managers and owners (including out of province owners) who leave their properties to fall into decrepit states – empty, boarded, overflowing garbage, and infestations of sorts to name a few.

The WCA is in favor of this being dealt with immediately as it is a need in all areas of the inner-city, not just the “fancy” areas like Briarwood. While the proposed options are a good starting point, eventually Saskatoon will need to move towards the Regulation of Vacant & Boarded Buildings, similar to that of Hamilton, Ontario’s approach. As of right now, we are prepared to support the city in their decision to increase capacity to proactively address property maintenance issues at properties with repeated issues. We are also prepared to support the Saskatoon Fire Department to designate **Empty & Boarded houses** as priority 1 under the current practice. We would also like to stress the wording be changed to the above bolded, **Empty & Boarded** houses or else we will see an increase in empty **unboarded** houses to get around this. We are also in favor of a time limit on how long a house can be empty or boarded, example no more than 3 months. It cannot go on for years and years.

Again, we would like to reiterate that this is a good starting point, but the City of Saskatoon and Saskatoon Fire Department will need to look to Regulating Rentals along with charging fees to have houses sit vacant, especially for longer than a specified amount of days/months in the near future. It is beyond time that property managers, owners and even any housing programs are held responsible for the state of disrepair their houses are in. It shouldn’t take a phone call to the local news to get houses looked after or almost bulldozed. If we want Saskatoon Shines to be our motto, it starts with change and it starts with the inner-city getting cleaned up and not looking at boarded up houses along major corridors of roads or having as many as 56 boarded houses in one area.

We would like to thank you for taking our letter into consideration for your meeting today. We wanted to have representatives attend, but not all are able to get away from our work commitments. We appreciate the heads up on this meeting and would like to be notified if there are any more in the future that someone may be able to attend.

Westmount Community Association