
Subject: FW: Email - Request to Speak - Theresa Kirkpatrick - Rezoning of 1414-1416 Main Street - CK 4351-021-001
Attachments: council_letter.pdf

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@saskatoon.ca>
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2021 2:22 PM
To: City Council <City.Council@saskatoon.ca>
Subject: Email - Request to Speak - Theresa Kirkpatrick - Rezoning of 1414-1416 Main Street - CK 4351-021-001

Submitted on Monday, February 15, 2021 - 14:22

Submitted values are:

Date Monday, February 15, 2021
To His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council
First Name Theresa
Last Name Kirkpatrick
Phone Number
Email
Address Main Street
City Saskatoon
Province Saskatchewan
Postal Code
Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable)
Subject Rezoning 1414-1416 Main Street
Meeting (if known) City Council February 22nd meeting
Comments

As the resident who owns two properties right beside the properties on 1414-1416 Main Street, I am writing this letter to council to oppose rezoning those properties from Low Density Residential to Corridor Residential by way of zoning agreement.

I am requesting time to speak to this issue at the February 22, 2021 council meeting and giving council notice that prior to that meeting, I will be submitting a petition asking that this development be denied as it does not fit with current zoning and should not be approved based on a corridor plan which is not yet completed. Signatures on this petition are approaching 300 individuals. A final total will be submitted with the petition by the morning of February 22, 2021.

I am also submitting a letter to council on this issue. Thank-you for your consideration.

Attachments
[council letter.pdf](#)

Theresa Kirkpatrick
Main Street
Saskatoon, SK

February 15, 2021

To: Saskatoon City Council

As the resident who owns two properties right beside the properties on 1414-1416 Main Street, I am writing this letter to council to oppose rezoning those properties from Low Density Residential to Corridor Residential by way of zoning agreement.

I am requesting time to speak to this issue at the February 22, 2021 council meeting and giving council notice that prior to that meeting, I will be submitting a petition asking that this development be denied as it does not fit with current zoning and should not be approved based on a corridor plan which is not yet completed. This petition has already been signed by nearly 300 people with more signing on every day.

Let me be clear, we are not opposed to development or to densification but believe both those things can be accomplished within existing zoning. The block in question has, in fact, increased the housing stock by approximately 35% in the last 7 years. The lots at 1414 and 1416 Main Street have potential to increase density by another 5 homes – all within the existing R2 zone.

We also believe this proposal is NOT aligned with the spirit or the letter of the Varsity View Local Area Plan which clearly shows this area as an R2 zone.

Mostly, though, we are very concerned the city administration is using the not-yet-complete corridor plan, which has been very poorly communicated, as the basis for its support of this project. We are also very worried about what this could mean for neighbourhoods across Saskatoon that are close to the “corridors” along the proposed Bus Rapid Transit routes.

The Corridor Transformation Plan document promises specifically that “each corridor plan is to be developed through a collaborative and consultative process with landowners, neighbourhood residents, local business owners and community and stakeholder groups.”

The process to this point, has been anything but collaborative or consultative. Frankly, it has left the residents and landowners we talked to feeling like our voices don’t matter.

I heard one person describe the process for the ordinary resident as being like “boiling a lobster” where you start off with cold water and gradually turn it up so that you don’t know you’re being cooked until it’s too late.

That seems to be the city administration's approach. They will consult ... but later. They hear complaints ... but dismiss them as "small but vocal minorities" who just don't want change in their back yard. They bend over backward to give developers "certainty" regarding rezoning proposals but don't hesitate to change the rules for homeowners like us and our neighbours who buy, renovate or build homes within an R2 zone.

The city administration has made sure developers, who have a vested interest and can make very good money with high density development in existing neighbourhoods, have been intimately involved in shaping the city's corridor plan. On the other hand, the general public, and particularly people within the "corridor" areas, have been only nominally involved in high-level open houses, surveys and events where the onus was on the individual to seek out participation.

The difference is that developers **knew** they should care about this stuff because **it means more opportunity for them**. Homeowners within "corridor zones", were unaware that this could have a significant impact on us too. For the most part, and to our detriment, we trusted the city.

We heard the city wanted to grow... can't disagree with that. We heard there would be a new rapid bus route to move people through the city faster ... sounds reasonable. Some of us even attended a couple of open houses and heard the city wanted more infill in existing neighbourhoods. From the very general information we saw at those meetings, we **assumed** that "infill" meant rebuilding within existing zoning. Neighbourhoods would change but that change would be fairly organic ... like the change in density already happening on the 1400 block of Main Street.

It wasn't until the city invited us to the December 10, 2020 meeting about the Blackrock proposal that we realized just how significant the change the city was proposing with its new corridor transformation plan. Quickly, we realized that our concern wasn't just about this development but about what could happen in neighbourhoods across Saskatoon.

As we began having doorstep conversations, it became clear that people are simply **not aware** they are in the BRT "corridor" or what that could mean. They are also surprised the city is already looking at approving major developments.

City planners told the Star Phoenix last week that they plan to support projects like Blackrock's because it aligns with their high-level objectives – "even though it's not clear whether such a project would be approved once the detailed plans are developed".

What???? How is that fair?

People who live within “corridors”, deserve a chance to have a say in **how** development happens in our area just as the developers have done. We should be able to talk with our city planners about things like the proposed size of the corridor area, how local area plans are considered, whether there could be regulations specifically for infills, whether there will be limits on the number of multi-unit dwellings in traditionally low-density areas, how can communities benefit as well as developers, and should there be sustainability requirements?

There should also be room for discussion on the foundation of the city’s growth plan. After the past year, living through a pandemic, is the city confident that building its growth plan around a mass transportation network is still solid? Will people want to pile onto a bus in the future? Will offices and businesses be concentrated in downtown? How common will telework arrangements be? And if things are changing, how might that change the approach?

In December, Councillors Davies and Loewen, concerned about bitter zoning disputes, asked city administration to look at ways to improve residents’ understanding of what’s behind proposed land use changes and what those land use changes could mean in their neighbourhood. **Consultation on the corridor growth plan provides council with the ideal opportunity to achieve that goal.**

Doing this as part of the planning process, rather than the within the context of a specific proposal, takes the temperature down. It allows people who may be most impacted to influence the process in a way that could benefit their community. Homeowners may not get everything we want. The city may not get everything it wants and developers may not get everything they want ... but if you invite people directly to participate and report back to them on the results of the consultation, people will at least know that they’ve been heard and they will know what the playing field looks like.

When change is done on a development-by-development basis, it’s easy for city administration to dismiss issues raised by area residents as nothing more than “not in my backyard” concerns. This is not only insulting to people who love and are concerned about their neighbourhood – but makes it harder for the city to implement change. Working with the people most impacted by the change is harder, but when it’s done right, it allows for a much smoother transition.

We’re asking you, as city councillors, to choose that better way. Reject this proposal. Do the consultations you promised. Make sure everyone knows what the plan is. THEN, consider proposals based on the plan.

Sincerely,

Theresa Kirkpatrick