

June 13, 2021

A recent CBC article has made publicly known what I have known for a while: that the developer has pulled out of plans to develop the old bus barns.

I know that Covid-19 has walloped the heck out of us, and the city must face many difficult decisions over the coming months and years to deal with empty properties as a result of struggling and failed businesses. Yet I feel Covid has also given us the capacity to see what happens when we are creative in dealing with big problems.

Zoom meetings, on-line concerts, distanced lane swimming ... we figured out how to connect and stay healthy during a pandemic. Let figure out how to connect and stay healthy after the pandemic.

The old bus barns offer an opportunity to create a vibrant corridor connecting the popular communities of Caswell Hill, Hudson Bay Park, Mayfair and other core neighbourhoods with Riversdale, the soon-to-be reopened restaurants, bars, theatres on 20th Street, to the Remai and Persephone Theatre, and on to Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan and the proposed amphitheatre. What an exciting circle of culture!

I'm not asking you to think big. Think small. Small businesses, artisans workspaces, small green spaces, small apartments, all tucked into existing, funky, modified buildings.

We have a chance to turn Saskatoon into an even cooler place to live. Walkable, bikeable, culturally vibrant, connected, diverse.

Please work with the communities involved, the developers who have already shown interest in creating a unique space, and the other layers of government who will also be trying to create the jobs to pull us all out of the pandemic blues.

With warm regards,

Wilma Groenen