

Walter, Penny

Subject: FW: Email - Communication - Heidi Epstein - Proposed Development - 1635 McKercher Drive - CK 4000-3 x 750-1
Attachments: letter to city council.pdf

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>

Sent: Sunday, August 25, 2024 5:32 PM

To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>

Subject: Email - Communication - Heidi Epstein - Proposed Development - 1635 McKercher Drive - CK 4000-3 x 750-1

--- Replies to this email will go to [REDACTED] ---

Submitted on Sunday, August 25, 2024 - 16:38

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

Submitted values are:

I have read and understand the above statements.: Yes

I do not want my comments placed on a public agenda. They will be shared with members of Council through their online repository.: No

I only want my comments shared with the Mayor or my Ward Councillor.: No

Date: Sunday, August 25, 2024

To: His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

First Name: Heidi

Last Name: Epstein

Phonetic spelling of first and/or last name: HI dee EP stine (not steen)

Phone Number : [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

I live outside of Saskatoon: No

Saskatoon Address and Ward:

Address: [REDACTED]-Heritage Lane

Ward: Ward 8

What do you wish to do ?: Submit Comments

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known):: City Council August 28 2024

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: Proposed Development and HAF use for 1635 McKercher Drive

Comments:

Find attached my response to proposed development and HAF use for 1635 McKercher Drive

Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting?: No

██████ Heritage Lane

Saskatoon, Sk ██████

25 August 2024

Dear Mayor Clark and City Councillors,

I am outraged that this administration would target 1635 McKercher Drive as a site on which to build affordable housing, and then try to frame such an initiative as minimally disruptive to "maintaining the balance of Municipal Reserve land."

The more vital balance that you are all planning to destroy lies much deeper: you are ripping up greenspace and trees that are crucial to the city's eco-system. Don't try to dupe people in this neighbourhood with your promises to plant a few trees (where exactly ????) after this project is done.

Why can't the best practices of this administration 'loudly' counter the climate-crisis denialism endemic to this province by refusing to rip up green spaces that are so crucial not only to absorbing CO2 emissions, but also to preserving habitat for birds, other animals, pollinators, and non-vertebrates. Promising to relocate a garden is greenwashing! You've destroyed green space, *Punkt schluss*.

The city already ruined the neighborhood and disrupted ecosystems with the installation of that god-awful, butt-ugly BMX bike park. That wretched mound impedes air flow onto the ponds, thereby exacerbating the algae blooms we get every summer now, due to longer heat waves and chronic drought. Duck populations are barely there anymore. (The weekly assault of noise pollution--heavy metal music and ridiculously mic'd-up commentators--on wildlife raising their young further reflects city planners' abject indifference to fostering peaceful co-existence with other species.) Now you want to rip up more habitat, inflict several more years of noise on the wildlife, all of which will increase rather than decrease the carbon footprint of city-dwellers.

No doubt you already have private contractors drooling at the possibility of building more and more and more housing units. Here again, this approach flagrantly denies the urgency of fundamentally rethinking how we tackle housing crises in urban spaces. *Retrofitting already existing buildings is the way to go, not destroying precious green spaces within city limits.* Countless cities in Europe and some in North America are implementing this much wiser approach. Concrete production and more intense consumption of lumber to create *entirely new building* projects are incredibly wasteful, non-innovative ways to tackle this issue with any sensitivity to the *wider, radically interdependent ecosystem* in which humans participate.

The idea that you can reconfigure parking spaces and ?perhaps? encourage more people to use the bus by reducing parking designated for the Lakewood Civic Centre is truly naive. Speaking as someone who regularly uses public transit, this is a fantasy for a population that runs mostly on Dodge Rams and SUVs. Moreover, I play tennis several times a week and I can assure you that sometimes all those lots are full due to sporting events, vaccine clinics,

and various other community meetings. Reducing parking spaces will simply mean more people park on the streets, thereby jeopardising the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers trying to navigate this newly congested area. Other respondents to this proposal have pointed out that we *already* have a high incidence of accidents and near-misses at the corner of Avondale and McKercher. Putting up a building on that corner while simultaneously reducing parking spaces at the Civic Centre is a recipe for more disaster, and further evidence of poor planning on your part.

This submission from me is in no way symptomatic of NIMBY thinking. Our neighbourhood already includes *well-integrated*, affordable housing,.

Finally, and more basically, as other respondents have pointed out, the corporate landgrab/cashgrab that you are trying to push through actually *violates the very policy for HAF-use that the city formulated*: this site does not fall within the "downtown and corridor growth areas" of Saskatoon.

It is hard not to be cynical as I write my response to this proposal. City councils solicit feedback all the time and then, in tandem with contractors, go ahead and do whatever they want. I have seen it over and over again. Please prove me wrong, most especially given the greenwashing, the destruction of precious, life-giving habitat, and the multiple violations of your own policy that this proposal seeks to inflict.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Heidi Epstein.

Heidi Epstein, PhD