
From: cityclerk
Subject: FW: City of Prince George Zoning Bylaw No. 7850, 2007, Amendment Bylaw No. 9268, 2021" and Liquor License Application No. LL100178 (1933 Queensway)

From: Jeff Morton <*REDACTED*>
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2022 4:29 PM
To: cityclerk <cityclerk@princegeorge.ca>
Cc: Mayor <MAYOR@princegeorge.ca>; Councillor Everitt, Frank <Frank.Everitt@princegeorge.ca>; Councillor Frizzell, Garth <Garth.Frizzell@princegeorge.ca>; Councillor Krause, Murry <Murry.Krause@princegeorge.ca>; Councillor McConnachie, Terri <Terri.McConnachie@princegeorge.ca>; Councillor Ramsay, Cori <Cori.Ramsay@princegeorge.ca>; Councillor Sampson, Kyle <Kyle.Sampson@princegeorge.ca>; Councillor Scott, Susan <Susan.Scott@princegeorge.ca>; Councillor Skakun, Brian <Brian.Skakun@princegeorge.ca>
Subject: City of Prince George Zoning Bylaw No. 7850, 2007, Amendment Bylaw No. 9268, 2021" and Liquor License Application No. LL100178 (1933 Queensway)

Dear Mayor and Council,

RE: City of Prince George Zoning Bylaw No. 7850, 2007, Amendment Bylaw No. 9268, 2021" and Liquor Licence Application No. LL100178 (1933 Queensway)

As a resident of the Millar Addition, I humbly submit the following concerns regarding the proposed C6: Highway Commercial Rezoning to C4I of 1933 Queensway. This re-zoning will facilitate the relocation of an established liquor store business at 6475 Hart Highway to 1933 Queensway.

Council and city staff are acutely aware of the deteriorating social situation surrounding the Millar Addition and the daily struggles residents endure with criminal activity, particularly theft and the safe enjoyment of their property and public space. There is also a large population of vulnerable people living within and immediately outside of the Millar Addition. Many of these people are experiencing homelessness, suffer from intergenerational trauma, **struggle with addictions**, and endure poor mental and physical health. The area is generally of lower socioeconomic status than other areas of Prince George with lower-than-average household incomes, lower educational attainment with an above-average number of households experiencing poverty relative to many other Prince George neighborhoods. The neighbourhood continues to battle a reputation as an undesirable area of Prince George.

Within this context, I believe it is crucial that Council and City staff consider this application in a more fulsome manner. At present, the proposal appears to be evaluated through the traditional re-zoning lens of floor space, noise, traffic impacts, hours of operations, with some analysis completed regarding liquor store densities.

I refer to section C.1 of the City's LCLP.

Community Impact Council **may consider** the following when providing a resolution with respect to a Liquor License or Cannabis Retail application:

- Location of the establishment.
- Proximity of the establishment to other social or recreational facilities and public buildings.
- Occupant load and hours of liquor service for Liquor License Applications.
- Floor plan of the retail, warehouse and delivery (m2), and proposed hours of operation.
- The number of other similar types of uses within a reasonable distance of the proposed Liquor License and Cannabis Retail License.

- Traffic, noise, parking and zoning.
- Population, density, and trends.
- Relevant socio-economic information.
- Whether the proposed amendment will result in the establishment being operated in a manner that is contrary to its primary purpose (i.e. Food Primary).
- The impact on the community if the application is approved.

Upon review of the staff reports of February 10th and March 16th, several of the above criteria remain unaddressed (highlighted in red). Given the situation of the Millar Addition neighborhood, I strongly urge Council and City staff to press for more information regarding the socio-economic impacts of the relocation of an existing liquor store to a vulnerable neighborhood. I also call on Council to robustly question the need for a redeployment of liquor sales from the Hart to a neighborhood that is currently experiencing socio-economic stresses. Such a business located in this area is strongly predatory in nature, within the same classification of pay-day loan businesses, pawnshops and used car dealerships.

In support of the argument and request, I respectfully submit the following:

- 1.
2. 1. A liquor store is a low-quality land use. It is not innovative, it does not fill any sort of requirement for the community, and it does not address long-standing broader neighbourhood and city issues such as affordability, healthy living, and the promotion of a diverse, vibrant, and sustainable economy.
2. 2. There is a wealth of peer-reviewed literature demonstrating a strong linkage between liquor stores, increasing crime, increased social inequity, deterioration of citizen health, and overall decline in resident quality of life. Specifically, liquor stores have a higher negative effect on neighborhoods already struggling with socio-economic issues. I urge City Council and staff to complete their own research into this matter.
3. 3. Liquor stores are often cheaply designed and incorporate uninspiring aesthetics, architecture, and landscaping. They often rapidly become an eyesore to the community and an emblem of decline and decay. They are not something to be proud of, nor are they something for a community to aspire to. Prince George has an abundance of liquor stores to service demand. The applicant has provided no evidence of rationale for their need to relocate from a previously approved location. Thus, I am left to assume the business is failing in its present location and requires government assistance in the form of a re-zoning to continue to operate. As the City staff report indicates, appropriately zoned land already exists. The invisible hand of the market should prevail in these circumstances and if profitable, the business should find its own way without government assistance in the form of a re-zoning.
- 4.
5. 4. The applicant and their representative do not demonstrate how this re-zoning contributes in a positive way to the neighbourhood, how any negative effects of their business would be mitigated or how they are contributing to broader OCP goals and objectives.
- 6.
7. 5. As this appears to be a re-zoning to facilitate an existing business relocation, I do not see how this constitutes a financial benefit to the City in terms of tax and employment. This appears to be a case of water bedding an unsuccessful business over to 'greener' pastures or an area of easier sales at the expense of the social well-being of the neighborhood. It's unlikely that Council regularly hears a demand from the public to facilitate the construction of more liquor stores as a pathway to prosperity and wealth.
8. I strongly believe the negative effects of such an establishment on an already struggling area of Prince George would vastly outweigh the very minimal amount of tax revenue and employment generated by this business.
- 9.
10. 6. This area of Prince George is already suffering from many socio-economic issues and falls lower on many, many metrics when compared to other areas of Prince George (income, crime, education, unemployment etc.). While a liquor store may not push the neighbourhood over the edge, it certainly does not offer anything to improve the current situation nor will it leave a positive legacy in its wake.

I fail to see any benefit for the City of Prince George, and residents (housed and unhoused) of the Millar Addition to allow a rezoning to facilitate the relocation of an existing liquor sales business. What I do see is the promotion of a basic, uninspiring business that will place additional pressure on vulnerable populations, amplify undesirable behaviors, improve access to unhealthy substances to the already at-risk, and offer little benefit, if any to the tax base.

I feel dirty being a NIMBY, but there are no positives in this application.

Thank you,

Jeff Morton
Millar Addition
1438 Queensway