
From: cityclerk
Subject: Letter for inclusion in Agenda

From: Melissa Grounds [Redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, April 11, 2023 3:01 PM
To: cityclerk <cityclerk@princegeorge.ca>
Subject: Letter for inclusion in Agenda

For inclusion in the Council Meeting Agenda

From: Melissa Grounds, 376 Watrous Street, Prince George BC V2M 2B6 [Redacted]

Hello Mayor and Council,

My name is Melissa Grounds, I work and live near downtown and am writing today in regards to Parks and Open Space Bylaw No. 7370, 2002, Amendment Bylaw No. 9389, 2023.

My first concern is that this conversation is being had without input from people with lived experience (people who are currently or have previously experienced homelessness). People who are currently unsheltered are experts in their own experience and if given the opportunity can provide input on how best to move forward. Agencies that work frontline with folks who are unsheltered and living in encampments can also provide input on trauma-informed ways to go about both supporting people who live in encampments and improving the safety and cleanliness of downtown.

My next concern is the safety for the people who may be forced to shelter at the Moccasin Flats encampment. How will they be kept safe from the public who already full of animosity, how will they be kept safe from each other if there is a mental health or violence issue, how will women be kept safe if they need to vacate the premises but have nowhere else that is safe to go to, and how will basic survival needs be met and supported by the City (washrooms, garbage, showers for those who may be banned from shelters)?

My final question is that should this plan go forward, how does it fit into the City's reconciliation plan and how are Indigenous rights and human rights going to be protected?

I recognize that it feels like there are no good options, that I do not know the full extent of the matter, that we live in a city where rent prices are ridiculous, racism is rampant, and the public perception is incredibly negative. However, I urge you to consider taking more time to consult more thoroughly with people who have lived experience and agencies that provide frontline services, as well as to take the time to ensure that Indigenous rights are not disregarded and that the safety of all Prince George citizens (including those who do not currently have a house) are taken into account.

Thank you,
Melissa