

18 Whittlesey St.
Kitimat, BC
V8C 1J8

Mayor and Council Members
District of Kitimat
270 City Centre,
Kitimat, BC
V8C 2H7

January 12, 2019

Re: Tamitik Status of Women's Shelter

Dear Mayor and Council:

I apologize for sending this letter to you directly; I do so only because I am writing it after the deadline for inclusion in the council meeting package. Again, my apologies and I am very aware that it may not become a part of the public record.

I have spent a great deal of time in self-reflection regarding the design of the women's shelter, its location and the very need for such a refuge for women and children. Self-reflection because my reaction says a lot about me as an individual, but also because in many ways my reaction may be self-serving and pious, because I can live comfortably, kilometres away from a problem that does not affect me. So, wrestling with who I am is difficult.

Would I want a four-story building of any purpose built on a lot next to my home? Absolutely not. But, therein lies my personal conflict. I should, indeed must, care about the purpose of the building. I live a comfortable life and no hardship in that life compares even slightly to the hardship experienced by the women and children who find themselves in need a home, solace and supports, especially those in a functional and welcoming community. In fact, the latter may be the most important aspect of the healing these people need.

The women who find themselves in need of refuge are daughters and granddaughters They come from all social strata and walks of life. They are real people, living far too real lives, and are possessed with all the same needs, wants and dreams as anyone else. They our children and grandchildren. And it is here that my self-reflection finds resolve. I don't know the why's and wherefores of the building design and what can be done about it, if anything, but I do believe that the people who will live in this building, whatever its form, deserve to be welcomed into a community where they can be secure and embraced for the human beings they are.

"The right project in the wrong location?" Actually, I don't think so at all – a change from my pre-reflection opinion. To place this home on a plot of commercial land away from neighbourhood and community would be absolutely the wrong decision. I am confident that there is yet time for the Tamitik Status of Women and the members of this neighbourhood to work together to build this project into a ripping success. Quite honestly, it is the right thing to do for everyone involved.



Sincerely,

Douglas Thomson