



- Council
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October 4, 2017

Oct. 23, 2017 - Addtl. Info Item 4a) Public Hearing 3900. 20. 60.35

As the commercial core is the heart of our community, I believe it's not a wise idea to move ahead with a divisive plan... when it's so easy to have a plan which brings harmony and agreement. May I suggest some changes for the Caillet property rezoning and Commercial 8 bylaw.

1.) A community amenity should be required in exchange for the applicant being given an increase in residential gross density. A worthwhile amenity would be the community acquiring the 5 m frontage strip, created by the 5 m front setback. This could serve as a pedestrian walkway/ greenspace, linking to future pathways.

2.) Other amenities could be unique architecture, outdoor sculptures visible from the road, a community greenhouse (very inexpensive), or innovative aspects to the building like solar power, rainwater harvesting, rooftop food production, "living green walls", or some Passive house technologies.

Unique, innovative, stand out features are a marketing tool, and will be helpful in branding Lantzville and our village core – enticing visitors. We could easily be known as the greenest or most innovative town in Canada, (or some other such theme), but this type of branding requires each decision to support this end. This benefits the property owner as well. None of this has to be expensive. Artisans often contribute their sculpture work for free for exposure.

Use some imagination to sell the project to the community and to visitors. High density condos is not a very colourful inducement.

3.) Tourist accommodation should be the permitted use instead of residential. The reasons are as follows:

a. Tourist/ visitor accommodation is a commercial use, hence retaining the full commercial property tax category... as opposed to having some of the property paying a lower residential rate.

b. Visitors will bring far more spending dollars to the village core. By contrast new residents will shop at Woodgrove, as do current residents. There is no evidence to the contrary.

c. Traffic will be reduced, from predominantly 2 car residents, to one car visitors.

d. A vibrant village core will have evening public events... and noisy businesses, like a pub with outdoor seating. Those residents proposed to live adjacent to businesses will want peace and quiet in the evening, putting a damper on village activities. Visitors, however, will embrace such night time activities ; or stay elsewhere.

It is good planning to avoid conflict in uses.

e. Accommodation businesses like Air B and B are doing very well, giving current commercial owners another string of income. Small boutique hotels have been a successful addition in other towns. They often have a restaurant or shop attached to them.

f. Accommodations will give visitors a big reason to come to Lantzville – ie a place to stay. There will be a continual influx of visitors supporting the restaurant, pub, etc., as opposed to residents who will eat at home every night.

By contrast, a village core full of condos has zero potential to attract visitors.

4.) If one must have a residential component, reduce the density, to bring more of the community on board, and to leave more of our valuable commercial space. The current zoning is for one residential unit, there's no need to leap to a 1000% increase. Having lots of space in our commercial core is not a curse, it's a plus. And we should be knitting it together in a thoughtful way.

5.) A temporary reduction of property taxes has been successfully used elsewhere as an incentive to attract commercial investment. A reduction in application fees can also be helpful. Both could possibly be used to help this applicant and future commercial core applicants move ahead.

Respectfully submitted,

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