



An inclusive, healthy, and thriving community where residents feel connected to one another and the land on which we live.

Re: Charter Bylaw 19547

Dear Mr. Read:

The Prince Rupert Community League (PRCL) is aware of the recent application to amend a designated City zoning bylaw to allow for additional business uses--in this specific instance, the operation of a crematorium. The PRCL is also aware that several community residents have expressed serious concerns regarding this proposed development citing health, odour, visual smoke, and potential negative impact on property values. The crematorium would be located directly across 119th street from many residents' homes and a dog park where families spend time outside.

At its February 3 and March 3, 2021 board meetings, the PRCL placed this item on its meeting agenda and invited both Councilor Bev Esslinger and Commemorate Group Inc. (respectively) and concerned residents to a question and answer session. The meetings and proposed agendas were advertised to the general Prince Rupert community through its standard media outlets with the purpose of providing a neutral forum in which residents could obtain factual information and clarification related to their concerns about the proposed development. Usual meeting attendance is approximately 10 residents; however, attendance for the proposed development discussions exceeded 25. The overwhelming majority of communications from residents--at the meetings, through email, and via social media--have been in opposition to this development.

Considering those discussions and as a result of its own investigations into the matter, the PRCL is of the opinion that:

1. There appears to be little regulatory oversight for crematoriums in Alberta, both at the provincial and municipal levels. Crematoriums are "excepted activities" under provincial environmental legislation, meaning that there are no specific regulations applicable.
 - a. This is especially concerning because Commemorate Group gave verbal confirmation that they would outsource any cremations that would yield excessive smoke (i.e.: a person wanting to be cremated in their leathers); however, with lack of regulations, there is no guarantee that this will happen.
2. There is very little data available on a provincial or municipal level regarding potential harmful health effects from crematorium emissions.
3. There are no clear provincial or municipal reporting structures in place to which concerned citizens may report perceived violations of air quality guidelines (odours, smoke, smell, etc.).
4. There is a discrepancy between information provided by the Commemorate Group Inc. at our monthly board meetings and what they shared with news media outlets regarding the number of bodies that may be cremated in a single day. At our meeting, they indicated they would burn up to six bodies per day; however, CTV reported Commemorate Group claimed they are permitted up to 3 per day. We could find no such regulations from the Crematoriums Act or the City of Edmonton regulations.



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In consideration of the above, the PRCL takes the following position:

1. Out of respect for all residents of our community, it does not take a position for, nor against the proposed development.
 - a. However, we would like to attest to the fact that there has been an unprecedented level of research and information sharing from community residents in their attempt to find evidence of the safety and comfort of living near a crematorium.
2. In view of the lack of data related to crematorium emissions and the minimal regulatory oversight, the City should take a precautionary approach and prescribe a minimal development setback between crematoriums and residential developments.
3. As the approving body for crematoriums in the city, the City has an obligation to clarify the regulation and in particular, the incident reporting structure for their operations. We understand residents of ours and surrounding communities have had extreme difficulty in navigating the reporting system and this has been a point of frustration.

Further to this position, the PRCL has been in contact with the Alberta Capital Airshed (ACA). The Alberta Capital Airshed is a not-for-profit, multi stakeholder organization that monitors, collects, and shares information on air quality to the public. The ACA is composed of government, industry, and non-governmental organizations and representatives of the public. The ACA has confirmed that it is prepared to work with the Prince Rupert community and residents to provide ambient air quality monitoring for the area. The PRCL looks forward to working with the ACA and the City in this regard.

In closing, the PRCL would like to acknowledge the efforts of Marilyn Dumkee and her community group for their tireless work in seeking clarification and deepening their understanding through extensive research on this matter. The PRCL also appreciates the cooperation that it has received from Commemorate Group Inc. in trying to find common ground and understanding.

Thank you for taking the concerns of the PRCL into consideration during this Public Hearing held on March 16, 2021.

Sincerely,

Angela Saxby, President
Prince Rupert Community League
On behalf of the PRCL Board of Directors