

Dear Mayor and Council,

In February of this year I wrote to you regarding concerns about intrusive lighting and the need for a bylaw to address this issue. At the time I provided the examples of the Vancouver bylaw addressing nuisance lighting as well as Statutory Nuisance Laws addressing lighting in the UK. My letter was read at the February 22 council meeting and I was able to listen to the reading and discussion online. My impression was there was general support for filling this gap in the bylaws and, looking further, to addressing light pollution as well. The letter was referred to staff to look into developing a bylaw.

I was therefore somewhat surprised to receive a letter from staff indicating they have decided not to proceed with developing a Whistler specific bylaw or an amendment to the Nuisance Bylaw with respect to lighting. Are you aware that something Council deemed worthwhile looking at is being dropped because staff are not interested?

I have included the letter I received for your reference, in case you were unaware of this response. There is no evidence of research or work of any sort having been done to determine the value of developing an outdoor lighting bylaw. The only justifications seem to be based on the opinion of the writer. I should note that most of the writer's objections around the difficulty of developing a bylaw are without merit. An intrusive lighting complaint is no more subjective than a noise complaint. A light that shines directly in someone else's window is a light that shines in someone else's window, whether its stated purpose is for security, illumination or "decoration". There do not need to be exceptions. There is no need for an inventory any more than noise has been inventoried. Determining a reasonable time frame to allow correction of outdoor lighting should not cause paralysis. And since when is there a public consultation to determine if resources should be "spent" every time work is done to develop new bylaws?

Finally, I would ask that the writer refrain from attempts to counsel me on conflict resolution and being a "good neighbour". Whether or not I spoke to the neighbours and resolved the specific circumstance, which brought my attention to this issue, is not up for discussion. Intrusive lighting is, and it remains a problem that should be addressed.

I would appreciate knowing on what basis, other than personal opinion, municipal staff chose to drop the matter of addressing nuisance lighting. I would also ask that this issue be reconsidered. Like other sources of pollution, it is best dealt with early, while it still can be managed more easily.

Sincerely,

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