

Marius Miklela

From: Rex McLennan [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 10:43 AM
To: corporate
Subject: Letter to Mayor and Council on Re-Zoning Proposal RZ1157 and Zoning Amendment Bylaw No 2283, 2020 (5298 Alta Lake Road)

The Mayor and Council,
Resort Municipality of Whistler,
Whistler, BC

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to strongly oppose the re-zoning proposal RZ1157 and the Zoning Amendment Bylaw No 2283, 2020 (5298 Alta Lake Rd).

Municipal councils of Whistler over the years seem to have adopted an approach to development planning primarily driven by objectives to “solve” the largely self-inflicted crises of employee housing, and “affordable housing” (yet undefined), mitigate traffic congestion, increase tourist accommodation, all while reducing the carbon footprint. Objectives not only in conflict, but also achievable without compromising arguably the most important objective of all – preservation of the community’s natural aesthetic beauty, not least of which are its few valuable pristine lakeshores and vistas. To create a sustainable future anchored on this core value requires other objectives be achieved within that context.

Just ask any Swiss or Austrian whose small alpine villages have been protected for centuries from any development that would adversely impact their inherent natural beauty. Grindelwald has a population of about 4,000 which is only marginally higher than a century ago. It is one of dozens of villages that inspire admiration from their citizens and visiting tourists for enduring beauty and a sustainability culture.

Our community jewel, Nita Lake, with already significant development around it will be tarnished forever if this development is permitted to proceed. The narrowly focused employee housing and tourism objectives may be served, as will lining the pockets of the developer, but a more important objective to preserve for generations to come a unique natural resource – the lake with its views, its quiet, pristine ambiance - would be sacrificed.

One need only look at the appalling destruction of the westward views over Green Lake by a housing development a few years back that began by clear cutting the entire hillside and ended with the construction of dozens of unsightly “box-like” homes, and a large gas station. A developer makes a good profit, the supply of housing is increased – but Green Lake vistas are destroyed. Is that how Whistler should measure progress ?

I urge the Mayor and Council to act in the broader best interests of the community by taking a step back and consider protecting Nita lake rather than exploiting it. We need to recognize that Whistler has reached, if not exceeded, its population and development limits and exceeding these have become the root cause of many of our other problems. The last thing Whistler needs is more tourist accommodations to exacerbate the problems created by an implied “growth for growths sake” strategy. There are other viable employee and low-cost housing solutions that can be developed if the Council devotes their energy and resources into innovative planning that does not destroy our natural lakeside surroundings.

I respectfully request that you vote against the zoning amendment and consider instead a plan to implement a moratorium on any increased development around Nita Lake.

Rex J McLennan
Unit 1 – 2324 Taluswood Pl
Whistler, B.C. V0N 1B2