

Murray

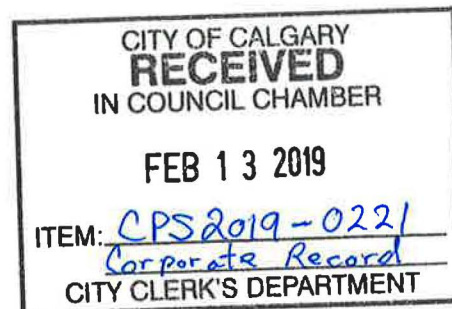
From: "Park Palisades" <parkpalmaintenance@gmail.com>
Date: January 25, 2019 4:54 PM
To: "Murray Shuturma" <condos@telus.net>; "heather schade" <Albertaexecservices@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: Letter to the minister

I am going to send this before I leave today.

Thanks and have a great day!

Park 300 & The Palisades

Troy Llewellyn Cartwright
 Building Manager
 403-969-5744



On Fri, Jan 25, 2019 at 3:09 PM Park Palisades <parkpalmaintenance@gmail.com> wrote:

Hey I've edited some and added some and deleted some of this so if you wish to review this and have me amend anything please let me know otherwise I'll send it out by the end of the day.

Hi I'm emailing regarding the supervised consumption site at the Sheldon M. Chumir Center in Calgary and the issues it has caused in our neighborhood as a result and will keep this as short as I possibly can, but I do need to inform you of all the extremely negative impacts the scs has had in our area.

A little about me:

I am a pretty well educated almost forty year old male who manages two condominium buildings on 13th and 14th avenue and have done so for almost seven years. In this time I have never seen this much crime or social disorder or hazards that have made this area dangerous or unsafe to anyone walking through, or living in the area. These buildings are back to back and connected through parking lots and the 13th avenue building is across the street from the scs and directly in front of Central Memorial park. Because of our facility location and size, I have probably had more experience or issues with the product of the scs than anyone else in the area. According to police, we have a very secure facility. We also have a very advanced surveillance system with up to thirty nine cameras so you can say that I am at the "front line" of scs issues as I can see more than most people but it's not to say that every neighbor including the businesses have not noticed or experienced, the very negative impact the scs has had on us.

My mother is a forty five year veteran of social services and foster care so I do have a lifetime of mental health and development experience. She is also a very experienced and well known real estate agent.

My father is a retired Calgary city police officer with a wealth of experience and knowledge of our city.

A little about Central Memorial park:

This little Victorian designed 4.68 acre park gives us one of the best views in all of downtown Calgary and is a very active area especially in the warmer months. It was designed in 1889 and holds the oldest library in Calgary and both were deemed a National Historic Site. The Colonel Belcher

Veterans Hospital used to stand where the Sheldon M. Chumir Center is and the park has the Boer War Monument which is known as one of the four finest equestrian statues in the world. The park also holds a large cenotaph dedicated to the end of WW1 and another statue that was erected by the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire to honour soldiers that fought in WW1. Some of our neighbors beside the park include the First Baptist Church built in 1911 and Calgary's Freemason main lodge.

Many people go to food trucks for lunch and sit by the water fountains and people tan or do yoga or other activities. There are a few daycare centers near that regularly bring the children out to enjoy this park and water features. This park hosts many festivals like the Lilac festival or activities such as Hohner piano competitions and so much more. On nice days, this park is very active.

My dad is retired Calgary police and when I told him about where I was working he gave me a brief history on the drug use issues that used to happen in this park before the city spent eleven million and five hundred thousand dollars to clean up in 2008-2009 and when I tell him what it's like since the scs opened, he says it's even worse than it used to be. But, I and our community already know this. There are several resident's in the area that have been here for thirty to fifty years and are very concerned as they say it's never been this bad and I cannot help but try and inform people that it is also no longer safe mostly because there is an extremely high potential for some kid or dog to be stuck with an improperly discarded syringe or syringe tip and more from hazardous items left by irresponsible drug addicts.

This park is no longer safe to use and people need to know this.

An average day at work before this facility opened:

Monday's I would do a random check on our camera footage to see activities inside and outside of our buildings and the rest of the week would be dedicated to work.

An average day at work after this facility opened:

Every day I have to check cctv footage mostly of the outside area's including the parking lots and bicycle rooms and almost everyday I find some kind of unwanted activity as a result from trespassers. Most of which are people using hard drugs on our property and breaking into cars for very minor items or breaking into our bicycle room but on many occasions have broken into lock boxes and then into the buildings and into rooms like our laundry rooms and mail room and then into cars in the basement parkades. I would then keep a close eye on our cctv and my phone as I constantly get calls or texts regarding drug addicts using drugs on our property or causing some kind of issue like crime or trespassing.

Most days we hear and see addicts screaming/yelling or dancing in the neighborhood or park or here. Most often addicts are in the alley beside our building using drugs and everything else that comes with it. I have on several occasions phoned an ambulance for overdoses on and off our property. These issues cost me an average of one or two days per week depending upon the amount of crime and/or damages and it makes it very difficult for me to be effective at work so I tend to spend much more time at work trying to make up for it but I do not know how much longer I can continue this way.

Crime:

A lot of the criminal issues have already been listed in the above paragraph but here are more items: Before the scs opened, we used to average a crime or incident maybe up to once per month but since it has opened it is every week and up to five or more that I've had to deal with. This includes writing police reports, fixing damages and gathering cctv footage and even this week or since Friday night

I've written five more police reports for obvious drug addicts or known scs users. I can tell they are addicts as I either know them as an scs user or see them using drugs or they leave items like syringes or like on Monday one guy dropped a bottle of Naxolone but they do leave other items like glass pipes, stericups, saline, syringe bins, drug bags and more. All but the empty drug bags are provided to them by the scs. The yellow syringe disposal containers I've seen often being used to drink alcohol from or drink soup out of. I also often find entire bags full of new unopened syringes from twenty or fifty of them.

When I approach users around or on our property I am always nice as I don't want them to cause us further issues and usually say "how's it going today" and "did you know this is private property?" and "I have to ask you to leave" which most times they will leave but quite often they want to finish using their drugs and quite often I see them sharing one syringe between two users so I have witnessed an extreme amount of drug use at or near our buildings. Every once in a while I am greeted with violent gestures and offers to end my life and extreme social disorder or mental health issues. Some other issues that come with drug use in our area or on our property are: defecating or peeing or vomiting or squirting blood from syringes on our property. From September 2018 to the end of December I've wrote over fifty police reports and many before and after this time. I've probably wrote this amount of police reports in the first five years I have worked here.

We've seen shot gun wielding addicts and a guy with a machete damaging property and threatening people and one of my employers witnessed an addict swinging an axe at people and so much more that many people especially my coworker and I have become desensitized or used to this.

We've had to spend tens of thousands of dollars last year and will need to spend much more to secure or keep our buildings and residents as safe as possible. We've added a garage door near the alley where far too many addicts had cut into our gate and fence. We've added additional out door lights and cameras and moved card readers so garaged doors only stay open for ten seconds instead of thirty. It's difficult to factor the overwhelming amount time it has cost our board of directors and myself especially when you include all the damages I have had to fix. If I were to estimate the approximate value of everything it cost our buildings last year, I would say around one hundred thousand dollars but, most of my employers time is worth much more than this.

One of the statistics regarding crime in the beltline area is not very informative. It says that crime has not increased, but the beltline is such a large area that every police officer will confirm it has drastically increased within a certain area from the scs and crime has been reduced outside of these areas which is the reason for this uninformative statistic. Calgary police have also moved many officers from other districts to our local district one to help with this crime increase in our area. They also have officers from other districts working in our area. Every time I speak with police, I always hear is how overwhelmed they are.

The scs has a written agreement with police that if addicts are seeking medical help with their addiction, then police legally cannot enforce the law which makes it even more difficult for everyone. An officer mentioned to us on Wednesday night that if they have a potential arrest several blocks from the scs, the suspect can claim they are on the way to the center for help and the police legally have to release them.

Drug dealers:

I and my coworker can watch the park or hospital on any given day during a fifteen minute coffee break and see drug deals by dealers who the police confirm, have moved into the area because of this site. We've had and have dealers living in our buildings. One obvious dealer was here for one night before police arrived heavily armed and tasered him because he threatened a woman with a knife and

then resisted arrest. I have written reports about the dealers but police can only investigate them if there is an occurrence in the area that leads them to their suite. I can only speculate they are dealers by their constant 24 hour activity which is normally leaving the building and walk to hospital or park where they meet addicts. So it is very obvious to us what they are doing.

Calgary city police did set up a sting and did arrest multiple drug dealers at or near the scs but did say when one is arrested, another replaces them. It did quiet the activity near the scs for a few weeks but is back to it's regular social disorder or what we feel is chaos.

Addiction and statistics:

A recent news report from December 13th did confirm a rise in violent crime and social disorder calls within a five hundred meter distance from the scs and was provided by Calgary police. There were 142 violent crime calls in our area in all of 2017 and by the end of October 2018 were already at 139 calls. In 2016 there were 84 and in 2015 there was a total of 83 calls. From January to October 2018 there was a 23% increase in social disorder calls than the previous year.

We've asked and they do not keep records but emergency responder's have confirmed that most of the over doses and users of the scs are regulars. So lets say they've treated six hundred over doses but in one day the same guy had over dosed five times and it wasn't even at the scs but near to it. The same for the users in the scs. One person has been there fifty times but they will not keep these statistics which we find should be an important piece of information for everyone.

The fire department syringe pick up for public property only has gone up 325% since 2010 and we do not know how much in the last six months but it will definitely be much more.

This location was apparently chosen because they determined there were about three hundred drug addicts in the area but didn't consider the other thirty five thousand residents of this area.

I should also mention the last known or amount we could find on what it costs to treat substance abuse was from 2014 for 5.4 billion dollars. I have to wonder how much it has increased since then.

Syringes and paraphernalia:

This is the most hazardous safety concern out of all of these issues. We in the neighborhood had no idea that people who get stoned out of their minds at the scs were going to be given syringes and often bags of syringes and all the other drug use items to take with them like saline or stericups or pipes or syringe disposal containers and more. One of my employers made a very good comment when she said "it's like giving a stoned addict a loaded handgun to take with them into public because it's just as dangerous".

The Vancouver location does not give the most irresponsible people syringes to take with them and leave all over the park or at our front doors or in every nook and cranny you can imagine. So why does the Calgary location? We had to discover the hard way that 311 and the scs will no longer take calls regarding syringe pick up and the fire department won't pick up on our property but will pick up on public property. The Doap team and apparently someone at the Alpha house will pick up but guys like myself and my neighbors have already picked up thousands of improperly discarded syringes because we can't just leave them for any length of time to be found by children or stepped on by others.

It's obvious how bad the syringe issue is when one of our owners mentioned to me that while she walks her daughter to the school bus, she plays a game called "count the syringes" which is very sad but it also teaches her seven year old daughter to avoid these dangers.

I have also witnessed a secondary purpose for these syringes. Addicts take these apart and use them to inhale drug smoke from the foil they use to cook drugs on.

Location:

I've already mentioned many park concerns but another of my employers said it best when he asked "why would they put the scs next to a park?" which is a very good question and now I'll I can think is "who in their right mind would put the scs beside any park, but especially one like this"!

Then you need to look at 4th street. This is one of the main streets that connect an even larger population of residents from different communities that walk, drive or ride their bicycles to the downtown core, but most importantly is the very high volume of pedestrian traffic that walk by this site daily and for this reason we have to wonder again why anyone in their right mind would choose this location. There are areas much better suited for this kind of facility like near or at one of several drop in centers.

Property value:

This subject should now be obvious. We have had many resident's move out from our buildings and have expressed the scs as the reason for moving. We have more resident's moving out soon for this reason. We've had Sheldon Chumir staff including nurses move out because of the scs issues.

We now get rental inquiries from people who ask how close we are to the scs and then do not book a viewing.

One of my employers posted an advertising to rent one of his condos and didn't include the location to the scs and had about sixty interests. He then added the location to the scs and had zero interest.

The nice restaurant in Memorial park has closed their doors in December as a direct result of the issues caused by the scs.

The coffee shop beside the scs is suffering because addicts hang outside of it all day long.

The corner store on 4th street and 14th avenue now closes two hours early because it is not safe enough for his employees. He also has a sign on his door that says 'no druggies allowed' as he's had far too many issues.

Every business, building or residence near this site has been broken into or had multiple crimes caused by addicts.

One of my employers met an older lady who is now too afraid to leave her condo due to these issues and cannot sell her condo as it's now, far too undervalued.

Because of the added resources needed to operate this facility like emergency services, we are all anticipating a rise in property tax while the property values decline.

Jimmy owns an entire building next to us with his own shawarma and Vietnamese restaurant and more and he is at his wits end. I've witnessed his cctv footage of an known addict named Crystal who was in his lobby so high that she tried to peel her face off. It looked like something from a horror movie when a woman and her baby walked in and witnessed this.

The used book store next to us has also had so many issues I heard her describe this area on CBC

radio as "the seventh circle of hell".

Another neighbor has had their commercial garage door cut so many times last year, it has cost them over thirty thousand dollars in repairs.

I have so many other true stories of neighbor issues and a thousand more of my own that I document via cctv and police reports but by now I think you get the severity of the situation so I'll just say that the businesses or neighbors have all been suffering as a direct result of the scs.

Lack of information:

There are one hundred and eighty for condominiums at our buildings and I have not met a single person who was mailed or notified that the scs was going to open in our area. My coworker manages over sixty condo's and she also did not receive any notification.

Not one business owner or neighbor that we've spoken with, received this notification.

We only learned of it's opening through the news a few weeks before it did.

They claim to have sent twenty five thousand letters but I still have yet to see one or meet a person who received it.

We also did were not notified about their recent application for renewal.

We requested the minutes from our meeting from November 19th/18 with the provincial manager for harm reduction with ahs but have still not received it.

What we've done:

I've written so many emails to the provincial manager for ahs harm reduction and the scs and the community police liaison and local mla office and mayors office that we finally did get some attention and did have a meeting at the center on November 19th. The provincial manager, the director a representative from the scs and the city and police and hospital attended and so did I and six other owners/employers from our facility. It was nice to finally be acknowledged and be able to express our concerns and was very civil but by the end of the meeting the provincial manager stated to us that this facility is here to stay. Many people including my employers have reached out to any and everyone who will listen and still, nothing has changed.

They did offer some positive solutions that were in effect or were going to be in effect but they have not improved a thing like: washing and cleaning the sidewalk near the scs or putting up a sign in the park that said "no loitering" or having their own meetings to discuss how they can improve the situation and hiring security on behalf of the city to patrol the park. Well, there is no longer a sign nor security as there was and our condo president had been invited to be a member of the improvement meetings but there has been nothing productive or positive from these meetings and most of the time the south sidewalk near the scs looks like an overflowing garbage bin and shanty town.

Some nights when I get called out to work which is usually for criminal activity, I see this area by the scs and looks even worse than it does during the daytime. At about three ante meridiem I watched about thirty to forty people playing or dancing or twitching on the street and on the sidewalk between the church and the scs and a stereo was playing loud music and there was so many items scattered throughout it looked like a garbage truck had dumped a shanty town and it also looked like a used bicycle store, but worse. There were bicycles that I can only assume were stolen and were scattered and flipped over everywhere from the center to the church and guys were working on them or adding

new and probably stolen tires etcetera. I've seen it like this many times.

Here is what the safe works for harm reduction or what we know as the supervised consumption site (scs) does for addicts:

They get paged into the center with illegal drugs. They then get to use their illegal drugs in a safe manner and will receive treatment if they overdose. They then get released into the public and become the citizens problem and we are left to deal with all these issues caused by drug addiction.

The scs does not treat drug addiction but enables drug addiction in a safe manner or what everyone knows it now as "to save the lives of the few, by jeopardizing the lives of everyone".

This is not only harmful for everyone near but is also harmful for the addicts. For example: Crystal of whom I mentioned earlier, used to be about one hundred and fifty pounds but has done so much drugs and is so malnourished that she is probably less than one hundred pounds and seems to have no cognitive functions left. She used to talk with us but now can barely put two words together and has been using crutches for six or more months for unknown reasons but I can only assume it's because her body cannot heal with all this drug use.

It seems hard drug users are everywhere in Calgary now and it's almost like they are enjoying their new found freedom to use illegal drugs and be almost untouchable to police. It's like they have a licence to use illegal drugs and be in public and everything that comes with being an addict and it seems to enable addicts and influence new addicts and I really do not like seeing or lecturing the under age addicts or the kids that hang out with addicts.

Solutions:

I need to point out that we of course are for helping people in need and saving lives, but things here have to change as the scs has officially made this neighborhood the worst area in Calgary.

Move or close the scs but definitely do not add these to areas of high population or traffic areas and especially near parks or daycare centers.

Treat drug addiction forcefully and criminally or by desire, but definitely do not enable drug addiction.

Under no circumstances should irresponsible addicts be allowed to possess syringes and other harmful paraphernalia.

Consider prescribing drugs like they do in Switzerland and many other European countries and South American countries. This takes away the criminal aspect of stealing to afford their habit and defeats the need for dealers and then takes away all the aspects of badly made drugs.

Closing:

Please help. It seems very hard to be heard by anyone in a position to listen and when heard, we are still ignored and nothing productive or positive has resulted. We are angry and confused and saddened, but most importantly we are shocked and embarrassed that this absurdity and stupidity has been allowed to continue this long. We have an opioid and other drug epidemic and the scs is only enabling or furthering addictions and it's endangering everyone and it has to stop otherwise they will keep creating victims and then what will it take to get noticed. Will it be a kid that stepped on a diseased syringe or will it be an employee like me who gets stabbed or will it be an addict who leaves the scs and walks out in traffic as they so often do and then is run over by a car when they leave the scs? I really hope not, do you?

If you made it this far then I sincerely thank you very much for your time and if you didn't, then we will be left to deal with another year of living hell and all the potential health and safety concerns that comes with it.