

OCT 18 2005

BARBARA LAING

14th October, 2005

5.8

Bob Bratina
Ward 2
Hamilton City Hall
Main Street West
Hamilton, Ontario

Dear Mr Bratina:

Once again we are writing to you about our distressful situation that the members of Meridian Co-op, 185 Ferguson Avenue North have had to endure these past several months as other years in the ever on-going saga with the patrons of the "Wesley Drop-In Centre" our direct neighbour.

We have had to endure persons with 1. blankets and sleeping bags, 2. mattresses and pillows, 3. lawn chairs and lazy boy chairs, 4. all manner of derelict furniture, 5. fence and trees used as clothes lines. Also 6. fighting and yelling 7. partying and drinking, 8. use and sale of drugs, 9. people passed out on lawns from drugs or alcohol 10. foul language and constant yelling, 11. men urinating against the building and trees and fences, 12. garbage left behind including used condoms and drug needles on or around our property, 13. sexual activities and encounters on and around our property(in broad daylight).

All of this is going on 24/7 just a few feet from adults and young, impressionable children. Friends and family, as well as ourselves, feel intimidated by the loitering of 20, 30 and 40 persons in groups that you have to pass on your way to and from the bus stop or the grocery store.

We never, never have a peaceful spring, summer or fall, and you can forget Sundays and holidays. We have to keep our doors and windows closed so we can sleep, talk, or watch t.v. or visit. We are subjected to this and all manner of anti-social behavior.

Other social services and shelters offer positive programmes that help their clients improve their situation and move forward. The Wesley Drop-In Centre is just that, "a drop in centre". From what we witness it is a place to socialize and use the open space around and about our building and across the street as a campground.

Cont'd

It would appear that the management of the Wesley Centre has no accountability to anyone and lack total respect for their neighbours and the negative impact they have. It would seem it is all about them and their endeavours and forget about the rest of the citizens and our needs.

We question the type of government funding and fundraisers toward the type of operation that the overburdened taxed public is asked to support when we witness drunkenness, drugs and cellphones.

We are aware and grateful that our disenfranchised citizens have places to turn for help. We understand "poor" as many of us are on low income, pensions and disability.

After many years we know all the stories, lectures and statistics. We have heard it all! Something has to be done with the Wesley Drop-In as far as accountability for their type of operation in this highly dense neighbourhood with perhaps rules, regulations, curfews, cameras, security.

This loitering of large crowds and carrying on at all hours has to be controlled. How about our representatives at City Hall hear our pleas for help for a change ???

We beg to question why these homeless clients have money for drugs, alcohol, cigarettes and cellphones. If the Centre is there to help what type of programmes or initiatives allow people to hang around outside the centre and be so idle? Some of these clients have been around for months and years. Where is the progress? Where is the direction?

Meridian Co-op members pay plenty of money for housing and to keep our grounds looking presentable. Two years ago it cost us over \$32, 000.00 for a wrought iron fence to protect our grounds and help with the privacy issues directly related to the Wesley Drop-In Centre. Our taxes this past year were \$109,000.000 .

We have a much envied interlocking brick road which is surrounded by garbage, we have picked up discarded bags of donated food, clothing and household items strewn about, drug needles that we have to clean up for fear that children will come across infectious garbage. The whole street between Cannon and Barton is a disgrace compared to the south end of Ferguson which the city nurtures.

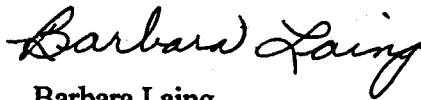
If the city wants to allow the licensing and existence of the Wesley Drop-In in this area then the city and/or Wesley should be responsible for the weekly clean-up service on both sides of the street between Cannon and Barton. (Perhaps Wesley Volunteers could do it).

Cont'd

Our plight has been totally ignored by City representatives as it is not on display in front of City Hall property or Gore Park. The situation is being shoved under the proverbial carpet on Ferguson Avenue North in plain sight of residents. How would all of you feel if your families and young children were to bear witness to this disgrace We are sure there would be solutions found quickly.

Mr. Bratina you have been quoted lately as to be showing concern and ready to act and come to the aid of the Hess Village neighbourhood. What about our neighbourhood on Ferguson Avenue. All we get is the acknowledgement of problems but do not get answers and more to the point "solutions".

Sincerely,



Barbara Laing

C.C. Larry Di Ianni Mayor City of Hamilton
Joe-Anne Priel General Manager
Public Health & Community Services
Brian Mullan Police Chief
Susan Clairmont Hamilton Spectator