

Debra Thompson

To: Debra Thompson
Subject: FW: Sale of Borough Lots
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From: Dave Ohmer <ohmer13@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 3, 2022 4:21 PM
To: majorjensen@petersburgak.gov <majorjensen@petersburgak.gov>; blynn@petersburgak.gov <blynn@petersburgak.gov>; dkensinger@petersburgak.gov <dkensinger@petersburgak.gov>; jgregor@petersburgak.gov <jgregor@petersburgak.gov>; ctremblay@petersburgak.gov <ctremblay@petersburgak.gov>; jmeucci@petersburgak.gov <jmeucci@petersburgak.gov>
Subject: Sale of Borough Lots

Mayor Jensen and Assembly Members,

Attached please find a letter expressing my appreciation and support for your addressing the housing and building lot shortage in our community. Very quickly this has become a crisis for many businesses and organizations in town. I hope that you will be able to take prompt action to help alleviate this problem.

Thank you, Dave

July 3, 2022

Dear, Major Jensen and Assembly Members

It is great news to see that you are taking up the issue of developing and selling Borough owned lots. There is clearly a feeling of urgency that is developing around town over the housing and employment crisis that we are currently in.

As we all know, nearly every business and government entity in Petersburg is short workers, while at the same time capable people who want to move here and take these jobs cannot find a place to rent, buy or build. The last two months of job opening advertisements in the Pilot have been amazing, and as a business owner, horrifying. Entities needing employees include the Hospital, Borough offices, Police department, grocery stores, hotels, construction companies, marine services, electricians, and I could go on. At the same time, people with rental properties, are overwhelmed with calls and applications from desperate people looking for any way to get a foothold in our community and economy.

So, what can be done by the Borough to help themselves and local businesses address this crippling problem? Raising the level of pay has not solved anything, for while it has increased the desire for people to take jobs, there is still no place for them to settle into and make a home. Private developers have not been able to solve the problems as they did it in the past, due to increased costs and new development regulations. Only the Borough has, and can develop and sell cost effective lots. Unlike the private sector who must get all benefits of a lot sale at the time of transfer, the Borough's benefits (and by Borough, I mean all citizens of Petersburg) just begin at time of transfer. From that moment on the Borough's revenues increase through new property taxes on the now privately owned land, additional property taxes with each home built, additional sale taxes paid by new residents, and increased school revenue for each child who moves to town with their parents. These revenues are not dreams, they are real, and the real stories we now hear include families with five kids who would be here right now, if there was a place for them to live.

So, the crisis of available lots and affordable housing is already upon us, and the community is suffering for it with each passing day. I am writing this letter to implore you to set a goal of putting single family lots for sale by no later than April of next year (2023). Please do not let a slow-moving bureaucracy prevent you from rapidly helping in a way that only you can.

Sincerely,



Dave Ohmer
613 Sandy Beach Road
Petersburg, Alaska