



Leana Kinley <leana@ci.stevenson.wa.us>

Repar--comments on home to business and business to home issue

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Wed, May 20, 2020 at 3:38 PM

To: Stevenson <citycouncil@ci.stevenson.wa.us>, Leana Kinley <leana@ci.stevenson.wa.us>, Ben Shumaker <ben@ci.stevenson.wa.us>

Dear Stevenson City Council, City Administrator Kinley, and City Planner Shumaker,

I attended the Planning commission meeting where this was discussed and where members of the public had input on the issue of whether the City should control what happens to the businesses that operate in homes and what happens if a business stops (for whatever reason) and the building becomes a home; the discussion turned on the fact that we have businesses that again become homes once a business leaves the building. We can also have homes that become businesses--which in the age of pandemics may become the norm as people work more from home and should be considered.

Frankly, I don't think the City should control what happens to houses that become businesses, and businesses that are housed in a home that become a home again. For one thing, the City doesn't control what businesses come to fruition and which ones do not. So, why should the City control what happens once a business fails or leaves, or if a business opens in a home? Businesses come and go in our community. That has happened for the last 30 years that I have lived here.

IF the City wants to control the housing stock, that is another thing. More houses could become available for actual housing and not businesses then. BUT, that is the larger issue of whether multiple rentals owned by only a few individuals in our community are a good or bad thing for a community in which housing stock is at a premium. (I have spoken at the Planning Commission meetings on this issue.)

I believe there are legal aspects to how much control a City can have over this issue. That is something to be addressed by your counsel. The other issue, and one more pertinent I believe, is why would the City want to control this. If a business is housed in a home, then at least we have a business in town. If a business home again becomes a house, then we have a house in which humans live. Win-Win.

Stevenson has always been a City that does not seem to have an overall identity. It's a place where real people work, live, and play. And, trying to push it in a direction that reeks of too much interference from local government may not be the path that leads to anything good. We have the Stevenson Downtown Plan which can give a broad overview of where the City wants to go, but trying to control the minutia of how to get to a community identity is not the way to go. We are not a recreation park that needs control.

Sincerely,

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