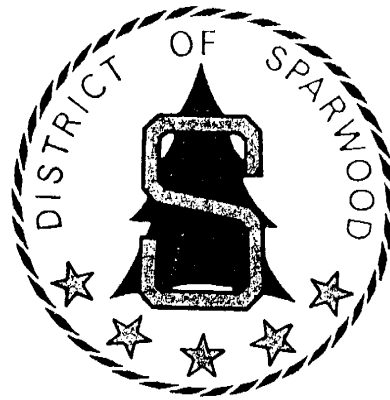


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March 13, 1984

Mr. Lyle Patrick
Real Estate Division
Overwaitea Foods
Box 7200
Vancouver, B.C.
V6B 4E4

Dear Lyle:

The day for the official opening of your firm's new Overwaitea will be at hand when you are in receipt of this letter. At a time like this, I feel nostalgic and think about the days when the Greenwood Mall expansion was a promise and a dream that fizzled with assurances that fourteen days would see the joyful announcement. The dream we shared has evolved, and I feel a friendship has been realized.

Since the official announcement last year, our paths have not crossed as frequently as I have wished. I no longer make those consistent phone calls to you at work or your home, but be sure that kind thoughts of you are fixed in my mind.

For posterity, since I intend to place this letter in the time capsule which will also mark the official opening of Overwaitea, I will share with you my personal recollections as I know them to have transpired.

Prior to you entering the scene, Sparwood was down. The community had been hyped-up by a dream - an impractical one. The model of that dream was founded on a hope which saw two proposed developers come and go. The last one said it was because of high interest rates that he would take his leave of the project. No one can deny that the interest rates were crippling any dream. I suppose hindsight can always find reasons, but the let-down for Sparwood was real.

Council decided to turn the matter of the mall over to the Urban & Industrial Development Committee, while the Mayor Henry Volkmann pursued the development of the Elk Valley Leisure

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Centre. Alderman Glen Scott, the then-committee chairman, gave the nod to his aldermanic colleague, me, to pursue it. I must admit that we both shared a dream. The joy I feel as the date advances to Overwaitea's opening must be mutually shared.

I suppose if there was a catalyst for that first step, it must be my pushing a grocery cart and running into your firm's Sparwood Manager, Bill Cruikshank. I could feel the weight of despair he felt now that his hope for a new and bigger store had been washed away. I informed him as to what had transpired at council and told him of my intention to pursue the mall's expansion. With the news, he brightened. He informed me that Clarence Heppel, the President of Overwaitea, would be in town in the near future and asked if I was prepared to meet him. Whether I thought the "deliverer" was about to arrive or a powder keg of hope had exploded in my mind, I don't know. I was simply jubilant. When I informed my wife of the news, she simply shrugged. Like the rest of the town, she had lived through hopes and dreams before. After having been primed-up to often, there was a numbness in the spirit.

Clarence's arrival in Sparwood came to me at the high school where I was teaching. It was Bill at the other end of the line. We made arrangements to meet the "top of the top brass" at 11:30 in the coffee room of your former store. I cursed the fact that I hadn't polished my shoes that morning. To tell you the truth, I wasn't too thrilled with my shirt either. Somehow, it didn't seem appropriate to meet the President of Overwaitea in a five-year old shirt and dusty shoes, but we did meet and a dream was formalized with Clarence's assurance that he'd send up his "real estate man" the following week. That was you, Lyle.

Our meeting went extremely well. I only cringed when I introduced you to the former Mayor Henry Volkmann and he remarked. "We'd better hurry, Toto. We've got a meeting with Super Value". I attempted a laugh while you just smiled. Well, Henry did have his way.

You acknowledged at that time that you would be interested in property to build a store. The closing suggestion I made as we walked to your car was simply, "Why don't you buy the mall. Simply tell them that they have pledged a million dollars to the construction of the Leisure Centre when the referendum goes through". I doubt if the casual remark had any impact in seeing the project realized, but it is ironic that both the Leisure Centre and the mall did come through and that the \$1 million pledge of B.C. Coal (now Westar) was lived up to. Good news can travel in the company of three, I guess.

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I also recall the time when you and I were sitting in the mayor's office and discussing the referendum for the Elk Valley Leisure Centre. We shared the same optimism that the referendum would pass, and you affirmed this by chipping in your two dollars on the percentage "yes" votes that the community would deliver. As you recall, my choice was in the 60's while yours was 70's and the voters outdid us both by going into the high 80's and affirming it with the largest turnout in Sparwood's voting history.

I also have fond memories of my first meeting with Keith Stewart of Humford Development. Over the telephone in August, you simply told me you were bringing "someone up" that you'd like me to meet.

Keith, as an individual, was a most interesting person to bring into the picture. He gave the impression of the "silent man". He stood detached, not much of a conversationalist and a listener to our dialogue. To tell you the truth, I didn't know who he was until the second or third meeting when he opened up. During that initial meeting, I thought he was working for you. Fortunately, I never pressed the issue. If silence is golden, then surely Keith was the "golden boy".

I also recall the lunch we had that day. Of course, I've always been primed up about Sparwood. As I pressed on Keith held true to character by listening attentively and in a silence that calculated each word. Then came the fact that residents in Sparwood had to travel to even get the simplest of items. I commented on a plastic bucket and a potato peeler. Keith perked up and was drawn in fascination into the conversation.

When it finally came to get the ball rolling, there was a mutual pledge made that we would not publicize it. All agreed that news that was too tentative could offer another let-down to the general public.

Remember the leak? that was a kicker! To the credit of the Elk Valley Miner who first got the story the Editor, Tom Hogue, held off. He also shared our concern that premature good news could turn sour and offer dismay to the residents of Sparwood who so wanted commercial growth.

Throughout the year to formal announcement, there were many calls I made to your office and home. And if I couldn't reach you, there was always Clarence whose ear I could bend.

Incidents upon incidents kept creeping up, the need for the liquor store to commit itself; the driving around in my faithful Datsun to get the nod in principle from my colleagues on council for the concept plan; the frustrations you, Keith and I felt when B.C. Coal (now Westar) was taking its time to sign the option to purchase; the repeated word of shutdowns and the positive words that always had to flow when retreat would have been a more

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comfortable route.

What crosses my mind at this instant is the time when word of an '83 shut-down came and my spirits were down. Your words were the proper medicine for the time's "you should be in Nelson where there's unemployment you wouldn't believe, Sparwood's still the place to be". And then, there was Clarence's assurance, "We'll pull it off". It seemed ironic then that I, the high-powered person for Sparwood, should be reinforced by those that I first pushed to sell in my community. I knew then that our relationships had grown into something special.

On my end, the two voices that drove me on were Alderman Glen Scott and Joe Jarina. Their trust, encouragement and enthusiasm drove me on. They cared, they tasted, they wanted the project to come off with the same zest and heart that drove my waking hours and dominated my dreams at night. They were the special travellers in my labour of love.

Then there was Bill Cruikshank, your manager here, and Barry Collick, your produce manager. They carried the same spirit as my elected colleagues.

From the initial work to the formal announcement of the mall's construction took one year. To finalize the mall's expansion and renovations has taken approximately another year. As for Wilf Renner, the construction manager, he's become special in our community. He's lived here and mixed with the natives so well that it's hard not to think of him as one of us. He will be dearly missed when the jobs completed. Anyway, I've already assured Keith that there will be further expansion. I have faith. I have a vision. Sparwood is the place to be. Sparwood has a clear destiny. Maybe Wilf will be part of that construction.

If I have one regret, it is simply that work commitment found you not able to attend the formal announcement when the word was out that the mall would go ahead with an anchor grocery store that is not comparable in the East Kootenays in selection and size - 30 000 square feet of it. I also hear you will be unable to attend the official opening, which again I regret since I believe we were quite a team - the professional and the novice politician - still, I hope it won't be too long until your next visit to Sparwood. After all, I still owe you the best steak dinner I can find in Sparwood, and I'm a man who likes to pay off his debts, especially when my dream wins out.

Looking back, we were quite a quartet - you, Keith, Clarence and the short pudgy alderman who became mayor of the community

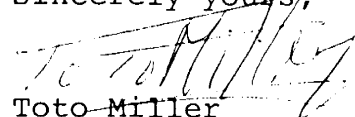
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he loves and believes in. But, dear Lyle, if politicians can get credit in the public eye for major commercial growth, then you Clarence and Keith deserve to be two ovations ahead of me. You three pulled off the largest commercial expansion since the Greenwood Mall was constructed by Kaiser Resources to serve it employees. Thanks.

Sincerely yours,


Toto Miller
Mayor

TM:tg

cc: Bill Cruikshank
Clarence Heppel
Keith Stewart
Time capsule
Press

