

From: aida facchin <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, June 24, 2021 8:21 PM
To: Mayor <Mayor@burnaby.ca>; Clerks <Clerks@burnaby.ca>
Cc: shawna <shawnaharrison@hotmail.com>
Subject: Puddle Jumpers - To Be Read at Council Meeting June 28, 2021

Dear Mr. Mayor and Council,

My children and my family have been part of the Puddle Jumpers programs for the last 10 years. We have taken part in the following programs:

- early age
- before and after school
- spring, winter, and summer camps
- all school professional days

Puddle Jumpers has operated out of the same location for 24 years. It is very disappointing that the owners of the current location have increased the rent so high that Shawna Harrison can no longer afford to pay the rent without increasing the daycare costs substantially. Which is not fair, and her loving heart could not do that to the Puddle Jumper families.

When Shawna advised the parents of the situation my husband and I went in stress and panic mode immediately. I started calling other locations for before and after school care to only find out that there are not very many in the Burnaby North area and that the wait lists were incredibly long. So long that when a spot would open my child would be in high school.

My family requires before and after school care so urgently for September, that it is causing a lot of anxiety for us. My husband and I are both working parents and as you know in the lower mainland, the majority of families have to have both parents working to get by. One parent staying home is not an option for us.

Being a part of Puddle Jumpers for the past 10 years has been the best time of my children's life when it comes to outside of home care. They have loved all the spring, winter, and summer camps so much.

Not to mention all the games, activities, sports, park visits, help with homework and the love and kindness from all the staff and Shawna Harrison. She loves the children so much. The best time of the year is Christmas, when Shawna and her staff plan out an amazing time for all the children. She goes all out, food, games, magicians, photos with Santa and Mrs. Clause. It is just fabulous.

My eyes tear up just thinking that this amazing, strong, and loving woman will be losing her life, her childcare facility, her love of working with the children and bringing them joy. Helping families like mine who need help with our children so we can go to work and feel comfortable knowing that we have left our children in the best care and with people to love children.

I feel incredibly sad and angry that this church could even do this with a blink of an eye all for profit and disrupt a businesswoman, her employees and countless families lives all for money. It is a shame.

For Shawna, I cannot imagine how she feels. Losing all this and not being able to provide care for future children in the coming years all because a church can raise the rent so high that it is forcing her too potentially close. Let us be real, this is also Shawna's livelihood too, her income for her and her family.

Mr. Mayor and Councilors, I really hope and pray that you read this letter and understand for the average family, we do need help caring for children. Especially in our communities.

I understand that Shawna has a potential site, Burnaby North Baptist Church at 3977 Albert Street. When I heard this, I was so happy!! Then we heard of an obstacle, parking. There is a parking lot across the street that is available for parents to park in. It serves as parking for businesses in the area, Hastings Street. I see no reason why I could not park there for 5 – 10 minutes to drop/pickup my child. Puddle Jumpers is a business after all. I would also like to point out that the church is right on the corner of long block. Could the City of Burnaby not consider possibly changing the parking signage so that this church could work out as a new location for Puddle Jumpers.

Please, please review this application and help Shawna, Puddle Jumpers and all the families that need this childcare facility to stay open. I hear on the news all the time the importance of childcare in communities, making it affordable for families, help from the government, make it easier for more childcare to open, etc.

Here we are needing help. Desperately needing help for a lot of families.

Again, I truly hope you can help with this and I thank you for taking the time to read this. It is appreciated.

Best regards,
Aida Capolongo