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June 29, 2020

Exotic Animal Bylaw Exemption request:

First off, I would like to indicate that I am opposed to this application brought forward by Brandon Vanderwel and Destiny Duncan. I live in the Van Dongen neighbourhood in Grand Bend where the Roaring Cat Retreat is located. I am about 3 blocks away and even with the windows closed, I could hear the lions roaring. I also hear the noise from the motorplex with my windows closed and air conditioning on as the motorplex is just across the fields from where I am located. Based on this, I fully expect to be hearing these lions roaring yet again. Hearing the roaring is enough to feel the anxiety of wondering if they are secure or have gotten loose. Loud tools and machinery is no match for the noise coming from the motorplex and who knows how these lions will react. Putting them in an enclosure will not drown out the noise.

Though Coun. Dianne Faubert has indicated how friendly they are – they are cubs and cubs will be cute and friendly. However, they do grow up. The average female lion weighs 127kgs and the average male weighs 191kg. It is unfortunate that Coun. Faubert didn't spend even a day here in this neighbourhood and experience what it was like living so close to the zoo before saying she would welcome them as neighbours.

Vanderwel and Duncan have said when asked if they plan to increase their cat population and their answer was "as of right now....". To me, that leaves the door open to add increase at a later date. Mr. Drysdale also started with a one or two animals and looked what happened over time.

Vanderwel and Duncan say they will not have any association with Roaring Cat Retreat but they did volunteer there and they did buy the cubs from them. Are their cubs also at an "undisclosed location" with the animals from the Roaring Cat Retreat? They may not currently have any business association with RCR but they do have a personal association.

Opening the door to allowing an exemption to this bylaw for Vanderwel and Duncan will also then open the door for Mr. Drysdale to apply for an exemption. Based on past history, if you approve the first one and you don't approve his, he will likely sue the municipality. It will also open the door for further exemption applications from Vanderwel and Duncan for more animals and anyone else that wants to have exotic animals in your municipality.

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