

I am Cathleen "Chrystal" DeCoster & I reside at 113 East 5th Avenue in Lyons.

Dear Town of Lyons' Board of Trustees and Lyons Community -

Thanks for this chance to pipe-in as a local business owner, independent arts advocate & private citizen of Lyons:

Coretta Scott King once said,

"It doesn't matter how strong your opinions are. If you don't use your power for positive change, you are indeed part of the problem."

As y'all may have noticed:

- There's already a hole in the ground,
- There's an opportunity afoot,
- And it's true, the doldrums ARE indeed - really real.

Thankfully, we live in a town - rich with creativity & spirited grit - coupled with demonstrative kindness...

"Got Grit" gained ground as a positive descriptor of those whose perseverance - creativity - vision - research - risk - dedication & sacrifice it took - to rightfully right the ship of Lyons - after the flood.

Perhaps we fathom this perceived "*hotel problem*" as an opportunity to creatively embark on a journey of positive change for the good of the group.

There's been a bunch of murmurings such as:

"How can this hotel possibly survive when so many businesses come & go?"

Think about that...

Could this hotel possibly be a vehicle that delivers an alter-ego paradigm shift?

"There's too many dang tourists; what can't they & the line of traffic they rode in on - just go away?"

Consider this...

What if tourists felt invited to *linger longer in Lyons* - to stop n' stay - shop at shops - listen to local tunes - wonder at the wonders of our creatively endowed town...

Bear in mind - these are key contributors to the town's coffers:

- The chorus of musicians, artists & entrepreneurs of all ilk who nest here - who need to feed their families & keep their art up to speed - ***all year long.***
- Shops that need to pay their rent & acquire inventory to stay fresh - ***all year long.***
- Restaurants which need *butts in seats* - in order to pay their staff - ***all year long.***

What if this project - this new line drawn in the gritty sand of Lyons - can actually help extend prosperous visits to Lyons that, in turn, help musicians, artists, entrepreneurs, shops AND restaurants endure...

What if this project - as gritty as it gets - shifts attitudes from a "*remember when?*" to a "*who'd a thought*" mentality:

"Who'd a thought"

Lyons could have a dedicated breakfast place that actually could sustain itself?

"Who'd a thought"

A musician's dance card would be so full they'd be turning down gigs?

"Who'd a thought"

A fledgling entrepreneur could gain international acclaim AND still stay afloat in Lyons?

"Who'd a thought"

There were so many long weekend events that featured our great local musicians, our fabulous area artists, & our delightful smorgasbord of flourishing culinary entities - that visitors to Lyons became fans - & those fans spread the news to like-minded friends - and events, like those dreamed up by the early Planet Bluegrass pioneers, became epic, so much so that our creatives were recognized as the iconic - economic - epicenter and heartbeat of Lyons...

My historic childhood hometown in Ohio, once rural, is now unrecognizable - planted with redundant rows of uninspired box stores. This town - *our town* - is a rare franchise-free and arts-centric oasis with a conscience - *that I choose to believe* - will not let such willy nilly sprawl happen.

As a business owner, I believe this visionary boutique-hotel team, who has brought its proposal to the feet of our town with an eager wagging tail, has a shared vision in the perennial perpetuation and prosperity of the distilled essence which makes Lyons *Lyons*... the success of its greatest & most compelling asset - the arts. These residents of Lyons, in my opinion, are indeed working toward enduring - *big picture* - positive change - for the good of the group & appropriate for this little oasis that compelled them to live here when they could have lived - & *dreamed out loud* - anywhere else.

Thanks for your time, your stewardship of Lyons, your ability to envision without blinders, and for your kind consideration.

My best,
Cathleen "Chrystal" DeCoster
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