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OPINION

Respectful dialogue needed on TTC Mall proposal

IAN JACQUES
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The re-development proposal for the Tsawwassen Town Centre Mall, currently in the staff and public review stage, has made for interesting discussions throughout the community.

It has easily been the most talked about news item on our letters and opinion pages for the past two months, with many residents weighing in on the proposal.

As is always the case, most of the letters sent to the *Optimist* have been negative, but in providing an opportunity to Century Group president Sean Hodgins to address many of the concerns presented – we were accused of bias and attacked viciously online.

All four of the *Optimist's* community columnists have weighed in on the topic with one of them also ferociously assailed online for sharing an opinion and a differing view.

It seems that anyone who shares a differing view on the proposal is attacked online by a vocal view, with some residents telling those who are in favour and want to see this proposal move forward to move and get out of our community.



FILE PHOTO

Century Group president Sean Hodgins speaks with a resident at the Feb. 27 public information meeting for the Tsawwassen Town Centre Mall redevelopment proposal.

I have had several people reach out to me saying that they would love to present a different viewpoint regarding the proposal by way of a letter to the editor but won't, for fear of reprisal and being attacked online.

Residents have also lashed out at city officials and members of council at public information meetings. Delta police were present at the second public information meeting on the proposal and were at both recent Delta open houses in North Delta and Monday night at city hall.

Comments online have also been toxic.

I came across this post on the City of Delta's Facebook page recently: "You sell your souls to the devil and destroy Ladner for your own money gain, greed, greasy palms, secret deals, and money under the table, all done in the dark with your heartless evil souls that are going to hell where they belong."

These comments, detached from reality, are inflammatory to say the least. All the personal attacks online and in public must stop. There is no place for bullying and harassment of community, members, councillors, and public officials.

I have no issue with the several resident groups that have formed who are opposed to the development proposal. Have your rallies, put out lawn signs, send letters to council and voice your opposition all that you want – that is all part of the democratic process.

But so is allowing opposing views and viewpoints.

Why is it that those opposed, demand to be heard, but will not allow those that do not share the same views a voice too?

How to survive Trump's erratic trade war, one day at a time

The gloves are off as we enter a new season of the "Trump Show."

We are in a full-blown trade war with our neighbours and my head is spinning.

I knew things were going to get bad when my beloved California chardonnay was removed from my local BC liquor store.

I love my chardonnay buttery and rich, but I'm trading it in for an Okanagan pinot gris.

Shopping at a Ladner veggie store recently, prices were good, with most of the produce coming from Chile.

California basil for my pesto was reasonable because local warehouses are stocked with U.S. product. Once it's sold-out U.S. produce will skyrocket. It's time to clean out your deep freeze.

Thankfully gas prices have stayed consistent, and can we agree, poor Point Roberts. What was once a quick trip to buy gas, cheese and wine has turned into a moral quandary.

The reality is Trump controls the richest economy in the world and has the power to hurt us economically.

So how do we take back our power? The politicians have the big cards to play, but for us, it's in the little things, like refusing to spend travel dollars in the U.S., or not buying U.S. products whenever possible.



Community Comment
INGRID ABBOTT

Trump anxiety is real. He has been in our psyche for 10 years and I am sick of it. I will continue watching because I have no choice, and I will resist the urge to panic.

Stay informed and make choices that help our fellow Canadians. Fly the flag, stay strong and carry on. We are true north, strong and free.

As I write this a Sikorsky Black Hawk helicopter flies over my house, the giant rotors whirling and chopping through the air startle me, reminding me we are not immune to a changed world.

Ingrid Abbott is a freelance writer who removed the post-it note reminding her to apply for a Nexus card.