



A NEW WHISTLE By Rhona Baron, Editor

Welcome to a New Year, a time for dreaming and fresh beginnings. In that spirit, The Whistle has several announcements and changes that should prove refreshing in the months ahead.

Pardon the chilly reference, but feel free to view me and this column as the tip of a community iceberg in 2023. I will continue to communicate out loud to synthesize and to release digestible information that enhances community conversation. Meanwhile, below the surface, The Whistle team, aka the bigger part of the iceberg, is a group of knowledgeable folks who attend council and commission meetings, conduct detailed research and participate in community. Know that when you contact us via our site, you're really getting access to about a dozen experienced local citizens!

Another facet of the exposed iceberg is The Whistle website. To kick off the year, the columns are now easier to find, read and download. Plus, we will offer a new "slide show" that makes understanding the complexities of local issues more tangible. Please visit to see the images, review columns, take surveys, or get more information at LWhistle.com. Feel free to contact us, no matter your position on the issues. We welcome all points of view.

In fact, beginning this year, we welcome you to become a guest columnist! We are inviting our readers to write 300-500 words and send them our way. As editor, I can review and work with you to get your piece ready for print. Topics might include traffic, tourism, density, infrastructure, safety, environment and anything you'd like to shout out. Contact me through the website at www.LWhistle.com. When you're published, you'll get credit in the Echo, along with publication on our Website. We are serious about hosting multiple viewpoints.

The only caveat is that your contribution must be fact based. Opinion is wonderful, but in a world where conspiracy theories have become more common, our goal will always be to present opinion grounded in facts. As before, we pledge to provide accurate information to back each and every claim we make! No one has detected a factual inaccuracy yet. We intend to keep it that way.

Which brings us to an important change in our column structure. To empower Leavenworth citizens, we will be offering a timely "to do list" to close each column in 2023. We're calling it *Whistle List*, so important we are creating a new word: *Whistlist*. Change happens when you add your voice. And right now it's crucial that the community comments on a thing called "the docket" before January 23. The docket is set by the council and PC each January and controls the considerations of the Planning Commission all through the year.

Whistlist: Due by January 24. Contact Lilith Vespier, council members and/or the mayor and planning commission IN WRITING with your opinion on any of the following:

1. **B and B's.** Let the city know if you believe there should be a limit in Leavenworth. Currently there is NO LIMIT in place!
2. **Environment.** If you believe code should enforce a percentage of buildable lots for plants, wildlife and permeability, say so. Right now NO PROTECTION is in place.
3. **Condominiums.** They are pending in ALL residential zones, including R6, single family!
4. **Affordable Housing.** The Whistle is generally in favor of mandating affordable housing by requiring new developments to include a set number of affordable dwellings. Are you?
5. **MFTE Taxes:** Multi-Family Tax Exemption. (MFTE) would encourage developers to include affordable units in a multi-family development. But the citizens would then pay the developer's taxes for a period of 10-12 years!

Happy New Year, everybody. We are here for you and your diverse points of view. Please take the survey in the Echo and keep on whistling. We'll hear you.