

Owner Sandy Murphy of Cold Spoons Gelato, known for its artisanal flavors and welcoming atmosphere, expressed deep gratitude to the community during her final service. “It’s been a pleasure to serve our customers and be a part of this neighborhood,” Murphy stated, her voice filled with emotion. “I will miss the smiles from our regulars, the birthday parties, and all the memories we’ve created together.”

Cold Spoons Gelato opened its doors in 2005, quickly becoming a go-to spot for families and friends seeking a sweet treat. With flavors ranging from classic vanilla to inventive creations like lavender honey and spicy chocolate, the shop had something for everyone. Over the years, it not only served gelato but also became a venue for local events and gatherings, earning a loyal following.

Highlands Cafe, directly across the street, has been a similarly cherished fixture. Known for its cozy ambiance and diverse menu, the cafe has been a gathering place for friends, families, and community members looking for a casual meal or a cup of coffee. Owner Dan Thompson shared his thoughts on the impending closure: “It’s heartbreaking to see both places shut down. We’ve built a community here, and it’s painful to say goodbye. However, I’m proud of the memories we’ve created.”

The closures come amid ongoing challenges faced by small businesses, exacerbated by the pandemic, rising costs, and changing consumer habits. Local business advocates have noted that these closures illustrate a larger trend affecting many neighborhood establishments. “Small businesses are the backbone of our community,” said Emily Rodriguez, director of the West Vliet Business Association. “When we lose places like Cold Spoons and Highlands Cafe, we lose more than just shops; we lose a part of our identity.”

Despite the sadness surrounding the closures, the community has come together to celebrate the impact these two locations have had on local life. Former customers have taken to social media to share memories, photos, and messages of appreciation. One patron, Lucy Kim, remarked, “Cold Spoons was our go-to spot every summer, and Highlands Cafe was the perfect place for brunch with friends. They will both be missed dearly.”

While the fate of the locations remains uncertain, there is hope that new businesses can step in to fill the gap left behind. Local entrepreneurs and residents are encouraged to support existing businesses in the area and consider potential new ventures that could thrive in this vibrant community.

As Cold Spoons Gelato and Highlands Cafe prepare for their final chapters, they leave behind a legacy of laughter, warmth, and a deep sense of belonging. The memories created within their walls will endure, reminding the community of the sweet moments that were shared and the bonds that will not easily fade. In the words of Sandy Murphy, “It’s not just about gelato or coffee; it’s about connection and community. That’s what we’ll always cherish.”

The final days of these beloved establishments are not just a farewell; they are a celebration of the spirit of community that both the gelato shop and cafe have embodied for nearly twenty years. As residents and patrons look to the future, they carry with them the joy and sweetness that defined these local favorites.