

Saturday, February 8, 2025

Mayor and Council

By email municipal.hall@csaanich.ca

Dear Mayor and Council

Re: Official Community Plan (OCP) amendment for 1934-66 Hovey Road

After the feel good words are removed from this OCP amendment application and a review of the actual proposal for development I can see nothing to support in the project.

Recently the municipality spent thousands of dollars to create an OCP yet as is typical for OCP's in Central Saanich before the ink is dry a developer is back before council asking for a change in the OCP. The purpose of an OCP is to not have spot zoning but to look at the municipality as a whole and develop a reasonable land use plan for the future. No application for a change of the OCP should be considered in the first few years of its life except under extraordinary situations, no such conditions exist. The municipality has already meet and exceeded the expected new housing numbers for much of the projected life of the current OCP. If the developer feels they are so different that a change in the OCP is warranted virtually before the ink is dry on the OCP, then they should 100% fund a new OCP under the auspices of an independent 3rd party.

At first I was reluctant to become involved in this project, but when I received a letter from as I recall the co-partner of the development, the Legion Manor I became concerned the project backers were trying to push a project through overtop of the local resident's concerns. The use of emotive terms such as "scruffy trees" that were slated to be removed concerned me. Concerned me because the description was not a technical description of the trees and when I looked at the erstwhile scruffy trees I recognized them from my experience owning and operating a local sawmill as trees containing valuable wood for construction. A recent ad in the Times Colonist from the developer suggesting support from a number of Saanichton businesses is a concern when a polling of the businesses mentioned indicated they had not voiced support for the project causes me to wonder how much of their application is correct or a true reflection of their intentions.

On a closer look at the project the undefined use of the words "affordable seniors homes" concerned me; there was no definition of what affordable was or how the affordable for seniors would be continued into the future. I suggest if the words affordable for seniors is to mean anything then it should be based on rent and other costs such as heating to be 30% or less of the typical income of many seniors the old age pension and CCP which is currently approximately \$2000 a month. The co partner in this development is already charging the residents of the units will be supposedly aimed at more than this 30% limit and that is for units 40 years old.

The supposed number of perspective residents riding bikes from the project is an unrealistic number, of the approximately 400 residents at the Legion Manor (which is home for very few Veterans) 2 regularly ride and I am one of them. I am a strong advocate of more cycling but also know most of the seniors will not be riding to and from this develop-

ment (Central Saanich has one of the most inadequate vulnerable transportation practises in the area). The access to and from the project by cyclists will be even worse than currently accessing East Saanich from Hovey Road is. The project is at the apex of a curve on East Saanich where automobiles habitually exceed the posted speed of 50 K and it appears the current cycling lanes that do not meet the BC Active Transportation Guidelines will be removed, There is no way to describe the removal of the cycling lanes in this area as anything but a willful and with knowledge intent to make cycling more dangerous in this Central Saanich. This problem is compounded by the new Central Saanich Municipal Office planned for immediately across East Saanich Road. The intersection will require a re-design to be safe. Given the extra amount of right of way in the intersection it is an ideal location for the use of a traffic circle (1 lane) as a traffic calming device and traffic control system.

I also have a good idea of the underground infrastructure in the area and have to question if there is adequate sanitary sewer and water to service the development or will the rest of the residents in Central Saanich be expected to pay for the upgrade?

The buildings themselves; I have considerable concern with the lack of fire exits (yes I know recent changes in the building code allow fire exits to be reduced). One might be able to say the reduction is tolerable for the building housing workers but in the building housing seniors this is a dangerous design, and evidence of a plan not thought through, with no consideration for the safety of the perspective residents.

In an environment where green spaces and greenery to uptake CO2 is prized, the significant reduction of CO2 producing plants is enough to cause one to wonder if the developers do not believe in climate change. Once again looking at the underground infrastructure is the storm sewer system adequate for the hard surface project coverage?

One of the concerns along with the concerns of climate change is urban heat islands. The project will contribute significantly to an increase in localized heat or a heat island, not mentioned in the proposal are actions to mitigate the effect of the project heat island.

The project is or is substantially outside of the "Bill 47" 800 meters from a transit exchange and further outside of the 800 meter distance from shops and services? Is the project right for this location?+

The more I look at the project the more I realise the change to the OCP and project itself is wrong for the municipality and will contribute to a degradation of peaceful enjoyment of life and happiness for area residents.

Norm Ryder

