

February 10, 2019

Dear Mayor and Council,

Re: Zoning and OCP Amendment for 461 Quatsino Blvd

In addition to my letter of support submitted on December 12, 2018, I feel that I need to submit an additional letter for consideration.

The Zoning and OCP Amendment for 461 Quatsino Blvd and Public Hearing process has been drawn out over an extended period of time which has allowed for the spreading of selective misinformation, fear rhetoric, intimidation, and fundamental human rights discrimination.

Social housing is a priority with many stakeholders across the province. In addition to creating a 30 point plan for addressing housing affordability in BC, the **Provincial Government** has created the Building BC: Women's Transition Housing Fund which commits \$734 million over 10 years to build and operate new units. **BC Housing** is supporting this particular project with a substantial funding proposal as well as covering operating costs for 60 years. The **District of Kitimat's** Housing Action Plan identifies the need for transitional and second stage housing in the community. The project put forward by the **Tamitik Status of Women** clearly aligns with the direction our province is moving in terms of support for at risk women and children. It would be an absolute travesty to allow a small group of vocal residents contribute to the failure of this project, which includes the threat of lawsuit and significantly delaying project timelines.

Many of those opposed are saying it is because of building height, tree buffers, parking and shade. The concerns from neighboring properties are valid, and it is my understanding that these types of issues are discussed during the building permitting process. To have them now, and for them to be the focus of the dialogue, is premature. I also find it extremely frustrating for select members of the opposition to hide behind the development concerns when their real biases and NIMBYism are showing throughout all of the inconsistencies in their letters, social media posts, and website content.

A website was created by members of the opposition and contains the following quote:

In many cases, a new building in a poorer neighborhood created a "sort of revitalization effect," Diamond says. "These areas don't tend to have a lot of investment in them. It makes the neighborhood appear more desirable." That, in turn, drew more homebuyers, particularly non-minorities.

On the flip side, wealthier neighborhoods didn't see affordable housing as an attractive amenity. And that impact rippled through the area years after construction started.

"In the high-income areas, you saw a strong housing price drop very locally, and then it radiated outward over time," McQuade says. The price effects remain even after 10 years, Diamond adds.

Stanford Graduate School of Business.

It is clear that the opposition is not solely about design, it is about not wanting this project in their backyard. It is discrimination that arises far too often with social housing projects. While I recognize we live in British Columbia, I wanted to share some excerpts from the Ontario Human Rights Commission and an article they issued entitled Human rights and not-in-my-back-yard (NIMBY):

- Concerns about affordable housing projects should be legitimately anchored in planning issues rather than stereotypical assumptions about the people who will be housed.
- The Commission heard that discriminatory NIMBY opposition delays or discourages affordable housing development, increases its costs and diverts public funds to costly appeals to the Ontario Municipal Board, when these funds could instead be used to create more affordable and supportive housing. It may cause housing providers to feel they need to make compromises to get affordable housing built, even when these compromises undermine the dignity or well-being of their residents.
- NIMBY opposition to affordable housing projects can violate the Code when it results in changes to existing planning processes, barriers to access to housing or exposes proposed residents to discriminatory comment or conduct. For example, claims of discrimination could arise if a municipality requires additional public meetings or amendments to the planning process solely because the intended residents of a proposed housing project are people with addictions, youth or older people, lone parents, in receipt of social assistance, or people with disabilities including mental illnesses.

I ask that Council make every effort within their control to maintain the integrity of the municipal process during Public Hearing on March 4th and that comment be rooted in the zoning issue at hand and not in NIMBYism.

Sincerely,

Marli Penner

Further reading for items referenced:

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018PREM0034-001019>

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018PREM0079-002068>

https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/homesbc/2018_Homes_For_BC.pdf

<https://www.kitimat.ca/en/municipal-hall/resources/Documents/Housing-Action-Plan.pdf>

<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/human-rights-and-not-my-back-yard-nimby>

<https://www.wwynkitimat.ca/>