



Quadra Cedar Hill Community Association

RE: DPR00789, REZ00662; 3977 Rainbow Street & 812 Sevenoaks Road

January 25, 2020

Planning Department
District of Saanich

Dear Saanich Planning,

Quadra Cedar Hill Community Association appreciates this opportunity to convey to you the opinion of the local residents regarding the proposed development at 3977 Rainbow Street/812 Sevenoaks Road. The proponent, Abstract Developments, proposes to rezone three RS-6 zoned single-family lots into a townhouse development with twenty-five, three-storey, two- and three-bedroom units.

Abstract hosted an open house on November 28th, 2019, which was attended by QCHCA's Representatives for the Rainbow area, along with another member of our executive. To its credit, Abstract sent invitations to all residents on Sevenoaks and Canterbury Roads between Rainbow and Nelthorpe Streets, and the open house was very well attended. QCHCA asked to co-host the meeting and for the format to be a presentation followed by a question and answer period as is our preferred process for all development applications. This enables all attendees to hear the same information; to pose, or hear posed, questions and concerns they or their neighbours may have; and to hear the questions and concerns answered for all to hear. Unfortunately, Abstract was not willing to provide a presentation followed by Q&A and proceeded with an open house format where attendees speak individually or in small groups with the proponent's team.

That said, we heard major concerns raised by nearly all who attended, with the ***top four objections being pedestrian safety; project density; traffic and parking impacts on Sevenoaks Road, Rainbow Street and Rainbow Park; as well overall neighbourhood access and egress.*** Many neighbours are deeply opposed to the project, and expressed intent to voice their opposition at Council, while others indicated that they could be open to an amended version that addressed the concerns above.

With respect to pedestrian safety, Sevenoaks Road is narrow, has a large number of vehicles parking on the street, does not have sidewalks for most of its length, and has become a busy through-traffic route, especially for vehicles going to St. Andrew's from anywhere west of the school. It is also a primary neighbourhood pedestrian route to Rainbow Park, and a primary conduit for kids walking to Rogers Elementary School. Residents are understandably upset

about the possibility of another 25 families (and up to another 50 vehicles) compounding the issue. Abstract has proposed to build sidewalks in front of its development. This would be a modest improvement but would primarily benefit new townhouse residents and do little to address the pedestrian safety issues noted. The rest of the street would remain unsafe and would be made more so by the significant increase in traffic. We believe a more significant CAC should be required given the increase in density proposed.

With respect to project density, the Rainbow neighbourhood consists of about 200 residences, and this proposed development would densify the area by approximately 15%. Although no concerns were raised by local residents about appearance or building height, turning three single family lots on a neighbourhood street into 25 high-end townhouses was felt by the majority to be much too dense for the established neighbourhood. A reduction in the number of units would help assuage some of these concerns. Given the proponent is requesting site-specific zoning, how did Abstract determine permitted site coverage of 60% without or before the zoning?

With respect to traffic and parking impacts, concern was also raised that visitor parking was insufficient and, with the likelihood of secondary suites, would compound existing parking issues on Sevenoaks and in the small Rainbow Park parking area. There also did not appear to be any provision for loading and unloading space.

With respect to overall access and egress, access into the Rainbow neighbourhood is limited to two points of entry (at Rainbow and Nelthorpe Streets) and is already a significant issue for residents. The traffic light at Nelthorpe is the sole option for westbound traffic and has become a choke point. This is further compounded by St. Andrew's School traffic, which crosses McKenzie at Nelthorpe, especially for pick up and drop off of students. Adding a further 25 families with potentially 50 additional vehicles will directly and negatively impact all current residents of the Rainbow area whose access is limited to Rainbow and Nelthorpe. Although we recognize this is a Saanich engineering problem, the proposed increase in density with this application will further exacerbate an already-existing issue and requires further consultation.

QCHCA does not support the project in its current form, and we look forward to hearing how Saanich and the proponent propose to address the above-noted residents' concerns.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We anticipate providing further input as the application consultation proceeds. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Susan Haddon
President, QCHCA