

**From:** [Garry Watson](#)  
**To:** [corporate](#)  
**Cc:** [Toni Metcalf](#); [Roman Licko](#)  
**Subject:** Subject: RZ1157 - 5298 Alta Lake Road  
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To: Mayor and Council

June 9, 2020

I am writing to you again on this matter in advance, I hope, of a draft of a formal bylaw being presented to Council for a first reading, so as to permit Council time to further assess the results of the negotiations with the proponent.

The primary consideration needs to be the proposal's adherence to the Guidelines laid out by the Municipality with respect to its proposal call for employee housing on privately owned lands, the principal objective of which was to achieve as significant as possible a yield of employee housing for the community. The first draft of the Guidelines called for projects consisting of 100% employee housing with no market housing being supported but, as this proved to be impractical, it was amended to provide that the projects;

“SHALL (meaning mandatory) optimize the amount of employee housing within the proposed development, and

MAY (meaning permissive) include LIMITED AMOUNTS of new unrestricted market accommodation to support project VIABILITY”.

The initial proposal that was presented only included 7 employee townhouse units of 106 sq. metres each for the community (8 similar units to be retained by the proponent to service its commercial needs) and, to support the viability of its project, proposed zoning for 22 market townhouse units of 200 sq. metres each, resulting in a massing ratio of 6 to 1. This massing ratio came as something of a surprise to most members of Council and the matter was left to be dealt with by staff. In my view this proposal amounted to a serious attempt at extortion, meeting the dictionary meaning of that word by “ exacting an exorbitant price for something”. In subsequent negotiations the proponent apparently first agreed to increase the number of employee housing units for the community to 14 and then to 21 but making no reduction in the number of the market units still at 22, thereby changing the ratio to 2 to 1.

As an example of what this project might look like at a ratio of 1 to 1 would be to reduce the number of market accommodation units to 15 and to optimize the number of employee units by increasing it to 30. What this would do to the financial viability of the project might be worth calculating

I have not heard of any clear justification of 22 units of market accommodation units being required to support the viability of the project financially. Although the proponent promised, at the first public meeting outlining the project, to make a copy of the form of financial statements it would be required to submit to the municipality regarding their project available to the public - this was subsequently refused. I assume that these financial statements for the project have or will be made

available to the members of Council for their consideration in assessing the viability of the project.

It has been assumed that the form of the proposed market development will be very similar to, if not exactly the same as, the 44 market townhouses the proponent developed and marketed above Rainbow,, one unit of which recently sold for 2.6 million dollars. Applying this sale as a reasonable comparable would suggest that each of the market units being proposed would have a value of at least \$2 million and a gross market value for the 22 units of \$44 million. I am wondering if this was reflected in the required financial statements or not and what was shown for the other costs of the development including the cost of the land, reported to have been \$10 million which, as such, could be the real elephant in the room.

As I have previously expressed to Council, I strongly believe that there is really no current need for further market accommodation in Whistler that would only create an increase in the demand for more employee housing, and add to the traffic and occupancy problems in public accommodation already being experienced. All the more reason to be more vigilant in assessing the real benefit to the community and the resort.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

Garry Watson  
2317 Boulder Ridge, Whistler



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