

James Thomson & Colleen Smith

7124 Nancy Greene Drive
Unit 3
Whistler, BC V8E 0W9

June 22, 2020

Mayor and Council
Resort Municipality of Whistler
4325 Blackcomb Way
Whistler, BC V8E 0X5

Dear Mayor, Council and Planning Dept.

I am a long-time resident of our community, and I am writing to express my concern about the recent discussion at the May 5th council meeting and the pending decision regarding the development application RZ 1146 – 7104 Nancy Greene Drive.

While I understand there is a great need for resident housing in Whistler this must be, as the Whistler Official Community Plan (OCP) states "designed and managed to be sensitive to the surrounding environment". The current proposed project has many shortcomings for it to meet this criteria.

I would like to bring the attention of the Council to the following 2 points of concern:

- Density of the proposed project; and
- Privacy issues with the current proposal

Density:

The current proposed density of the project at 7104 Nancy Greene Drive is way too high for such a small site. The site is only 2,816.6 square meters and the developer is proposing 38 units and a Floor Space Ratio of 0.95, by comparison this is:

- A smaller lot size over 1000 meters square than the neighboring Fitzsimmons Walk WHA land (3,912 meters square) where there are only 36 units – see attached GIS Mapping.
- Triple the density of proposal RZ1144 – 2077 Garibaldi Way – with a current proposed Floor Space Ratio of only 0.32. Please remember you rejected the previous application of this site when the Floor Space Ratio was 0.40 for the reason it was too much density.

I would also like to remind council that this development site has been evaluated previously for residential housing rental in the workshop and subsequent report completed in 2004 and documented in 'Comparative Evaluation of Potential Resident Housing Sites in Whistler' – attached. This report identified this site would be appropriate for townhouse rental properties and a site maximum of 5 units. The current proposal is far exceeding this recommendation which was made by a host of personnel including municipal staff, WHA staff, Environmental professionals, Civil Engineers and Resort planners.

Mayor, Council

Date

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To build something that is such high density in a neighborhood that consists of primarily low-density zoning and buildings is not 'sensitive to the surrounding environment' nor does it consider the "...locational characteristics..." of the neighborhood as per your guidelines documented in 'Guidelines for Evaluating Private Sector rezoning Proposals for Employee Housing' as attached.

Privacy

With such a dense development being proposed, the residents of Nancy Greene Drive are concerned about the significant reduction in privacy, especially those in Building A and H of Fitzsimmons Walk.

Persons on Nancy Greene Drive purchased and choose to live where they do with the understanding that on the 7104 Nancy Greene Drive site, there would be single family home or something comparable built as per the zoning. I believe that the council is not using their best judgement in considering a 4 story building (parkade that is above Fitzsimmons walk elevation, plus 3 stories of residential) and the impact on my quality of life and privacy as a neighbor to such a development. This proposal would mean that everyone in this building will be overlooking my property, I no longer have any privacy on my patio or balcony. The developer may be proposing a coniferous mature tree buffer, but it will take over 10 years for this to grow in. This is not acceptable.

Please take the time to really consider what is being proposed here. The high density proposal, while helping to fulfil the mayors task force of finding more bed units, will only create significant issues for the future. The council must reject this proposal and ask the developer to consider a smaller development on this site.



James Thomson & Colleen Smith

Cc: RMOW General Manager of Resort Experience

Cc: RMOW Planning Department

Director of Planning – M Kirkegaard

Senior Planner – Roman Licko

Planner – Stephanie Johnson

Attachments:

- GIS Mapping of Fitzsimmons Walk WHA buildings
- Comparative Evaluation of Potential Resident Housing Sites in Whistler – refer to Appendix B page 1
- Guidelines for Evaluating Private Sector rezoning Proposals for Employee Housing

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Dear Mayor, Council and Planning Dept.

As a member of the Whistler community I have been following the progress of the development and rezoning application for RZ1146 – 7104 Nancy Greene Drive. Council needs to reject this proposal now and only consider a much smaller development.

The development, not only being too dense for the parcel of land it will be on also has the following flaws:

- Inadequate storage for residents of the complex
- Inadequate availability of parking for residents and visitors
- It will significantly increase traffic congestion

The high density that is being requested for this parcel of land results in the above issues. We therefore need to reconsider how many LIVABLE units can be built on this parcel of land. The 'Comparative Evaluation of Potential Resident Housing Sites in Whistler' study and workshop estimated 5 rental townhouses. This could look like something such as The Coops (see attached transposition onto the proposed site). If we abide by this professional and thoughtful report, the issues I am bring to your attention would not be issues.

Storage

As Whistler residents, we love to play. Most of the sports/activities that we participate in, skiing, mountain biking, rock climbing, hiking etc all require equipment. This equipment needs to be securely stored in our own residences. The proposed development for 7104 Nancy Greene Drive includes a bike storage room for 60 bikes but does not include any in-unit storage OR storage assigned to the unit.

Council needs to reflect on how many bikes their own households – this will be no different for people moving into this development. On average a whistler resident has 2 bikes - one for valley trail riding and one for trail riding. The neighboring Fitzsimmons Walk property conducted a survey. Of the 67 residents living onsite at any one time, there is 153 bikes. How do these fit in a storage room designed for 60 bikes? This will result in balconies being used for storage, which poses its own security concern, but means the balconies will not be used for outdoor enjoyment as intended.

The neighboring Fitzsimmons Walk property, all WHA has in-unit storage, an assigned locker of 60sq ft per unit AND a dedicated bike storage room. Let me tell you, all of this space is used to its full capacity. Consider, if you lived in this proposed space, where would you store chariots, suitcases, hockey nets, kids scooter, skies and tires for cars...all the things that people in Whistler, including members of council, own and need to store! Storage is an issue in this proposal!

Parking

The developer is requesting for a reduction in the number of required parking spaces in the proposed development. How can we allow this?

Council in their May 5th, 2020 meeting suggested that residents that live close the village and a supermarket would not have a need for a vehicle. This could not be further from the truth! Life is not solely lived in the village or shopping solely done at Nesters. Residents of Whistler use vehicles to access hikes around the valley, to travel along highway 99 and to visit friends. As a resident of Fitzsimmons walk, I would not even consider catching a bus to Cheakamus to visit friends, as it is inconvenient having to catch a bus from Nesters, to the village and then wait for the next bus going south. Then having to do that on the way home.

Lenency was granted for parking allocations in both the Cheakamus and Rainbow projects. Look at the mess these neighborhoods are now –cars parked everywhere. Cheakamus has the most frequent bus service and everyone still has a car or two. This is not what we want for our neighborhood.

Residents of Whistler OWN cars! In the neighboring Fitzsimmons Walk property - that is just as close to the village and Nesters as the proposed development has 46 vehicles, where at any one time there is 67 persons living onsite. The developer is suggesting 2 persons per bedroom, equally 128 people and only 42 parking spaces –that is 0.3 parking spaces per person. Severely lacking!

The 2019 Community Life Survey of Whistler (attached) residents, that over half of the residents said that their preferred method of transportation to/from work is by personal vehicle with 1 occupant. This does not indicate that people want to be carless in their lifestyle choices. The council must enforce zoning and parking bylaws to avoid another congested neighborhood.

Traffic Congestion

As a resident living on Nancy Greene Drive, I observe considerable confusion and congestion on the section between the highway 99 intersection and Blackcomb Way. It is an accident waiting to happen. Adding additional vehicles due to a high-density building is an issue that Council needs to avoid.

For example, at any one time at the intersection of Nancy Greene Drive and Blackcomb way, there are vehicles travelling along Nancy Greene Drive, cars entering Nancy Greene Drive from either Blackcomb Way or Fitzsimmons Walk driveway, or other driveways. Compound this issue by having the valley trail coming from Spruce Grove or down the hill from highway 99 with bikes, strollers pedestrians, e-bikes and school children. Who has the right of way? The high volume of traffic on this section can not sustain an increase resulting from a high density development! It will become a serious safety issue for not only motorists, but pedestrians.

Refer to your 'Guidelines for Evaluating Private Sector rezoning Proposals for Employee Housing' item 17 (attached) and you will see this development proposal does not meet this criteria.

As you can see, the proposed development and rezoning poses not only livability concerns, but also safety and security concerns. The severe lack of storage and parking makes these places unlivable for residents of Whistler that love to enjoy the outdoors. This requires access outside of the bus network and personal equipment. The increase in density will result in significantly more pedestrian and vehicle congestion along Nancy Greene Drive and is a serious safety concern!

Council must reject this proposal and only consider a much smaller development!


Thomson & Colleen Smith

Cc: RMOW General Manager of Resort Experience

Cc: RMOW Planning Department

Director of Planning – M Kirkegaard

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Mayor, Council and Planning Dept
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Dear Mayor, Council and Planning Dept

As a neighbor to the proposed 7104 Nancy Greene Drive development, I am writing to council to bring your attention to the set-backs and height of the development application. This property is currently zoned for a single residential home and changing the set backs and height allowances to accommodate this high density building will ensure it not only doesn't fit in the neighborhood, but will very much encroach on neighboring privacy and livability.

Set-backs

The set-backs being proposed in the March application from Vidorra are significantly less than what the surrounding properties were required to meet. Here is a quick look at what you are asking the neighbors to have in their backyards

	Set-back – Front	Setback Side	Set-back Rear	Height Max	Density
Current Zoning RSE1	7.6m	3-6m	7.6 m	7.6 m	35%
RS1 Zoning	7.6m	3-6m	7.6m	7.6m	35%
RT1 Zoning	7.6m	3-6m	7.6m	7.6m	35%
RM1 Zoning	7.6m	3.0m	7.6m	7.6m	40%
Proposed Zoning	1.5m	1.5m	3.0m	8.5m	95%

For reference attached is a map identifying the surrounding lots and their zonings.

Reducing the set-backs so drastically will result in:

- Existing large coniferous trees being removed, therefore resulting in the loss of natural screen barrier and privacy for neighbors. This cannot be replaced!
- Existing rock structure being removed and completely changing the natural landscaping!
- Loss of privacy for neighbors

Previous projects have been forced to have larger set-backs and this project should not be treated any different. For example 5298 Alta Lake Road, the proposal saw the building setback changed from 7.6 meters to 20 meters. This is significant! Councilor Jewett stated in February in regards to the development that "the good thing about this is it will be model moving forward for some of the other proposals we'll get in front of us in the near future". This development application at 7104 Nancy Greene Drive is exactly what she would have been referring to.

See article <https://issuu.com/whistlerpublishing/docs/pi-quewebissue2708/16>

Consider a development such as that illustrated in attachment 'The Coops on 7104 Nancy Greene Drive. This illustrates that a building such as The Coops (in Creekside) could be built on this plot of land and would not only maintain more consistent set-backs that match the neighborhood, but would preserve the existing mature trees and natural rock.

The 9291 Emerald Drive employee housing project was required to preserve existing trees on the property again this should be not different. See article - <https://issuu.com/whistlerpublishing/docs/piquewebissue2706/20>

The developer himself as also previously mentioned that he would not be removing the mature trees on the site "I think the most important issue are the mature trees on the site and the setbacks from the property lines. We have completed a detailed survey of the existing trees on the site and the height of those trees. We have moved the building closer to the Highway side of the property and preserve many of those trees and the rock face that is a great feature facing 7124". Clearly this proposal does not preserve the trees or the rock face.

Have you looked around the neighborhood? None of the surrounding homes are built this close to their property lines (the adjacent building Hat Fitzsimmons walk is 10 meters from the property line) and their neighbors. All are separated by natural tree screening and this property should be no different. The neighboring properties would like to see:

- the rock and coniferous trees between the proposed apartment building and Fitzsimmons walk remain and be undisturbed,
- increase the setbacks so that they are consistent with neighboring properties –at least 15-20 meters from property line to preserve undisturbed the existing rock and coniferous trees.

Height

As you can see from the previously presented the table, the height of the proposed development application is far greater than the neighboring properties. It is unrealistic to think that a development with greater density and height than the surrounding properties will meet the requirement of guideline 12 in the 'Guidelines for Evaluating Private sector Rezoning Proposals for Employee Housing' dated 26 March 2019. For reference this states; "Proposed densities, scale of development and form of housing should be appropriate for the site context. Visual impacts and impacts on solar access should be minimized." highlight the second part of this statement!

What would be appropriate for this site is a 2 story building consistent with the low to medium density residential properties that it will be adjacent too.

I look forward to seeing council re-evaluate this development application with an understanding of how this will change our neighborhood and the livability of it. This project is far to dense, close to properties lines and will dwarf the surrounding properties. It must be reduced in size for it to be complimentary to the surroundings in which it is being built.


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Cc: RMOW General Manager of Resort Experience

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June 27, 2020

Mayor, Council & Planning
Resort Municipality of Whistler
4325 Blackcomb Way
Whistler, BC V8E 0X5

Ref: RZ1146 Rezoning Application - 7104 Nancy Greene Drive – Keep Rock Trees Undisturbed

Dear Mayor, Council and Planning Dept.

The developer's current proposal calls for too high a density building with very short setbacks which will negatively impact the surrounding residential area.

As the saying goes 'a picture is worth a thousand words', the pictures below highlight the extent to which the developer will have to remove the existing rock face outcrop and many mature trees to accommodate his high density proposal, despite saying otherwise.

In 2018 and 2019 the residents of Fitzsimmons Walk wrote several letters to RMOW opposing the developer's plan to demolish all the existing rock outcrop and trees on the rock and to the property line along Fitzsimmons Walk. At that time he was planning to build the parking garage and building 1.5 to 3.0 meters from the property line. The developer responded specifically as follows to the opposition letters concerns on the existing trees and rock buffer. He wrote in his reply **"I think the most important issue are the mature trees on the site and the setbacks from the property lines. We have completed a detailed survey of the existing trees on the site and the height of those trees. We have moved the building closer to the Highway side of the property and preserve many of those trees and the rock face that is a great feature facing 7124"**. He also said **"We can also use a 6m setback from 7124 on our South property line to preserve more trees."** His current proposal to remove existing trees and rock outcrop is contrary to his prior undertakings as stated above and in the developer's web site in 2018/2019 which said **"the existing trees we are planning to leave in place will screen almost the entire building from the rear of Fitzsimmons Walk buildings"**. The following was added to the developer's web site at that time **"we are proposing to leave the mature 71ft full trees that border our two developments in place and these are taller than both buildings and already block the view corridor our building occupies"**. The developer commits to preserving the existing rock and forest undisturbed between all Fitzsimmons Walk and his project.

The 1st picture below shows the Surveyor's orange marker (& our tape measure to identify it) where all the above rock and trees will be demolished by the developer's RZ1146 application.



At the highest part, the rock face behind Building H of the Fitzsimmons Walk complex measures a total of 18 feet approx. The orange mark on the rock was put there by the developer's surveyor who confirmed that the plan is to demolish the entire portion of the rock face above this mark which measures 10 feet approx. That represents about 55% of the rock face demolished. In addition, all the large trees on and behind the rock would also have to be removed which should be unacceptable by RMOW. There's also the strong possibility that the rock demolition process will cause damage to the trees in the foreground of the picture #2 which are on Fitzsimmons Walk Strata property. What happens if there's damage to those trees? Destruction of any trees on the Fitzsimmons Walk Strata property line is not allowed.



The 2nd picture above shows the total 18 foot high rock face facing townhome #3 Fitzsimmons Walk, the orange demolition marker at 10 feet from the top of the rock face and the existing trees on the property line and inside Fitzsimmons Walk property line that may be destroyed with proposed rock demolition by developer. This rock & tree demolition should not be allowed by RMOW. RMOW must reduce RZ1146 density, equally increase the setbacks and leave undisturbed existing rock & tree forest from Fitzsimmons Walk property lines.

Yours truly,

Colleen Smith & James Thomson

Colleen Smith & James Thomson
#3 Fitzsimmons Walk