

TO: City Council and Planning and development

FROM: Peter Wise

RE: 2150 Queensway and

Application to rezone and amend the OCP

Dated: August 6, 2019

The purpose of this letter is to provide City Council with the rationale behind the application.

As you are aware an application has been filed for the property and planning and development has submitted a letter with various discussion points to the matter.

As you are aware the city has incentivized various development in specific areas to assist developers to build multi family dwellings. The city has identified the downtown core as the primary focus. This property exits on the opposite side of Queensway to the multi family incentives area and the RTE zone. In addition, it is next to a 102-unit multi family development "Magnolia Gardens". The notion of developing such multi family residences here is not out of sorts with the area but in fact is more the norm. Looking at the existing residences in the area and the incentives if I built across the street would suggest that this is in fact a very natural and acceptable location for additional multifamily residences.

Planning and development suggest that the OCP provide for and support park space, which is understandable and most desirable to have in abundance within a city. Generally speaking, parks are owned and maintained by municipalities or other levels of government. To suggest a private citizen, own and maintain parkland for public use is a bit perverse in nature. Especially if the owner must also pay tax on the land as I currently do. There is also plenty of access to the park and nature preserve all around the property which will continue to be accessible. This particular parcel has no ponds, creek, large trees or interesting foliage but is basically a barren parcel of dry land.

There is also the reference to the notion of the property being situated within the flood plain. If this was truly a detriment to developing than most of the downtown of Prince George would be excluded. With this specific property the east end of the property (74%) is below the 200-year flood plain; but only marginally. The estimate of such is about 12 inches at most. Construction of townhomes with garages on the main floor and living area above will certainly not be exposed to major hazards. Nor as a developer would I desire to build if there was a high threat level. During development it would be easy enough to raise the east side of the property with fill so as to lift the elevation and hence not be within the flood plain at all. Geotechnical assessment of the site reveals ideal build conditions.

Local Fisheries have identified the Hudson bay nature preserve as a salmon bearing habitat. Very important to preserve and protect such areas. This property however is pretty far from any fish bearing stream or reservoir. The far east corner is over 90 meters from the existing waterway.

In summary, there are not really any detriments to development of this property! It is in a good location with close proximity to services, other multi family projects, does not block park access, easy to rectify and address the 200-year flood plan issue and is situated in a desirable area close to the park. I am asking the city for approval to rezone as well as an amendment to the OCP, plus due to the proximity of the property to the RTE and incentives zone would also be asking for inclusion within the boundary. I would also ask the city to consider the rationale of having private citizens owning, maintaining and paying tax on parkland that the city would deem important to remain as park. If in the determination of the use of this land it is desirous of the city to keep this as parkland and hence undevelopable than I would humbly ask the city to not require me to pay tax on the land. After all, any private citizen that owns land and pays tax on such land does so with the intent that they may use the land for various purpose. One such purpose would be to take the land to its highest and best use and optimize such land so as to make a reasonable profit. If there is never to be any sort of use by an owner than why own the land in the first place. I believe that myself along with all previous owners of this land have held it and paid tax on it with the intention that someday in the future it would hold some kind of potential. In addition, the city may wish to also consider that if this land in their opinion should stay parkland than trading the owner for a similar size piece of land elsewhere should be of consideration.

Humbly yours,

Peter Wise