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6909 St. Stephanie Place  
Prince George, BC  
V2N 5A4

City Council  
City of Prince George  
1100 Patricia Blvd.  
Prince George, BC  
V2L 3V9

June 10, 2023

RE: Proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendment  
Subject Property: 6700 Southridge Avenue  
Lot A, District Lot 2003, Cariboo District, Plan EPP86923

Dear Mayor and City Council;

We are the owners of a single-family residential dwelling at 6909 St. Stephanie Place, Prince George, BC. For the reasons outlined below, we strongly oppose the rezoning of the subject property referenced above to Multiple Residential (RM5).

We will categorize our reasons into “Personal” and “Community”, accordingly:

### **PERSONAL REASONS**

We purchased our home on 6909 St. Stephanie Place in 2003 after making the decision to reside in Prince George for the long term. At that time, we looked at many various real estate options in Prince George. We chose the location based on the features of the home, lot, and neighborhood design, that being almost exclusively detached single family dwellings on residential municipal lots. The lot, being at the end of a csul de sac, offered the degree of privacy that we sought.

We allocated our life savings to the property and since then have worked hard to improve and maintain our home, investing thousands of dollars in improvements to the yard and infrastructure. We had looked forward to enjoying the results of our efforts as we approach our retirement years, with the intent of remaining in our family home. We very much enjoy our backyard, and spend considerable time on our patio and deck, with the privacy we have enjoyed for 20 years. We willingly pay approaching \$7,000 per year in property tax to the city for the features for our location.

The notion of a multiple story apartment building, mere feet from our back yard, with ultimately a myriad of windows and balconies, all with a perspective straight into the back of our house and back yard is simply untenable. The associated privacy invasion, traffic, and noise shatters the basis of why we bought that specific home to begin with, shatters our vision for our retirement, and we expect results in a dramatic loss of market value of the home we have invested in.

**For these personal reasons we strongly oppose the contemplated rezoning to multiple family.**

## COMMUNITY REASONS

Over the last twenty years we have resided in College Heights there has been growth and development (for example-Creekside) and associated increased pressure on the community infrastructure. In recent years we have seen the construction of four (4) multiple family apartment complexes within 500 meters of our home, and along with that a very apparent and dramatic increase in traffic. It is almost impossible to now access or exit the College Heights shopping complex (Save on) at many hours of the day.

We also understand that the Southridge Elementary School is at or close to capacity. Additional apartment complexes in the neighborhood will place additional unrealistic pressure on enrolment.

College Heights (and Southridge) was clearly designed by the City of Prince George to be a neighborhood of preponderantly single-family homes, with some apartments and townhomes as well. The location of the older apartments, for example McGill Crescent at Eton Avenue, are adjacent to parks/greens space, and do not immediately encroach on the single-family dwellings in the neighborhood. This standard and community planning approach was clearly deviated from with the new apartments behind WalMart, at the intersection of Marleau Road and Southridge Avenue. These box style apartments with no obvious requirements for a landscaping plan do not in any way fit with the overall vision and design of the College Heights neighborhood.

We live in a city and community that borderlines the wilderness of northern British Columbia. We need to ensure we design the city so there is an integration with that reality. The current area behind our lot is clearly a wildlife corridor from the outskirts of town to the Fraser River. We routinely see moose, deer, black bear, fox, coyotes, and other wildlife. Their habitat and movement route will clearly be eliminated by the proposed re-zoning.

**For these community-based reasons, we strongly oppose the contemplated rezoning to multiple family.**

Your circular distributed to residents of College Heights explaining this prospective Zoning Bylaw Amendment contained the following:

“This notice is provided in advance of Council’s consideration of first and second reading of the proposed bylaw. In accordance with the *Local Government Act*, as the proposed bylaw is consistent with the City’s Official Community Plan, a public hearing will not be held”.

The tone of this statement gives a clear indication that this amendment will simply proceed, regardless of the views expressed by those that live in College Heights/Southridge. It is disappointing to say the absolute least. I would like to draw your attention to your very own City of Prince George Official Community Plan, selected excerpts (bolded/underlined for emphasis) include the following:

- 8.3 D. Neighbourhoods..... “They are typically **small-scale, dominated by single-family and similar sized buildings**”.....

- Objectives, Objective 8.3.15, “Ensure change in existing neighbourhoods **is in keeping with existing character and scale.**”
- Policies, General, Policy 8.3.48, “**The City should encourage incremental, small-scale redevelopment whose immediate impacts are relatively minor.**”
- Policy 8.3.55, “The City should require buildings to be **of a size and scale that is compatible with nearby (e.g., on the same street or block) buildings.**”
- Policy 8.3.58, “The City **should maintain a similar scale of housing to that typical to existing neighborhoods, by limiting the size of new buildings and encouraging GROUND ORIENTED MULTIPLE RESIDENTIAL FORMS.**”

We respectfully request that you pay VERY close attention to these aspects of the OCP in your disposition of this matter, including all relevant sections not cited here (including 8.3.38).

We are not ignorant of the fact development needs to occur, and that citizens of this fine city need affordable and suitable housing options, and that entrepreneurs and developers should be afforded the opportunity to thrive. We are simply of the view there are ample more suitable locations in the city of PG for this to take place. Should development proceed on 6700 Southridge Avenue, the developer should be restricted to building single family homes under the same criteria and covenants that were applicable to all initial home development in the Southridge neighborhood. However, should an apartment ultimately be constructed, essentially in our backyard, we respectfully request the city insist on the following:

- That the four story, fifty foot high, construction be as far to the opposite side of the development lot (northwest side) from the current single-family dwelling lots in that area of the Southridge neighborhood, specifically St. Stephane Place, and St. Erica Place.
- That the developer be actually held to a realistic (and not token) landscaping plan that provides for large tree buffer between the apartment and the single-family residential dwellings.
- As per Section 8.3.38 of the OCP, “Housing in these locations should ensure the development can effectively buffer residents from traffic noise and visual impacts through appropriate building and site design; and, where the housing form is adjacent to lower density uses, the bulk of the building be mitigated through appropriate setbacks, landscaping, and/or terracing of the building form”.
- And, in accordance with Policy 8.3.62 of the Official Community Plan (for Prince George), “The City should maintain character typical of existing neighbourhoods by encouraging any multi-unit development to be asymmetrical, with varied and interesting facades, rooflines, entry points, balconies, and porches”.

Finally, in closing, and so it is not left unsaid, should this Zoning Bylaw Amendment be approved as currently contemplated for 6700 Southridge Avenue (for a 4 story apartment) we will escalate our opposition through any/all avenues available, including a next level of appeal with the City (if available), the media, a college heights petition, and a legal application with the court, if necessary, to cease this particular development from proceeding.

Sincerely,  
Michael Bryce, Linda Picton Bryce (6909 St. Stephanie Place)