

**February 16, 2021**

**Mario Pascuzzi  
564 Union Street  
Prince George, BC V2M 3S5**

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

**Attention: Mayor Lyn Hall and City Council  
Re: Subject Properties 606 / 614 / 622 Zelkwas Avenue (City of Prince George Zoning  
Bylaw No. 7850, 2007, Amendment Bylaw No. 9138, 2020)  
3<sup>rd</sup> Reading at Prince George City Council Meeting dated February 22, 2021**

**Dear Mayor and Council:**

**I am making this initial submission with respect to the proposed amendment of a zoning bylaw, as mentioned above, to facilitate housing facilities for the Pheonix Transition Society. This submission discusses some of the issues of concern for me. The areas discussed below include: rezoning, size access, parking, development size / logistics, and public hearing announcements. There are multiple other issues that I would like to address to you (i.e., volume of site usage / traffic, location, communications, neighborhood respect, health/safety, and other issues), I will be submitting that information in a separate letter and will be provided to you at the February 22 meeting. In addition, I will possibly be adding further information relating to what will be explained in this letter. The separate letter will also be e-mailed to each of you over the next few days.**

## **REZONING**

Part of the proposal is to (a) amalgamate three properties into one property, and (b) rezone the property from a zoned P2 to a zoned RM3 (i.e., to provide for multiple residential housing with a maximum density of 60 dwellings/ha). The proposal has now added an amended RM3 rezoning to add "Housing, Supportive" as a permitted use on the subject property; that is, permitting the applicant to develop a housing facility providing sleeping accommodations including individual or cooperative kitchen facilities for people reintegrating into the community. There has been a lot of amendments requested, as well as multiple additional documents that may change the rezoning even further. It is not clear to me what the rezoning is and requires clarification. My problem is that the rezoning language is making it difficult for me to navigate, especially when these changes may be proposed without the public having any knowledge.

## **SITE ACCESS**

The applicant is stating that the area is located adjacent to a number of road networks to dissipate potential traffic increases (i.e., 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Union Street, Zelkwas Avenue, Rainbow Drive, and a laneway located to the west).

- If you are driving west on Rainbow Drive from Ahbau Street, a person can gain access to the subject property by taking a right on Union Street and driving about five blocks.
- If you are driving west on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Highway 97 (Central Street West), a person can gain access to the subject property by taking a left on Union Street and driving less than a block.
- If you are driving east on Zelkwas Street, a person can gain access to the subject property by either taking a left on Union Street (and driving less than a block) or taking a left on a concrete laneway (this will be explained below).

The concrete laneway to the west of the subject property is located between the subject property (and part of the Trinity United Church parking lot) and a number of other properties (i.e., 650 Zelkwas Avenue, 636 / 642 Vedder Crescent). The laneway is about 35-40 percent smaller in width compared to residential streets within the neighbourhood (excluding 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue). Residents of both 636 / 642 Vedder Crescent utilize the laneway to back their vehicles in/out of their property. The laneway is also utilized to get to/from a back alley used for parking for properties located at 534 Stuart Drive and the properties at 3579 / 3593 / 3595 / 3599 / 3609 / 3611 / 3633/ 3653 / 3655 / 3675 / 3677 / 3723 / 3725 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue). The laneway ends at an intersection between Trinity United Church and 3579 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. (There is no access point to the laneway from 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue.) At this intersection where the laneway ends, the entire back alley is mostly gravel and paved road. There are multiple ways to gain access to this intersection: off Stuart Drive, off Zelkwas Avenue, and off the parking lot located between the Trinity United Church and the proposed property. About five (5) years ago, barricades about 30-40 mm in height were placed between the parking lot and the intersection described. Within a few months, the barricades were removed by members of the public and the access point was (and is currently) reopened. Since that time, the access point from the parkade has always been open. This has since changed very recently last month, where the snow accumulated on the laneway has been (and is being) cleaned by City staff to prevent traffic from the parking lot. This is forcing people who want to gain access to the back alley take the concrete laneway route instead. Regardless of the current barricade of snow that has cut access from the Trinity United Church parking lot, the snow will melt and members of the public (including residents located on the properties on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue) will utilize this access point.

Excluding the issues surrounding the concrete laneway, most people will go to the subject property by driving on Union Street until they find the entry way located across the street from 564 / 580 Union Street. The entry way is the basic entrance leading to the Trinity United Church parking lot. The applicant is saying that the entry way across from 564 / 580 Union Street will be the only way to get to the subject property. This entry way can become a very congested part of our neighbourhood, due to the number of vehicles coming in/out of the parking lot, including those that want to take a shortcut to the concrete laneway. Another issue related to access is the matter of parking (to be brought up in a separate section of the letter). When people want to gain access to/from the back alley described, we see vehicles that are treating the parking lot like a road (sometimes, people are driving up to 40 km/hr there). This has been a disruption from our view on Union Street, as the intersection seems to be more like a traffic stop than anything else. These issues have never been addressed in the past and, even if there is indication that the issues will be addressed, I cannot guarantee with certain that it will be safer than what it looks like presently.

## **PARKING**

The applicant is stating that the asphalt area (which is gravel road) on the northern portion of the proposed site is currently not being utilized for parking. The entire parking lot of the Trinity United Church (which is asphalt) is located:

- Between the front of the Trinity United Church (on 3555 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue) and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and
- Between the back of the Trinity United Church and the northern edge of the subject property (which is gravel).

The edge of the subject property (that is asphalt) changes into gravel and then grass. (The subject property from Zelkwas Avenue to the gravel section on the property is grass, which turns into gravel and then asphalt.) Basically, the gravel section which is on the proposed property is located between the grassed portion of the subject property and the entire parking lot behind the Trinity United Church. The applicant is stating that the gravel section (which would be part of the subject property) is not being utilized for parking.

The asphalt area is currently being used in a few situations:

- For members of the staff located at 513 Ahbau Street. This location provides a number of services to the general public, including Krell Wellness Center (chiropractic, naturopathic, chiropractic, physiotherapy, acupuncture, massage therapy, orthotics, etc.) and many other businesses, including: Dengarry Professional Services, James Secord Personal Health Design, Li-Car Management Group, Elevate Performance Realty & Management, Yoga PG, and other services. This building has two (2) parking lots – one along the front side of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and the other along the back side of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The front side of 513 Ahbau Street contains about 8-10 parking spaces, while the back side of 513 Ahbau Street (where access is available off the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Union Street) contains about 35-50 parking spaces. From our knowledge at our viewing distance, the Trinity United Church allows people who work at 513 Ahbau Street to park on any part of their property, with most of the staff parking behind the Trinity United Church. There are other employees who park behind the Trinity United Church and usually park either on the asphalt portion or the gravel part, located on the subject property.
- When there is an overload of vehicles for Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA), or other meetings. The vast majority of the meetings for user groups are located in a designated room located on the back side of the Trinity United Church. (This room has also been used as a voting station for the most recent provincial and federal election campaigns.) This room is currently being used for weight loss, yoga, and other purposes. The largest amount of people attending these meetings at this time are for AA (Sundays at 1:00PM and Mondays at 8:00PM) and NA (Tuesdays at 7:00PM) meetings. On any one of either the AA or NA meetings, approximately 7-25 vehicles are parked behind the Trinity United Church, the asphalt area (on the subject property), or alongside Union Street. This does not include other events or other meetings that may be occurring on the front side of the Trinity United Church.
- During special ceremonies (not including Sunday service at 10:00AM) where parking is required (e.g., wedding, funeral, or other church and non-church related event). For obvious reasons, we are not aware of any large special ceremonies at the Trinity United Church taking place due to

Covid-19 restrictions. (This also includes concerts hosted by the Prince George Conservatory of Music.) Prior to Covid-19, the Church would have multiple ceremonies of the nature described and, for most of these events, most of the available parking spaces, including the asphalt area, were utilized.

- Members of the general public who park their vehicles on the subject property to keep their cars idle and/or park their vehicles for other reasons. This is an occurrence that might take place anywhere from one (1) to five (5) days per week. They will park either on the church parking lot or on the subject property, even the grass in some cases.

There are also other considerations relating to the parking situation:

1. There are two (2) operations located on the Trinity United Church (3555 Union Street) site – Prince George Conservatory of Music and Edge Meadows Preschool.
  - a. The Prince George Conservatory of Music is located on the front side of the Church (facing 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue) and has its own separate entrance. During the day (particularly between 3PM and 6PM on most of the weekdays), this area of the property was particularly hectic, as you had vehicles from the 513 Ahbau Street site parked there AND vehicles with either adults or family members dropping off their children for music lessons. If there was no room to park at the front side of the Church parking lot, people would either park on Union Street or the back of the Church parking lot. (Since the restrictions from Covid-19, the congestion on the front side of the parking lot has been reduced drastically from the 3PM to 6PM time slots. Although there has been an increase of vehicles from the 513 Ahbau Street site parking on the front side of the parking lot, the congestion and traffic from the Conservatory has lessened.) The primary point I would like to make is that, when there are no Covid-19 restrictions (and the Conservatory is operating at maximum levels), there is an over-congestion of vehicles in that area, which has also congested Union Street. Additionally, if someone needs to enter either the Trinity United Church front parking lot or the back parking lot behind 513 Ahbau Street, that intersection is extremely difficult to slow down, find what you are looking for, and park.
  - b. Edge Meadows Preschool is located on the back side of the church and faces the subject property and the concrete laneway (located west of the subject property). The congestion is usually on weekday mornings (between 8:30AM and 10:00AM) and later in the day (between 11:00AM and 12:30PM), when most of the drop off and pick up of children takes place. Most of the parking for the Preschool faces the subject property, and you could probably have 10 (ten) to 15 vehicles parking there. As I have discussed previously, the space between the concrete laneway and the Preschool has a lot of traffic, which makes this part of the area difficult to circumvent when driving within that particular section of the parking lot.
2. As mentioned prior, the applicant is stating that part of the northern portion of the proposed site (which is gravel) is currently not being utilized for parking. I have provided you with concrete examples showing when the gravel road is utilized. During one (1) of the community engagement sessions, parking was brought up. Specifically, we enquired about what would be happening with parking once the proposed property has its constructions completed. Bob K. Fillier, the Head Minister of the Trinity United Church, informed us that night that the parking lot

behind Trinity United Church would be shared, which implies that people who will be living and/or working on the proposed site would share the same parking lot (i.e., between the Church and the proposed property) with any meetings and activities at the Church.

3. Between the proposed property and the property on 513 Ahbau Street, Union Street is an access point. Union Street is utilized for parking for both locations, mostly for clients and employees at 513 Ahbau Street. This makes it difficult to drive through the street or to back out of one's own driveway. When clients or employees are parked on Union Street, especially if there is one across the street from another,

## **DEVELOPMENT SIZE / LOGISTICS**

The proposal is to rezone the site to RM3 (Multiple Residential) to allow for a 14-unit supportive housing development (with a density of 60 units/hectare). I have had the opportunity to look at the correspondence that has been written and the information that has been provided by outside sources prior to asking questions of the actual sources. The questions are as follows:

- How many units are going to be built on the proposed site with 100 percent certainty? A review of the documentation shows that there will be a total of 14 units on only one building. During the virtual engagement session I attended last December, I raised this question to all parties involved in the construction phase. The response I received from the developer at the engagement session was that they could not answer the question, stating that the number of units would be determined in the design process. To obtain even more information, I recently had a telephone conversation with Sandra Sasaki (President/Chair, Phoenix Transition Society) on February 12, 2021, who stated that even she did not have this information. How many total units will be on the proposed property? My expectation would be to know this information at the inception of getting knowledge about the project. To expect to receive this information at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading stage and/or after the final sketches are presented to City Council a few months later is unacceptable.
- How many buildings will be on the proposed site? A review of the 12<sup>th</sup> slide as part of the Virtual Meeting Presentation Slides that was part of the engagement session I attended shows that there will only be one (1) building that will be built on the proposed property, which will be located on the corner of Union Street and Zelkwas Avenue. However, other information that has been discussed is the construction of two (2) buildings, not one, on the proposed property. How many buildings will there be on the proposed property? As the site will have a density of 60 units/hectare, will there be 14 units in one building and up to 46 units in another building? Will the 14-unit building have the potential of being expanded in the future to have more than 14 units? When you look at the rezoning of three large lots on one piece of property, the issue of expansion will most definitely be a concern. From some of the drawings, it appears to be evident that another building, larger than the one that is being proposed, can most definitely be built. Additionally,
  - If the one building that we are being communicated about has a mother, a baby, and other children in each unit, this amounts to about a maximum about of people of 42, not including staff and the possibility that the one building could have staff and all of the other supports available?

- If the current proposal as part of the bylaw change is for a maximum density of 60 units/hectare, this number will have to be amended when a larger building is possibly built on the same property?
- How many storeys will each building have on the proposed site? A review of the one building to be built on the corner of Union Street and Zelkwas Avenue indicates, as part of the RM3 zoning change, that the size can be up to 12 feet in height and up to three storeys. On the slide presentation, it indicated that the building would be between 7.5 and 8.25 feet in height and only two storeys. How many storeys will the one building be? Will the building be adjusted in size (i.e., up to 12 feet)? And what will the size be of the 2<sup>nd</sup> building, where will it be, and why is it not part of any of the documentation? In the most recent presentation to the City, the applicants are saying that the residents who attended the public information sessions wanted buildings that conform to the neighbourhood and, as a result, the type of building will be built will be changed, who is to say that this will be changed back to the original idea of a stacked mobile home structure. If a stacked mobile home structure is built instead, this will give the applicant the opportunity to either increase the height of the building, add more units (which is still to be determined), or widen the building.
- How many people will the facilities on the proposed site serve? And is there a maximum amount of people that can be served on the proposed site? A review of the initial paperwork presented last year indicates that the property will have a density of 60 units/hectare. This suggests that there will be a maximum of 60 people that could potentially be housed on the proposed property. Given that some of the units will have families, what is the maximum number of people that could potentially be in one unit? For a 14-unit facility

For ourselves, the list of questions to be answered have not been addressed in any of the paperwork available. It is irrational that the information that will be presented at the City Council meeting giving 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading to the rezoning will address all of these issues.

## **PUBLIC HEARING REQUIREMENT**

It was recommended that public hearings be waived in relation to this proposed bylaw change as one would not expect or show significant public input.

In M'Akola Development Services' rezoning request, they indicated that, as a public hearing would not be required, they would lead and host an on-site neighbourhood meeting with representatives from M'Akola, Phoenix Transition Society, BC Housing, and the United Trinity Church, one where neighbouring residents had the opportunity to learn about the project and ask questions. We received mail correspondence around November 21, 2020, inviting us to attend one (1) of three (3) online events through Zoom. I attended the final online event. (There was another information session for the stakeholders, which was held on a separate date.)

Although we did receive a letter in the mail inviting us to the meetings, along with a 2-page brochure explaining the project in some detail, we were unable to see any other information. Before the meeting began, Hillary Morgan (who was running the meeting), said that we were only allowed to answer questions solely based on the information that we were receiving. The problem was that there was a lot of information provided within a short period of time and it was difficult to prepare any questions. It

would be normal to assume that we would be able to see what the proposed project on the proposed site would actually look like, rather than a slide showing the building highlighted in red.

At the time of the meeting, each of the representative parties spoke about who they were and some information on the project itself. My preference for such a meeting would have been to:

- (a) See what the proposed project would look like (rather than being informed that we don't know what it will look like),
- (b) Have copies of the slide show ahead of time so we would have known the information to be explained in further detail, and
- (c) No information relating to the number of units and the number of people that would be on the proposed facility, stating that they did not have the information and that the plans have not been done to confirm this.

From the information session I attended to present date, many people (including owners of properties on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue) were not aware of this project. This may explain why there were so little people attending the public sessions. When some of the neighbours conducted petition signing sessions around our neighbourhood over the Summer and Fall of last year, many were not even aware of this project, nor did they receive correspondence inviting them to the public information sessions. This suggests an inaccuracy relating to the lack of questions surrounding the project. It was difficult to attend an information session when most of the questions could not be addressed or answered. It is unacceptable to expect these issues to be addressed during a 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading at a City Council meeting.

**I would like to take this time to thank all of you for giving me the opportunity to voice my concerns about this rezoning. I am a strong proponent of supportive housing of this nature; however, the objective issues surrounding this project, not including the ones yet to be mentioned, are too difficult to ignore. I believe in strong relationship building and full openness and communication. Residing very close to this proposed property for more than 30 years, and respecting one another through the years, I would expect this to also apply with this proposal (but I have not seen this relationship building, openness, and communication to date). For many reasons, I have been afraid (like a lot of people in our neighbourhood) to speak my opinion about this matter and am worried about any negative impacts on me. (I will also be discussing this in my other letter.)**

**If it is possible, I would like some communication from any of you to discuss the issues described in this letter (and those to be provided at a later date). Some of us within the neighborhood would be more than willing to have a meeting with any one of you. I am also willing to speak to you by phone at the City Council meeting, if any of you feel that my feedback is going to assist. (I feel strongly that my feedback will be beneficial). My contact information will be at the end of this letter.**

**Once again, thank you for giving me this opportunity.**

**Sincerely,**

**Mario Pascuzzi  
564 Union Street**

Prince George, BC V2M 3S5

Redacted

