

## Nareka Jacques

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 23, 2024 3:40 PM  
**To:** Municipal Hall; Niall Paltiel; Mayor Ryan Windsor; Chris Graham; Bob Thompson; Gordon Newton; Sarah Riddell; Zeb King  
**Subject:** 1934 Hovey Development

Dear Mayor and Council,

The development proposal for 1934 Hovey Rd sounds great! Having health care workers living so close to where they work would mean many of them could live car-light or car-free. It looks like the developer is putting in a lot of effort to encourage alternate forms of transportation and I can't imagine any major issue with parking because of that. The 72 and 75 have stops within a block of that address, with the 81 only a couple blocks away on Wallace. Grocery stores, pharmacies, doctors offices, and restaurants are within a 15 minute walk, and Brentwood Bay is within a 15 minute bike ride. It's a location made for a car-free lifestyle.

I think a shuttle service between a purpose-built staff housing property and the hospital makes a lot of sense.

This whole project could be the "thinking outside the box" solution to parking that the Saanich Peninsula Hospital needs, if they can only see it. Population will only increase on the Peninsula and we can't assume that driving is the only solution or the entire peninsula will be a parking lot one day. We don't want to become the next Langford, we need to develop for people instead of cars. Don't pave over the Agricultural Land Reserve next to the hospital for the storage of privately owned vehicles.

Best regards,  
Jamie Wellbourn

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# B & J Smith - 1974 Hovey Rd

## *Uninvited Development Impact*

In 2000, we settled at our current address and have created a very comfortable and satisfying home in our corner of Central Saanich.

In June of 2023 we were advised that Aryze Developments was proposing a major property redevelopment right beside us that would increase the neighbourhood population from five dwellings to almost 200. This intrusive change came with no warning and our anxiety level immediately jumped. Sixteen months later, this project continues to percolate and the outlook for our peaceful lifestyle remains a question mark.

At this point, it is worthwhile to step back and refresh our minds regarding the framework for this situation.

### **1. Two Visions**

Broadly speaking, there can be two perceptions of a particular property, community or neighbourhood:

1. It can be viewed as a home. This is the view taken by most residents and us. It is their personal choice of location, their homesite, it serves all their needs and is a stable, calm, predictable and satisfying basis for conducting their life. **Generally, the home location is a source of comfort and contentment, not anxiety.**

Furthermore, the regional and neighbourhood context provided by the Regional Growth Strategy and the Official Community Plan implies, and may even specify, that the look and feel of the neighborhood will remain essentially as it was or develop gradually within known and acceptable parameters. Sudden non-conforming changes to the neighbourhood are not sanctioned by these professionally developed land-use planning tools. Both the RGS and the OCP result from extensive public input and represent the preferences of the residents.

These documents and the related local zoning regulations assure residents that no sudden changes to their lifestyle should be expected.

**In this regard, it is important to note the role of the Municipality.** It is to manage land-use planning for the residents according to their wishes expressed in the OCP. **The obligation of the Mayor, Council and Staff is to act for the residents first and last.**

2. It can be viewed as a business opportunity. This is not an unreasonable position but any newcomer to the area should be expected to substantially conform to the neighborhood plans and zoning already in place. They should respect the existing community plans, zoning and certainly the preferences of the existing residents. This is the legal and moral framework that has existed for some time before their commercial decision was made. As a guest, would the visitor not normally respect the preferences of the host?

With this application in particular, the applicant's interest is not in making a home within the existing neighbourhood structure, but on substantially changing the neighbourhood for their commercial benefit. In fact, this application depends upon upending the OCP for this area and poses a direct threat to the stable and peaceful life legitimately taken for granted by the residents. **Its objectives require disruption.**

**These adverse changes do not stem from the community itself but are imposed upon them by outside commercial interests.** In most other areas of human endeavour, personal space, independence and well-being are respected, even protected by law.

## **2. Existing Framework**

The existing land use plan is governed by the RGS, the OCP, Infill Housing Design Guidelines and related bylaws. Here is a partial summary of the planning guidelines/stipulations for the area covered by the application, Hovey Road at East Saanich Road:

1. Within the Urban Containment Boundary
2. Zoning, Residential Neighbourhood and Residential Corridor
3. OCP, Neighbourhood Residential, mix of housing units such as single detached, duplexes and multi-unit residential buildings containing up to eight dwelling units. The site fronting on East Saanich Road (Main Corridor) can support townhouses and apartment buildings up to four stories.

**As noted in the July Staff Report, this proposal is well outside those prescriptions.**

## **3. The Application**

1. Two buildings, market rental 135 units, Legion seniors housing 62 affordable units (only 31%).
2. Outside the Village Center area (800m away)
3. Rezoning to Residential Attached, RM-5, a major change
4. Purchase and demolition of five homes with environmental costs
5. Not compliant with density and height guidelines
6. Does not comply with the stepping down height policy for areas away from the village center, adjacent to low density residential areas and agricultural land.
7. Our home is orphaned between a 6 storey building and farm fields
8. 6 storeys, maximum height exceedance is 5.5 m, adjacent to the Smith property
9. The western building exceeds the Floor Area Ratio limit
10. Supplied parking is 196 spaces short, 345 are required (only 43% are supplied)
11. Tree loss, 48 removed, 9 retained, 17 planted
12. Traffic Impact Assessment, more work required. Sightlines at Hovey Road and E. Saanich Rd. are difficult
13. **Staff recommendations: not in line with OCP guidelines, reconsider height and parking ratio**

## **4. Observations**

It is clear that this proposal does not respect the OCP or zoning regulations. Furthermore, and even more concerning, it does not recognize the existence of any neighbours or consider the impacts of the project upon them. These are serious shortcomings and should have been flagged much earlier in the process.

In fact, it is not unreasonable to suggest that this application in its original form should not have cleared the Municipal front counter.

Further comments:

1. There is not even a token attempt to provide affordable housing in the larger building which contains 69% of the proposed units. It is widely known that housing affordability is a huge problem.
2. It would appear that the inclusion of the Legion building in this proposal is more as a “sweetener” to garner support rather than the outcome of rational project planning. There is no functional or logical connection between the two buildings.
3. It is highly likely that the 62 unit Legion building could easily be accommodated on their own land. In fact there may be room for two or even three buildings with that footprint which would eliminate the need to demolish three good houses.
4. Without rehashing the list of problems in Section 3 on page 2, this project fails badly in two areas:
  - a. It is not even close to complying with the OCP and Zoning regulations or the proximity to the Village Centre
  - b. There has been no attempt to look outside the proposal envelope and consider the impact upon the neighbours.**
5. It is important to reinforce the points made in Section 1 on page 1 that:
  - a. Residents are entitled to “quiet enjoyment” of their home and surroundings as provided for in the RGS, the OCP and the Zoning regulations
  - b. Uninvited disruptions to that quiet enjoyment should not be entertained
  - c. It is the responsibility of the Municipality to uphold the current land-use plans as endorsed by the residents. The Municipality has no inherent obligation to further proposed changes to the community that are not compliant with the existing land use plans - they are paid by and work for the residents, no one else.

## **5. Conclusions**

In some respects, this project may have some worthwhile elements. However, the shortcomings are significant. Particularly noteworthy is the **complete lack of attention to the impact upon the neighbours.**

It likely should not have proceeded this far without some or all of those problems being addressed. Further close scrutiny is required.

## **6. Recommendations**

1. Reconsider the whole project in light of the extensive problems cited above, particularly:
  - a. The complete lack of consideration for the neighborhood impacts
  - b. The complete lack of affordable housing provisions
  - c. Investigate the feasibility of putting the Legion building upon Legion land
2. **Conduct a Neighborhood Impact Assessment to consider the following:**
  - a. Compliance with the governing regulations cited above (Section 2 page 2)
  - b. A detailed list of the neighbourhood changes being proposed including
    - i. Density, traffic, dust, parking and related noise
    - ii. Viewscapes (sky, natural scenery) and sightlines, night lighting, light pollution
    - iii. Neighbourhood look and feel
    - iv. Impact upon privacy and traditional use of the dwelling and associated land

- v. Impact upon the quality of life
- vi. Impact upon the property value and saleability
- c. An assessment and comparison of the costs and benefits of a) and b) above
- d. A conclusion as to the scope and amount of the impact upon the neighbourhood
- e. A conclusion as to the net benefits of the project to the neighbourhood
  - i. **Special attention should be paid to neighbouring seniors who have invested considerable time and money in their homes.** Forced relocation is a time consuming, expensive and highly stressful life event.
- f. Recommendations which could include:
  - i. Do not approve
  - ii. Approve with changes
  - iii. Approve as proposed
  - iv. A compensation package to affected residents if approval is given

## **7. Compensation**

Should the project proceed, we may seek compensation for the many uninvited negative impacts upon our otherwise peaceful life and for any resulting loss of property value and saleability.