

Sharon MacGougan, 7411 Ash St. Item 1, Dec. 16, 2013 Public Hearing

Mayor and Councillors,

Thank you for referring the 7460 Ash Street proposal back to staff at the May public hearing, where I spoke. I have some follow-up points.

1. The hawk's nest: CO-HABITING WITH THE NATURAL WORLD

Thank you to Councillor Linda McPhail for starting a process by asking staff about the hawk nest and also for caring about the hawks. I was worried about a tree being cut down with baby hawks still in the nest, so I had been communicating with city staff about the hawks since February. I'd like to update you now and add a request.

- It was a joyful experience, watching the hawk babies grow. They make a *kreee* sound as they learn to fly. We could co-habit with the natural world if we left some space. I've left half my own property in a natural state. I love trees, and I've conserved good habitat for birds and bees. I hope the soon-to-be-homeless hawk moves into my yard.
- I've done this voluntarily, but perhaps there can be incentives for other people to do the same. Currently we reward development, and there could be a way to reward *not* developing every single patch of land. Bees and birds need places to live. If all the natural growth is clearcut, where will that place be? At the May public hearing, Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt mentioned a loss of songbirds in her neighbourhood. There are so many songbirds in *our* neighbourhood whose voices will also soon be stilled.
- Please consider what you as the government of Richmond can do to retain more of the natural growth at 7460 Ash Street.

2. Trees: FOREST BATHING

The Japanese term *forest bathing* is what happens to people when they walk through a forest. It's a healing experience. It makes for a better neighbourhood when trees remain in it, especially mature trees. I don't want this Ash Street development or any other one to make a neighbourhood worse.

- If the *will* to save trees is not there, no good happens. However, 41st Avenue, just west of the Boulevard, has a mature sequoia tree right in the middle of the busy shopping area. Somebody had a grand idea and it became a reality. They found a way for development to take place all around it without killing the tree. In contrast, if trees are seen as an inconvenience or as not important, then no real efforts will ever be made to save them.
- Throughout our neighbourhood, we are losing hundreds of mature trees, with massive loss of wildlife habitat. When we lose trees, developers sometimes pay money in compensation. That money may be used to plant trees in other areas of Richmond, and sharing is okay. However, I have two questions:
 1. Why can't some of the money be used to plant street trees in our area?
 2. Why can't the developers be required to work around the trees in the parts of our area that are still well treed—like 7460 Ash Street?

3. Traffic calming: KEEPING PROMISES

The OCP for our area states that traffic calming and full street upgrades will be paid for out of development cost charges. I also have here a 2004 letter from the city's Urban Development Division. It says this:

Transportation staff will continue to pursue traffic-calming devices as part of the development review process (i.e., curb extensions and traffic circles on local residential streets in the South McLennan Area) to increase the traffic safety and liveability of the neighbourhood. A preliminary list of traffic-calming measures has already been identified by staff to be installed in the neighbourhood, with exact locations to be confirmed later.

Why has the promised action not happened? Can you make it happen now?

4. Sidewalk: GOOD MEASURE

Thank you for considering a sidewalk extension to my mother's driveway. You will have noticed that staff want asphalt, a temporary sidewalk. The rationale is that my mother's property has development potential.

However, according to the OCP for our area, the development potential of her property would be three houses: one facing Ash and two facing Armstrong. Sidewalks are provided with developments of *five* houses, not *three*. I think that means there never will be a sidewalk.

I have found it hard to explain to my mother why she wouldn't be getting a "real" sidewalk. A "temporary" asphalt extension is hard to explain to someone about to turn 90. I have a first-class mother, and I think she deserves a first-class sidewalk. I'd like you to know a few other things:

- My parents' house was one of the first on Ash Street, and my mother is the last original resident on the street.
- My parents have paid taxes at this location since 1948. In fact, our family has paid taxes on three Ash Street properties for decades. For the full street upgrades and traffic calming promised in the OCP, a portion could be paid for from the taxes collected from us.
- When I was a little girl, my first "job" was picking blueberries from the family patch with "orders" coming from kindly relatives. Berry picking is hard work, and I remember thinking about how much money I would get as I watched my father carefully weigh the berries. He always threw in an extra pound or more. "It's called good measure," he said. Maybe I wasn't so happy then as I watched some of my profits disappear, but now I value the lesson: for good measure, always give a little more, not a little less.

What we are being offered here is a little less.

Thank you for your thoughtful comments when I spoke to you in May. Whatever you decide today, I will appreciate your efforts.



City of Richmond

6911 No.3 Road, Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1
Telephone (604) 276-4000
www.city.richmond.bc.ca

November 4, 2004
File: 08-4050-08/2004-Vol 01

Urban Development Division
Fax: (604) 276-4052

Ms. Sharon MacGougan
7411 Ash Street
Richmond, BC V6Y 2R9

Dear Ms. MacGougan:

Re: Traffic-Related Concerns Regarding Development in the South McLennan Area

Thank you for your letter of August 25, 2004 to the City Clerks office with regards to the proposed Polygon Development at 7140 Heather Street in the South McLennan area. Your letter has been forwarded to the Transportation Department to address specifically the issue of traffic safety and speeding vehicles on Ash Street.

As you may know, the Richmond Official Community Plan (OCP) for the McLennan South Sub-Area is a document that outlines the goals, objectives, and policies for the area. The OCP Plan encourages the provision of a mix of housing types to accommodate a variety of households, especially for families with children and older residents to age-in-place, while retaining a large portion of existing single-family dwellings. The proposed Polygon Development you have identified is in accordance with the OCP for the McLennan South area.

While any new development may increase the amount of traffic on adjacent streets, issues related to traffic operations, access, and traffic safety are reviewed by Transportation staff prior to the approval of any new developments in the City, including the subject development. As such, Transportation staff will continue to pursue traffic-calming devices as part of the development review process (i.e., curb extensions and traffic circles on local residential streets in the South McLennan Area) to increase the traffic safety and liveability of the neighbourhood. A preliminary list of traffic-calming measures has already been identified by staff to be installed in the neighbourhood, with the exact locations to be confirmed later.

As you have also identified several enforcement issues in your letter, we have already forwarded them to the Richmond RCMP with a request to include these areas in their schedule of enforcement.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns to our attention. Please contact me (604-247-4627) if you have any other traffic-related concerns. For any development-related issues, please contact Eric Fiss, Policy Planner (604-276-4193), while any enforcement-related concerns should be forwarded to the Richmond RCMP, non-emergency number (604-278-1212).

Yours truly,

Fred Lin, P. Eng.
Transportation Engineer

pc: Linda Barnes, Councillor

1351729

278-5139

RICHMOND
Island City, by Nature