

Arterial Road Policy

I would like my comments to be on the record that I disagree with the new proposal in the official community plan amendments to allow encroachment of 5 feet into the heretofore scared minimum 20 foot backyard setbacks.

Developer driven policy changes to allow overshadowing and encroachment of privacy on abutting single family detached homes by this new allowance further erodes the quality of life for many long term Richmond homeowners.

Historically when homes were built, the 20 foot rear yard setback was considered the absolute minimum and many properties were built with substantially deeper backyards. New homes today are built with the 20 foot backyard as maximum not the minimum. Allowing townhouses to encroach 5 feet closer and to effectively allow a single 10 to 12 foot to 16 foot single story on 50% of the backyard is a catastrophic change to sunlight and privacy of the abutting backyard neighbour.

These main arterial road developments are built on land raised to the crown of the main arterial roads and in many cases the starting foundations of these townhomes is 5 feet and higher than the back subdivision property. The building is starting at a higher elevation. The back lane accesses that used to buffer the main road developments are used less frequently. The developers are building bigger looking two level townhomes with higher pitch roofs and taller ceilings in the back to balance the three levels built in the front of the lots. You can see an example of this deliberate elevation blurr at the highly regarded Cassis development on Steveston Highway.

The policy allows for 2 1/2 storeys in the back rows. What does a 2 1/2 storey townhome really look like?

Please reconsider this aspect of the proposed arterial road policy. Listen to the citizens. You heard them and acted appropriately with the development at Kingsley Estates on the old Steveston High School site and that site was built with substantially greater set backs well beyond 20 feet to the established neighbourhood houses.

The neighbours of Coldfall Court are unhappy with the current regulations... can you imagine how much more unbearable their life would be if those townhomes were built with an additional one storey encroaching 5 feet closer.

Hear the pleas and remove the 5 foot encroachment for 50% of the backyard. 15 ft is not enough to buffer the changes and they are not needed for the zonings to be successful. Eliminate overlooking balconies and large windows. It is not needed for density or affordability.

Thank you

Lyn ter Borg

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