

May 28, 2018

Mayor, Council, City Staff, and others,

We are writing to you, once again, to re-iterate our opposition to the re-zoning application for the former Rosemary Heights Retreat Centre lands. Our argument against it is convincing and we are appealing to the City to reject Porte's application. To break it down, please note the multiple reasons that make up our argument:

ENVIRONMENT

We are concerned about impact of the proposed development on a protected and ecologically sensitive riparian forest. In fact, the proposed development is inconsistent, and indeed in direct contravention of the City's conservation strategy:

Surrey's Sustainability Charter

- States that Surrey is a thriving, GREEN, inclusive City.

Surrey's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy

- The proposed development runs counter to the City's own scientific research, which has identified the ecological sensitivity of the subject lands and riparian forest as a key spoke in the City's conservation strategy, and thus worthy of protection. In fact, the Retreat Centre Lands have been identified by the Surrey Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS) Green Infrastructure Network (GIN) as being a major hub (Hub J) for animal mating and migrations, including owls, eagles, deer, and many other habitat. This report ranked the Rosemary Heights wildlife corridor as 5th among all of Surrey's Hub-to-Hub corridors in terms of ecological importance.

Ecological Concerns

- This includes loss of Surrey's tree canopy, concerns with slope stability, and wind protection.

Surrey's involvement in the David Suzuki Blue Dot Movement

- On January 11, 2016 the City of Surrey approved the declaration "Right to a Healthy Environment" which includes:
 - Breathing clean air, drinking clean water, consuming safe food;
 - Accessing nature;
 - Knowing about pollutants released into the local environment; and
 - *Participating in government decisions that will affect the environment.*

SCHOOLS

It is well known that the Rosemary Heights community schools have already by far exceeded capacity. The student population generated from the proposed development on top of that generated from other new developments in the area, including the

enormous Harvard Gardens, will bring school overcrowding in the area to crisis levels. Of note, Porte's proposal includes a Francophone school that is exclusive and not accessible to the large majority of the community's students.

TRAFFIC, ROAD SAFETY AND PARKING

It is also well known that the Rosemary Heights area is fraught with traffic congestion, road and pedestrian safety issues, and parking frustrations. The City appears to be advancing massive development (including Harvard Gardens) without funding for the infrastructure required to support it. The Porte development proposes an additional 322 housing units, which will exacerbate these issues in the community, in the immediate vicinity of the development and within the development itself. With Porte's plans to include the addition of a Francophone school on the property where most of the 260 students will be bussed in combined with complex traffic and poorly thought out entrance/exit points, the risk to safety increases drastically. Further, this increased traffic, including busses, poses a direct safety risk to children walking to and from Rosemary Heights Elementary. The need for parking will also inherently increase in the area, which is already a noticeable problem for existing residents.

NEIGHBOURHOOD CONCEPT PLAN

The NCP was designed to ensure that the Rosemary Heights area has a unique quality that even city council has stated needs to be maintained. Any further development should be consistent with the intent and principles of the NCP. The Porte Development does not conform with these guidelines in any way.

THE DEVELOPER'S APPROACH, COMMUNICATION AND MISREPRESENTATION OF THE FACTS

- Porte is aggressively forcing a development on our community to which we have expressly opposed.
- Despite their own claims, Porte has not listened to community concerns and feedback.
- Porte has provided revised plans that are markedly worse than their previous proposal.
- Porte has told the City that they will not hold a public consultation despite the fact that the revisions essentially constitute a new proposal. Porte has assured the City that their information sheet (flyer) and their door to door canvass will suffice. Of concern is that:
 - the flyer circulated provided limited information, ie.
 - lack of information about the school / misrepresentations of it being accessible to the community's student population
 - lack of information about the entrance/exit/traffic
 - lack of information about the sight-lines for the proposed 4 storey condominiums
 - lack of information about density

- the results of the door to door survey will be unbiased and may not be reported to the City accurately

NO BENEFIT TO THE COMMUNITY

Porte's proposal offers no real benefit to the community; on the contrary, it serves to disadvantage it in every way as described above. We are in full agreement with Dr. Christopher Condin who has stated:

"I urge Council and planning to require that they (Porte) revise their proposal in accordance with the current zoning of the property as institutional, which will permit the retention of the existing forest by using existing building footprints, bequeath the ecologically sensitive land for future generations, and result in traffic impacts at before/after school periods only (rather than constantly), and/or bring a net benefit to the community (such as a library, a publically accessible [i.e. not an exclusively Francophone] school, a park, firehall, or similar."

As the City Council considers all the issues and the negative impacts this proposed development will have on the Rosemary Heights area, we, and the community, remain hopeful that Council will act appropriately, and within the wishes of its constituents in this area, and deny the application.