

CITY OF MERRITT

OCT 06 2020

RECEIVED

To: Mayor Linda Brown and Councilors

October 5, 2020

Subject: For Inclusion in Public Hearing Agenda on Tuesday, October 13, 2020  
3350 Voght Street and 3155 Grimmett Development Proposal

Attention: Don McArthur, Planning & Development Services Manager

Hello, our name is Ken & Barb Sward. We live at 2259 Burgess Avenue, which is directly to the south of the proposed development of Townhouses and Modular Homes located to the south of Voght Street.

We write you today with both praise and concern as it relates to this project.

Development is required and is a good thing for the City of Merritt. Merritt needs to, and should, grow. There is tremendous potential in this City. That is one of the reasons we moved to this beautiful area.

However, it must also be noted that one of the major reasons we moved to Burgess Avenue was the privacy and "elbow room" it afforded. We can view deer feeding by our home, we can view raptors sitting in the dead tree behind our home daily, and are always encouraged to experience rarer sightings such as in the past year, we have had 2 moose in the area, as well as a bobcat, beaver, and a bear. It is a quiet street and is relatively crime free.

If, and when, this development takes place much of this could be lost. We believe in order to preserve some of the reasons we live here will require some cooperation and consideration on behalf of the city, as well as the developer. The residents of Burgess pay very high taxes and do not have a sidewalk, street lights, or storm drains. We do not complain about this as we knew this when moving in, but the changes proposed offer some challenges as listed below.

- 1) As this is the ONLY east/west corridor for wildlife to travel from one side of the valley to the other within the City of Merritt, this valuable land must be recognized as such. The property ties in with the protected lands and oxbows recently recognized by the City to the east. The hillside is their corridor and is regularly travelled by wildlife. This is an invaluable commodity that would be lost forever;
- 2) The hillside is obviously arid and as such makes it vulnerable to any sort of activity placed upon it. There must not be access to this hillside for things such as tobogganing, mountain biking, hiking, or any other usage which will only serve to permanently damage these sensitive grass lands;

**For Inclusion in Public Hearing Agenda**

**3350 Voght Street and 3155 Grimmert Development Proposal**

- 3) As a rear entry point to the properties located on Burgess Ave., it becomes an open invitation to crime. Obviously this is not something any of us want;
- 4) With a large amount of people residing on the property to be developed, it is only a short matter of time before a hiking trail is created along the ridge crest, be it an official trail or simply one through the grass whereby hikers can enjoy the view of the city, or the view of residents' back yards; and
- 5) Property values would be significantly reduced as a result of the loss of privacy. Obviously a situation that does not sit well with the residents of Burgess Ave. This would also be reflected in the reduction of taxes paid to the City by those same property owners.

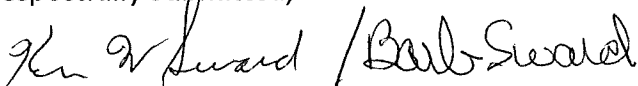
Something that can be done to mitigate many of the above mentioned problems is an 8 foot high privacy fence that can be constructed along the top of the hillside on City property at the time of development. We are proposing that the City and the developer cost share in the erection of a privacy fence as this would alleviate much of the residents' concerns with this potential development. This fence would be located at the crest of the hill and extend the full length of the development property, from the east by the Hydro property to the west at Voght Street.

We believe that there are always solutions to problems and we believe that a privacy fence would minimize many of the concerns, and is something the taxpayers who currently live on Burgess Avenue could live with.

Please feel free to contact us at any time should you have questions about our opinions. We would welcome you to view the project from our backyard and the privacy lost. We do understand the importance of this project for the City of Merritt, and that is why we are looking for solutions.

Thank you for your time and consideration to this urgent matter.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Ken & Barb Sward

2259 Burgess Ave

1 250 599-9355

1 250 315-7892

To: Mayor Linda Brown and Councilors

October 3, 2020

**Subject: 3350 Voght Street and 3155 Grimmer Development Proposal**

Attention: Don McArthur, Planning & Development Services Manager

From: Residents of Burgess Avenue, Merritt, BC



## **PETITION**

We, the undersigned, are current residents of Burgess Avenue in Merritt and oppose in part, the development currently under consideration to be located at 3350 Voght Street, Merritt for the following reasons:

- 1) Ease of ingress and regress to rear of properties located on Burgess Avenue from aforementioned development via the hillside to the south of Burgess Avenue.
- 2) The high probability of the risk of crime, including trespass and theft due to increased ease of access and alternative escape routes the development will provide.
- 3) A high degree of loss of privacy for all residents on Burgess via viewing from developed properties as well as from walking trails that will inevitably be developed.
- 4) A decrease in property values due to the loss of privacy, which in turn would reduce land taxes currently being paid to the City by Burgess Avenue residents.
- 5) Intrusion of the only east/west wildlife corridor that currently allows wildlife to travel through Merritt via their natural habitat.
- 6) Restricts a possible future addition to the newly announced conservation areas designated by the City to the east of the property in question.
- 7) Concerns regarding possible water runoff and drainage problems due to development.
- 8) A loss of, or damage to, valuable grasslands by intrusion of hikers, snow enthusiasts, bikers, and sightseer traffic.

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Petition**

In order to mitigate much of our concerns, if a tasteful and permanent 8 foot high privacy fence were to be built on City land at the top of the hill above Burgess Avenue, we would be much more receptive to this project.

We do understand that Merritt requires development and needs to move forward with a community plan. It should not, however, infringe so strongly on residents currently living and paying a high tax rate on the neighboring properties.

Respectfully submitted for your consideration and action.

Please see attached Petition.

# PETITION

NAME

ADDRESS

Ken W Sward

2259 BURGESS AVE.

Barb Sward

2259 Burgess Ave

DIA Danielle Martens 2267 Burgess

BA Blake Martens

2267 Burgess Ave

Michael  
Arlene Brown

2216 Burgess Ave

2211 Burgess Ave

Just

2241 Burgess Ave

CHRISTINE BERKEY

2433 BURGESS AVE

MARK SCHAENZELBACH

MS

2499 BURGESS AVE.

Q

" " "

Q Mowland

2485 Burgess Ave

# PETITION

NAME

ADDRESS

Glenn Meuland

2485 BURGESS AVE

R. Leach

2112 BURGESS AVE.

Khanjoo

2112 Burgess Ave.

Ann Luho

2215 BURGESS AVE

P. Jurko

2215 Burgess Ave.

Dan Post

2241 Burgess Ave.