

October 2, 2018

Attention: CVRD Directors,

I would like to remind the directors that this meeting is about whether or not to approve a request to designate a new settlement node in the Comox Valley. This is not about a specific development, affordable housing, sustainable development or a park which, at this point, are all speculative in nature. Any additional information that 3L would like to add at this late date, does not concern the request for a new Settlement Node. If that land is designated as a Settlement Node, there is nothing to stop 3L from selling the land in which case these plans would mean nothing. Once designated as a Settlement Node, a developer can make their own plans and submit for re-zoning. Details of the 3L plan will not be pertinent unless it gets to the re-zoning stage and later at the sub-division stage.

You must, therefore, think ahead to the possibilities that might occur if a new Settlement Node is approved. If a new settlement node is approved, 3L will be able to proceed with a re-zoning application and the Area Directors and residents will be tasked with determining whether or not 3L can proceed to the subdivision stage. This would occur, regardless of who owns that land. In my opinion, the possibility of the rural areas approving re-zoning of this land are very slim. If the new settlement node is not approved, what then?

Then... 3L might sell the land in question to a buyer who has no idea of the current conflict or the battle that they would have in order to rezone or subdivide this property. 3L can probably give more accurate figures, but I believe that the land was assessed for about 3 million dollars when purchased by 3L and yet it is being advertised for 65 million dollars, internationally. Of course, with any real estate it is a matter of buyer beware. In this case, the directors must also beware. It's just a little too easy to offer a park, have a new settlement node created and then sell the land for a largely inflated price, leaving a trail of broken promises behind. Will the Regional Directors please consider how the public will react to a decision to prolong this conflict? How will taxpayer's react to your inability to stand up to a developer that has used and abused the process to suit their needs? Isn't the RGS in place to prevent urban sprawl and unplanned growth?

I am also disturbed by the fact that some directors, rather than accept the responsibility of following the settlement plan outlined in the Regional Growth Strategy, seem more than willing to 'pass the buck' to a new Board of Directors who may not be familiar with the history of this rural area or the significance of the Regional Growth Strategy. Although I know that the CVRD staff will attempt to update new directors regarding community feedback, the legalities and the process of settlement planning, I feel it would be remiss of the current Board of Directors to allow this to proceed to a 2nd and 3rd reading and expect a new board to make these important decisions. Any additional information that 3L would like to be considered at this time is irrelevant unless, of course, they have changed their minds and decided to adhere to the current zoning.

I have heard some directors state that they want to see this go through the entire consultation process. I believe, however, that it is totally unnecessary. The court determined that the application for an amendment to the growth strategy be submitted and received by the CVRD. The court did not say it had to be accepted nor did the court say it had to go through the entire consultation process. As directors, you can save the taxpayers, staff and future directors a lot of unnecessary time, expense and trouble by saying No at this time. Following the TAC and SC advice to deny this application now would be an act of bravery and a laudable savings of tax payer's money. To begin this process again with new information submitted by 3L, at this late date, has no bearing on the task before you. You either agree that large scale development should happen in that area or you don't. The details of the development plan are moot.

Whether or not you agree with the concept of urban sprawl or whether or not you think the RGS should be reviewed, you were elected to uphold the principles of the RGS. Whether or not you have hope that this development will provide a park, low-income or affordable housing, the RGS is a legal document with clearly defined settlement patterns that were the result of thoughtful community consultation. If you disagree with the RGS, you can initiate revisions at a later date but at present, you must not discount the importance of a legally mandated document which is there to guide your decisions. Your personal opinion has no bearing on your duties as a director to represent your constituents.

When very few residents have any confidence that the CVRD directors or any other politician will make decisions with integrity and within the rule of law, now is the time to show them that there is a process in place to protect their homes and families from rampant, unplanned development. Allowing this amendment to proceed to a 2nd and 3rd reading sends the wrong message to the public regarding a legal document created to guide and govern regional planning decisions. You are basically telling the public that public consultation means very little. The request to amend the RGS and create a new suburb is certainly unfeasible and unnecessary.

In closing, I would like to say that 3L is not the only developer on Vancouver Island or in BC or Canada, for that matter. The Comox Valley is the next hot spot on the radar of many developers, engineers and architects. They call this area the '3Cs' - Comox, Courtenay and Cumberland. They are watching this current conflict unfold and are just waiting for clarity regarding settlement nodes. Will you send them the signal that the RGS is a toothless document that they can manipulate at will or will you send the message that they can be confident that the RGS is there to guide them?

Not all developers will try to manipulate the public with unsubstantiated promises or exploit their fears. Not all developers will threaten the public when they don't get what they want. Not all developers will resort to media manipulation, full page, local

advertisements, expensive PR consultants and misleading international ads. Not all developers will resort to court action when they can't take NO for an answer.

Please say NO at the first reading and open the door to ethical development in the Comox Valley. Do not allow this proposal to tear at the fabric of the community. Say no, Now, so that developers, engineers and architects can confidently do business in this valley without resorting to hurry, hurry or wait, wait demands and attempts to make amendments to the RGS to satisfy their needs. Developers are free to apply for re-zoning and go through the process of subdivision but they are not at liberty to amend the RGS without creating conflict and division in our community. Do your duty as elected officials and build community without destroying it. You owe that to yourself, to the reputation of the CVRD and to the residents of this valley.

Yours truly,

*Diana Schroeder*

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*Courtenay, B.C.*