

2018-05-02

Re: Development Variance Permit Application – 1758 Astra Rd  
Lot B, District Lot 172, Comox District, Plan 32341, PID 000-103-489

Dir Sir and/or Madam:

With respect to the above noted variance permit, we would like to voice our strong opposition to the application.

As long term residences and property owners of Astra Rd., we feel that the application in question is unnecessary and does not come close to meeting any of the CVRDs own principles of why variances may be granted. A front yard setback serves as a buffer between public and private use. Its benefits are numerous and varied including on-site drainage, consistency of streetscape, and visibility for safe access/egress.

The property in question is by most standards, a large lot. Over the last year, the current owners have cleared the lot of nearly all vegetation, including 40 mature trees, and proceeded to build several (3) outbuildings, staggered around the roadside of the property, for the purpose of producing a commercial blueberry crop as well as chicken eggs for selling. Adhering to existing bylaws, coupled with better planning on the owner's part could have easily mitigated any felt need for constructing a fourth, large building, 3.0 metres from the minimum front lot line setback.

In recent years, Astra Rd has seen a steady increase in both vehicle and pedestrian traffic. Much of this can be associated with new developments in the area, and the continual popularity of Kin Beach Park, not only during the summer months, but also the winter. Astra Road, being the original road that was put through in the 50's, is fairly narrow with no designated area for pedestrians or bikers. Often I find myself and my small children having to remove ourselves from the road and wait in public easement areas, in order to provide room for large vehicles, campers and trailers to pass. Allowing a large building, such as the proposed garage, to be built 3.0m from front lot line setback, puts pedestrians and children in danger.

In addition to the public safety concern of a reduced public easement, we also have concerns of the intended purpose of this shop, perhaps to store their large boat or RV? Being so close to the public roadway, there is no way that this can be done without continually blocking the public road when either backing in or pulling forward. The roadway is intended for passing vehicles and pedestrians. Not as an extension of ones property.

As the Comox Valley grows it is important that we continue to make smart development choices that not only take into account todays development needs and wants, but also those of the future. Granting permission for a reduced minimum front lot line setback for the sole purpose of accommodating a large recreational shop does not follow any of the current CVRD development guidelines.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to express our concerns.

Sincerely,  
Lindsey and Arlen Canary