

Walter, Penny

From: City Council
Subject: FW: Email - Communication - Bob and Donna Cram - Proposed Willows Concept Plan Amendment - CK 4131-24
Attachments: cram_submission_to_city_council_nov_22_2021_meeting.pdf

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@saskatoon.ca>
Sent: Thursday, November 18, 2021 3:00 PM
To: City Council <City.Council@saskatoon.ca>
Subject: Email - Communication - Bob and Donna Cram - Proposed Willows Concept Plan Amendment - CK 4131-24

--- Replies to this email will go to [REDACTED]

Submitted on Thursday, November 18, 2021 - 15:00

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

Submitted values are:

Date Thursday, November 18, 2021
To His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council
First Name Bob & Donna
Last Name Cram
Phone Number [REDACTED]
Email [REDACTED]
Address [REDACTED] 602 Cartwright Street
City Saskatoon
Province Saskatchewan
Postal Code [REDACTED]
Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable)
Subject Dream's Amended Community Plan Proposal for Willows
Meeting (if known) City Council Public Hearings Nov. 22
Comments

One of us, Bob, already provided a submission on behalf of the 602 Waterford area at Willows. This is our personal submission as residents.

Attachments

[cram_submission_to_city_council_nov_22_2021_meeting.pdf](#)

Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting? No

November 18, 2021

Dear Councillors and Mayor:

We are residents of Willows living at [REDACTED] 602 Cartwright Street. We have grave concerns about Dream's amended community plan for our neighbourhood, and we have already expressed our concerns to City Planning, the Municipal Planning Commission, and Dream. We know from the MPC's agenda package for its members that over 500 people (out of 721 living at Willows, which includes children) have signed letters that were submitted to the City Clerk's Office opposing Dream's amended plan. More letters were sent directly to City Planning. In addition, in our bare land condominium area, 602/Waterford, only 2% of our residents said they supported Dream's plan in a survey conducted by our condominium corporation, and our area has 43% of the entire Willows population.

Can you think of any time when neighbourhood opposition to something has been so strong?

Why are we so concerned? Because this is not some minor community plan amendment. It is a radical change to promises that Dream previously made to the residents who purchased here. In our opinion, if it wasn't for the power of City Council to approve Dream's amended plan and make it legal, it would be considered a breach of contract.

When we purchased out here, Dream promised us:

- a quiet, residential golf course community with a 27 hole golf course
- zoning that would prevent commercial development other than directly relevant to the operations of the golf course
- panoramic golf course views for those willing to pay extra for them
- architectural controls and bare land condominiums for the new housing to be developed as part of Phase 2 (Dream's proposed amended plan is for phase 2)
- housing development in Phase 2 that would be restricted to the area west of the Clubhouse.

Dream's proposed amended plan will take away all these features. We know sometimes changes have to come in neighborhoods, and we would support reasonable changes, but this proposal is for dramatic, extensive transformation, and no rationale for it has been provided by either Dream or City Planning. Of course the likely rationale for Dream is to squeeze the maximum amount of profit out of every square foot without any concern for promises made or the community itself.

Should you support a massive amendment to a community plan when the developer and City Planning have yet to provide any justification for it?

Here are the main concerns

1. Size, Density and Traffic

These issues are all interrelated. Dream is proposing a reduction of minimum lot size from 60' to 50', which would violate both the zoning DCD4 guidelines and the Official Community Plan. However, the sheer size of Dream's proposed Phase 2 development is also unacceptable. It will add an additional 1,000 residents to Willows over and above what was promised (current population is 721). This will more than triple the current population of Willows. The original 2003 phase 2 plan would have seen a doubling of the population.

It is the size of the expansion (along with commercial development and a 120 room hotel) that will create the traffic problems that residents are so justly concerned about. The City cannot tell Dream what to do with its golf course, but the City can limit the overall scale of the housing expansion, and it can withhold approval of any plan that does not locate new housing in a way that is respectful of residents. For example, we believe that many concerns would be addressed if the construction that is currently planned is not allowed on the current Bridges 1-4 holes. The

area of those four holes could be maintained as a park area and/or as a short practice course. Both Riverside and the Saskatoon Golf and Country Club have 3-hole practice courses alongside their 18-hole courses.

Such an approach would scale back the expansion of housing to a more reasonable size, still larger than the 2003 plan, and would solve the problem of disrupting the views of many residents, although not the views of those affected by the hotel (see below).

2. Green Space

Dream's plan still leads to an unacceptable loss of green space, trees and beautiful landscapes. Dream claims that 27 holes are unsustainable, but this has never been supported by any evidence, and during the last two years golf has expanded rapidly. We don't know about the city-owned courses, but we have been told that all the other Saskatoon and surrounding golf courses sold out of memberships this year. Willows certainly sold out, and even made a profit in 2020 and 2021.

3. The Proposed Hotel and other commercial space

We do not believe a new hotel would be a good addition to the neighbourhood. Although it is far from our own house, we sympathize greatly with those residents who would be stuck living close to it or have it built right where they now have beautiful views to the west. It would also contribute significantly to an increase in traffic. There are good reasons why the OCP and the DCD4 guidelines prohibit this kind of commercial development for golf course communities.

Dream and City Planning have yet to provide any rationale for why a hotel should be built in the middle of a quiet, residential community. When hotels and motels are built in residential neighborhoods, they are always built along the edges of the neighbourhood on arterial streets, not right in the middle of single family housing.

A spa hotel is a fine idea for Saskatoon. Its proponents just need to find a different location, perhaps in the triangular parcel on the northwest end of Willows that is also part of Dream's amended plan.

It has been suggested that a hotel golf and play package could be offered at the hotel that would provide business for the golf course too. If the golf course goes to 18 holes, there will be no opportunity for anyone to play except for members. There will simply not be enough tee times. Of course, the members may all leave for other golf courses, in which case the golf course will really become unsustainable.

Keep the commercial DCD4 guidelines for Willows and the OCP as they are now. They already allow for smaller scale commercial development appropriate to a golf course community.

4. Fee Simple Lots

Dream's proposal is to develop the new housing in Phase 2 as "fee-simple", not bare land condominiums. The existing houses in Willows belong to bare land condominiums. We currently pay full municipal property taxes, but do not receive full City services. Consequently, we must also pay monthly condominium fees to cover expenses (paving, lighting, street cleaning, snow removal, etc.) that would normally be provided by the City. Dream's amended plan for fee-simple housing in the Phase 2 development would leave existing bare land condominiums such as ours in an economically disadvantageous situation. The new Phase 2 area would have full City services and no condominium fees; we would have the same restricted City services, full property taxes, and condominium fees. This is clearly unfair and would lower property values in existing areas of Willows. Dream will say that the older areas can become fee-simple too, but this is almost impossible to achieve since it requires unanimous support from homeowners.

In addition, fee-simple housing in Phase 2 will lead to higher expenses for the City, since it will have to provide full services. Is this a cost you should be considering when you are looking at the possibility of 6% property tax increases in the next couple of years?

Please ensure that the Willows Phase 2 development is made up of bare land condominiums like the Phase 1 housing.

5. Official Community Plan

Dream's request to amend the section of the City's Official Community Plan related to golf courses must be rejected. Not only would that amendment make large-scale commercial development and small lot sizes possible at Willows, it would make that possible for all future golf course communities. If the City wants all that type of valuable housing and taxes to go to Corman Park in the future, then it should not amend the OCP. Just look at Greenbryre.

6. Lack of Consultation

Dream has been planning these massive changes since at least 2017 (see the 2017 Traffic Impact Assessment done by Stantec for Dream that is part of Dream's proposal). Until they put forward the amended plan for consideration by City Planning in December 2020, Dream did not engage in any form of consultation with Willows residents. Why didn't they just approach the various condominium corporation boards that make up Willows.

7. Conclusion

Close to 90% of Willows residents are opposed to Dream's amended plan, and that plan would take away specific aspects of the Willows neighbourhood that were marketed to home buyers by Dream itself prior to 2020.

We urge City Council to vote against any changes to the DCD4 or the OCP and to also reject the drastic changes to Willows contained in Dream's amended plan.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Yours sincerely,

Bob and Donna Cram, [REDACTED]-602 Cartwright Street