

Walter, Penny

From: City Council
Subject: FW: Email - Communication - Katrina Weggel - Housing Accelerator Funding - CK 750-1
Attachments: HAFcorrespondence.docx

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>
Sent: Monday, May 27, 2024 4:55 PM
To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>
Subject: Email - Communication - Katrina Weggel - Housing Accelerator Funding - CK 750-1

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

Submitted on Monday, May 27, 2024 - 16:52

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

Submitted values are:

I have read and understand the above statements.: Yes

I do not want my comments placed on a public agenda. They will be shared with members of Council through their online repository.: No

I only want my comments shared with the Mayor or my Ward Councillor.: No

Date: Monday, May 27, 2024

To: His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

Pronouns: She/her/hers

First Name: Katrina

Last Name: Weggel

Email: [REDACTED]

I live outside of Saskatoon: No

Saskatoon Address and Ward:

Address: [REDACTED] Kirk Crescent

Ward: Ward 8

What do you wish to do ?: Submit Comments

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known):: Municipal Planning Committee

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: 7.4-7.7

Comments:

Please find attached correspondence regarding the Housing Accelerator Funding

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

█ Kirk Crescent
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
█

May 27, 2024

To Members of the Municipal Planning Committee

Thank you for the work you are undertaking with respect to Saskatoon's Core Growth Boundary, Land Use amendments and application under the federal Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF). Recognizing and appreciating the importance and urgency of addressing housing and transit needs within our city, we are nevertheless writing to express our strong concerns about proposed changes to the zoning in our neighbourhood and others as part of Saskatoon's efforts to secure federal funding.

We understand concerns that many have about the peripheral expansion of low-density housing encroaching on much needed agricultural and naturally biodiverse land. Nevertheless, we regret that our city's recent planning around density increases within the Corridor Growth Area has proceeded too rapidly in our view with little to no consultation with Saskatoon residents, particularly those in most affected areas. The proposed zoning changes will impact the character and features of our city and neighbourhoods far beyond the timeframe of the limited HAF funding. The current rezoning amendments and proposals for our city and neighbourhoods carry short- and long-term consequences and risks that far outweigh the benefits of short-term funding that does not respect the specificity of our communities.

In particular, we object to the proposal without any consultation to permit as-of-right building of four storey structures with five units or more in proposed corridor residential areas, including unique and well-established neighbourhoods like Greystone, Grosvenor Park, Caswell Hill and historic streets near the riverbank like Saskatchewan Crescent and University Drive. Carte-blanche permission for such uncontrolled development could suddenly and significantly have negative impacts on the existing neighbourhoods chosen by current residents specifically for their character and features. In making these significantly larger housing types 'as-of-right,' without the need for approvals, community input or conformity with design requirements, incentives for developers to do their best to respect and be sensitive to existing neighbourhoods and immediate neighbours are removed. Proposed changes like these in an effort to rapidly increase neighbourhood density in conjunction with the elimination of off-street parking requirements will create congestion and decrease pedestrian safety, while increasing risks for children and seniors in these intergenerational neighbourhoods. Moreover, the removal of limits to the number of units in a large building and sole reliance on the National Building Code does not ensure favourable conditions for those seeking housing, regardless of the location.

Increasing the allowable lot coverage at the same time as introducing unlimited multi-unit building types will likely result in construction right to the setbacks with negative impacts on stormwater management due to the loss of permeable land surfaces for absorption of rainwater during precipitation events. Would it not be better for the City to implement further drainage mitigation

measures to lessen the burden on existing stormwater systems and the potential for catastrophic flooding rather than reducing the amount of natural landscape to absorb this surface water amidst increasing incidences of 'once-in-a-lifetime' storms? Meanwhile, the proposed increase in lot coverage and construction equipment will lead to the removal of extensive landscaped areas and trees in well established neighbourhoods. In addition to the aesthetic losses, those trees would otherwise offset effects of fossil fuel consumption and provide cooling effects in the heat of summer without excessive need for air conditioning.

Rapidly increased density could also easily have a negative impact on existing aging infrastructure and surrounding structures. At local levels, the construction activity necessary for a taller buildings' deeper foundations could have impacts on adjacent older foundations in established areas. A targeted strategy that applies resources from the Housing Accelerator Fund to improve the resilience of City infrastructure in anticipation of larger increases in residents would constitute a far more strategic and favourable long-term investment now while the density of our city is still relatively low. Local population growth will also not be well served if there is no anticipatory increase in modern neighbourhood infrastructure and services including schools, parks, libraries and leisure centres.

Many residents in our community are eager to participate in meaningful public deliberations about the best ways forward for managing population growth and needed housing and it is regrettable that the current process has allowed little opportunity for that sort of engagement. With other municipal agreements in place, there are also opportunities to benefit from lessons learned and to see where more favourable agreements have been reached that respect the uniqueness and integrity of Canada's urban centres. While respecting the urgency of our housing needs, we would urge the Municipal Planning Committee to recommend to City Council that consideration be given over the near future to enable city officials, developers, communities and residents the opportunity to efficiently engage in constructive dialogue and re-negotiate with the federal government to ensure funding terms that build on and enhance, not diminish, the quality and strengths of our city and neighbourhoods.

Sincerely,

Katrina Weggel, BES, BArch

Peggy Schmeiser, PhD