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March 30, 2022

Site Adaptive Planning in Urban Rural Interface - 1771 ROBERT STREET

SITE:

1771 Robert Street is a 2.37 ha (5.75 acre) parcel located in the northwest corner of the community of Crofton within the Municipality of North Cowichan. The site is located within the Municipality's Urban Containment / Growth Centre Boundaries.

The lands contain an existing newer single-family dwelling in the southwest corner of the parcel which was constructed in 2018. Historic air photos indicate that the southern half of the property was cleared and open as far back as the mid-1970's (note, there was an older home from the 1960's (approx.) that was removed when the new home was built in 2018). The northern half of the property appears to have been cleared in approximately 2016/2017. The current state of the property is that the majority of it is roughly graded, except for those areas directly around / in proximity to the single-family dwelling.

The existing single-family dwelling has a connection to municipal water, which runs along the entire frontage of the property along Robert Street. Municipal water is also stubbed at northern end of Chaplin Street. Municipal sanitary and storm sewer services are also stubbed at the end of Chaplin Street in anticipation of future extension to these lands. The house is connected to municipal sewer at the northeast corner of the site.

TERRAIN:

The subject property slopes fairly consistently at 10-12% from the southwest corner of the property (90m above sea level) to the northeast corner (63 m above sea level).

ECOSYSTEM / SURROUNDING CONTEXT:

There is a minor overland drainage route that enters the property approximately halfway along the western boundary of the site and exits the property into the piped municipal stormwater system near the northeast corner of the site.

Lands directly adjoining to the east consist of an existing low density residential neighbourhood (R3 zoning: single family / duplex). Lands to the west are also located in the Urban Containment Boundaries (UCB) and are serviced with municipal water. Lands to the south (across Robert Street) are forested, located outside of the UCB and owned by the Municipality. Lands to the north are forested and are located within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), although do not currently appear to be in use for any agricultural purposes.

COMMUNITY CONTEXT:

Crofton is an established and stable community located on Osborne Bay within the Municipality of North Cowichan. The majority of the community consists of older residential housing stock on serviced urban lots. Newer developments have occurred within the community, primarily in the south / southeast areas of the community, along with lands directly east of the subject property.

The following important community facilities are located within walking distance to the site:

- BC Transit route: 250 m
- Crofton Community Fire Hall: 275 m
- Crofton Community Centre: 300 m
- Crofton Community Pool: 340 m
- Crofton Post Office: 600 m
- Grocery / Liquor Store / Neighbourhood Pub: 650 m
- Crofton Elementary: 850 m
- Crofton waterfront / Seawalk: 1000 m

KEY SITE PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

In consideration of the various on-site and surrounding characteristics, proximity to community services and direct access to municipal services (water, sanitary storm, roads, etc.) the subject property appears to be an excellent candidate for well-planned residential development. The following critical site characteristics have been carefully considered in the development of a conceptual land use plan for this site:

Drainage Course:

The seasonal drainage course has been reviewed by Madrone Environmental and they have confirmed that a 5.0 m setback (on both sides) will provide for adequate protection of this minor drainage course. This setback has been augmented in our site planning with an additional 4.5 m of park dedication with a hard-surfaced trail on the east side of the environmental setback and will have an environmental fence to minimize impact. Impact is also reduced through the inclusion of a single crossing of the drainage course for access and servicing to the west side of the drainage course.

ALR Buffer:

As previously noted, the lands to the north are located within the Agricultural Land Reserve, although do not appear to be in use for any agricultural purposes at this time. Notwithstanding this, it is important to establish a buffer to these lands to acknowledge potential long-term farm uses that could take place on the lands. Best practices established by the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) encourage the establishment of a 15.0 m vegetative buffer from the property line. In the case of the subject property, as these lands have previously been cleared, a re-planting plan will be required to re-establish appropriate buffer vegetation. In addition, a secondary 15.0 m buffer is also used to restrict principal

dwellings (homes) within this area, which ensures that homes are no less than 30.0 m (100 ft.) from the ALR property. This secondary buffer may still be used for yard areas, driveways, access, etc.

These buffering requirements have been incorporated into the proposed development.

Terrain:

As noted, the lands have a fairly consistent slope of 10-12% from SW to NE. Planning the site in consideration of these contours minimizes the land alteration required to establish appropriate grades and elevation for municipal roads, servicing and building sites.

Community Impact:

The fourth and final key consideration with this site is community impact. The Crofton community engaged in and largely endorsed a community plan that was adopted in 2017. This plan identifies the subject lands for low density residential development, which is what has been proposed with this application. The forms of housing proposed with this development are consistent with and match the goals and objectives of the Community Plan and are similar in scale and density to the existing low density residential lands directly adjoining to the east. Additional residential units (single family, duplex and townhouse) and the corresponding increase in population will also help to support and encourage new and existing commercial and personal services and will also support the student population at Crofton Elementary School.

Overall, we believe that this well-planned development has given careful consideration to the various relevant site and community characteristics and will be a positive and welcome addition to the community.

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