

Community Consultation Meeting Regarding the Rezoning and Subdivision of 855 Falaise Cr.

When: January 18th, 2020, 12.45 to 4.30 pm

Where: Commonwealth Recreation Centre, 4636 Elk Lake Dr. – Douglas Fir Room

Introductions

36 People attended the meeting. This included the two property owners, 31 area residents, and three resource people – see Appendix A.

The agenda for the meeting was circulated.

Purpose and objectives of the meeting and overview of process

The facilitator circulated a statement about the purpose and objectives of the meeting – see Appendix B

He noted in particular that, at its September 16, 2019 committee of the whole meeting, Saanich Council passed the following motion:

MOVED by Councillor Brownoff and Seconded by Councillor Chambers: “That it be recommended that consideration of the request to rezone the property located at 855 Falaise Crescent from the A-1 (Rural) Zone to the RS-10 (Single Family Dwelling) Zone and Development Variance Permit DVP00407 be postponed to allow the developer to hold a community meeting and then come back to Council.”

The facilitator reviewed the meeting agenda and stressed the importance of maintaining a respectful environment at the meeting.

The facilitator reviewed the process that had occurred and how it would be processed from here – see appendix B.

Current development proposal

Denise Kors, the developers’ representative, outlined the history of the development application and noted the changes that had occurred since September 2019. She noted in particular:

The history of the development application which included the reduction in size of the houses prior to the Sept 2019 Council COW meeting. She also noted that the replacement trees could be located on the site or elsewhere; and that any impacted rhododendrons could be made available.

The review by the two arborists (developer’s and the one hired by FCA) had resulted in their agreement that tree #1986 could be saved. However, moving the houses back to save tree #1986 meant that tree #1992 could not be saved.

On questioning, she clarified that the variance is required for lot width which is measured in a specific way for irregular lots like these ones (i.e. narrows towards its frontage).

On questioning, the owners noted that they intended to live in one house and sell the other lot. It was noted that the interior layout of the house is not considered by Council and questions of future occupancy are difficult to confirm since the future homeowner will determine how many people live in the house and this can change with each owner.

Report from the arborist

Jeremy Gye, the arborist retained by the developer, discussed the overall site situation and the efforts to retain the additional tree #1986. He noted in particular:

- The importance of understanding the spatial extent and functional anatomy of tree roots when evaluating the prospects for tree retention on a building site. The age, species and site conditions are also relevant factors. Older trees on rocky sites present more of a challenge.
- A closer examination of the area near the base of the tree and beneath the canopy of rhododendrons revealed a linear rocky outcrop south of Tree 1986. It appears likely that this outcrop has prevented roots from developing within the site proposed for the house on Lot A, diverting and concentrating root development toward the building site for Lot B instead. These unique site conditions change the potential for preserving Tree 1986. By repositioning the two proposed homes slightly, it is now possible to consider preserving this tree; however, repositioning the home on Lot B further back away from Tree 1986 moves it hard up against another oak, Tree 1992. In the arborist's opinion, only one of these two trees can be preserved. Tree 1986 is the more desirable tree due to its health, size and prominence on the lot.

Some relocation of the driveways had also been made to ease the impact on the various tree root systems. It was agreed that:

- The alignment and grading of the two driveways has been designed to minimize impacts to the root systems of the protected oaks on the lot. The arborist will work with the civil engineer to minimize tree root impacts during the design of the underground servicing and storm-water management for both lots.

Roadwork, safety, parking (servicing requirements)

Denise Kors, the developers' representative, outlined the requirements and implications of the District's road Servicing Standards. She noted in particular:

These servicing requirements are mandated on developers by Saanich Council's Engineering Standards. While application to Council can be made to vary them, such applications can be difficult. However, the

opportunity of appearing before Council is also an opportunity to raise other questions such as the lack of sidewalks or concerns re parking and road width.

Road will be widened to 8.5m from currently about 7m, with curb and gutter.

Parking will change from 'no parking' to 'resident's only'.

Drainage will be included in curb and gutter and if catch basins are required, they will be provided at the time of detailed design.

On questioning, the following issues were raised and discussed:

- Potential for a shared driveway¹
- Where the residential parking only' will apply – just on the developed properties/upgraded street.
- Will tree 1987 be impacted by the road widening? It is on Saanich property and they will determine how work should be carried out to protect that tree.

Information from the FCA

Carl Ross presented the position of the FCA using a set of slides. See Appendix C. He addressed the following questions and made some suggestions:

The development proposal is controversial because the community regards the lot as really part of the park, and certainly part of the Garry Oak meadow that is intrinsic to the park. It is essentially different from other lots in the area.

Traffic and parking are a concern now and will become more acute with this development, both through the potential for large numbers of occupants and cars, and through Saanich's required servicing upgrades to what is essentially, in one person's comment, 'still a country lane'.

The loss of privacy in adjoining lots was also a concern.

On behalf of the FCA, he made the following suggestions:

¹ The person who asked this question provided the following clarification by post-meeting email
Give consideration for one central access point to the proposed subdivision, versus two, for the following reasons:

-Significantly improved safety with one access, and it's proximity to Falaise Park with many neighbourhood families using this route

-Better parking layout

-Less paved area for single driveway/access point rather than with two access points, resulting in more green area

-Improved drainage

And with no impact on tree #1986 (same as current proposal)

What the FCA would like:

- Reduce the size of house B, move it forward
 - Saves tree #1992
 - Less imposing on neighbours
- New parking spaces completely off existing roadway
 - Helps address road safety
- Install catch-basin or otherwise deal with Park run-off
 - Eliminate flooding of neighbourhood driveways
- Maintain original privacy covenants regarding vegetation
 - Lessen visual impact of new houses on neighbours

Community input

Community input was managed in two parts. First, two letters (email) received from people who were unable to attend the meeting, were read out (see Appendix D). Secondly, those with a statement to make presented their statement – one such statement was made (on behalf of eight residents unable to attend) (see Appendix E). Thirdly, community members were asked to note questions, to categorize them by topic (see below). Then discussion proceeded more or less on each of the three topic areas.

For the sake of clarity in reporting, the general themes and comments are noted below. Every effort has been made to capture the essence of the discussion and to incorporate the comments made in the two letters and one statement:

Trees and Biodiversity

Additional concerns, issues, questions (generally discussed and answered) included:

- The development proposal still requires three Garry oaks to be cut down. Council has made statements about the importance of trees and biodiversity. Yet developments such as this take precedence.
- Can tree 1992 be saved by some repositioning of the house? There is not enough space between 1986 and 1992 for the proposed house – one must go.
- Will the replacement trees survive? Must they be Garry oaks (not necessarily – Saanich Parks will advise)? Can they be located in the park?
- Do the owners have the option to cut down the trees after they move in? No - the remaining trees on the lot are protected by Saanich's tree bylaw. A covenant is also being considered for the rear yards and side yard of Lot B to further protect trees and vegetation within these areas.

- There is a threat that, if the rezoning is not approved, the owner can build one large house and cut all the trees down. Are the Garry oaks not protected (yes, but typically, the owner's right to build must also be considered).
- Concern that this property is an extension of the ecosystem in Falaise Park - the arborist noted that the understorey of Lot 855 has been changed and simplified to a "lawn and garden" plant community, and as such has few, if any, of the native species that characterize the understorey of the park.

Road Safety, Parking and Drainage

Additional concerns, issues, questions (generally discussed and answered) included:

- Saanich has servicing standards required for all new development.
- Parking is currently an issue and will be exacerbated by this development:
 - Use of neighbourhood by day parkers from Broadmead, etc, and funeral home parkers.
 - Family and other events already cause frequent congestion through additional on-street parking
- Parking enforcement is minimal to non-existent.
- Could the advantages of a shared driveway be further examined (see above)?
- Safety is an issue with multiple causes – and will only get worse with this development:
 - Lack of or discontinuous sidewalks
 - Cars parked on street force pedestrians into the road
 - The road is currently narrow with parking on one side only – parking both sides will effectively narrow the street and is unacceptable.
 - The road is on a slope, suffers from poor drainage and is dangerous in heavy rain or snow.
 - Residents are increasing in age – more ambulances and fire trucks.
 - The upgrades do not take into account pedestrians and bicyclists.

House Size, Design and Privacy

Additional concerns, issues, questions (generally discussed and answered) included:

The house sizes were reduced following the first Council presentation (March 2019); by how much? Reduced by 544ft² and 593ft² for lots A and B respectively. And from 5 bedrooms and 6 bathrooms to five bedrooms and 5 bathrooms (one bed & one bath in the proposed suite in each case).

Will the new houses have basements. No –to protect tree roots from blasting. There will likely be a crawl space.

How do the house sizes compare to neighbourhood average? No data is available on average size, but sizes vary from 1000sqft to over 3500 sqft. It is dependent on lot size and coverage; the coverage with these two lots is well below the maximum allowable under RS10 zoning.

New houses will overlook the neighbouring house – some commitments to alleviate this were earlier proposed – are they still in place? Yes. The developer's representative has proposed a covenant for the

retention of vegetation (except invasive plants that must be removed) and have provided the info to staff in the past with no reply. She will continue to put this proposal forward and in the end it will be up to staff and council whether such a thing is acceptable.

Who will live in these houses? At this point in time, we believe that the lot owner will live in one and sell the other lot (although it is not possible to provide guarantees of future ownership).

What is assured during the rezoning process:

- The approved external look of the house, placement on lot, etc, is assured. Any change will require Council approval and community input
- The interior configuration of the house can be changed.

The houses are currently planned for a suite downstairs and four bedrooms and three bathrooms upstairs.

It is proposed that these will be 'solar-ready'. All new Saanich homes must be "solar-ready". Would solar readiness for House A be enhanced by changing the design so the sloped roofs face south? Perhaps but need to consider whether or not trees would shade the roof.

The new house designs do not fit into the community.

Other issues

Additional concerns / issues raised included:

This is just a subdivision application – 'we all live on subdivided lots, and all were previously covered in trees that were cut down to allow existing houses to be built'.

Attitudes have changed and concern for the environment has massively increased. Council has recognized it in Urban Forest and other strategies. But when are we going to take 'green' seriously? A more sustainable approach to planning and development is required.

Current zoning is based on the Royal Oak Local Area Plan, which is massively out-of-date.

Concerns were expressed that Saanich staff are out-of-touch with local issues such as traffic.

Not enough attention has been paid to make the development as environmentally friendly as possible.

Appendices

A – Agenda

B - Purpose and objectives of the meeting and overview of process

C – FCA Presentation

D – Letters Prior to the Meeting

E – Statements Made at the Meeting

A – Agenda

Community Consultation Meeting Regarding the Rezoning and Subdivision of 855 Falaise Cr.

When: January 18th, 2020, 12.45 to 4.30 pm

Where: Commonwealth Recreation Centre, 4636 Elk Lake Dr. – Douglas Fir Room

Agenda:

Setting the Stage – 12.45 to 1.15 – just to get the ball rolling, share some general information and establish some guidelines for discussion.

Introductions	Meeting Facilitator
Purpose and objectives of the meeting	Meeting Facilitator
Meeting management and maintaining a respectful environment	Meeting Facilitator
Overview of process to date	Meeting Facilitator

Information Setting – 1.15 to 2.15 – information from the developers, other professionals and FCA – Opportunity for clarification questions at the end of each presentation.

Information from the property owners	Owners
Current development proposal	Denise Kors
Roadwork, safety, parking (servicing requirements)	Denise Kors
Report from the arborist	Jeremy Gye
Information from the FCA	FCA director

Community Input - 2.30 onwards – questions/statements will be limited to 5 mins max – one question per person until all people have been afforded an opportunity. We will try to organize questions/comments by topic area.

Community input/ Q&A	Residents
Summary and Next Steps – Final 15 mins	Facilitator

	NAME	ADDRESS ^① ^② ^③
1	Holly Hart	832 Royalwood Pl.
2	Sue + Mae Johnson	832 Royalwood Place
3	Ken Kowalsky	4691 Falaise Dr.
4	Linda Koudsky	4691 Falaise Dr.
5	Elen Schoepf	4605 Royalwood Ct
6	Doug Weidman	896 Falaise Cr
7	Donna Weidman	896 Falaise Cr
8	Dale Sammet	4605 Royalwood Ct
9	Barbara Ross	1005 Falaise Cres.
10	Ann Brydon	1001 Southover Lane
11	Cynthia Hawksworth	1016 Southover Lane
12	Sue Lucy	
13	Mae Johnson	4613 Royalwood Ct
14	Key Stietford	4625 Deventer Dr

+1 woman who preferred to not sign

	NAME	ADDRESS
1	Bob Lucy	849 Falaise Cres.
2	CLYDE PAULETTE SMITH	928 Falaise Cres
3	MIKE REASON	854 FALAISE CRES
4	MARK HARPER	850 FALAISE CRES
5	PAUL CUTHBERT	821 ROYAL WOOD PL
6	TERRI THOMAS	921 ROYAL WOOD PL.
7	Gillian Harper	850 Falaise Cres
8	Daphne + Rick Andrews	845 Falaise Cres.
9	G Bal	1337 PEARCE CRES
10	D. KANDHANA	516 PAMELA PL
11	Pamela + Roger Norton	888 Falaise Cr.
12	GARY WEEKS	4617 DEVENTER
13	GENNIFER RYAN	1040 ADELIN PLACE.

B - Purpose and objectives of the meeting and overview of process

Purpose and Objectives of the Meeting

At its September 16, 2019 committee of the whole meeting, Saanich Council passed the following motion:

MOVED by Councillor Brownoff and Seconded by Councillor Chambers: "That it be recommended that consideration of the request to rezone the property located at 855 Falaise Crescent from the A-1 (Rural) Zone to the RS-10 (Single Family Dwelling) Zone and Development Variance Permit DVP00407 be postponed to allow the developer to hold a community meeting and then come back to Council."

This meeting meets council's request.

Since that time, the developer has made further amendments to the submission documents. Therefore a second objective of this meeting is for the developer's representative to share these amendments with community members.

A third objective is for the application to be further discussed, and for community members to ask questions and to share any further comments/concerns with the developer's representative.

A brief summary of the meeting will be prepared and made available to the Falaise Community Association and the developer's representative.

Overview of process to date

Process To Date

Without getting into the details of emails back and forth, the following summarizes the process to date:

- February 2018 – Discussions with immediate neighbours and FCA
- March 2018 - Proposal for rezoning and variance submitted to Saanich Municipality and reviewed by staff.
- April 2018 – two site meetings with immediate neighbours on Falaise and Southover Lane
- March 2019 – Application presented to Council at Committee of the Whole (COW). Concerns raised by Falaise Community Association and community members.
- September 2019 – Revised application presented to Council COW.
- January 2020 – This meeting.

Future Process

- Council, through its COW and then full Council, will review again the subdivision and variances
- If approved a Public Hearing will be held.
- Subsequent to that, Council will make a decision re the rezoning and variance application. If approved, the developer can proceed with a sub-division application.

C – FCA Presentation - The Rezoning and Development of 855 Falaise Cr. - Carl Ross, 18-Jan-20

Merging Notes and PowerPoint slides

Bob Yates has reviewed the background regarding the proposed development of 855 Falaise Cr. We have heard from the owner(s) and the developer has presented her most recent plans.

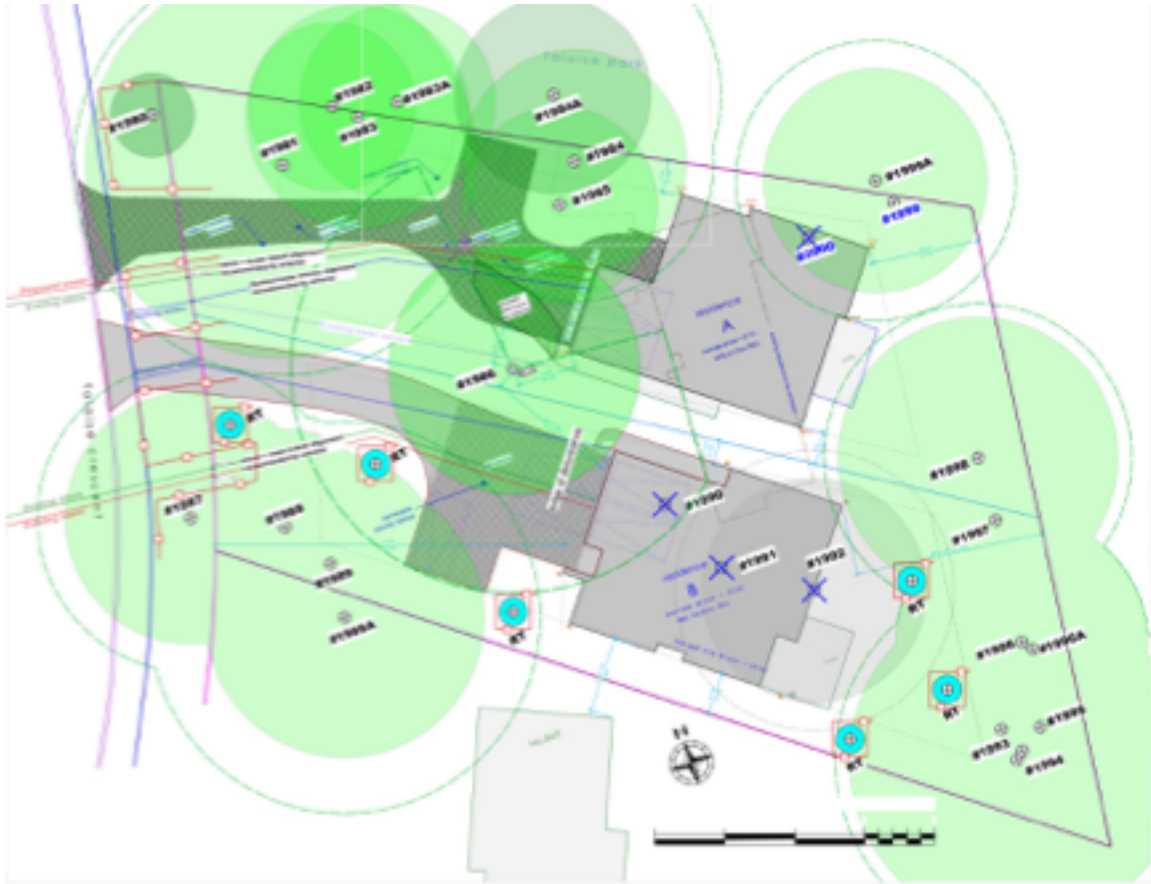
Why is the development of 855 Falaise Cr. controversial?

There is a need for additional, affordable housing in Saanich. In driving around, one sees older homes being replaced with newer ones and large lots being subdivided to allow for multiple residences. So development is occurring. I thought I would begin by taking another look at why the development of Lot 855 has generated concern within the community.



The lot is an extension of the ecosystem in Falaise Park.

This slide shows an aerial view of Lot 855 and the adjacent Falaise Park. The existing home on the lot is a small, one-storey, two-bedroom house. When looked at from the hill in Falaise Park one hardly notices that there is any building on the lot. The other thing one notices from the Park is that the ecosystem of Lot 855 is a natural extension of the ecosystem in the Park.



Two large homes lead to tree loss, lack of privacy, parking concerns.

So the first cause for concern comes from the observation that putting two large, two-storey houses on this long, narrow lot is going to lead to significant tree loss and a feeling that the residential area is encroaching on the Park. Some of the trees that may be removed are decades, or even centuries, old. Although new trees can and should be planted it will be several decades before they can assume the role of the existing trees. So residents are concerned about tree loss and the visual pollution of two large homes close to the Park.



Saanich requires that the road be widened from 7.5 m to 8.5 m.

The second major concern relates to road safety. Falaise Cr. is a long, narrow, curving road, with a significant grade in front of 855 Falaise Cr. We note that there is significant traffic on the road because it serves not only the crescent itself, but also the four cul-de-sacs running off of it. Saanich Engineering requires that the roadway be widened from 7.5 m to 8.5 m in front of 855. The red lines in this slide show that this is a very modest change in the width. By way of reference, a typical car is about 2 m wide. Saanich will permit parking on BOTH sides of the roadway in front of 855 and apparently there will be room for four cars.



Parking, with vehicles on both sides of the road.

This slide shows what it will be like to have vehicles parked on both sides of the roadway. It will only be possible to have single-file traffic through this area if cars are parked on both sides. Some residents have reported accidents or close calls in this area, especially when the road is icy or snow-covered. Permitting parking on both sides is only going to make this section of the roadway even more hazardous.

So these are the main concerns: loss of significant trees; high-occupancy homes leading to significant on-street parking and associated traffic hazards; loss of privacy for nearby residents.

Options:

- **Integrate the lot into Falaise Park**
- **Do not rezone the lot; replace the existing house**
- **Rezone, approve variance, accept/modify present proposal**

When the original occupants of 855 Falaise moved out, there were several alternatives. The best option, in terms of the urban forest, would have been to integrate this lot into Falaise Park. This did not happen and the new owner has made a significant investment so other options must be considered. The least disruptive would be to maintain the present lot as it is, but replace the existing house with a more modern one of about 2500 ft². Doing so would preserve all, or almost all of the existing trees, and would not lead to a large influx of residents requiring parking spaces. It is likely that the owner saw a better investment potential in the property by building two homes so will not be satisfied with this option. Council warned us that, by refusing to rezone, the owner might choose to build a monster home and cut down all, or most, of the trees.

The least favourable option is the proposed rezoning and development. We acknowledge that the developer has made several changes in response to earlier concerns. The largest Garry oak on the property is to be preserved and the house sizes have been reduced somewhat. The layout of the driveways has been changed to permit more on-street parking.

What the FCA would like:

- **Reduce the size of house B, move it forward**
 - Saves tree #1992
 - Less imposing on neighbours
- **New parking spaces completely off existing roadway**
 - Helps address road safety
- **Install catch-basin or otherwise deal with Park run-off**
 - Eliminate flooding of neighbourhood driveways
- **Maintain original privacy covenants regarding vegetation**
 - Lessen visual impact of new houses on neighbours

Is there more that could be done? Based on discussions with local residents and with Directors of the FCA we would like the following changes and/or covenants to be considered: 1) Reduce the size of house B and move it forward enough to save tree #1992. 2) Widen the road in front of 855 such that cars parked in front of the new houses will be completely off the edge of the existing roadway. 3) Install a catch-basin or other appropriate roadway modification so that run-off from Lot 855 no longer impacts

nearby residents. 4) Make sure the original covenant regarding the vegetation at the back of the lot remains in place. This will help to ensure the privacy of nearby neighbours.

Council and the developer have been receptive to the concerns of residents regarding the development of Lot 855. The original proposal has been changed significantly. If the four items summarized above are addressed satisfactorily, then the FCA would be in a position to support the application the next time it is submitted to Council.

Appendix D - Letters Prior to the Meeting

From: Maureen Reason
Sent: Friday, January 17, 2020 1:53 PM
To: Bob
Subject: concerns --855 Falaise Crescent

we live right across the street from this home, 854 Falaise Crescent.
We have many concerns.

The biggest concern is the parking.

Right now if one of our neighbours have a family event cars are lined up in front of all three of our homes. The same if we have any events with our family - cars are all in front of these houses.

The street is then full of cars any one coming down the street has to slow down to a stop and go around the cars.

On many occasions people park their cars to walk up to the funeral homes ,this can be blocks long way pass our door.

As noted our street is a very narrow road which is an old country road with no sidewalks.

We have many ambulances and fire trucks coming and going due to the elderly people living in this area.

Our front room window is facing right in the middle of this lot.

We have a park across the street.

This is a beautiful park which many of our neighbours walk on this road with their dogs and many children.

We are very concerned about the beautiful trees .

We have many animals which make this park their home.

We are concerned about what will happen to our park, the trees and the lives of these animals.

What will happen to them?

Maureen Reason and family

-----Original Message----- From: Alan Taylor
Sent: Sunday, January 12, 2020 2:04 PM
To: Bob Lucy
Subject: Re: Meeting with developer

Below are my comments which I wish to have presented on January 18th:

I am in receipt of the second redevelopment plan submitted to the FCA Executive. I did not receive any revised plans for the actual homes.

The revised plan is shocking in its disregard for the impact on neighbouring property owners. Specifically, the new plan effectively eliminates any privacy in the rear yard for the neighbouring property. At an onsite meeting with the owner/developer and their agent some time ago, the owner/developer and their agent agreed to switch the placement of the rear deck to the opposite side of the home to allow the neighbouring property owner privacy in their rear yard. Instead, the new plan places the entire home next to the rear lot of the neighbouring property and leaves the rear deck on the same side vs the commitment to move to the opposite side of the new home. The elevation of the new home will tower over the neighbouring lot, ensuring a devaluation of that property. Not the sort of plan that engenders community support.

The affected neighbour is a 35-year resident of Falaise Crescent. If the owner/developer and their agent were truly committed to working with the Falaise Community, this sort of plan would never have been proposed. The owner/developer and their agent have not demonstrated any sensitivity to the community. They simply wish to subdivide and build two homes to maximize profit, with no consideration how their project will fit into the existing Falaise community.

Saanich has recently strengthened the Tree Protection Bylaw, which comes into effect on February 5th:

<https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/news-events/news-archives/2019-news/saanich-strengthens-tree-protection-bylaw.html>

From the Saanich website:

“Council actively supports the protection of trees in our community and we’re leading by example,” said Mayor Fred Haynes. “We made a commitment to our roles as environmental leaders and urban forest stewards.”

In addition:

“Trees provide us with so many important values - they support biodiversity and provide habitat, improve the quality of stormwater to and reduce costs for conveying it, provide critical shade and cooling in the summer, and they are responsible for so much of the character that makes Saanich’s neighbourhoods and rural areas unique,” said Councillor Mersereau. “These important bylaw changes will help us ensure that we continue to have a healthy urban forest to benefit future generations in Saanich.”

The owner/developer and their agent did not look at the total impact of their redesign. The revised pan still suggests elimination of trees that could otherwise be saved with appropriate diligence and sensitivity to the environment they are wishing to impact. The owner/developer and their agent need to go back to the drawing board and use more than one critical lens when creating a development project for this site.

Thanks,

AI

Alan Taylor
artaylor@shaw.ca

Appendix E – Statements Made at the Meeting

Lot 855 Community Meeting Notes

I am Stuart Macpherson , a resident on Royalwood Place and Falaise Park Steward.

I am speaking on behalf of eight residents of Royalwood Place:

Terri Thomas, Paul Cuthbert , Nigel and Anne Brodeur , Ron and Cathy Brown , Peter Broadbent, Holly Holt.

Most of them are not attending the meeting today. In part because they have a sense that we have a council that doesn't listen to the neighbourhood and that is inevitable that it will approve the subdivision application . The failure by Council to act on a highway barrier has heightened this feeling in our street.

As residents we walk though the walkway from Royal wood to Falaise Cres to access Falaise Park . We turn right to go down to the Broadmead shops or left up to Falaise Park , walking up the middle of the street sometimes with grandchildren

We want to send a message to the developer that we are not happy with the proposed subdivision or with the revised plan

Two large houses are being proposed . Two houses will create more traffic and on street parking and raises a safety concern for pedestrians walking up to the park. Not a only are the houses out of character with the neighbourhood but it leads to a concern over safety on the section of Falaise Cres beside the park and loss of mature Garry oak trees . If the developer was to propose smaller houses with smaller footprints then there would not be same concern as there would be less on street parking and Garry oaks would not be cut down .

The developer has made an effort to save one large oak tree on the property but we shouldn't lose sight of the fact that that the proposal still means that three mature Garry oaks would be cut down.