

SilverBack Questions

“Golf Course Resort Community Zone” – What Does it Mean for Sechelt?

There are 546 single family dwelling units located in residential areas along Sechelt Inlet Road from Dusty Road to Tuwanek. Most are year-round residents. The SilverBack application seeks approval for 1,600 units, of which 1,127 would be multi-family. All these units can be placed in a rental pool, an inducement to investors. There are also plans for quarter ownership, an increasingly popular appeal to buyers of vacation or “getaway” second homes who plan merely to visit, not to stay.

The business and real estate sections of the Vancouver Sun carry stories every week showing the latest market trends in vacation real estate: condo hotels in Kelowna (Summerland Waterfront Resort, Westin Kelowna Resort), golf course resort developments (Predator Ridge near Vernon, Bear Mountain near Victoria), and more.

This is the same market that has driven the development of Vail and Aspen in Colorado, Palm Springs in California, and ski-and-golf towns like Canmore, Alberta and Invermere in BC. Closer to home, we have Whistler: a haven for tourists and the very rich, but unaffordable for year-round residents living on moderate incomes, including those who work in the resorts.

It seems evident that SilverBack, following market trends, will take on the dominant features of a condo hotel, as described in the Vancouver Sun, August 26, 2006: “a way for well-heeled baby boomers to own vacation real estate without the hassle of having to look after it.”

If only a minority of SilverBack residents are year-round and full owners, what will be the effects on municipal activities and services in the District of Sechelt? Who will pay for infrastructure costs—health care, libraries, aquatic center, roads, public transit and so on? What happens when rising property values and upmarket shops put prices out of reach of average wage earners? And who looks after the routine maintenance--not just of landscaping, but of community services and organizations?

Notice boards on Sechelt Inlet Road use the phrase “Golf Course Resort Community Zone” to describe the proposed SilverBack development. What does this phrase mean?

What will be the effects on Sechelt’s population, economy and character? Do resorts typically work like a community, or are they better described for what they are, commercial operations in recreation, accommodation and luxury services?

SilverBack

Affordable Housing

The East Porpoise Bay Neighbourhood Plan and the District of Sechelt OCP both describe an acceptable comprehensive development plan as one that will “include affordable housing which is well integrated into the overall development and phasing, and is not physically isolated.” This is consistent with well-accepted municipal policies across Canada concerning the dispersal of affordable housing throughout planned communities. The original development plan for The Terraces in 1997-98 took this approach, proposing that affordable housing be dispersed throughout the development.

In contrast, the SilverBack development application proposes a single site for affordable housing, located adjacent to Sechelt Indian Band lands in the northwest corner of the development (parcel 37 on the site plan) and at some distance from the commercial facilities. This parcel consists of 4.3 acres out of a total of 400 acres—just over 1% of the land. There is no information that permits estimates of the buildable area on this parcel.

Many municipalities have policies requiring 10-15% of units in planned communities be affordable housing. Based on the proposed total of 1600 units in SilverBack, this would amount to 160-240 additional units. To achieve these numbers, given the 4.3 acres/1.7 hectares being offered, would require the construction of six-storey multi-family buildings, at a density similar to those proposed for the Seaside Village (99 units/ha). These would not be suitable at this location.

The Terraces development plan proposed that the developer retain ownership of the land and offer leases to non-profit housing societies. The intent in SilverBack is that “the ownership of this site will be transferred to the District of Sechelt so that Council and the developer can identify and work with non-profit housing organizations.” The District, as owner, would have ultimate responsibility for administering and servicing this pocket of housing in the context of a surrounding bare land strata development governed by strata councils.

It is commendable that some recognition of the need for affordable housing has been incorporated into this proposal. Whether what is offered is suitable, and adequate, is open to question.

Any agreements about affordable housing between the developer and Sechelt Council must be concluded before fourth reading of the OCP and zoning bylaw amendments. There is time for Council to clarify its expectations of development applications on this issue, and to consult with other jurisdictions as to fair and reasonable contributions by developers towards the community's needs for affordable housing.

SILVERBACK—PROPOSED BYLAW**SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

The Table sets out in detail changes to the proposed bylaw from the Planner's Report in the materials for the July 11 Planning Committee meeting to the Request for Decision for the materials in the July 19 Council meeting. Changes & anomalies are in **boldface**. The table will facilitate identification & evaluation of changes in any future iterations of the proposed bylaw.

Changes made include:

- reduction in setbacks in low density, medium density (if there is medium density – no development site numbers are provided) and seaside village
- change in development site numbers in high density (which could be unintentional)
- increase in building height from 2 to 3 stories in convenience commercial

Note that they appear to use “parcel” and “lot” interchangeably and that “development site” is the term for the numbered areas on the Proposed Rezoning map (## in the Table).

WHAT (numbers are sections of bylaw)	SILVERBACK July 11/06 Planner's Report	SILVERBACK July 19/06 Request for Decision	NEXT?
• 1. Golf course, incl. driving range, maintenance facilities, Club House + restaurant, lounge, golf retail, indoor recreation, meeting rooms, outdoor amenity area, parking lot	## 21, 23, 33, 40	same	
• 2.1 Low density residential	## 24, 34, 36	same	
lot	single fam. res. - 500 sq. m. / 15m x 28m 2-fam. res. - 800 sq. m. / 20m x 28m	same same	
setbacks	front 4.5m side 2.5m & 3m rear 5m exc. abutting golf course - 10m	same side- 1.5m same 7.5m	
bldg. height	2.5 stories or 10.5m	same	
coverage	not specified	same	

• 2.2 Medium density residential -- triplex, 4plex, accessory uses ... such as ???	no development site ###	same – no development site ###	
lot	1000 sq. m. / 23m x30m		
setbacks	front 6m 10m rear side 7.5m interior side 6m	3m 5m 3m 1.5m	
bldg. height	3 stories	same	
coverage	45%	same	
rental pool	yes	same	
• 2.3 High density residential – multi-family including townhouse and apartment & what else?	## 10, 14, 15, 16, 22, 26, 29, 32, 35, <u>37</u> , 42 where is 42?	37 deleted, 38 added;	
lot	3000 sq.m / 30m x 30m		
setbacks	townhouse front 6m rear 10m side 7.5m interior side 6m apartment front-????? rear-lesser of 10m & bldg. ht. side-lesser of 7.5m & .6 x building ht. parking lot-0 [no setback]	same same same same no front setback same same same	
bldg. height	6 stories	same	
coverage	45%	same	
rental pool	Yes	same	
• 3. Mixed Use Seaside “Village” multiple dwellings / commercial	## 2 thru 9 ## 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9		
apts & townhouse above ground floor	no ## provided	same – no ##	

live / work	## 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 – live above work	same	
retail / rental shops / restaurant / bakery / deli / pub	## 2, 3	same	
lot / parcel	5000 sq. m.	same	
setbacks	front-??? side-lesser of 7.5m & .6 x bldg. ht. rear-lesser of 10m & bldg. ht. parking structure – no setback	front – 5m 6m 7.5m same	
bldg. ht.	## 2, 3 – 6 stories ##4 thru 9 – 12 stories	same	
coverage	45%	same	
rental pool	Yes-residential	same	
max. retail area	2180 sq. m. all in – 2 thru 9	same	
• 4. Hotel / Lodge pub, personal services, restaurant, spa, hairdresser, meeting	# 20		
lot	-	-	
setbacks	front – 4.5m side – 3m rear – 4.5m	same same same	
bldg. ht.	6 stories	same	
coverage	45%	same	
rental pool	-	-	
• 5. Convenience commercial convenience store, personal services, med/dental, drycleaner, liquor store, PO	# 13	same	
lot / parcel	-	-	
setback	front – 5m side – 3m rear – 3m	same same same	
bldg. ht.	2 stories	3 stories	
coverage	45%	same	

rental pool	-	-	
total retail area / max. per unit	820 sq. m. / no one retail unit > 200 sq. m.	no max. per unit no residential on ground floor of mixed use bldg.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Utility waste water + water treatment, reservoir, fire hall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ## 16, 27, 30, 37, 44 16 is also s.2.3, Hi Density Residential – [intentional?] where is 44? 	same	
lot	-	-	
setback	all – 7.5m	same	
bldg. ht.	2.5 stories	same	
coverage	25%	same	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Parks 	## 1, 11, 12, 19, 25, 28, 31	same	

SilverBack Issues

Sechelt Inlet Road and Traffic Impact

To ease the traffic impact of the SilverBack development, Sechelt District Council can stipulate the following mitigating steps:

- 1)** Require the developer to proceed with a proposed link road from the outset of its phased construction programme and not defer it to a later stage of the project. The link road, as proposed by the developer's transportation consultant, Bunt and Associates, would run from Sxwelatp Avenue [St. Mary's Hospital/Extra Foods] to join Sechelt Inlet Road at a point west of Dusty Road and thereby route around the congested Highway 101 junction with Wharf Road.
- 2)** Insist on the link road being carried farther north, as suggested by the District engineering department, to connect with Sechelt Inlet Road via the eastern arm of Burnett. (The link road cannot be taken beyond this point because of a provincial park boundary and an adjacent development.)
- 3)** The transportation consultant has said the link road is essentially to the viability of the SilverBack scheme. Any argument that it is not needed during early phases of development, on the grounds that the Highway 101/Wharf Road interchange has unused capacity, should be dismissed.
- 4)** The developer's consultant has suggested that land can be surrendered to permit road widening and, possibly, curvature easement, north of the provincial park, while claiming that there may not be scope to permit widening to the District's desired standard of 11 metres of pavement (including flanking 1.5-metre bicycle lanes), plus gravel shoulders. No reason is given for this qualification. The district should insist on widening that meets its requirement, even if this involves placing fill or blasting.
- 5)** Road widening adjacent to the eastern parcel of the SilverBack lands is complicated by the B.C. Ministry of Transportation having responsibility for a stretch of road that runs alongside Sechelt First Nations land on the west side. There should be co-operation with the government agency to ensure uniform upgrading of this portion of road over which there is divided jurisdiction.
- 6)** Council should reject home construction on a property immediately north of band land and separated from the main SilverBack acreage by Sechelt Inlet Road. Such a deletion would whittle down the proposed number of access points (potential accident sites) from five to three.
- 7)** The developer has proposed an underpass to handle cross traffic between a waterfront development (hotel, conference centre, etc.) and the main property, on which a golf course is to be developed. A commitment to an underpass should be encouraged.

SilverBack Questions

AIR AND WATER

1. Water

- a. What is the name of the firm which is doing Hydrology study re well potential?
- b. Are you looking at constructing shallow wells? (competing with creeks?) Or deep wells? (draining aquifer)
- c. A 1973 study conducted by the Ministry of Lands and Forests for Porpoise BayPark concluded that “conditions at the park yard were not manageable for a high capacity;” maximum pump output was 35 gal. per hour; not till 75 -80 ft. depth was water found with “good potential.” What has changed since then to give confidence re drilling wells to provide potable water for 3500 people?
- d. Given the excessive arsenic levels in well water up the coast near Pender Harbour, have you determined arsenic levels in your proposed wells?
- e. Have alternate arrangements been made with the SCR D to hook up with their watermains if wells are deemed unfeasible? (Taking into account a chronic summer water shortage, can the Regional District provide water for another 3,500 people?)
- f. If the wells fail, will all tax payers be obliged to support the provision of alternate water?
- g. What protection is being provided for beaver habitat?

2. Air

- a. The Fire Chief will be issuing Developer Burn Permits. If this development goes ahead and burns its vast piles of brush from land clearing how will the citizens that live in this nearby area find clean air to breathe?
- b. How can the District protect our hospital that will be in the path of the drifting smoke of this burn?
- c. Other developers being more responsible than the purveyors of this development are chipping and composting. Could our local governments take action to provide a level playing field for all developers?
- d. Because of the unseemly speed and scope of this development would it not be wise to call for a hiatus in order to assess the possible negative impacts on the health of people in the District before this proposal is pushed through?

Sept. 13/06

SilverBack Questions

Governance, Taxes and Voting

1. Strata Development?

- a. If so,
 - i. How many strata councils would be formed or allowed for the whole place?
 - ii. Are there any covenants or other rules that the strata councils must abide by set by the developers in advance? What are they?
 - iii. Would one of the separate strata councils be allowed to act in a manner different from the others e.g. set up a gated community for their share? What would stop them?
- b. If not a Strata Development,
 - i. There appears to be central rental booking and services. Aside from any question about the commercial aspect of this, how does this comply with the District Rental Bylaw that provides, in part, that any agent: Must reside in the District of Sechelt on a permanent basis; and, cannot act for more than two rentals unless the agent owns them all.

2. Taxes

- a. Are there any taxes that the strata style is able to avoid –i.e. referendum items like the swimming pool or others?
- b. With the rental aspect centralized then presumably owners would obtain collections and management from the central source. This is a commercial hotel so are commercial taxes levied? If not, why not?
- c. With this project, massive changes may needed to accommodate the traffic increases. Who is to pay for: the improvements to Sechelt Inlet Road, the bypass over SIB lands, the changes in Highway 101 required just to enter or leave and the changes in the Village traffic patterns?
- d. Is it true that no DCC's can be charged on or in respect of the Sechelt Inlet Road?
- e. Is it true that there is a limited width allowance to widen Sechelt Inlet Road? If so, will the developer be transferring land for widening to the District and bearing this cost? If not, what solutions are offered for future road problems?

3. Voting

- a. Would it be expected that absentee landlords would vote for new District initiatives, say a new library? Why would they?
- b. If the "resort" is self contained why would they vote for any community amenities outside of SilverBack?