

Bob Rogers
President,
Summerwind Estates Strata Council
100 Palmer Rd.
Vernon, BC V1H 2H8

Sue Wood
Corporate Officer, City of Vernon
3400 30 St.
Vernon, BC V1T 5E6

December 5, 2024

Re. Reconsideration of DVP00659

Dear Ms. Wood,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Summerwind Estates Strata Council to appeal the decision made by the City of Vernon Planning Dept. to deny the application by our forty-five unit strata property for a variance to increase the maximum permitted height for a fence within a front yard setback from 1.2 m to 2.0 m. As per the city's zoning, the "front yard" of our complex is the side bordering on Scott Rd.

As noted in the letter from the planning dept., our strata is bordered by cedar hedges that provide privacy to owners, as all of our units are internal facing with the back yards of those on the perimeter of the property facing the roadways. As owners we are concerned that the cedars present a fire hazard and as a result we have worked with the city's FireSmart Coordinator to have a FireSmart assessment done, and that assessment recommended removal of the cedars as a way in which we could significantly reduce the risk of fire damage on our property. We are also aware that the city has been removing cedars on city property for the same reasons, and we felt that this would align with actions being taken by the city.

Replacing the cedar hedges with a 2.0 m fence would not only align with FireSmart recommendations, it would also not reduce the current street connectivity (in fact the opposite would be true). For the owners of properties that border Scott Rd. the installation of a 1.2m fence to replace the cedar hedge would result in a significant reduction of privacy to their back yard spaces. It makes sense to us that fencing along the front yard of a single family dwelling be limited to 1.2m, but in our case it is the back yards of our units that face out on to Scott Rd. As noted by the response from the planning department, no responses from neighbouring properties were received following our public notification.

Our strata is looking for ways to make our property more fire resistant while also maintaining the sense of privacy that many owners appreciated when choosing to purchase a home here. To remove the cedars and replace with fencing our bylaws require the support of at least 75% of owners, and while we will be proposing the project to owners with the understanding that fencing on Scott Rd. currently will be limited to 1.2m, we feel it is quite likely that this proposal may not pass as a result of the denial of the variance request. If this is the case the cedar hedges will remain in place for the foreseeable future, a result that we feel neither the strata council nor the city would favour.

We appreciate council taking the time to consider our appeal, and we look forward to hearing your decision.

Sincerely,

Bob Rogers
President
Summerwind Estates Strata Council