

Council and Housing Minister discuss 3240 Skaha Lake Road

(Penticton BC - January 27, 2021) – Public opposition to a proposed supportive housing project at 3240 Skaha Lake Road was the focus of discussions Tuesday, January 26, during a meeting between Penticton City Council, Penticton’s MLA, BC Housing CEO and staff, as well as the Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing, along with his Deputy Minister and staff. The meeting was requested by the Attorney General’s office in response to Mayor John Vassilaki’s January 13 letter regarding feedback Council was receiving from local residents and businesses about the proposed project and its location.

During the meeting, members of Council reiterated, 1) the growing concerns being heard from residents and businesses about the project, 2) restated the need for a more comprehensive and community-wide engagement process before proceeding with any plans and 3) until an assessment of the existing supportive housing is completed and made publicly available, requested a pause on the supportive housing portion of this project given the recent experiences with Compass Court, Burdock House and Fairhaven projects.

Referencing data provided by BC Housing which shows that homes for seniors and lower-income working families are the most urgent form of housing needed in Penticton, Council also requested that BC Housing, should they continue with a project at 3240 Skaha Road, proceed with a solution that serves the needs of these residents.

And finally, Council used the meeting to inform the Minister of their preliminary support for the Notice of Motion introduced by the Mayor during the January 26 Special Council Meeting seeking a provincially-funded, transparent and third-party evaluation of the existing supportive housing in Penticton.

“We remain a long way from concluding discussions on this proposed project, but overall I was very pleased with the reception Council received from Minister Eby who, at the conclusion of our meeting, indicated he would like to meet with Council again next week to further discuss our community’s concerns and provide additional information about the project,” said Penticton Mayor, John Vassilaki. “Council was also told that additional community engagement opportunities will be organized, so I encourage all residents to sign up for these events as soon as the dates are made available.”

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