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August 31, 2015

Tanya Turner  
Director of Development Services  
City of Quesnel  
410 Kinchant St.  
Quesnel, BC V2J 3J5

RE: Parking allowance proposal for affordable seniors housing project

Dear Ms. Turner:

The seniors' housing project proposed by the Quesnel Lions Housing Society (QLHS) at the corner of McNaughton and Reid will require, if it is to proceed, a variance for the number of allowed parking spaces.

Number of proposed units: 30 one bedroom (1BR) independent living apartments for seniors 65 and over requiring affordable housing

Size of proposed units: approximately at BC Housing standards of 585 sq. ft. for 1BR units (unit sizes in the preliminary plans vary from 534 to 654 sq. ft.; the average will be less than 600)

Number of proposed parking spaces: eleven (11) including one h/c accessible stall (one stall for every 2.7 units)

The following is our rationale for a parking variance request.

- 1) Multi-unit housing developments for seniors, especially non-market projects, require substantially less parking than the City's current bylaws require.

Most municipalities allow reduced parking for non-market housing, including seniors' housing sites.<sup>1</sup> Online research yields many supporting references for that statement, and for the fact that automobile ownership varies with income and age: older people with lower incomes use vehicles less than younger people with higher incomes.

The following presents a sampling of research reviewed.

- a) "The peak parking demand rates varied between 0.214 and 0.579 vehicles per unit/bed with a weighted average rate of 0.404 vehicles per unit/bed. Employee, resident, and visitor parking

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<sup>1</sup> *The Metro Vancouver Apartment Parking Study: Revised Technical Report*. Metro Vancouver, Dept. of Metropolitan Planning, Environment, and Parks, Sept. 2012 (see [http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/PlanningPublications/Apartment\\_Parking\\_Study\\_TechnicalReport.pdf](http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/PlanningPublications/Apartment_Parking_Study_TechnicalReport.pdf))

is included. This rate is one third to one half the parking rate of other residential uses. (Surveyed) sites with the higher parking rates generally have more nursing beds which requires more employees than the residential units.”<sup>2</sup> Note that the Quesnel seniors’ housing project will not have staffing other than a resident manager.

- b) A parking standards survey for the City of Toronto showed parking demand of 0.22 vehicles, on average, for one bedroom (1BR) apartments occupied by “targeted” renters including seniors (the average would have been even lower if only seniors were considered).<sup>3</sup>
- c) New standards for the City of Vancouver allow the lowest ratio of parking stalls to seniors’ apartments observed in this research. The bylaw provision is as follows: “Three or more dwelling units designated solely for senior citizens’ housing under the provisions of the National Housing Act, or other similar use: A minimum of one space for every six dwelling units.”<sup>4</sup>
- d) The City of Kelowna allows 1 parking spot per 3 dwelling units for “supportive housing,” including non-market housing for seniors.<sup>5</sup>
- e) Alward Place in Prince George is a 120 unit independent living, non-market apartment building for seniors, and is comparable to what the QLHS plans. It has 47 parking stalls: 2.55 apartment units for each parking stall.<sup>6</sup>

2) Two housing developments for seniors in Quesnel also support this proposal.

Maeford Place is an assisted living facility partly applicable to the QLHS project (partly applicable because the residents are less likely to use automobiles than would residents of the QLHS project, as the latter is for independent living). Maeford was designed with 19 parking stalls, and as is well known locally, the parking lot is virtually empty the great majority of the time. Peak use exceptions occur a few days each year, such as Mother’s Day and Christmas.

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<sup>2</sup> Corcoran, S.B., *Senior housing trip generation and parking demand characteristics*. Paper presented at the Institute of Transportation Engineers 66th Annual Meeting, Sept. 1996  
(see <http://library.ite.org/pub/e2318e3d-2354-d714-5119-2cd67225c3e0>)

<sup>3</sup> Consult Limited, Parking standards review – Phase Two apartment building/multi-unit block developments component, new zoning by-law project (for the City of Toronto; Project No. C0342). February 2007, p.19.  
(see [http://www1.toronto.ca/city\\_of\\_toronto/city\\_planning/zoning\\_environment/files/pdf/cansult\\_final\\_apart\\_stds.pdf](http://www1.toronto.ca/city_of_toronto/city_planning/zoning_environment/files/pdf/cansult_final_apart_stds.pdf))

<sup>4</sup> City of Vancouver Parking Bylaw, June 2014, page 4-7, Section 4.2.1.8.  
(see <http://former.vancouver.ca/commsvcs/BYLAWS/parking/Sec04.pdf>)

<sup>5</sup> City of Kelowna Consolidated Zoning Bylaw No. 8000, Section 8 – Parking and Loading (Revised April 8, 2013), p. 8-9  
(see <http://www.kelowna.ca/CityPage/Docs/PDFs/Bylaws/Zoning%20Bylaw%20No.%208000/Section%2008%20-%20Parking%20and%20Loading.pdf>)

“SUPPORTIVE HOUSING [for the City of Kelowna] means housing consisting of dwellings with support services on-site that may or may not include collective dining facilities, laundry facilities, counselling, educational services, homemaking and transportation. Supportive housing might also qualify as Special Needs Housing.”

(see [www.kelowna.ca/CityPage/Docs/PDFs%5C%5CCouncil%5CMeetings%5CCouncil%20Meetings%202007%5C2007-04-02%5CItem%205.6%28b%29%20-%20BL9766%20-%20TA07-0002%20-%20Text%20Amendment%20to%20City%20of%20Kelowna%20Zoning%20Bylaw%20No.%208000.pdf?t=043006549](http://www.kelowna.ca/CityPage/Docs/PDFs%5C%5CCouncil%5CMeetings%5CCouncil%20Meetings%202007%5C2007-04-02%5CItem%205.6%28b%29%20-%20BL9766%20-%20TA07-0002%20-%20Text%20Amendment%20to%20City%20of%20Kelowna%20Zoning%20Bylaw%20No.%208000.pdf?t=043006549))

<sup>6</sup> Personal communication with Access Engineering, Prince George, and “Report on the Quality of life in Prince George,” UNBC, 1997, p. 180 (see <http://web.unbc.ca/isre/1997/20.pdf>).

Fraser Village is the best local example of why the proposed parking variance for the QLHS project is reasonable: it is for fully independent seniors, has 57 apartments, allows seniors in their 50s, and has zero officially designated parking stalls. Informally, it uses 4 stalls designated by the City (on the south side) and 5 stalls from the Northern Health Authority (on the north side). The City and NHA stalls are not permanently tied to Fraser Village and can be withdrawn for other uses at any time.<sup>7</sup>

Fraser Village also advises that two or three additional nearby stalls are used informally, and that there are no issues with the amount of informal parking available (a total of about 12 stalls), despite residency of seniors in their 50s (the QLHS project will house seniors 65+). Therefore the ratio of apartment units to informal parking stalls at Fraser Village is 4.75: a little more than half of the parking proposed for the QLHS project.

- 3) The City has provided variances for parking in the past, including a commercial operation allowed to have 25 percent of the parking that would have been required before a variance.

Previous variances:<sup>8</sup>

- a) DVP2013-33 (permit 6 on street stalls where 24 required for fitness facility- existing building, simply reviewing for a higher use in downtown)
- b) DVP 2013-34 (permit 18 stalls where 22 required) - mixed use.
- c) DVP 2013-40 (permit 43 stalls where 47 required) - commercial.
- d) DVP2014-42 (permit 26 where 33 required) - multi-family
- e) DVP2014-44 (permit 17 where 22 required) - amends 2013-34 above

- 4) The impact of “market units” on analysis of parking requirements

To be financially viable, the QLHS project will need to rent a substantial portion of its units at market or near-market rents (up to 50 percent of the units in the current analysis). All such units will be subject to the same age restrictions as non-market units, and therefore the research results noted above apply: although tenants renting at market rates will likely have more resources than non-market renters, the units are relatively small, and will be more likely to attract renters who are not affluent. Also, market units will be rented preferentially to seniors who do not own an automobile.

Since the research shows that allowances vary from 1 stall for every 6 units (0.17 stalls/unit; City of Vancouver) to 1 stall for every 3 units (0.33 stalls/unit; several other communities researched by QLHS), the QLHS believes that its proposal of 0.37 stalls/unit will be adequate regardless of the likely ratio of market to non-market units.

- 5) Implications of “aging in place” for parking demand

All units in the QLHS project will be designed for aging in place. Even if a tenant owns a vehicle when they first rent a unit, they will likely discard the vehicle as they age. Also, the proportion of women to men in seniors housing projects is typically high and increases over time, and women

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<sup>7</sup> Information based on personal communications and the attached letter from the Fraser Village Homes Society.

<sup>8</sup> Information provided by the City of Quesnel.

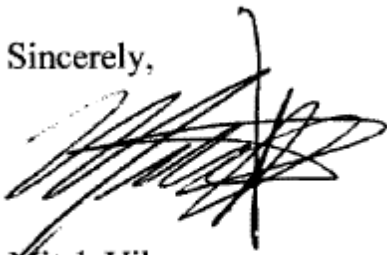
appear less inclined than men to keep vehicles as they age. Tenants with vehicles may move in to replace tenants who move to other facilities, but tenancy change will likely be slow. In summary, “aging in place” means that vehicle ownership would gradually decline due to the downward pressures on vehicle ownership noted above.

6) Application of a restrictive covenant to manage parking demand

The QLHS is willing to apply a restrictive covenant, or a similarly strong measure if proposed by the City, to manage on-site parking demand. This would ensure that vehicle ownership by tenants is permanently capped at no more than the proposed amount (0.37 stalls/unit). This would be achieved by making vehicle ownership a selection criterion for tenancy.

In conclusion, the QLHS believes that the research noted above indicates that its parking proposal is reasonable, and we are prepared to work with the City to ensure that QLHS’s approach is sustainable over time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mitch Vik", written over a series of horizontal lines.

Mitch Vik  
President

See one attachment (Appendix A).

## Appendix A: Letter from Fraser Village



### Fraser Village Homes Society

Low Cost Housing for Independent Seniors

Office - 401 Front Street  
Quesnel, BC V2J 2K4

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Email: [fraservl@telus.net](mailto:fraservl@telus.net)

March 16, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

Fraser Village Homes Society in Quesnel, BC has a total of 57 rented units. There are four designated parking stalls with one "handicap only" stall from the City of Quesnel. Northern Health also allows us to use five of their parking stalls in addition to the City parking stalls.

Thank-you

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Nielsen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Peter Nielsen/Director  
Fraser Village Homes Society