

Will we soon have more homes than people?

By Brian Lee

If you haven't been on an exploratory Sunday drive lately, you'll be amazed at the startling changes to the Pender Harbour landscape.

High-end, large-scale subdivision developments have been the norm rather than the exception lately.

They're providing a relief from a housing shortage but there's a perception that the changes taking place here are more influenced from afar than within and threaten the rural lifestyle many have grown accustomed to.

More importantly, can the infrastructure accommodate such massive growth and what restrictions, if any, are put on those groups pouring millions of dollars into the local soil?

Developers speak a different language than the rest of us and many are confused about who these people are and how our land resource is being managed.

Terms such as "Bare Land Strata" or "Fee Simple" are thrown around but how many of us really know how these terms apply to the developers needs?

I've taken seven large developments that are in various stages of permit approval to try to shed some light on the projects most often discussed over coffee at John Henry's.

The number of lots proposed for these seven developments alone is a staggering 250 new homes.

What's even more startling is the cost of many of single building lots, some listing for close to \$2 million.

DANIEL POINT COTTAGES

The fourth phase of developer Les Allen's Daniel Point development,

Daniel Point Cottages consists of 40 lots, each with an 800-square-foot home on a freehold half acre.

The parcels went on sale last year and sold out within three months for between \$199,000 and \$279,000 each.

Stonewater Homes, a construction company created for this project by Les Allen, is the builder.

Allen told the Harbour Spiel that he wishes he'd built houses or cottages on each plot of land from the start,

"People from outside of the area are afraid of buying a piece of land when they don't if they'll be able to build on it," he said,

"If you ask a local builder, he'll tell you to come back in three years

because that's when he's booked until and who knows what construction costs will be by that time so forget about getting a quote."

FARRINGTON COVE

The 20-acre Farrington Cove development sits between Duncan Cove and Irvine's Landing in Garden Bay and has been an eyesore for many years as the result of a failed develop-

ment in the 1980s that left it empty and unfinished.

Planners at the SCRD suggest that the lack of vegetation would probably not be allowable today but was the result of a rezoning amendment from years ago that allowed higher density.

The new developer, Rick Barbieri, owner of 1425 West Pender Holdings Ltd., has taken the 20 acre site and created 51 bare land strata lots, of which 22 are waterfront, ranging in price from \$175,000 to \$410,000.

According to the website, www.farringtoncove.com, 44 lots have already sold.

Zoning is also in place for a six-

plex townhome development that is almost completed.

The townhome development is built on the site of the former developer's condominium site that was torn down at the start of the current project.

The townhomes are 2400 square foot each on 3 levels and are listed between \$559,000 and \$659,000.

LILY LAKE VILLAGE

A bare land strata development, Lily Lake

BARE LAND STRATA

Essentially takes the lot density that the whole property would allow under current zoning and compresses it down to smaller and denser lot footprints to leave more non-sub dividable, open space around the development. This allows for more open space but building sites are more compact. In these cases, the developer must maintain road maintenance and septic systems. The Bare Land Strata act does not allow the SCRD to manage infrastructure unless the developer requests it although it still must be designed to SCRD standards and requirements.

FEE SIMPLE

Also called freehold, fee simple is the most common form of property ownership and basically represents absolute ownership for real property but is still limited by basic government powers like taxation.

Village sits between Lagoon Road and Lily Lake in Madeira Park.

The development has all of its rezoning permits complete and has occupants already moved in.

Developer Ryan Campbell originally bought two lots that were subdividable to a maximum of 16-20 half acre lots and applied for rezoning for 27 single family or duplex building lots.

Part of the terms of the rezoning agreement with the SCRCD were to supply a fully-furnished building lot to Area A Seniors Housing for the Abbeyfield House project, a 10-suite assisted-living home for seniors on top of a 13.7% park dedication that provides a public access trail down to and along Lily Lake.

According to the realtor's website, 11 of the 27 lots have been sold.

PAINTED BOAT

Painted Boat is the name of the development currently being built where Lowe's Resort used to stand.

The preferred term for what used to be called a time share is now fractional ownership.

In this case, 31 "vacation villas" are sold with quarter shares in each.

The BC Assessment Authority has determined that fractional ownership is more commercial than residential and has taxed such developments much higher.

After some concern, it seems this is a non-issue for the Painted Boat Development as Project Manager, Ronaye Matthew, explains:

"The developer investigated with legal counsel and local BC Assessment Authorities to ensure management has been set up to support the

residential assessment for regional tax purposes for the fractional interest owners."

Painted Boat required rezoning to CD2 (Comprehensive Development Two) which allows for a variety of building uses though "no one person can occupy an accommodation unit for more than a total of 26 weeks in a calendar year."

This is the first development of its kind in the Pender Harbour area and may be the litmus test for similar developments in the future.

In lieu of 5% park dedication that would have been required if they were subdividing, the developers put up \$70,000 in cash.

This money will be directly applied to construction costs of the Lagoon Road Bicycle/Walking Path, a 1.5 metre-wide paved path that will run from Gonzales Road to Lily Lake Village and eventually may circumnavigate Lily Lake.

The septic system will be a community system for the entire development and the SCRCD will take over its operation after one year, as is normally the case with similar developments.

David Rafael, senior planner with the SCRCD, said: "Building permit applications have been received for the accommodation units. Discussions are ongoing with the SCRCD's Infrastructure Services Department



Brian Lee photo

This view could be yours... for a mere \$1.2 million *plus* building costs.

regarding the details of the septic system."

There is planned commercial activity such as a spa and a restaurant but, according to the SCRCD, no such permits have been applied for yet.

Matthew said that designs are in place and they are just waiting for DFO approval before they begin construction of the restaurant this May.

More information is available at www.paintedboat.com.

PENDER HARBOUR LANDING

Pender Harbour Landing sits above Irvine's Landing and is best accessed via Hotel Lake Road.

The development company, Pender Harbour Landing Ltd., is the partnership of Bob Fielding, Doug Sladey and Lorne Embree.

They have preliminary lot approval and the lots are listed for sale but technically don't exist yet because not all permits are in place.

The development will consist of 39 freehold properties on a parcel of

Developments (cont.)

land that theoretically could have accommodated close to 200.

The developers have opted to keep larger parcel sizes in favour of green space and a less cramped lot plan and have created a strict building scheme in order to ensure compatible architectural characteristics.

The lots vary in size and cost with lots available anywhere from \$175,000 to \$2 million.

The majority of the dedicated park land sits at the entrance to the development along Hotel Lake Road.

Pender Harbour Landing will have a community septic system and developer Bob Fielding says he expects that all approvals and permits will be in place by mid-April. After the system has been approved, the SCR D will take over ownership and management.

SAKINAW RIDGE

Sakinaw Ridge developer BGD Holdings of Langley consists of a number of partners that hold 155 hectares along Lee Bay Road to Sakinaw Lake and out to the ocean around to the Daniel Point Development.

They're currently involved in subdividing one-third of their land holdings for a total of 31 lots.

John Enevoldsen Engineering is

managing their application for a conventional, or fee simple, sub-division with lot sizes of 1.6 to 5.96 acres and are listed for sale for anywhere between \$275,000 and \$1.2 million.

According to Alan Stewart of Re/Max Realty, 10 out of the 31 lots have been sold.

The developers provided approximately \$68,000 plus land for park dedication to satisfy the requirements of the SCR D.

The park land is a 4.81 hectare site that is situated away from the current development toward Mixal Lake in an area that may be developed in the future.

Water supply is yet to be resolved but a possible solution is in the works with the SCR D applying to draw water from Sakinaw Lake.

The septic system should be a mixture of community and on-site but has not yet gained approval.

The developer is working with the SCR D to refine the design.

WHITTAKER'S AT PENDER HARBOUR

With a nod to the history of its namesake, Whittaker's at Pender Harbour is being developed by Rockwater

Properties, the same company that bought Lord Jim's Resort and operates it now as Rockwater Secret Cove Resort.

Situated directly between Pender Harbour Landing and Farrington Cove, Rockwater Properties bills Whittaker's as "a luxury, architect-designed ocean-front community" in an "undisturbed and natural setting."

Like Farrington, Whittaker's is a bare land strata development and has opted to increase the density of housing towards

the water's edge and leave the back end of the property in its natural state.

The development consists of 25 lots with custom designed homes that will cost between \$989,000 and \$1.75 million.

In lieu of land dedication for rezoning, Rockwater Properties gave 5% of the land's appraised value to the SCR D Parks Acquisition fund and will be applied to future park expenditures on the Sunshine Coast.

The SCR D has signed off on all permits for this development.

It is more than 50% sold.

PARK DEDICATION

When negotiating park dedication, the SCR D usually tries to get as much land as possible rather than an equivalent value of cash because of the obvious long-term benefits.

Planners will reject land that doesn't make sense and suggest more appropriate locations that align with the Official Community Plan or planned projects that are in the community interest.

A developer applying for a Bare Land Strata development usually provides a cash payment in lieu of park dedication because they aren't subdividing, just rezoning.

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