



August 10, 2023

Cowichan Valley Regional District
175 Ingram Street,
Duncan, BC
V9L 1N8

ATTENTION: Area A Director Kate Segall &
CVRD Board Members

SUBJECT: Zoning Amendment Application for Stonebridge Project (Area A – Mill Bay)

On behalf on The Limona Group and Merdyn Group we are pleased to submit for your consideration an application to consolidate, repair and update the land use zoning for the parcels that comprise the Stonebridge project in Mill Bay.

Envisioned before 2010 the Stonebridge lands have long been viewed as the future heart of Mill Bay. Land use zoning was approved in two parts, 2013 and 2016, and infrastructure to support Stonebridge is finally in the process of being approved. Since the zoning approvals the housing needs and affordability for both rental housing and market housing have greatly changed. As local governments and the Provincial government understand we are amid a housing crisis that includes a need for housing options across the entire housing spectrum.

This amendment application originated when errors were identified in the existing zoning. When evaluating options to repair the zoning, discussions on consolidating the five current zones into one comprehensive zone occurred, including simplification and updates of the zoning that would allow expansion of the housing options to encourage more affordable and attainable options.

It is important to confirm that this application to consolidate, simplify and update the zoning is not based on an increase in density. The final density of the Stonebridge project will be limited based on available infrastructure, primarily domestic water, therefore updates included in this application, including reductions in minimum lot sizes do not equate to increases in density.

The Stonebridge project is unique in many ways, the density and uses greatly expand the Mill Bay community with homes across the economic and tenure spectrums, as well as provide new commercial services and opportunities, all while not impacting existing adjacent residential areas like traditional infill development.



The proposed consolidated and updated zone for Stonebridge includes many benefits and opportunities, please find a few key points below;

- There is no change in the permitted uses for the residential components of the zoning, the housing spectrum under the consolidated zone will be expanded, including the introduction of smaller lots with homes that are focused on being functional and practical. Smaller lots with functional homes will also help provide attainable homes when first built and in the future as these homes' re-sell.
- The residential zoning has been simplified including the introduction of minimum lot width requirements in place of traditional frontage requirements. Lot width has a greater impact on the functionality of a parcel as it is calculated where the dwelling is sited on the parcel. The current Area A zoning bylaw does not have a parcel width requirement therefore this is proposed to be added.
- Multiple family units will promote an assortment of housing tenure, including affordable rental buildings sponsored by BC Housing or CMHC that address needs from families to seniors, as well as assisted living for seniors, market rental buildings, and attainable home ownership buildings.
- The proposed consolidated zone promotes integrated planning with single family, duplex, townhouses, and multi-family uses existing together and not being separated into traditional "areas" that only offer a single type of residential use.
- Site coverage, heights and setbacks have been standardized to provide maximum flexibility throughout the entire project. This standardization will help accommodate varying property grades, site conditions, housing provider requirements, housing types, roof styles and architectural features. Having standardized minimum and maximum requirements reduces unnecessary process and helps to bring housing to the market with expediency.
- Flexibility within the consolidated zone will also help Stonebridge continue to meet housing demands as needs and market factors change throughout the expected ten-to-fourteen-year buildout. As housing demands or needs change, Stonebridge, and therefore CVRD will be well positioned to meet those demands.
- The consolidated zone also incorporates the two existing commercial areas within Stonebridge, one that is best described as highway commercial on Barry Road at Deloume, and the other being the former Pioneer Square site that is being planned as village commercial. Both sites will permit a wide range of processional and commercial services, as well as expanded retail opportunities for the overall community.
- The two commercial area's zoning proposes drive thru as a permitted use. The addition of drive thru recognizes modern design requirements based on changing vehicle technologies including anti-idle features and the legislated movement towards electric vehicles. Modern design specifications will be included such as que lane requirements, landscaping and layouts that do not impede traffic flow within parking lots or on roads.



- The commitments of park dedication, riparian protection, and park amenities as currently required with existing zoning and as detailed in a registered covenant will remain and be engrained within the new consolidated zone, or more appropriately within an updated amenity covenant that will be registered on the title of all Stonebridge parcels.
- One of the public amenities that will offer immense benefit to the community will be the construction of an estimated 15 kilometers of multi-functional trails, sidewalks, and pathways. These trails will be designed to accommodate pedestrians, cyclists and other non-motor vehicular forms of transportation, and these multi-functional trails will connect existing and new residential areas to the village commercial area and to other transportation opportunities including BC Transit.

One of the primary challenges of the housing crisis is the ability to bring housing to the market in a timely manner. To help address this issue we have proposed that a “Show Home Building Permit” process be integrated into the consolidated zoning, or a separate policy created. It is common with large projects like Stonebridge that a “Show Home Village” be constructed concurrently with the civil servicing of the lands, therefore allowing future residents to view and purchase homes at least six months sooner than traditional approaches. Various sample policies from other jurisdictions have been provided to CVRD for reference. While we recognize that CVRD does not have experience with a show home approach we trust that all recognize that this will help bring housing to the market as soon as possible and therefore is worth including.

The Stonebridge project provides an unmatched opportunity to create housing that is integrated and connected, practical and functional, in a community that prioritizes the natural environment and protects riparian areas, connects existing community areas with new parks and commercial services, and sets new expectations for the definition of community.

We are confident that the Stonebridge project will set new standards for both residential and commercial development in the CVRD, and after so many years of planning we look forward to working with CVRD to bring all that Stonebridge has to offer to the community starting in 2024!

Thank you for your consideration of this application and please contact the undersigned with any questions you may have.

Regards,

Wayne Hopkins

Email: wayne@merdyngroup.com

Phone/Text: 250.812.0554