

September 10, 2014

Rafal, following below is our initial Community Context Questionnaire. As noted in earlier conversations, we still intend to provide a final addendum, primarily to the TIA, on the closing date of September 12, 2014.

At his time we want to make two requests:

- Regardless that no school has gone to the Calgary Planning Commission prior to this one, we sincerely request that the Development Authority and their senior management seriously consider that this one should be the first. We believe it unfair and unrealistic that a single individual be placed in the untenable position of deciding an application that highlights so many conflicts with vision and leadership in planning, with best practice and code of conduct compliance in the planning field, and with City policies and the true determination of the best interests of the residents of Calgary. If the City of Calgary truly believes that placing regional schools within mature communities and on fully developed open spaces is the 'right' solution, then let's allow the community and the proponent standing at a properly convened CPC meeting and permit the CPC to thereafter determine what is truly best for all citizens, when it comes to siting of regional schools.
- Until our request for referral to CPC is fully considered and properly decided, we request that this Development Permit application's comments closing date and processing be again extended, so to remain fully open until that decision is made and communicated.

Sincerely,
David Wright
Community Development Director
Scenic Acres Community Association

Community Context Questionnaire *(submitted by the Scenic Acres Community Association)*

Permit Number DP2014-3221

Address of Development: 220 Scenic Acres Drive NW

The role is to provide Community perspective as the “eyes of the community” and to help enable the best informed planning decision by the Development Authority.

- Provide the local context that the Community Association feels the Development Authority should be aware of.
- Provide planning related comments in support of or objection to the proposal.
- Identify any important issues the Community Association think should be addressed.
- Provide Community perspective as regards the implementation of local planning policies such as local Community Plans, Area Redevelopment Plans, and Area Structure Plans.

1. **From a community perspective what are the merits of the proposed development?**

- The overwhelmingly expressed community perspective is that there is **no merit** to this proposed development - solely **due to the inappropriate site selected**. Had the Community Needs assessment process been used, as required by the Calgary Open Space Plan (page 11), we

are confident that Scenic Acres Park would have years ago been permanently excluded from consideration for any further school development.

- The **community fully supports** new-built regional FrancoSud School Authority elementary schools for Calgary, provided they are located on **correctly-sourced regional-use sites**, and subject to full and early consultation with the adjacent communities.
- Rather than achieving the best interests of the citizens of Calgary, **the community sees** this development, should it be approved, as representing **a true “lose-lose” outcome**. The proponents acquire a compromised and not-further-expandable regional school with long-term and significant traffic safety concerns from the incorrect site selection and its suboptimal access. Community residents lose important recreational space for themselves, their children and grandchildren.

2. **From a community perspective, could the proposed development be improved to make it more compatible or beneficial to major communities need(s)?**

- The Scenic Acres community already has two elementary schools, two churches, a Community Association building, and a regional sports facility; the Crowchild Twin Arenas. The only remaining **major community need is the full retention**, without compromise or reduction of the current open space, **of Scenic Acres Park**.
- The only way to have any benefits from the proposed development is to even further reduce its proposed footprint in the park, the community's key current need. However, this would create further extraordinary and unnecessary costs; essentially just re-balancing the proportions of the “lose-lose”.

If the expectation of being at all beneficial to community needs were set aside completely, then improvements to make the development more compatible are certainly possible and expected. Generally these fall into the category of common mitigations for context conflicts and traffic concerns. We request that all of these improvements be conditions of the any Development permit, if and when released:

- Significant upgrading of all exterior materials and textures, with community involvement, so to better match the style, context and quality of the adjacent homes, in particular because of the proposed structure's ‘too forward’ placement on the site.
- Remove completely the 6 portables on the north side. Portables are appropriate in regional schools when properly sited. The school authority has several times publicly committed to **constrain this school to 400 students maximum**. From their earlier statements the school would remain at that full capacity for decades. Accordingly, to better match the context of the nearby homes, and to minimize the higher maintenance and life-cycle costs that portables entail, the school should be built out fully, without portables, to the 400 student capacity.
- Quality of landscaping and grounds maintenance is a great concern in Scenic Acres. The school authority's board should **commit to equal or better the standards of the Scenic Acres LEAF Program in their landscaping and site upkeep**, or agree to reimburse the Community Association to maintain it to those standards for them.
- The softball diamond will no longer be regulation size for outfield depth without a requirement upon the proponent of some further and innovative modifications to their parking area. An offset investment to improve to regulation size another softball diamond in Scenic Acres or a nearby Northwest Calgary community could also be considered.

- A commitment to not introduce year-round programs in future, without consultation with and full support of the community.
 - An enforceable **commitment to minimize the extent and frequency of loss of access during school hours**, for both casual and organized & booked users, to the non-school envelope park areas.
 - For buses there should be a prohibition of loop turning, staging, or cutting-through to Nose Hill Drive using the parking lots of Crowchild Twin Arena. Also needed is a requirement of no loop turning or staging in Scenic Glen Gate and Crescent, Scenic Ridge Gate and Crescent, Scandia Hill or Scandia Rise, or by use of Scimitar Point and the loop of 100 Scimitar Point. In fact, there should be no bus traffic at all over the brick pavers (cobblestones) section that initiates Scimitar Point.
 - For parent cars, even with the new drop-off loop within the on-site parking area, ongoing parent traffic education programs with additional signage and significant enforcement at school authority expense should be mandatory. No Left Turn signage out of the school parking lot along with No U-Turns signs at all the nearby intersections with Scenic Acres Drive (Scenic Glen Gate & Crescent, Scimitar Point, Scenic Ridge Gate, Scandia Point, Scandia Hill and Scandia Rise) would be an appropriate initial requirement.
 - An enforceable commitment, up to and including to **“most elegant and leading-edge” solutions for the traffic situations that will arise** at the existing intersections at Scenic Way and Scenic Acres Gate, Scenic Acres Gate and Scenic Acres Drive, Scimitar Point and Scenic Acres Drive, and Scenic Ridge Gate and Scenic Acres Drive (for clarity: ‘elegant’ does not include inappropriately placed curb extensions, 3-way stop signs or 4-way traffic lights!).
 - An assurance for re-timing of the traffic lights at Scenic Acres Gate and Nose Hill Drive, with community input and a bias to regular and quick-sequence clearing of Scenic Acres Gate (and not to the current bias of free-flow on Nose Hill Drive) is required. Additionally, bus-activated warning lights at the two blind intersections, Scenic Acres Drive with both Scandia Point and Scandia Hill, should be a commitment.
 - An in-depth vehicular and intersection focused TIA would have surely highlighted the increased likelihood of conflicts at the first two driveways on Scenic Acres Gate (#4 & #8 Scenic Acres Gate) and the intersection with Scenic Way. Some additional study and resident's vehicle entering warning lights to be committed to.
 - Although not necessarily a strongly supported mitigation, a bus standing lane addition along the north side of Scenic Acres Drive, funded solely by the proponent, should remain a standing commitment for the entire projected life of the school.
 - Enhanced snow plowing throughout all the Scenic Acres school bus routes and increased winter maintenance of the several icy intersections associated with this location should be made mandatory with the approval of any permit. Even with that commitment the **community remains adamant that a school at this site will further deteriorate traffic conditions and public safety - to an 'unacceptable traffic safety hazard status' in winter** - for all users, particularly the children attending the school.
3. **How will the proposed development impact the neighbours and the community regarding such things as the “fit” of the development with its surroundings; generally this refers to height, massing, setbacks, streetscape, privacy, parking, vehicle or pedestrian access, landscaping-including the retention of mature vegetation's, etc.**

- The maximum 'height' of 10 meters and the structure's 'massing' has been somewhat mitigated by the architects initial efforts, placing the gym into the center of the structure. However, the minimal setbacks on the south side [well intended, but not without consequences] still have the effect of increasing massing when the structure is viewed from the south and southwest along Scenic Acres Drive .
- The 'streetscape' concerns primarily arise from the lack of information provided by the applicant or with the DP application on the quality, durability, texture and suitability of the exterior components. The school as proposed would be very close to a group of larger homes directly across Scenic Acres Drive. The community and its residents are understandably concerned that only the **highest quality and most compatible exterior materials of construction are used.**
- A privacy issue also arises from those same residences and, as you are aware from resident comments you have directly received, the residents are also concerned about the student's and teacher's privacy for similar reasons.
- Because of the large size of adjacent homes and several three car garage width driveways on the south side of Scenic Acres Drive, there are less than the usual number of street parking spots available. Understandably, the directly affected residents seek to secure certainty of the continued availability of these few parking spaces. We suggest resident only parking restrictions will have to be considered. On the north side of Scenic Acres Drive there is often overnight parking on weekdays and, again, given the 'no benefits' nature of this proposal, the residents see no reason they should be inconvenienced by any suggestion of time restrictive parking control on the north side.
- Through the five well-attended plan review sessions the Community Association and volunteers hosted for residents we are well aware of the details of the majority of **resident concerns** you have been receiving relating to this particular question. Rather than attempt to repeat those many comments here we'll ask that they all **be read into our response to question # 3 and considered and addressed in the Reasons for Decision document.**
- The nearby residents, particularly along Scenic Glen Crescent, still question why new tall trees are proposed along the tops of the slopes, at near to the road level elevations. Further consults and consensus agreement should be made a commitment

4. Has the community discussed the proposed development with the applicant and/or landowner? If so, please provide details including details or outcomes from the engagement.

- A small meeting of several Community Association executives and directors and the FrancoSud Board Chair and executives took place May 16, 2014, over three months after the funding announcement.
- On May 21 our MLA Sandra Jensen organized and invited stakeholders and the broad community to an information session that drew more than 300 residents.
- The two sessions in May were the most helpful and showed early potential of good outcomes, particularly, a positive dialogue began on May 16th. If held 15 to 18 months earlier, we are confident that the two engagements could have led to a properly sited and expandable-when-needed Regional Elementary school, likely on a site where another FrancoSud NW quadrant school, possibly a future Regional Junior High, would also be possible.
- On July 2, 2014 and August 28, 2014 meetings of stakeholders (about 15-25 people from JUC, TAFF Architects, Alberta Education and Infrastructure, FrancoSud and Community Association and Save Our Park Committee leaders) occurred.

- These last two sessions were more structured and, with the pressure of time, the outcomes were primarily a hardening of proponent's positions and lessening of their earlier commitment to frank and transparent dialogue.

5. **Were adjacent neighbours or owners of the subject site present and/or involved in the Community review of this application?**

Scenic Acres Community Association, a specifically designed and parallel Save Our Park Steering Committee, and our community volunteers have, together, held six information sessions, one particularly intended for the nearest and most impacted residents.

Response has been very good and the File Manager has received many direct emails and calls from residents that, as noted above, we won't attempt to summarize and categorize here; rather leaving that content to be included in your processes, and considered and addressed in your Reasons for Decision document.