



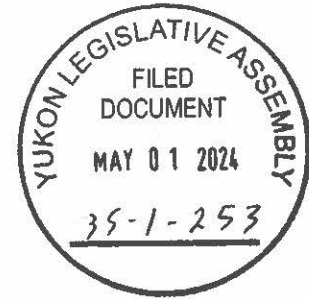
Village of Haines Junction

Box 5339 • Haines Junction, Yukon Territory • Canada • Y0B 1L0
Phone: (867) 634-7100 • Fax: (867) 634-2008 • E-mail: admin@hainesjunction.ca
Website: www.hainesjunctionyukon.com

April 29, 2024
Sent via email:

Richard.Mostyn@yukon.ca

Richard Mostyn
Minister of Community Services
Government of Yukon
2071 2nd Avenue
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 1B2



Dear Minister Mostyn,

I am writing regarding the recent complete tree removal in the new 44-lot subdivision, "Area 1 Phase 1." This project was a result of many years of discussions between our Village Council and the Land Development Branch (LDB).

During the planning phase, Council emphasized the importance of: 1) retaining trees wherever possible to maintain the unique character of our community, a community value that was also reflected in the 2009 YESAB Decision Document for the project that was issued by your Department; 2) keeping lot prices low and 3) providing underground power to the lots in this subdivision. I am saddened to report:

1. The unexpected and rapid removal of almost all trees over two days in March 2024. This was a shock to both the Council and residents. The forest is gone, and the mature trees that were removed cannot be restored in our lifetime. The LDB attended a public information session on March 25th, 2024. This session was an important first step towards repair, but many residents' concerns were not alleviated.
2. Government of Yukon policies and design choices have increased the cost of the subdivision by at least \$1.5M. When the impact of YG policies and decisions raise the project costs, we feel that those expenses should be borne by YG and not passed along to prospective homeowners, especially while we are in the midst of a housing crisis. Furthermore, local quarries are not accessible to most contractors, who had to base their bids on securing gravel from Whitehorse, with all associated transportation costs. Had a local gravel source been available to all bidders, the lowest bid would have come in significantly lower, thereby creating substantial savings for the project.
3. Underground power was not included in the tender documents. From recent discussions with LDB, we understand that the Class C estimate of \$271,000 that Council requested, and was provided in February 2023, has now risen to \$900,000 per a quote provided by ATCO within the past several weeks. Not only are we left

with a fully cleared area, but we are expected to accept that this area's viewscape will be dominated by power poles, lines, and transformers. This is something that would not be acceptable in a new Whitehorse subdivision.

It is important to note that our concern is not simply that clearcutting occurred, the lack of follow through on Council's priorities, and the seeming disregard of Council's stated wishes has impacted trust within the community. In addition, it is important to note that our concerns are not limited to the Area 1 Development. We have also experienced similar issues with the Spruce Street and Wintergreen Way developments. We would be happy to meet in person to discuss the specifics of our concerns with past projects.

While we recognize and appreciate the efforts of the LDB to provide more serviced lots, this incident has unfortunately negatively impacted public perception of the Territorial and Municipal governments decision making ability, and accountability to our residents.

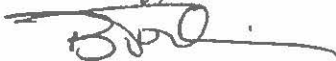
We are pleased to note that our team and the LDB team are working well together on an After-Action Report in part to better understand where communication and planning broke down, and to identify concrete processes and tools to ensure adequate communication and inclusion of community values moving forward. The Village is also working with the LDB to complete a What We Heard summary of the last public engagement and will share the document when complete.

We also feel strongly that an in-person discussion is needed between yourself and Council. We are inviting you to meet with us, at your earliest convenience, to discuss:

- YESAB Process, and how Decision Documents are respected by your department.
- Impacts of YG policy decisions on affordable housing and local economic opportunities.
- The plan to enhance and beautify the development area post construction.
- Underground power options for the development.
- How Council can be assured they are making a fully informed decision in the design phase that will be followed through on in the construction phase.

We value our relationship with the Government of the Yukon and are committed to resolving these concerns respectfully and constructively. Thank you for considering these matters. We look forward to your support in making these adjustments and to a fulsome conversation with you.

Sincerely,



Mayor, Bruce Tomlin

cc: Chief Barb Joe, MLA Wade Istchenko, Premier Ranj Pillai, Kate White, Curry Dixon