

To : Brandon City Council

Re: 21 Willowcrest Proposed Development/Sycamore Ave. Safety Concerns

A number of concerns about the management of the high volume traffic flow on Sycamore Ave. as it relates to the safety of pedestrians and vehicle operators have been previously raised at City Council by area residents during public hearings into the proposed development of Aspen Green Apartments. In spite of assurances from City Engineering that this section of road is designed to handle the volume of traffic created by the high density developments in the area, the day to day experience of residents suggests that the measures in place to manage the traffic flow are inadequate and oft time presents a higher than acceptable risk to the safety of the users. For the most part, the concerns that have been raised both by residents and Members of Council have been off handedly dismissed by City Engineering.

Recently, notices have been distributed to Landing residents of a revamped development plan for the area south of the existing Aspen Green Apartments. The plan varies significantly from the previous proposals in that it proposes the development of another 190 units with one of two exits being funneled onto Sycamore Dr. There appears to be no plan on the part of the City to address any of the concerns raised by the area residents concerning traffic flow and safety on Sycamore Dr. A recent newspaper article indicates traffic studies and concerns being addressed in other areas but does not include Sycamore Dr.

My concerns are not aimed at reducing the volume of traffic or in opposition to the developments that have been completed or being proposed. Regardless of whether Sycamore can handle the volume, in my opinion, the City Administration has an obligation to ensure the safety of the residents and other users of this street. As a resident, I have personally experienced occasions of having trouble crossing the street at the intersection of Birchwood and Sycamore due to vehicles failing to stop for me as a pedestrian with the right of way. Often this is due to large vehicles being parked (legally) and obscuring a pedestrian about to cross. The same goes for trying to make a left turn from Birchwood onto Sycamore to go west. In order to see past park vehicles you must be well into the intersection. In the winter months this is even worse as the vehicles parked on both sides reduce the width of the roadway because of grader banks.

Measures to ensure safety should be of primary concern, especially considering the high volume of pedestrians and drivers using this section of street.

I don't need to be an Engineer to know from personal experience that this does not present a safe environment for users. Such measures as speed limit reduction, limiting parking to one side of the street, providing sidewalks for access to pedestrian crossing areas, marking crosswalk areas appropriately, and establishing appropriate sightlines for turning vehicles do not limit development but provide for safe neighborhoods. I believe the safety of residents is unduly being put at risk by inflexibility of guidelines for traffic safety that should be adjustable to the circumstances. Changes in other neighbourhoods have been made based upon the personal experience and concerns raised by residents. I believe similar consideration is needed for Sycamore Dr concerns as the high density and volume of traffic far exceeds other areas where measures have been implemented.

Dennis Bercier

6 Birchwood Dr.