

November 9, 2018

Signal Hill Community Association

Joseph Yun  
City of Calgary  
Planning and Development  
PO Box 2100 Station M  
Calgary, AB

**RE: LOC2018-0184 – Signature Parke Village Land Use Amendment (LUA) Application**

Dear Mr. Yun:

The Signal Hill Community Association (SHCA) is formally replying to the above LUA application on behalf of the residents of this community. This response is reflective of comments received as of November 8, 2018, and summarizes all major elements of the feedback. The information within this response represents the views of the community residents who replied to requests for feedback from the SHCA, the City of Calgary and the applicant.

Overall, the Signal Hill community residents do not support the current LUA application for the following reasons:

1. **INTENSE DENSIFICATION:** The proposed residential and commercial/retail development represents a 90% increase in dwelling density per quarter section compared to the surrounding Signal Hill area. This level of densification does not align with the current community design, or offer any significant community benefits for existing residents of Signal Hill. It also conflicts with the City of Calgary's Municipal Development Plan (MDP). Section 3.5.1.a of the MDP states that the City's land use policies will (a) recognize the predominantly low density, residential nature of the Developed Residential Areas and support retention of housing stock, or *moderate intensification* in a form that respects the scale and character of the neighborhood; and that (b) redevelopment within predominantly multi-family areas should be compatible with the established pattern of development. The level of intense densification as proposed by the applicant does not meet the criteria outlined in the MDP policy and represents a significant departure from both scale and character of the community.
2. **EXCESSIVE MASSING AND BUILDING HEIGHT:** The location of the proposed towers and their height will negatively impact surrounding residents. The 85-metre-tall maximum building height would take advantage of the vistas enjoyed by current residents while offering no significant positive benefit to the enjoyment of their existing dwellings. The LUA application also downplays the negative impact 85-metre-tall, mixed-use towers would have on views for residents in other nearby communities. In short, this application does not accurately capture the impact of view blockage to all existing dwellings in the area. Additionally, there are two existing residential condominium complexes in Signal Hill to the immediate south and north of the development which have privacy, light blockage and over-view concerns if the LUA were to move forward as proposed. Many residents in the immediate vicinity have expressed concern the proposed building height will significantly devalue their properties due to the massing and height issues outlined in this section.

3. **TRAFFIC AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY:** Intersections in the immediate area (particularly 17<sup>th</sup> Ave SW and Sirocco Dr SW) are currently regarded as being very congested, resulting in vehicle near misses and significant commuter wait time issues. Adding a 370-unit development to the existing road and pedestrian infrastructure will put more pressure on streets and intersections, which already appear to be functioning at or near capacity. Secondly, pedestrian safety will be negatively impacted by the proposed densification as the existing intersections servicing pedestrian traffic already pose a safety problem. A pedestrian overpass to service foot traffic moving to/from the Sirocco LRT station is badly needed to address the many current issues with this particular pedestrian crossing area. The higher pedestrian density associated with this LUA will increase the risk of vehicle/pedestrian collisions if no action is taken. Please note, the SHCA plans to request full participation in any future traffic/pedestrian studies performed by the applicant. SHCA involvement in the gathering of all traffic/pedestrian data (studies, plans, consulting work, etc.) should be considered a requirement by the applicant before any submission to the City Traffic department for a formal review. Lastly, parking concerns, which are already well documented with the City, will continue to be an issue with the addition of the two proposed towers. The lack of surface and underground parking associated with the development are a major concern to existing residents in the immediate area. The applicant appears to be basing their calculations for required parking on the assumption that age-in-place residents will not drive as many vehicles, however this assumption is inconsistent with observed trends and not supported by any hard data.
4. **LACK OF COMMUNITY BENEFITS:** The amenities associated with the development are designed to benefit future tenants, not the majority of the existing community. The applicant is planning a plaza area which is mainly for use of tenants and delivers little large-scale community benefit. Secondly, the planned green space is undersized and will not be accessible to most Signal Hill residents, does not notably increase designated park space for the community at large, or appear large enough to service the proposed development. Lastly, the residents of Signal Hill believe that existing senior living housing in the area more than satisfies the community need. Both the Manor Village at Signature Park and Wentworth Manor are within one block of the proposed development and are designated as seniors-only housing.
5. **COMMERCIAL AND RETAIL BENEFITS OVERSTATED:** The residents of Signal Hill are already adequately serviced with the existing approximately 150 retail and professional service businesses within the community boundaries. Adding additional volume for new retail and professional services will increase pressure on existing businesses. Also, the specific rules of the MU-2 District state that businesses at grade should be street-oriented along road edges. Office/Professional type businesses should be located above grade and away from public frontages. These two conditions do not appear to have been considered in the current application.
6. **NO SYNERGY WITH EXISTING COMMUNITY:** There is a complete lack of transition zone between the proposed development and surrounding single-family dwellings and condominium complexes. Our community is largely comprised of single-family dwellings, duplexes, 2-storey multi-family complexes and 2-3 storey apartment style buildings. The installation of high-rise buildings immediately next to the existing dwellings does not constitute an adequate transition zone. In order to address this issue, we respectfully request that the City of Calgary initiate a planning study to develop an Area Structure Plan that would provide full context and policies for this and potential future developments in the area. As a minimum, a site-specific direct control zoning approach is requested that would address concerns over the lack of a firm commitment from the applicant regarding ratios of (a) rental/owned units, (b) senior/open units and (c) commercial/retail units.

In summary, the LUA application as provided by the applicant is not supported by the residents of the community because it (a) does not abide by the policies as set out in the MDP, (b) adds to significant traffic and pedestrian safety concerns, (c) does not respect the scale and character of the neighborhood, (d) does not deliver any new community benefit or fill a defined community need and (e) does not notably improve the livability or vibrancy of the community for existing residents.

It is possible that Signal Hill residents and the SHCA could support a redevelopment of the existing land parcel provided the applicant addresses all major concerns noted in this response.

We would like to note that the applicant has been forthcoming, transparent and responsive to all requests received from the SHCA, and we are pleased with the meaningful community engagement to date. Continued dialogue, collaboration and transparency will allow for both the applicant and residents of the community to progress this proposed redevelopment to a favourable conclusion.

Lastly, the SHCA requests that we are provided with a minimum of 10 business days notice of all future City of Calgary reviews (such as the upcoming Urban Design Committee review), and any application amendments, so we have adequate time to attend or respond to future requests for input.

Sincerely,

Brian Lawrence  
President  
Signal Hill Community Association

CC: Jeff Laplante, SHCA Director – Development