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Fish Creek condos seek final approval

Emma Poole

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A \$50-million condominium project overlooking Fish Creek Park has one last hurdle to clear today at city hall before breaking ground this summer.

The project's developer, Medicine Hat-based Medican, plans to construct a 400-unit building and set aside space on the 6.3-hectare plot for a 500-seat church in Evergreen Estates.

The church won't necessarily be built by Medican, but setting aside space for it was a condition of sale when the company purchased the land from Sanderson Farms Corp. and Rosamond Anne Sanderson.

"It's something we support as a company," said Rob Whitten, Medican's construction manager.

When the project was proposed last year, concerns over traffic and damage to the nearby park were voiced by local residents. The company has since agreed to resolve some of the concerns.

Ald. Diane Colley-Urquhart said the project is just what the community needs, adding the land at 2428 146th Ave. S.W., west of Evergreen Street, has been sitting undeveloped for years.

To alleviate traffic concerns, the developers will finish a portion of 146th Avenue by constructing two northbound lanes at Evergreen Boulevard.

"It's a really incredible project. (The road) has been a bone of contention," said Colley-Urquhart. "They have promised to finish that piece of road. That was a big part of getting the community on board."

In a letter to the city, Chuck Dunn, president of the Calgary Evergreen Community Association, voiced concern about the impact of traffic from the condos. He asked the city to assess traffic in the area.

Colley-Urquhart said a city study showed the project would not negatively affect the community.

"Pretty much everything the community asked for them to do, they've gone back to the drawing board," she said.

The company is also expected to finish a portion of the regional pathway that connects to Fish Creek Park.

Protectors of the park had asked that the condominiums be pushed at least 18 metres back from the top of the bank over the park. The company has agreed to build at least 16 metres back from the bluff, well beyond the current guidelines.

The plan goes in front of the city's planning commission today.

epoole@theherald.canwest.com

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