

① OSWB  
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**RECEIVED**  
Regional District

OCT 11 2023

101 Martin Street  
Penticton BC V2A 5J9

Okanagan Basin Water Board

1450 KLO Road

Kelowna, B.C.

V1W 3Z4

Dear Sirs/Madams,

My wife and I own a small house north of Naramata in an area called Indian Rock. The area is governed by the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen. Our property is about ½ acre in size. The zoning is RS3. The area was subdivided in the 1960's.

Our family has grown, and we get a lot of visitors, so we decided that we need more space. For privacy/separation reasons, we thought we would build a small two-bedroom coach house, roughly 600 sq. ft. in size, like the secondary buildings that many of our neighbours have. But when I checked with the RDOS, I was told that a secondary building would not be allowed, because the property is less than 1.0 hectare in size, and we are not connected to a community sewer system. Since our location is quite remote, there is no realistic chance that we will ever be connected to a community sewer system, and so these rules effectively preclude us from building a second building.

I was shocked by this revelation. When I inquired as to the rationale for such a policy, I was informed that the zoning guidelines were largely the result of pressure exerted upon the RDOS by the OBWB, whose mandate in this regard is to protect against the degradation of groundwater from poorly operated septic systems.

May I suggest, respectfully, that attempting to protect groundwater through the blunt instrument of regional level zoning bylaws is ill-conceived. Your goals in preventing the degradation of groundwater are laudable; but your means of trying to achieve that goal simply don't make sense. The absurdity is particularly highlighted by the fact that apparently, we would be allowed to build an addition to the existing house of 2000 sq. ft or more with several rooms and several new bathrooms, and connect that to the existing septic system, but we are not allowed to build a modest 600 square foot coach house, even if we offer to install with it a new state-of-the-art septic system. That is farcical. If you want to protect the groundwater (a worthy goal that we support), then protect the groundwater! Demand modern septic systems; demand annual pumping and inspections; demand occasional groundwater testing. Do whatever else you think necessary. Because forcing us to build an addition, instead of a modest 600 sq. ft. secondary building, will cost us a lot more money and will result in more negative impacts to our neighbours, but will do absolutely nothing to protect the groundwater. Your policy is forcing us into a lose-lose situation when a win-win solution (small coach house with upgraded septic) is simple, easily implemented, and will much better accomplish YOUR goals.



My understanding is that your policy is meant to stymie "rural sprawl", but Indian Rock was sub-divided into ½ to ¾ acre lots way back in the 1960's. Since we will never have access to a community sewer system due to our remote location, the zoning as it exists, at the OBWB's bequest, unfairly restricts us, without any compensating benefit to you. Forcing us to build a more expensive addition, without accomplishing any of your goals, is an example of the misguided bureaucracy that is partly responsible for the crisis of housing affordability in Canada.

I urge you to rethink your policies and the ways that you are attempting to achieve your goals. You obviously wield considerable power over the RDOS and other districts and towns. Please use this power wisely, by working with them to develop rules and regulations that will achieve your goals while still allowing property owners to exercise their right to use and enjoy their properties in a manner consistent with other properties in the area.

Respectfully,



Dave Rawlyk

