

Subject: Development Variance Permit Stats

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Mayor & Council:

At the September 9th Council meeting there were four Development Variance Permits issued. During the debate on one of these, Councillor Crist argued that so many applications come forward because *"9 out of 10 are approved by this Council."*

Both Mayor Bell and Coun. Denault took exception to this statement. Mayor Bell rationalized the high number of approvals by pointing out that Planning Staff work with applicants to ensure that variances are minimized. While partially true, Staff do recommend that some DVPs be rejected yet Council routinely approves them anyway. Staff's advice, therefore, is only good when they recommend approval.

Councillor Denault chastised Coun. Crist for suggesting that Council is soft on DVPs. He said that Ernie's numbers were wrong and belittled him by making reference to a recent staff report to Council on the numbers of DVPs and the associated rejection rate.

The following day I requested from Planning a copy of this mysterious Staff Report. It turns out there was no such report but I was provided a list of 101 Development Variance Permits dating from January 2000 through August 2002. As a Follow-up I requested and received a breakdown of the numbers. Councillor Denault, it seems, was entirely correct -- Coun. Crist's estimate of "9 out of 10" being approved was in fact quite far off. **The approval rate is actually MUCH higher.**

Of the total 101 DVPs:

- 9 are currently still being processed
- 4 were withdrawn by the applicants
- 1 was approved by the Board of Variance

- 87 DVPs have gone to Council

- 3 have been rejected (one each year)

So, rather than a 10% rejection rate per Councillor Crist estimated, **the true rate of DVP rejections by this Council is 3.4%** If the 9 being processed are all approved (as they like will be) the rate will be 3.1%

Is it any wonder why so many disregard the Zoning Bylaw and apply for variances?

Sincerely,
Brian Platts