



Big waterfront project planned for Sooke

Bear Mountain developer's brother plans condos, shops next to marina

Richard Watts

Times Colonist

Tuesday, September 25, 2007

A major waterfront development in Sooke -- complete with condos, townhomes and retail stores all backing onto a marina -- is being planned by Mike Barrie, brother of the man behind the Bear Mountain development in Langford.

Barrie envisions about 240 units, a mixture of townhouse and condos, to be constructed on the approximately 2.4-hectare site at 6585 Sooke Rd., near the intersection of Church Road. All told, it would be worth about \$90 million to \$100 million, said Barrie, a partner in the venture, in an interview yesterday.

The development would be adjacent to Vacations West Marina, a 28-berth marina with a 20-room motel, which Barrie owns.

He said the project will not be out of place in a small community centre like Sooke, population 9,700, and the public will still have access to the waterfront.

"We are not trying to change things or make [Sooke] into a big city or anything," said Barrie.

The development is in its early stages -- at least two years from being built, he said. An application to have the property zoned appropriately has been filed. And in recent weeks, there have been open houses for the public.

Like his brother Len Barrie, the man behind the Bear Mountain development, Mike Barrie also played professional hockey. Originally from Kelowna, Barrie played 12 years in the American Hockey League, the International Hockey League, the ECHL and in Europe. He also played exhibition games with the Buffalo Sabres and New Jersey Devils and did a stint with the Victoria Salmon Kings.

Since his hockey career ended three years ago, he has invested money in Bear Mountain and has worked there selling real estate and drumming up other investors.

Barrie said he is now in the process of buying out his partner in the Sooke venture, a woman in San Diego, Calif. But he also plans to seek out other partners to come on board.

Ultimately, Barrie said he envisions the Sooke development taking full advantage of the adjacent Vacations West Marina and nearby fishing grounds.

"You kind of have your boat and walk into your place," said Barrie. "You can step out by morning and into your boat."

Right now, work is so preliminary he said he couldn't estimate what the selling price of the units will be. But he said he has every intention of building a high-quality development.

"They'll be nice. I'm not going to cut corners here," said Barrie.

Reaction from the municipality so far appears muted.

Acting mayor Jen Smith said she knows little about the project and didn't wish to comment.

But she said it was gratifying to see the developer hosting open houses for the public and seeking consultation.

"I like to see a developer talking to the community before we get to council," she said.

© Times Colonist (Victoria) 2007

CLOSE WINDOW

Copyright © 2007 CanWest Interactive, a division of [CanWest MediaWorks Publications, Inc.](#) All rights reserved.