



March 23, 2021

Attention: developmentsservices@victoria.ca

Regarding: 1132 Empress Avenue Rezoning Pre-Application: Community Feedback

Dear Mayor and Council;

As you know, Frontera Homes have submitted their rezoning pre-application for the property at 1132 Empress Avenue, where they propose to [insert description]. The pre-application process ran between Feb. 19 and Mar. 19, 2021 and one comment was received.

It is the policy of the Fernwood Community Association Land Use Committee to request that developers hold the 'informal' stage of the pre-application consultation at a monthly meeting so that local residents have an opportunity to provide feedback at the earliest stage possible. Frontera Homes attended the Land Use Committee meeting on December 3 2020, and we are pleased to be able to forward the feedback gathered at that meeting along with the comments collected by the City's pre-application consultation process.

A description of the feedback received is appended to this letter. These comments are offered in the spirit of encouraging the developer to be a good neighbour and to proceed with thoughtful consideration as to how their proposed project will fit into the existing neighbourhood, as well as how it may affect those living in proximity.

Should you wish to discuss these comments further, please contact Kristin or Alieda at fernwoodlanduse@gmail.com.

Yours sincerely,
Kristin Atwood and Alieda Blandford, Co-Chairs
Fernwood Community Association Land Use Committee

/send to caluc@victoria.ca



Comments on the Proposed Development at 1132 Empress Avenue:

- We appreciated the developers' candid response to our questions about why this level of density proposed was being considered, as opposed to a carriage house or duplex. While we understand that the developer was encouraged by the City of Victoria to increase the density, given that the property is located next to what they consider a "corridor" (Bay Street), the neighbours had two primary concerns related to density:
 - *Noise:* Additional density brings more noise related to vehicle traffic and noise related to garbage and recycling.
 - *Parking:* Parking in the area is already difficult, especially for houses that face on to Bay Street, which this development would do. Since the property is providing only three spots for six suites, there may be an increase in people seeking street parking on already over-burdened streets, including both Empress Avenue and Empire Street, located across Bay Street, where many residents already park.
- Immediate neighbours expressed concern that the development will negatively impact the sun in their yards, which was particularly worrying since at least one neighbour uses their yard to grow food. At the meeting, neighbours noted that the design presented was taller than they had been originally informed. The inclusion of a sun study will be an important addition to the pre-application phase of consultation. This should include impacts not just on neighbours' back yards but on the light coming into their houses as well. The sun study should demonstrate impacts at multiple times during the day (morning, midday, afternoon, evening) and during different seasons.
- Neighbours also expressed concern about how the sundeck would affect the views from the neighbouring yards. They requested that the developer consider sloping the car parking to lower the deck as much as possible. While the developer noted they can't go too low because of drainage, we would encourage them to include an investigation of this possibility in their pre-application submission.
- One neighbour expressed the opinion that having rental units in perpetuity might result in a lot of turnover or potential lack of care to the property. However other neighbours at the meeting appreciated the fact that renters were being considered.
- One neighbour expressed concern about the impact of construction since the properties are quite close together. We would encourage the developer to take every step available to them to mitigate the impact of construction (dirt/dust, noise, and the impact on parking of having work trucks take up residential spots) on the surrounding area.

During the formal consultation process undertaken by the City, one positive comment was received, which is quoted verbatim below:

I support this proposal because I know that Fernwood needs more rental housing. Having gotten to know Taylor McCarthy as a neighbour while he renovated the character house next door, I saw firsthand that he manages projects like he builds them – with care. This is to a certain extent a best-case scenario for development next door. However, I think the need for 3 parking spaces is redundant especially with the shift towards car-lite planning and the updated Official Community Plan's emphasis on accessible green and garden space. The parking spaces and the privacy deck above it represent a loss of green space, they unnecessarily increase the horizontal and vertical footprint of the development and decrease the amount of light to our food garden and fruit trees. Having discussed these issues with Taylor myself, I trust that the final project design will strike a balance between the need for housing, our shared environmental concerns and love of gardens as well as the requirements of the planning department.

Survey Responses

16 September 2020 - 22 March 2021

1132 Empress Avenue Feedback

Have Your Say

Project: 1132 Empress Avenue



VISITORS					
3					
CONTRIBUTORS			RESPONSES		
2			2		
0	0	2	0	0	2
Registered	Unverified	Anonymous	Registered	Unverified	Anonymous



Respondent No: 1

Login: Anonymous

Email: n/a

Responded At: Mar 20, 2021 21:10:24 pm

Last Seen: Mar 20, 2021 21:10:24 pm

IP Address: n/a

Q1. **What is your position on this proposal?** Support

Q2. **Comments (optional)**

The city needs more housing and as an immediate neighbour I support this project. That said, the city's 3 car parking requirement is terribly backwards looking, embarrassing even. Reducing the number of required car spaces will greatly lower noise and environmental impact for those living in and around this project (the less space wasted for cars the better). We have concerns over losing light for our food garden in the backyard but have faith in Taylor doing the best he can within the limits of what space and city planning allow.

Q3. **Your Full Name** Ron Brogden

Q4. **Your Street Address** 1136 Empress Avenue



Respondent No: 2

Login: Anonymous

Email: n/a

Responded At: Mar 20, 2021 22:59:53 pm

Last Seen: Mar 20, 2021 22:59:53 pm

IP Address: n/a

Q1. **What is your position on this proposal?** Support

Q2. **Comments (optional)**

I support this proposal because I know that Fernwood needs more rental housing. Having gotten to know Taylor McCarthy as a neighbour while he renovated the character house next door, I saw firsthand that he manages projects like he builds them – with care. This is to a certain extent a best-case scenario for development next door. However, I think the need for 3 parking spaces is redundant especially with the shift towards car-lite planning and the updated Official Community Plan's emphasis on accessible green and garden space. The parking spaces and the privacy deck above it represent a loss of green space, they unnecessarily increase the horizontal and vertical footprint of the development and decrease the amount of light to our food garden and fruit trees. Having discussed these issues with Taylor myself, I trust that the final project design will strike a balance between the need for housing, our shared environmental concerns and love of gardens as well as the requirements of the planning department.

Q3. **Your Full Name** Soma Morse

Q4. **Your Street Address** 1136 Empress Ave
