

Dear Council members, and CALUC representative, Avery Stetski,

My husband and I are residents at 3103 Washington Ave, a development of four houses, built in 2021 and across the street from # 3106.

We have lived here for two years now and like this area very much; the mix of housing and our proximity to the Galloping Goose bike trail, the Gorge waterway, and our close proximity to downtown Victoria are all perfect for our lifestyle. But, our four houses were the first of three large construction projects on Washington: eight similar homes directly opposite our's, and Formwell's 34-unit construction site slightly further up the street, which is nearing completion. Move-in dates are set for July.

As you no doubt know, Washington Ave is a narrow road, forming a connection between Burnside Rd and Gorge Rd and because of that it was already a busy street. With all these new developments, parked cars now take up both sides of the street, (and that's right now before the 34-units are inhabited), so much so that it is impossible for two cars to pass each other at any time along any section of the street. When our neighbours at 3106 promoted the idea of constructing four houses in their backyard, they mentioned nothing about those homes including secondary suites. So, many of us are dismayed to learn that, should this project go ahead, we would potentially be looking at at least another eight cars- possibly more, jostling for a parking space on Washington Ave.

Whether we like it or not, many couples or families today still own at least one vehicle. None of the new houses that have been built along this street so far are low-cost housing units; they are expensive properties- meaning that everyone of those home-owners also owns one (and often two or more) vehicles. This is the current reality. Ignoring this fact will not make it go away. While we understand the pressing need for more housing in Victoria, it cannot come at the cost of ignoring the fact that vehicles are still an ever-present reality in our communities.

Unless our neighbours at 3106 are going to build underground parking for their new homes and suites- or have enough space outside the houses for eight parking places, plus a couple of visitor parking spots, then obviously those cars will end up trying to find room along Washington Ave.

As you can imagine, we are very concerned about this real possibility and consider it of utmost importance that the Council and CALUC re-visit the 3106 development proposal with a view to insisting on adequate parking facilities for the four houses and suites our neighbours are planning to build. We would like to invite you to come and take a look at what is happening along Washington Ave, if indeed you haven't already done so.

Yours sincerely,

Ruth and Adrian Norfolk

Dear Mayor Alto and City Council Members,

I am writing to express my concern over the 3106 Washington Avenue proposal.

I am not opposed to the development of 4 units as the owners verbally initially presented to us; however, I am very concerned about their proposal to have secondary suites. The reason for this opposition is because of parking. The city has been using the rationale that "increasing housing density is directly targeted for people who want a vehicle free lifestyle." The reality is that anyone who can afford these units has one or two cars.

The recently finished development of 8 units at 3120 Washington added more than 8 cars; there are at least an additional 5 cars that park on the street. The previous development 3103 has 4 units but one of the units has tenants and in total they have 4 cars which adds 3 to the streets. The next massive development at 3190 Washington has 35 units with only 4 guest parking spaces; this will surely over pack the crowded street.

The 3106 proposal with 4 new units might be a small consideration in terms of helping to increase housing, but with secondary suites, as many as 16 vehicles could be added to the congestion.

In addition the current Burnside/Washington/Dupplin intersection with the added congestion no longer functions well. It need to be a proper stop light. I've been almost run over several times with my dog as drivers ignore the flashing pedestrian lights; I see cars illegally driving around the barrier; and, during morning rush hour it is impossible to enter Burnside from Washington because of the long line up of cars on Burnside and the building number of cars on Washington.

This is unsustainable. This city needs to consider a better solution and stop assuming this is a residential street where no one drives a car or has more than one car.

Adam J Con and Chjristopher Bowen  
4-3103 Washington Avenue

Dear council,

## Re: Proposed development at 3106 Washington Ave

My name is Wendy Wall. I'm a resident at 3050A Washington Ave responding to a notice of a proposed development at 3106 Washington Ave. I'm also president of the Vancouver Island Strata Owners Association.

First, I commend the owner of the property, **Tom Buchanan**, for their vision. This infill housing is exactly the kind of creative solution that provides additional housing while preserving the character of our neighbourhood by retaining the original house. I also acknowledge the attractive design that Zebra Design has put forward. I support the project in principle but **have** some questions and practical concerns based on the experiences of strata owners and councils that I have assisted over the last 11 years.

I offer the following in hopes that it will spark conversation and long-term thinking for the projects brought to you for approval. These are not houses, they are communities. Strata corporations have to manage themselves like small cities managing infrastructure, budgets, and legal responsibilities. I ask all parties involved to take the same view as if you were making decisions about the infrastructure you are responsible for. You hold all the cards. The decisions you make today set out the future of this strata. Many of those decisions can't be undone **once the buildings are constructed and the strata plan is filed**. The strata owners will have to live with the benefits or consequences of your decisions for the lifetime of the strata corporation.

### **Parking**

Currently house 1 and 2 have 2 tandem parking stalls where 1 is for the owners of the strata lot and 1 is labelled visitor. Visitor stalls in these locations aren't practical. There will be times when residents are blocked from entering or leaving with no idea whose vehicle is in the visitor spot. A more practical solution would be for the strata plan to be filed with 2 limited common property (LCP) stalls for house 1, 2 LCP stalls for house 2, 1 LCP stall for house 3, and no stall for house 4. The parking spot beside the sequoia could be a common property parking stall for visitors. This stall is also important so that contractors have a place to park larger vehicles with easy access to their equipment and supplies. Contractors such as gutter cleaners won't want to provide services if they have to park on the street. Also the access lane should be wide enough to easily allow a tow truck to enter the property. There will be times when it's necessary for the strata to tow a vehicle.

### **Rental suites**

At a recent presentation, **Louis Horvat** from **Zebra Design**, explained that creating a rental suite would be optional and each house would be built to suit the buyer. This would be an opportunity lost. One of the most positive elements of this proposal is creating 4 rental suites. Victoria has a housing crisis and the addition of 4 nicely sized 1-bedroom units would be a great addition to our neighbourhood. I feel very strongly that the rental suites should be a requirement and protected by covenant if possible.

### **Short term accommodations**

Too many strata and rental units that could be used as homes are being lost due to owners using them for short term accommodations (**STA**). It would be beneficial for all to make a requirement for this development that STA use is not permitted for the main living units or the lower suites. It is also very

upsetting for an owner to buy their dream home only to find out that they are living beside a "hotel". Prohibiting STAs from the outset would go a long way to maintaining a healthy community and reducing conflict.

### **Heat pumps and EV charging**

I can't tell from the drawings if heat pumps and level 2 electric vehicle charging stations have been contemplated. I highly encourage that all 8 units have heat pumps installed. Adding them afterwards is more difficult for various physical and legal reasons. **Strata law is complicated!** I also encourage installing a level 2 EV charger on houses 1-3 or at the very least sizing the electrical service accordingly so chargers can be added. I also encourage designing all 4 bike rooms to allow charging of E-bikes. Resolving these needs in the design would be very beneficial. Currently there is a lot of conflict and frustration in strata corporations revolving around these topics.

### **Factors affecting Insurance**

The most expensive portion of a strata corporation's annual budget is insurance. It is becoming increasingly more difficult for strata corporations to get insurance at all, let alone at competitive rates. I offer some practical points to help this community in the long-term by making design choices that mitigate issues for insurance. Consider this a selling feature!

Are the walkways beside each home wide enough for wheelchairs? Are wheelchairs able to travel over pavers with vegetation in the cracks? Strata corporations have a duty to accommodate disabilities under the *Human Rights Code*. Ensuring the original design takes mobility into consideration is in the long-term best interests of the strata corporation. A need for retrofits later often starts with contentious litigation. That's not healthy for any community.

Water damage is the number one reason for strata insurance claims and the biggest driver in the strata insurance crisis that has seen premiums increase 100%-800% in a single year and deductibles increase significantly as well. It is crucial for stratas to maintain roofs, gutters, perimeter drains etc to mitigate water damage. With the trees so close to the buildings, can preventative maintenance be done adequately? For example, between house 3 and 4 there are 3 trees called *Carpinus Betulus* 'Frans Fontaine'. These grow to a height of 40' and up to 20' in width (6.1 metres), yet the space between these houses is only 3.35 m. It seems an impractical choice that has the potential to make it difficult to maintain buildings 3 and 4. Perhaps the landscapers could plan 3 large planters instead, which would avoid root damage to perimeter drains and the foundation, and could be repositioned if needed to allow the upper and lower windows of house 3 to receive light. Similarly, the *Acer Circinatum* (vine maples) in each back patio area grow to a width of 20 ft (6.1 m). The beds in the back are only 1.5 X 3 m. Trees so close to the buildings can cause both maintenance and insurance issues. Surely there are other smaller species that could be chosen.

Easy access for fire trucks is also a very important factor for insurance reasons.

### **Other Landscaping**

The landscaping design is very pleasing and the inclusion of native plants and pollinator-friendly plants is a welcome addition to the neighbourhood. However, a few details are unclear. The landscaping plans go into a great deal of detail about sod and irrigation. However at the presentation Erin, the landscaper, said there would be no sod. If so, I would like to see a revised landscaping plan that makes that clear. Where irrigation runs is also unclear. I couldn't see those details. If there's irrigation or driveway

lighting that raises the question...where is the common property electrical room? How is it accessed? Will someone have to cross limited common property to reach it? Legal disputes have arisen because of the exclusive use nature of LCP and that others don't have the right to cross it to reach a common property room.

Building more homes isn't enough. For the Homes for People Plan to work we have to build homes that people will enjoy living in: strata corporations that have their best chance of being functional, livable communities.

We're all in this together. Let's open up conversations that think about the lives of the strata owners who will live at 3106 Washington. I am happy to help workshop ideas and solutions for this and any other proposed developments. Feel free to contact me any time.

Sincerely,

**Wendy Wall (she/her), President - Board of Directors**

Celebrating 50 years (1973-2023)

Vancouver Island Strata Owners Association (VISOA)

602-620 View Street, Victoria BC V8W 1J6

Dear Mayor and Council,

Re: Proposed Development of 3106 Washington Ave

I am the 21-year owner of 3065 Washington Ave (since 2003), a 1911 Character Home, identified with Historical Merit, located within 75m of the proposed development application.

I still cannot support this project 'as is'. As stated in a previous letter and even acknowledged in the developer's most recent revision letter, Washington Ave has seen 'vigorous development' and density increases through recent developments and on-street-parking is already a problem. This proposed development is located across the road and next door to three very new developments where five single family homes have been replaced with 46 units over 3 lots. Despite a warning to the city from the neighbours, that the decision to grant a height variance for the latest, and largest, 34-unit development next door would be an error (as the variance was being used to hide the developer's self-induced shortfall to provide adequate parking for the number of units they wanted) the development went ahead and we are now dealing with the precise, and anticipated problems, that the city was warned about ahead of time.

The history as to how we got here is important. In March 2021, previous Councillor's Alto and Andrew recused themselves from the vote on the 34-unit development due to their personal interests in the area and only Councillor Thorton-Joe attended the development site prior to the vote. What was obvious to Councilor Thorton-Joe and the neighbourhood, when looking beyond the development site, was its proximity to the Galloping Goose Trail, a park, the narrow street with a history of a child pedestrian fatality, and the calm and quiet nature of the middle section of the street. These were the reasons why she voted against the 34-unit development as it was proposed.

The City was warned that the nature of the garages (enclosed) of the 34-unit development would encourage them to be used for storage and not vehicles and this has come true. Few of the garages contain vehicles. The 4 designated guest-spots are perpetually full. Many of the units own more than one vehicle (family oriented remember?) and the spill over of vehicles, from the development, line both sides of the narrow street. These vehicles are then combined with the Park and Galloping Goose user's vehicles, causing those unable to bike or walk a significant barrier, sometimes hundreds of meters, to get to and from their homes. We keep hearing from developers that people will use their garages for their vehicles and that parking will not become a problem. This has not been the case here. Long term residents, senior citizens, have resorted to placing traffic cones in front of their homes in order to have somewhere to park nearby.

The developer of 3106 is aware of the proximity of the Park and Galloping Goose as noted in their most recent proposal letter. What they do not mention is just how popular the park is (with inadequate parking) and the impact the easy access to the Galloping Goose trail (with no parking) already has on us residents. The city needs to take a step back and look at this street/neighbourhood as a whole. Galloping Goose trail users use the Park's lot to park their cars and access the Trail from there. The city's efforts to make Victoria 'bike friendly' haven't addressed the fact that not everyone rides all the way from home and back. Many choose to only ride part of the way and need places to park while out on their bikes. Washington Ave has become desirable 'free day parking' for many who use the Trail and, once the park's lot is full, the vehicles quickly spill out onto Cecilia Rd and then onto Washington Ave.

8 units in 4 buildings are being proposed. 6 parking stalls are shown in the design, but only 4 have 'unobstructed access', without potential of boxing others in. Zoning Regulation Bylaw Schedule C - Off Street

Parking Regulations requires more parking for this kind of development as proposed. Also, no visitor spots have been considered. The panhandle design will also eliminate at least one existing parking spot from the street.

Suggestions:

1. Keep the parking plan the same and remove all secondary suites from the plan. Developers of the neighbouring, similar and recent, developments initially asked for basement suites and, for the reason above (parking), they listened to us (neighbours) and changed their proposals and these two developments have not caused any burden on the neighbourhood.
2. Reduce the number of buildings from 4 to 3. This provides more options for parking and greenspaces.
3. Add access gate(s) from Lot A to the multi-use path – Doric Connector – that runs alongside it. This will reduce traffic along Washington Ave by providing the 4 buildings easier bike access to the Connector and to the additional street parking available on Carroll St (for when there is none left on Washington Ave or Cecelia Rd). Providing easier access to the parking available on Carroll St will also help reduce the need for Washington Ave residents from having to park on Burnside Road as some already have to.
4. Consider removing 1 or 2 more non-native trees, especially those near the end of their life cycle and replacing them with more native trees elsewhere on the property. Old fruit trees and other non-native species are in decline due to climate change and require additional resources to maintain them. By removing them and planting hardier trees elsewhere, more options for parking become available if Lot A is made slightly larger.
5. Remove or move the existing shed on Lot B to the rear of the Lot and create access to Lot A from the south side of the property. This frees up more room and creates a shared driveway. This eliminates any clearance challenges faced by having access to Lot A run along the north side of the property, preserves the existing street parking as is and preserves more green space by not disturbing the north side of the lot.
6. Earmark the 3000 block of Washington Ave for a future parking and garage usage study once these recent blocks of developments are occupied and lived in. Repeatedly Victoria residents, the Mayor and Council have been told by developers that “parking is not a concern’ and ‘residents will use their garages for their cars’ (and not for extra storage). A proper study would give developers, residents, Mayor and Council accurate information and ‘Victoria specific’ facts regarding the effectiveness of parking plans and the actual use of these spaces. Our experience on Washington Ave is that already the previous parking allotments were not enough. The overflowing parking from the 34 new units next door and this proposal ‘as is’ will only add to this error in judgement. I’d love to read a study to prove us wrong.

Thank you for considering my objection to the proposed development ‘as is’ and considering some or all of my suggestions.

Cameron Burton  
Homeowner – 3065 Washington Ave