

17 April 2025

26 Russett Avenue

Toronto, ON

M6H 3M3

City Councillors:

We are two couples retiring to Victoria with the goal of living sustainably in a shared building, downsizing from single family homes to live within a supportive two-household community, close to our extended families and in an accessible urban setting. In September 2024, we purchased 1012 Oliphant, a 1912 family home that was converted into apartments in 1938. The home fits well into a mixed neighbourhood of single-family homes and low-rise apartment buildings. A fifth basement suite was added in 1945. Following City of Victoria Schedule G: House Conversion of the municipal zoning bylaws, once we receive our building permit, we will create housing that is affordable to us and will meet our needs as we age in place, converting the property into one 3-bedroom dwelling and one 2-bedroom dwelling with an additional basement bachelor rental property - each unit will have its own entrance. These new units will enhance the diversity of the City of Victoria's current housing stock.

We request that City of Victoria Council grant us two strata titles to this property, providing housing security during our lifetime and economic security for our heirs. The two strata units will consist of: (1) the first-floor unit with an attached basement rental unit; (2) the second and third floor unit. As set out in BC's Strata Property Act and because this will be an up-down strata, we will be installing code-compliant fire and sound separation between all units. The remaining basement space will divide into storage with common throughfares, the bike shed will be shared, and the garden will be common property.

PLANNED UPGRADES

We have a number of planned upgrades to the existing building, the most significant of which will be rebuilding two internal staircases to meet current code. As the previous owner installed double-glazed windows, we do not need to replace the windows. The only significant change to the building envelope will be in the back yard. This includes the addition of a door for accessing the upper unit, the replacement of two small currently existing rear windows, and a first-floor door out onto a small deck to allow the ground occupants access to bike parking and the rear garden where the new bike shed will be located. We will make above grade seismic upgrades to increase the building's ability to withstand seismic activity, including the removal or lowering of remaining chimneys.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

In compliance with the current BC government greenhouse gas emissions strategy, our renovation plan includes keeping our reliance on fossil fuels to a minimum and offering efficiency by installing the following upgrades: individual heat pumps for each unit, an on-site bicycle parking/charging station, and solar panels on our shared roof. Our new bicycle shed will have three bike slots for each unit - two of these slots will be for charging electric bikes, one belonging to each unit. We believe that it is most ecological to wait for a few years and use the remaining life of the current roof before replacing it. As set out in our attached Depreciation Report, our co-owners' agreement for the house includes putting \$30,000 aside for solar installation as well as electric conduits for the solar panels.

This funding plan guarantees that future owners are not left with unfunded liabilities for roofing, re-fencing, dealing with perimeter drains and re-stuccoing/re-painting etc. Here we again direct your attention to our Depreciation Report where we outline our plan to fund the new roof, as well as ongoing maintenance on the various systems of the house.

TENANT ASSISTANCE PLAN

Because we are applying to strata title our property, we have been advised to follow the City of Victoria's Tenant Assistance Policy (TAP) for Market Rental Housing Development and compensate tenants who fall under TAP for being unhoused. We also believe that this is an ethical course of action. Megan Davies is working with Jelena Putnik, City of Victoria Tenant Assistance Planner, to ensure that we apply TAP in an appropriate manner.

Following TAP, our relationship with tenants has been characterised by providing transparency, sharing relevant information, listening to their concerns, and responding to their needs. From the time of purchase in September 2024, we have clearly communicated our intentions for the property and – as much as possible – provided accurate timelines. As a primary point of contact for tenants, Stephen Goring has shared this information. Since learning that we will apply TAP as part of our strata title application, we have emailed each household that is included under TAP, formally informing them of our intention to renovate and convert the building into two strata units, inviting them to submit a Tenant Request for Assistance form, and providing information about tenant rights, provincial legislation regarding evictions, and potential rental accommodation in the Greater Victoria area. We have sent an email to our non-TAP tenants providing similar information but without the TAP form.

Responding to needs articulated by tenants in the building regarding the timing of an eviction notice, in February we proactively offered them greater security by confirming an "earliest possible" date (1 August 2025) for serving eviction papers. Here are the specifics of our plan moving forward:

- We will continue to keep all tenants updated on the process of our applications (prior, during, and at the conclusion), offering tenants information about housing and housing organizations and proactive support, providing excellent letters of reference in a timely fashion, and calling prospective landlords if asked. As per TAP Section 4.3 and in consultation with TAP tenants, we will be providing TAP households with three housing options that meet the TAP criteria. This work would take place in consultation with TAP tenants during the four-month period following eviction notices, i.e. between 1 August - end November and will be documented, equitable and directed by needs articulated by the tenants. Megan Davies will be acting as Relocation Coordinator. We may hire someone to work on this under Megan's direction.
- If vulnerable tenants self-identify during the TAP process, we will work with them to ascertain necessary action to address their needs. Tenant privacy will be carefully guarded in our TAP process.
- The tenant currently occupying the basement suite (5) will be offered right of return at the same rent. If they choose this option, we will follow guidelines and provide funds for them to move back into the building when the renovations are complete. We will also support them in completing the necessary paperwork under Right of First Refusal.

This working plan will be developed with input from tenants, and once finalized, it will be fully communicated with TAP tenants. We will also keep non-TAP tenants informed of our plans.

We acknowledge the assistance of City of Victoria staff Brent Molnar and Jelena Putnick in preparing our materials for this submission and thank the Council for their time.

Sincerely,

Megan J. Davies
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