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## MEMO

To: City of Victoria  
From: Evan Peterson, Barefoot Planning  
Date: August 8, 2018  
Att: Mayor & Council

### Re: Proposed Small Lot Housing Subdivision at 1249 Finlayson Street

#### INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

This brief memo provides a rationale for the proposed development at 1249 Finlayson Street (at Highview Street).

In brief, the project entails the subdivision of an existing R1-B lot into two R1-S2 lots – creating two attainable, family-oriented homes. The existing house will be preserved, rotated, and shifted north, in order to better address Finlayson Street and create space for a new lot in the (existing) rear yard. The proponent intends to rent both homes, delivering much needed housing to the community.

The project will also provide a new sidewalk along the Highview frontage, an improved sidewalk along the Finlayson frontage, and a 2.5m-wide SRW for future streetscape improvements along Finlayson.

#### RATIONALE & SUPPORT

##### Policy Support

- **OCP**
  - Consistent with Traditional Residential Land Use designation, which supports ground-oriented built forms.
  - Consistent with numerous housing and infill policies.
- **Small Lot House Rezoning Policy**
  - Consistent with numerous directions, including:
    - Exceeds minimum lot size and width
    - Preferred corner lot siting
    - Preserves existing house
    - Responsive design to adjacent homes and fronting streets
    - Consultation with adjacent neighbours and wider community
- **LAP**
  - Existing LAP is outdated but is consistent with OCP directions.

##### Project Need & Benefits

- Responds to need for more attainable, family-oriented housing units.



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- Increases family-oriented rental housing stock.
- Satisfies need for sensitive infill housing in a strategic location – a corner lot on public and active transportation routes with access to green space and walkable to amenities and schools.
- Improved pedestrian amenities in neighbourhood.

### Servicing

- The site is served by all necessary public infrastructure and services.
- However, the project will provide a new sidewalk along its Highview Street frontage, an improved 1.75m sidewalk along Finlayson Street frontage, and a 2.5m wide SRW to accommodate future improvements along Finlayson Street.

### Neighbourhood / Appropriateness

- The site is appropriate for a small lot rezoning relative to other lots for several reasons: it is [a] a large, corner lot, [b] located on public and active transportation routes, and [c] walkable to parks, schools, services, and amenities.
- Also, the proposal is consistent with adjacent and surrounding development patterns and lot sizes, with smaller lots, modestly-scaled homes, and consistent architectural details.

### Impacts & Impact Mitigation

- Project will maintain and refurbish an aging house and create much needed *rental* housing.
- Existing house will be rotated and shifted to better address Finlayson Street, improving urban design (e.g., street enclosure, pedestrian experience) and increasing “eyes on the street”.
- Design of new house will mitigate privacy/overlook impacts on 3069 Highview Street (closest neighbour) by [a] limiting glazing on its south and east sides, [b] positioning the garage between the living areas of the two homes, and [c] being located on the north side, essentially eliminating shadowing impacts.
- An existing row of evergreens screens the proposal from the other adjacent neighbour at 1309 Finlayson Street, and there will be limited glazing on the east side of both homes.
- One protected tree will be removed based on arborist recommendation – an aging oak tree in fair condition; however, it will be replaced by two new oak trees and high quality landscaping. The client has agreed to give some rounds of the tree to Quadra School as requested at the preliminary Community Association meeting.



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- While adding a single new house, the project will also improve the streetscape of the frontage along Highview – with new sidewalk and landscaping.

### Design

- Existing house will be rotated and shifted to “face” Finlayson and strengthen that street frontage.
- New house is of a modest scale, consistent with the heights and building footprints of neighbouring homes.
- Design character of both homes is consistent with older homes in the neighbourhood, including overall scale, rooflines, definition of entryways, proportion of glazing, neutral colours, and character details.

### VARIANCES

The proposal requires four setback variances:

- (1-2) For the existing house, the Finlayson Road frontage will function as the front yard; however, the Highview frontage is the front yard by definition. The proposed West and East (side by function) yards both exceed the required 2.4m side yard requirement and allow the preservation of the existing house, orientated toward Finlayson Street. The Highview (West) side requires a 3.09m variance (6.0m required; 2.91m proposed), and the East side requires a 3.56m variance (6.0m required; 2.44m proposed).
- (2-3) For the East and West sides of the new house, the requested front (6.0m required / 3.5 proposed) and rear (6.0m required / 3.37m proposed) setback variances are consistent with typical small lot designs. Both variances allow a more pedestrian-oriented design (entry forward, garage back) while accommodating a family-sized unit (3 bedrooms) and single car garage, which buffers the house to the south. The impact of the rear variance is mitigated by a row of mature evergreens, limited glazing, and lack of adjacent house to the East.

### SUMMARY

The proposed development is consistent with OCP and Small Lot Rezoning policies; represents sought-after neighbourhood-scale infill housing; and will provide much needed attainable, family-oriented rental housing units in the City. Moreover, the location is ideal for this sensitive densification, while design is responsive and sensitive to the neighbourhood, minimizing privacy and view impacts.





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We appreciate your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

Evan Peterson  
Principal  
Barefoot Planning