



Mayor Helps and Council  
City of Victoria  
No.1 Centennial Square  
Victoria, BC  
V8W 1P6

September 23, 2018

**Re: 1400 Quadra Street Rezoning and OCP Amendment**

Dear Mayor Helps and Council,

The DRA LUC has reviewed the drawings for the proposed building and hosted a CALUC meeting on May 18, 2017 for the above-mentioned application. The presentation was conducted by Lynn Gordon-Findlay of de Hoog and Kierulf Architects.

Based on the information presented by the applicant the purpose of the Rezoning and OCP amendment is to create a 14-storey market rental building with ground floor commercial space fronting Quadra and Johnson Streets. Information presented at the public meeting indicates the applicant is requesting an OCP amendment to increase the residential FSR component of this project from the allowable 3:1 to approximately 6:1. Some minor variances for setbacks are also requested.

Comments and concerns raised at the Land Use Committee public meeting are as follows:

- The question was asked whether the proposed building will "improve the neighbourhood". The applicant stated that having more residents will provide more eyes on the street with the expectation that there will be an improvement in the local conditions.
- There were questions asked regarding the amount of time the construction would take and the amount of blasting required. The applicant offered that construction would take approximately 2 years and there will be significant blasting taking place.
- When asked to clarify the OCP amendment to create residential occupancy for the entire building rather than include office occupancy at 50%, the applicant pointed out that it was economically difficult to split occupancies due to the need for separate lobbies and elevators for the two uses.
- Questions were asked related to the setbacks of any proposed balconies and the adjacent windows of the adjacent supportive housing complex at 844 Johnson. The applicant stated that the balconies had a minimum 4.5m setback. Dual pane windows and other sound abatement techniques will be included.

Comments and concerns raised by committee members are as follows:

- The applicant has included three bedroom apartments within this proposal which will allow families to reside within the downtown area. This is a laudable response to current residential needs.

- The applicant is providing adequate parking for this project in compliance with City regulations which is highly desirable and should be encouraged. Many other applications are seeking significant parking variances or provide no parking at all creating parking pressures in adjacent neighbourhoods.
- The building exterior appears to be of a higher than average quality.
- Ubiquitous clear glass balcony guards do not screen personal possessions that are inevitably stored on balconies from public view. It is suggested that at least a portion of the railing glass on each balcony be of the obscure type to provide some screening from public view and create additional aesthetic interest.
- It is disappointing that the stained glass feature shown on early drawings that responded to the architectural detail of the Conservatory opposite appears to have been removed from the current design.
- Since the CALUC meeting, the requested FSR has been reduced to 5.5:1 which is in keeping with the lower density OCP designation for buildings of residential occupancy immediately across Quadra and to the east.
- It is noted that if this application was located immediately across the street it would not require an OCP amendment.

There were no objections to this application stated by attendees at the CALUC meeting. The DRA has a policy not to support OCP amendments without a compelling rationale to do so. The risk taken by the applicant to improve the local area in spite of the challenges of the particular site in this particular case warrants support.

Sincerely,



Ian Sutherland  
Chair Land Use Committee  
Downtown Residents Association

cc COV Planning