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To:
Mayor and Council
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square, Victoria BC V8W 1P6

Dear Mayor and Council,

Last March, our family's home, that has been our home since 2007, was overcome by a devastating fire that could not be saved. We lost everything, including our wonderful tenants that shared our home and gave us the ability to stay in the neighbourhood we love so much. Our proposal to Mayor and Council is to be able to rebuild our home the way it was, as much as we are able, and with 2 suites in the basement so there is room for our family while still being able to offer long term rental units.

We are prepared to enter into legal agreements for the two basement suites as rental units in perpetuity and for the design of the building and landscape, prior to the Public Hearing.

In addition, we researched City staff's recommendation to provide a TDM program relating to the 2 basement suites and will be purchasing 2 car share memberships, a one-time membership for each unit. Our proposal also includes secured short term and long term bicycle parking for our family and tenants.

We understand Council's concern for parking issues on our street. Being the only house on McClure St. without a driveway has always been a sore spot for us. Through this process, we have tried really hard to put in a driveway that would have room for two vehicles. Unfortunately, the cost of relocating the hydro pole, and the removal of a healthy City tree, is just too much for us, and with current regulations, and the many adjustments made to accommodate all departments, a single pad in the front seems to be the only solution. Still, this is more parking than we had before the fire. With the same number of tenants planned, that we had before the fire, we hope that Council will be satisfied with our current plan of, one parking pad, adding additional bike storage, and MODO memberships, will be enough to offset the need for additional parking on site.

Our great concern for adding additional parking stalls is the amount of green space that would be taken up in order to make the parking on site work. This would include having to pave a long driveway down to the back of the house as well as create the additional parking stalls, and room for a turnaround, that would become extremely awkward for this site. Doing this would take away valuable recreational green space, important to our family, as well as give the look and feel of being more of a commercial property in a residential neighbourhood. Our family would no longer have the use of outdoor space they had to play in before the fire. In addition, the cost we would have to incur in order to make this happen would truly be a hardship for our family as the unanticipated length of time it is taking for us to rebuild our home is already taking its toll.

We have been landlords for the past 10 years, at the McClure address, and in our experience, we've had fewer tenants with a vehicle and far more with bicycles. (YAY to the many, new, wonderful bike lanes that have been added!) By adding additional parking stalls, would seem to go against City's desire for less traffic in the downtown core, while not having them would promote the need for the TDM program. We have found that as the cost of renting increases in city centers, many renters today can't afford, or choose not to own a vehicle, making the access to affordable, rental, vehicles when they need one, a benefit to renting downtown. Along with the car-share program, our location already lends itself to easy, walkable, and bike-rideable distances to just about everything anyone would need, and where it doesn't, the many bus stops and MODO memberships should surely cover any deficiencies.

With regards to sustainability, we are including MODO/TDM as part of the equation, Light pollution reduction (Some soffit lighting, and potentially additional low voltage landscape lighting). We are also looking at including low water use plantings as well as native plants for the landscape of some of the new garden areas.

We had herb and vegetable garden beds before and would like to add these again where we can. Maintain current fruit trees (apple and pear) that still exist on site. Our overall goal is to reach an EnerGuide Rating of 80 or higher.

Our family hope's that Mayor and Council will take these points into consideration when making their final decision, and would like to thank you all for your time and consideration with our proposal and the rebuilding of our home.

Most respectfully,

Mike McComb, Jesika Edison,
and all our kiddos who love our home and the community they are growing up in.