

April 3, 2019

City of Victoria
Via Email

mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca

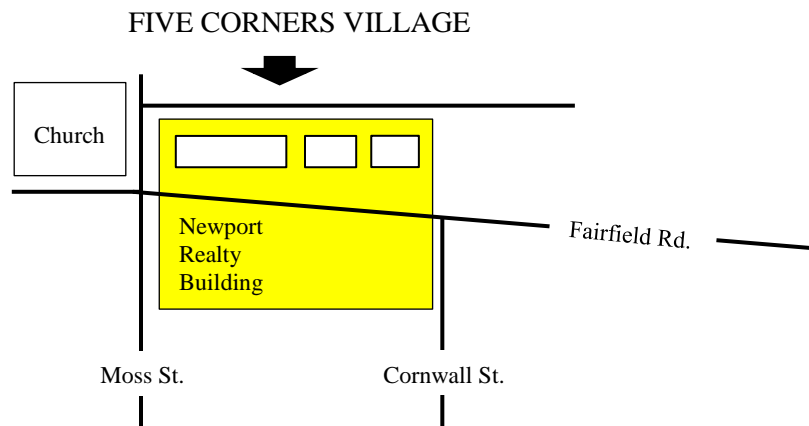
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Dear Mayor and Council:

Re: Five Corners Village

It has come to my attention that staff is forwarding a recommendation to the committee of the whole this Thursday to alter wording in the draft copy of the Fairfield Community Plan. This report is recommending lessening the density and height guidelines for the Five Corners Village currently embodied in the Fairfield Community Plan Draft Report. I have owned the Newport Realty building and neighbouring house on Moss St. going on 20 years now.

After much community involvement, there was a support level of 69% from the 282 respondents in favour of small mixed use or residential buildings of 3-4 storeys and a 2 to 1 FSR for the village area. This was in the original draft recommendation from staff and was largely embraced by the community. This draft copy representing years of community involvement and city time.



Small Urban Villages - applies to Moss St. and Fairfield Rd.

- 7.6.1 Support mixed use development to a maximum height of 13.5 m (approx. 4 storeys) fronting on Fairfield Rd. and up to 10.5m elsewhere.
- 7.6.2 Support mixed use development up to a density of 1.5:1 floor space ratio.
- 7.6.3 Notwithstanding 7.6.2, consider additional density up to 2:1 floor space ratio on parcels fronting on Fairfield Rd. where development provides a contribution offsetting the impacts of added density.

Source: Fairfield Community Plan
City of Victoria Draft

Figure 27 in the draft Community Plan illustrates a four storey building on the Newport Realty site and Figure 28 illustrates the 4th storey as setback lending to the appearance of a three storey building. None of these illustrations show parking on site at ground level, presumably the intent being for parking underground.

Herein lies the problem. Left as currently crafted, the neighbourhood plan opens the door for considering 4 storeys and a 2:1 FSR on appropriate sites within the core village area. From a scalability perspective, the Newport Realty site is the singular property that could support this and present well. It is the only property of scale, about 1.5 times the lot size of the United Church site.

As per Figure 28 in the draft Community Plan, the vision for this property is mixed commercial on the main floor with residential above.

If the vision embraces underground parking on this site then it must leave the door open for 4 storeys and a 2:1 FSR. Without this added density, there is no viable way for any development of this property to occur that could support the costs of underground parking.

Current zoning C-1P in place allows for 12 metres of mixed use. My current zoning being sufficient for my future plans on this site. However, by changing the recommended density and height in the community plan, my process increases in complexity. If this was the community will as reflected in all the research done, then so be it. However, this does not reflect the community's desire for Fairfield, rather their fears. Fears created by council supporting density for the United Church greater than what is recommended in the Draft of the Fairfield Community Plan. The city did not honour their own guidelines and gave density where the community did not want it. There was direct intervention by the mayor with neighbours opposed to this densification. Community opposition to 4 storeys and a 2:1 ratio is push back *against* the United Church approval, not against the vision for my property being the heart of Five Corners. My property has scale and position for staging and provides the greater diversity of core services desired by the community.

Changing the widely circulated and accepted Draft of the Fairfield Community Plan does not reflect what is in its best interest, rather a knee jerk response to actions taken by city outside this plan.

Recommendation

Keep the wording currently in place in the Draft Fairfield Community Plan. It leaves the door open for responsible densification of key sites, yet clearly leaves control with the city and neighbourhood.

It is material to note that four storey's is widely supported along arterial streets. Traffic through the village on Fairfield is sufficient in volume to qualify as an arterial street.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Greg Abbott

Five Corner Holdings Ltd.
Owner: Newport Realty Building
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]