

April 25, 2019

Mayor and Council,

We are writing in response the public hearing notification we received on April 17, 2019 regarding rezoning of the land known as 926 and 932 Pandora Avenue.

Our understanding is that the existing zoning (CA-1 Zone) allows for a 15.5m building with the proposed zoning (CR-P, in progress) which will allow for 32.34m height. While we support development on this site, we do not support this rezoning for the following reasons:

- 1) The shadowing of a structure built at the height this zoning would allow will impact the livability of the homes on the north side of Mason Street especially during winter months;
- 2) The additional height will negatively impact the historical characteristics of the neighborhood including matching or exceeding the neighborhoods distinct church steeples (Alex Goolden Performance Hall, St. John the Divine Anglican Church, among others); and
- 3) The transitional nature (social, physical) of this block is not reflected in this rezoning.

The 900 Block of Pandora Avenue is one of the city's most sensitive areas and a respectful transition should be considered. Pandora Avenue is the border of the North Park neighborhood and an important transitional area from the downtown core to a distinct, historical neighborhood currently undergoing considerable transformation. This transformation has begun in a way that reflects the sensitive characteristics that make the North Park neighborhood what it is.

In addition, this rezoning would result in a 11 story Commercial Residential building immediately neighboring properties zoned for R-2 – Two Family Dwelling which allows for up to 7.6m in height for two family dwellings and up to 11m in height for a public building. A transition from 32.34m to 7.5m (residential) immediately across the street does not reflect the critical transitional character of this block. As reference, the nearest new development that connects to the North Park Neighborhood (1008 Pandora Avenue) is six stories on the Pandora border and four along Mason Street. This design demonstrates respect for neighboring lots.

We would like to be clear that we support development and recognize the need for housing for ALL residents of Victoria. We do not oppose Commercial Residential use at this site but would like Council to consider the impacts this proposed zoning will have on neighboring existing zonings as well as the critical transitional characteristics of the 900 Block of Pandora Avenue.

We would like to add that as residents of the 900 Block of Mason Street, since May of 2018 we have been aware that a development was proposed for this site but we have not received any communications from the developer to discuss this development or to engage residents of this block. We are not able to confirm whether any contact was made with residents prior to May, 2018, however based on conversations with long-term neighbors we do not believe these efforts have been made.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Beth Hurford and Chris Heesterman

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