

Date March 19, 2018

Dear Mayor and Council,

**Re: Development Proposal at 331 and 337 Charles Street St.**

The proposal is to carve out a third lot from two existing lots and build a large 3-level, 5-bedroom home with a basement suite. This structure would be squeezed into a very narrow lot, creating an odd lot configuration and requiring several significant variances to City Zoning By laws.

Will this development enhance our neighbourhood? This development will benefit only the developer, and that at the expense of current neighbours and the City. It is not a respectful and reasonable development, will increase City expenditures to address City infrastructure challenges already experienced by existing residents, and will definitely not meet the needs of those seeking affordable housing. It will have a negative impact on the following specific issues.

**Pedestrian traffic:** The corner of Earle St. and St. Charles is an active area with no crosswalks. There are many pedestrians, such as walkers, shoppers, hospital staff, parents and children going to daycare, and the many and various park users.

**Parking congestion:** This is already an issue due to pressure from homeowners, renters, plaza shoppers and employees, daycare, and park users. In addition, many drivers use Earle St. as a short cut route. We know that the City is well aware of the parking issues on these blocks.

This development would exacerbate both existing issues. It requires the addition of a second driveway off Earle that would further reduce on-street parking and, because of its proximity to the corner, further increase hazards for pedestrians. The development reduces street parking, yet increases the need for on-street parking by proposing a suite, but not supplying any on-site parking for it.

**Shadowing:** Our home at 1613 Earle St. is located to the east and adjacent to the proposed development. Our home had extensive renovations in 1994 and the west wall, which has a total of 13 windows was designed to capture sunlight and warmth in the winter months. The proposed development (*with the maximum height specified for this zone*) will block the solar heating upon which we have become dependent. This would require us to increase our use of non-renewable resources, thereby significantly adding to our heating expenses, and contribute negatively to climate change (e.g., on sunny March 10th the temperature outside was 8 C but it was 21 C in our house). As retirees, this unexpected increase in annual costs is a hardship on us. This shadowing will also reduce the sunlight to our garden and decks, significantly impacting our enjoyment of our property – enjoyment we regularly share with the children we raised in this house, and our grandchildren. We note that the proposed house plan (*which has only 6, mostly small, windows*) does not taken advantage of any green energy in their plans.

**Loss of green space:** The proposed development requires that the large laurel hedge running along Earle street, which presently reduces the traffic noise and road views, will need to be removed to accommodate a new driveway. The hedge-like assortment of trees, which runs along the south side are

also to be removed to allow for proposed house construction. No mention of these alterations is made in the proposed plan. In addition, two mature flowering cherry trees would be removed.

**Ground instability:** This area is a former estuary, making the soil structure unstable. Over time, this instability has caused our front porch and basement stairs to sink. Further disturbance such as excavation for an adjacent house and additional drainage will affect the water table and further aggravate damage to our home.

We are not opposed to development and densification. We support thoughtful and respectful changes that will enhance our neighbourhood; for instance, building a structure to suit the existing site, such as a garden suite, which would not require variances. The possibility of a variance exists in order to prevent hardship. The only consideration involved here appears to be maximizing profit for the developer, who has made no attempt to consult and present their current plans to us and our neighbours.

The City of Victoria Zoning By-laws have been thoughtfully and duly implemented to ensure that neighbourhoods are protected from development that is out of keeping with its surroundings. There has been no adequate case made for any variances sought in this proposal. In fact, we are concerned that approving these variances and allowing this development to take place will set a precedent for future development that is also not consistent with the character of this neighbourhood, with negative effects for the entire area. For these reasons, we oppose this application for the proposed development and variance and we encourage our elected council to follow the guidelines of the OCP and zoning by-laws and reject this development proposal.

Thanking you for reading this letter and for your public service.

Sincerely,



Insha Khan

Lydia Wiet

1613 Earle St.

Photo 1 - parking on corner of Earle St in front of proposed subdivision access

Photo 2 - parking across the street in front of proposed subdivision access

Photo 3 - parking across the street in front of proposed subdivision cont'd

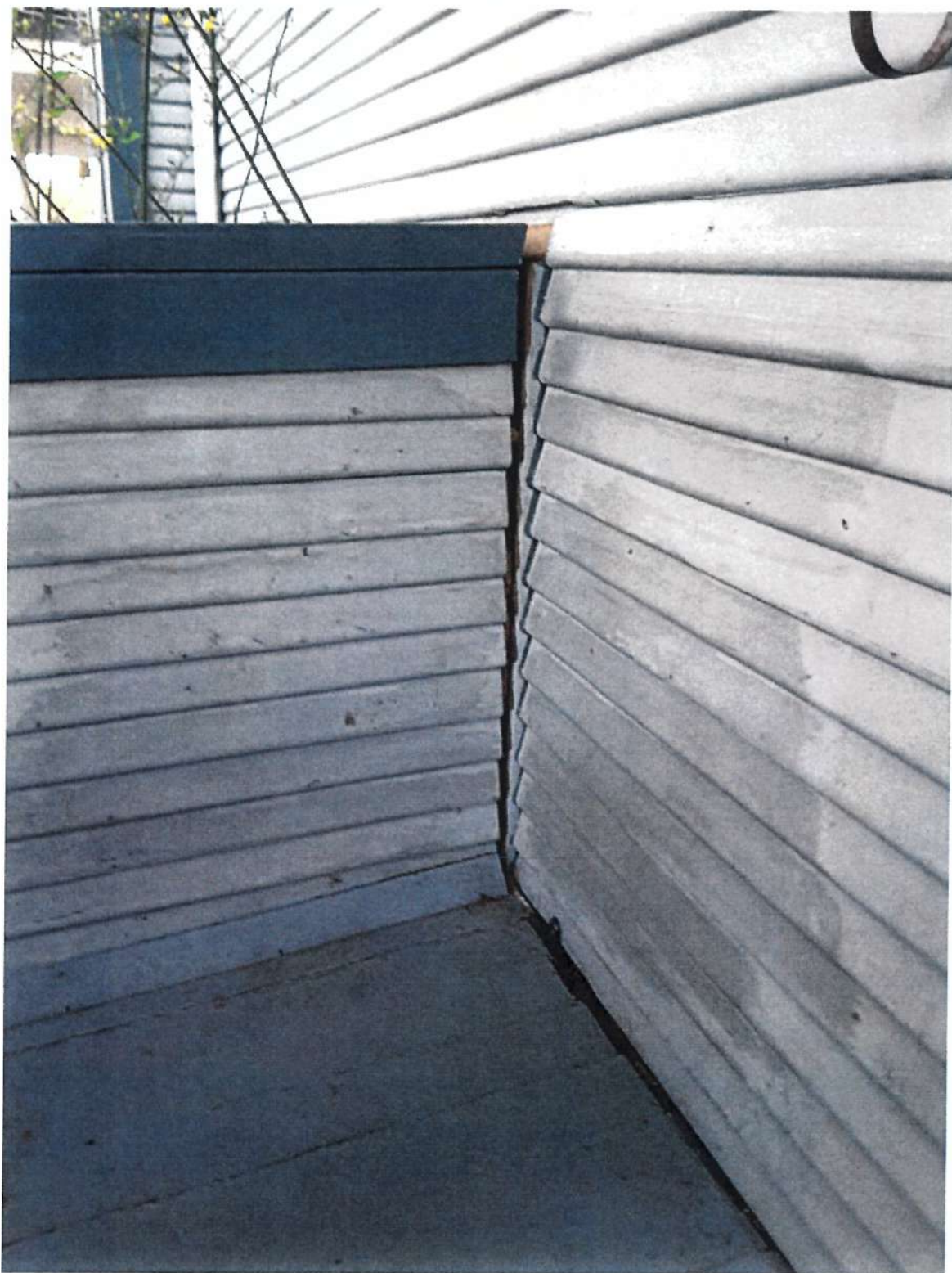
Photo 4, 5 - front porch and entrance basement stair gaps from soil settlement











January 22, 2018

Dear Mayor and City Council,

We are writing to raise an issue regarding the development variance permit application to subdivide 331 and 333 St. Charles St.

The application seeks approval to subdivide the two lots into three. The new lot, with a proposed 5-bedroom house and secondary suite, will be accessed from Earle St.

This neighbourhood was a former estuary. The soil consists of 4 feet of organic soil, 3 feet of brown clay with seashells and the bottom layer is gray clay saturated with water.

As Earle St. residents we have experienced the following:

- Sewer line is no longer level. Every Monday, the City has a truck stationed at the intersection of Earle St. and St. Charles St. to pump the contents from Earle St into the connecting pipes on St. Charles.
- 1620 Earle Street requires a permanent pump to move the contents from their house to the sewer line on Earle Street.
- Sewage backflow into basements has occurred multiple times in 1613, 1616 and 1617 Earle St. One resident cleans out their sewer line 2 times a year as a proactive measure.
- 1644 Earle St drainage flow is described as slow. They are not allowed to have additional plumbing on their lot.
- The road and sidewalk are not level. Residents describe it as similar to a roller coaster. Numerous sunken areas and cracks have been patched but cannot keep pace with the continuous sagging in the road and sidewalk.
- The front porches of the two houses adjacent to the proposed new 5-bedroom house are sinking.
- Houses shake when a large truck drives on the road.

Our concern is that the added pressure from the proposed additional infill in this location will exacerbate this problem for the existing residents of Earle Street.

We hope that the developer is aware of the delicate nature of the soil, the high water table and the potential for the use of heavy equipment to excavate the basement site to damage the adjacent buildings and road infrastructure.

We request that the City's Engineering department reconsider this application in light of the issues identified regarding the soil and sewage. We think it is important that Council be fully informed of potential implications of the proposed new development on neighbouring buildings, and consider addressing the infrastructure problem on Earle Street before this proposed application proceeds further. As residents of the Gonzales neighbourhood, we support the objective of encouraging more housing diversity and opportunities for affordable housing, but we expect that any proposed development be respectful of the neighbours, with due consideration of infrastructure and building challenges associated with this particular location and potential consequences on existing properties.

Sincerely,



Kathy Humphrey

1693 Earle Street

Genna Trinidad

gf 1680 Earle Street

Tim Burdison

1658 Earle Street

[Signature]

1628 Earle

og Perday

1691 Earle Street

[Signature]

1616 Earle Street

K. Travers

1620 Earle St.

B. B. B. B.

1622 Earle St.

J. Weedne

1648 Earle St.

H. B. M. M.

1664 Earle St.



Dech h

1613 Earle St.

Blythe

1662 Earle St

R. Whitcomb

1689 Earle St.

L. Ferguson

1667 Earle St.

W. White

1644 Earle St.

J. R.

1632 Earle St.

Allen fan

1625 Earle Street

David Hughes

343 St. Charles

Far C. S.

1617 EARLE STREET

M.

1661 EARLE STREET

Aspencer

1679 Earle St.

P. S.

1693 EARLE ST



March 12, 2018

Dear Mayor and Council,

My family and I are residents of 331 St. Charles Street. I have reviewed the February 22, 2018 revised application for a variance permit at 331/337 St. Charles Street, to accommodate the development of a new five-bedroom house and basement suite. For the reasons set out below, I am opposed to this proposal.

Firstly, this proposal would result in the loss of a significant amount of backyard at 331 St. Charles. Our children have enjoyed playing in the backyard and together as a family, we have actively used the backyard for gardening, having put in multiple raised vegetable beds and fruit trees. A significant portion of that existing gardening area would be eliminated with the proposed development. A garden shed located at the northeast corner of our lot would also be eliminated.

The proposal also significantly reduces the backyard space of the neighbouring property on 337 St. Charles, similarly affecting the ability of future families to use the backyard to sustainably garden and enjoy other family activities. A portion of the existing green space on that neighbouring property will be eliminated to create new off-street parking. The proposed removal of an existing hedge further reduces the green features of that property.

The significant reduction in the backyards at 331 and 337 St. Charles, and the similarly small backyard of the proposed infill lot, is inconsistent with the character of nearby lots in this area. The size of the proposed new house is also significantly larger, with a greater site coverage, and of a different design than properties in this neighbourhood (which is predominantly stucco).

It is my view that the proposed development is inconsistent with the character of the Gonzales neighbourhood, particularly the green nature of this particular area. These lots are all adjacent to Hollywood Park, an important green space used extensively by local residents and visitors who participate and support the Beaconhill Little League. The environmental, social and recreational values associated with this neighbourhood park should be preserved and protected for future generations. Permitting this application for development that requires significant variances, in this particular location, is inconsistent with that objective.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Foote

Brandon Shelley



March 17, 2018

Dear Mayor and Council,

**Re: Proposed Development at 331 and 337 St. Charles Street**

We understand that a revised application was submitted to the City on February 22, 2018, regarding a proposal to subdivide the lots at 331 and 337 St. Charles Street, to allow for the building of a new 5-bedroom house with a basement suite, in a new **very** narrow-sized lot, with limited parking.

We support increased density and development as being necessary to allow for improved infrastructure, energy efficiency and climate change objectives, as well as creating more affordable housing. However in our view, allowing this proposed development, which **significantly exceeds** the minimum setback requirements set out in the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw*, is inconsistent with the principles of the *Official Community Plan*, and makes **no** contribution to any of the of the above mentioned objectives, is simply not sound public policy.

For the reasons following we ask that you reject this application.

- **Suite should absolutely not be considered unless additional parking spaces are provided for.** With the Mall, Hospital, Daycares/playcares, existing duplexes and suites and the playground/ park there is already **no** parking. Often, we cannot even get out our driveway. The lack of parking is a very serious issue in our local neighbourhood and must be dealt with before new dwellings are added. Saying that that Transit is a solution is not valid– Transit is already often maxed out going to UVIC and Oak Bay High requiring waits of two or three busses which is not realistic. Electric vehicle prices are rapidly decreasing which will mean many more cars – electric ones still need parking and roads.
- The Lot owner/ speculator, knowing the zoning regulation bylaws, paid more than the asking price to acquire Lot 331 so that this application for subdivision could occur. This has already resulted in increased tax assessment and market sales values for nearby residents including us. The housing objective could be met by suiting the existing two houses with or without small additions and additional green space conservation could have been achieved. Potentially these suites could have provided more affordable housing than the new proposed house will. Speculator/applicant has also prohibited tenants of 331 St Charles from opposing rezoning in their rental contract in order to reduce opposition.
- Water restrictions and rationing – CRD is rationing water through restrictions due to insufficient supply and inadequate infrastructure so we should not be adding to the load until the infrastructure is improved. In addition, we already suffer from insufficient water pressure frequently in the summer months (PSI less than 50). We had water line and our Miele Washer tested – it shuts off when inlet pressure is less than 50 psi - Adding another residence and suite without fixing the infrastructure would make this worse.
- The city sewer is in need of significant repair and must be flushed out continually – we have to roto roter at least twice a year and the blockage is often at the street junction. Plus the regular flushing by the city may contribute to our line backing up as sludge is washed into our line from the larger drain when it is being cleaned.



- Earle street needs significant road maintenance – it is barely driveable – good part is you don't have to worry about speeders the ruts serve as speed bumps! When it rains hard the puddle in front of our house is the length of two vehicles and is almost up to the top of the sidewalk again (City engineers fixed this a few years ago but road has settled and moved)
- ALL of the setback variances requested are not necessary and they certainly are not minor as claimed by the proponent. The house can be constructed to a smaller size and we believe without the road dedications being required by the city meet the requirements in the Zoning Regulation Bylaw.
  - Front yard setbacks rational not identified and not immediately required – why does City need road dedications? Rather the City should be selling the adjacent boulevards to the applicant to increase lot size and generate revenue. Road dedications for unidentified future projects is not sound planning. We were unable to find any discussion or even identification of these requirements in either the official community plan or the City planning information on line.
  - Proposed new House can be constructed smaller and fit within the setbacks as in the zoning requirement. It doesn't have to have a suite nor be as big – Difference between profit maximization and sound regulation – abiding by zoning requirements and the OCP.

In addition, this speculator/applicant has not even bothered to come and talk us yet we live one lot away! Remarkable from our perspective but I guess when \$ are the objective and you don't even live in the neighborhood relationships and the neighborhood are not important.

We would support the development if no variances were required. We believe this is possible by forgoing the road dedications, reducing the size of the residence and eliminating the suite.

We recently found out that there was a planning process underway for the Gonzales and Fairfield areas and that it had been going on for some time (much to our surprise). Pretty hard to have any confidence in a new planning process if the current plans and zoning are provided variances at any opportunity. Allowing a new residence of this size, with a suite may well forestall additional development of the local area before the new planning process is even complete. We have lived here over 30 years and support development but lets do it right and not simply line the pockets of speculators. Let's build greater neighborhoods!

For example we could support the full development of the "L" shaped area on Earle and St Charles provided it was done in a way where all of the lots were developed at the same time, density objectives could be achieved, economies of scale captured, and greenspace conservation could occur. For example full underground parking for the whole area could be constructed covered by townhouses/affordable houses – some with store front micro businesses. There's lots of options but please don't leave it to speculators and developers to determine by granting variances for any old request – lets have sound public policy which includes everyone not just speculators.

Thank you for your public service and for reading our concerns.

Cheers

Ross and Loraine Curtis  
1617 Earle Street

March 25, 2018

Dear Mayor and Council,

**Re: Proposed Development at 331 and 337 St. Charles Street**

We understand that a revised application was submitted to the City on February 22, 2018, regarding a proposal to subdivide the lots at 331 and 337 St. Charles Street, to allow for the building of a new 5-bedroom house with basement suite, in a new narrow-sized lot. In our view, allowing this proposed development, which significantly exceeds the minimum setback requirements set out in the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw*, is inconsistent with the principles of the *Official Community Plan* and the characteristics of the Gonzales neighbourhood, particularly being adjacent to an important neighbourhood park. For the reasons we set out in this letter, we ask that you reject this application.

The backyard of 331 & 337 St. Charles Street is visible to the many users of Hollywood Park, including local and Victoria residents, and even visitors from across the Province attending Beacon Hill Little League games. The *Official Community Plan* describes the significance of neighbourhood parks in this way:

Parks, open spaces and both indoor and outdoor recreational facilities are critical components of a complete community... They help to improve the livability of densely developed areas, enable active lifestyles and personal health, provide spaces for respite and contemplation, highlight historic and cultural landscapes, and provide indoor and outdoor gathering places. Many parks and open spaces also play an important role in providing animal and plant habitat and maintaining ecosystem services.

Goal 9(A) states "Victoria is an active community where everyone enjoys convenient access to community parks, open spaces, facilities, amenities and programs close to where they live." Being located adjacent to a neighbourhood park is an important factor when considering new buildings, and are to consider these OCP objectives:

- 8 (a) That urban design at every scale from sites to local areas is responsive to Victoria's geographic context and existing pattern of development, achieves excellence, and creates memorable places.
- 8 (b) That the views from the public realm of existing landmarks are maintained, and that new landmarks are introduced to enhance the visual identity and appearance of Victoria and to improve wayfinding around the city.
- 8 (c) That new buildings and features contribute to the sense of place in development permit areas and heritage conservation areas through sensitive and innovative responses to existing form and character.
- 8 (d) That social vibrancy is fostered and strengthened through human scale design of buildings, streetscapes and public spaces.
- 8 (f) That the built environment is beautified and softened through natural features in the public realm.

A significant portion of existing gardens and green space on 331 and 337 St. Charles St. that borders the northwest corner of the park would be lost with the proposed development. An existing hedge of Cedar and Fir trees up to 25 ft tall will also be eliminated.



The Gonzales neighbourhood is described in the proposed *Gonzales Neighbourhood Community Plan* (2018), as "special because of the quiet, tree-lined streets, diverse and attractive detached houses with gardens, a variety of park spaces...The community wants these features maintained as they contribute to a feeling of wholeness for the neighbourhood." The current *Gonzales Neighbourhood Community Plan* (2002) requires consideration of "the fit of new houses with the size and character of existing houses in the neighbourhood, e.g., reduce the maximum permitted house size and site coverage, as outlined in Table 1" (3.3.2), and that builders are "to preserve and maintain, to the extent possible, neighbourhood features, such as trees, fences, gardens, and rock outcrops" (3.3.11), and encourages builders to "consider the existing character of the site, as well as that of neighbouring properties, in the design of new houses" (3.3.12).

Contrary to the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* applicable to this area, the proposal exceeds the minimum setback requirements, including a rear yard setback decrease of **50%** and interior side yard setback of **45%**. This is not consistent with the green character of this neighbourhood, which is particularly important given its location next to a neighbourhood park. We are not of the view that the width of the adjacent lot at 1613 Earle Street, a house built over 90 years ago, sets the precedent that future variances to other lots in proximity should automatically be given.

This development would set a negative precedent for future development in this area, which could erode the value of Hollywood Park, potentially decreasing habitat and ecological functions, and would reduce residents' and visitors' ability to relax and connect with nature - as that "nature" would be crowded by buildings, instead of the green space of sufficiently sized yards characteristic of Gonzales.

Furthermore, there is currently a delicate balance established between park users and local residents, involving the parking pressures and noise associated with the use of Hollywood Park, particularly during sporting events. Allowing increased density that ignores this situation can significantly disrupt that balance. As the creation of a secondary suite does not require off-street parking, this will inevitably create more pressure on already limited street parking in this area, given parking demands from the Fairfield plaza employees, customers, other local businesses, and Hollywood Park users particularly during the busy baseball season.

Finally, the proposed development would exacerbate the current challenges that currently exist with the sewage infrastructure and delicate nature of the soil of this particular area (former estuary) that were identified to Mayor and Council on January 22, 2018 by residents of Earle Street.

To protect the important environmental, social value of Hollywood Park to our local community and broader Victoria community, to maintain the character of this neighbourhood important to our community, and to give due consideration of the potential consequences of this development to existing residents due to the geology, infrastructure and traffic/parking challenges associated with this particular location, we ask that the application for development at 331 and 337 St. Charles be rejected.

Sincerely,

C. L. 625

325 St. Charles St.

Cauler

325 St. Charles St.

D. W. 625

319 St. Charles St.

8. 16

309 St. Charles St.

W. H. 625

315 St. Charles St.

Stewart

315 St. Charles St.

W. Varga

1591 Earle Place.

For 625

1632 Earle St

Janet 625  
E. Bortch

1638 Earle St.

1644 EARLE St.

625

1692 Earle St.



Arthur  
Hunter

1587 EARLE PLACE.

1672 Earle St.

~~GA~~

1693 Earle Street

W. G. A. L.

1664 Earle St.

~~BB~~

1738 Fairfield Road.

B. G. A. L.

1622 Earle St.

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March 21, 2018

Dear Mayor and City Council,

We are residents living in close proximity to the properties of 331 and 337 St. Charles St. The application seeks approval to subdivide the two existing lots into three, creating a very narrow new lot. It proposes building a large 5-bedroom house that includes a secondary suite, both of which would be accessed from Earle St. We are writing to raise the following concerns and our objections to the development variance permit application to re-zone 331 and 337 St. Charles St:

1. **Variances:** This application does not comply with Zoning By-law R1-G. Approval is being sought for 6 variances, the majority of which are significant. The by-law requires a front lot width of 15 m (50 ft), but the proposed new lot front width is only 12.6 m (40 ft) while the rear width is even narrower, proposed at only 8.6 m (28 ft). Approving this uncharacteristic lot in this area would set an unfortunate precedence, providing a reference for future development that would render the zoning by-law irrelevant in this area.
2. **Parking:** Currently there is a lack of parking spaces on Earle St. and on St. Charles St. Current parking availability cannot accommodate the current needs of the residents and this is exacerbated by additional pressures from Fairfield Plaza employees and customers, Hollywood park users, and visitors who travel to the park and local businesses by car as they do not reside in the area. The new house will require an additional driveway and the secondary suite will require on-street parking. This will eliminate at least 2 existing parking spots and worsen the existing parking problem.
3. **Geophysical soil properties:** This area is a former estuary. The top 4 feet of earth consists of organic black loam, which is followed by 4 feet of water-saturated brown clay with seashells; below 8 feet there is water-saturated gray clay. As the water table changes due to improved residential drainage, housing structures such as front porches, decks, chimneys, and basement walls shift. Additional development will exacerbate this problem, resulting in lowering the value of the neighbouring houses, as well as requiring residents to incur additional remedial costs.
4. **Civic infrastructure:** Another result of the geophysical characteristic of the site is the poor condition of the current sewer system and road. The sewer line is no longer level causing sewer backups and requiring the installation of pumps; currently, it also requires the City to send a pumping truck, on a weekly basis, to pump out solids that cannot pass adequately. The road and sidewalk surfaces are referred to as "a roller coaster" by locals. Adding a new house with 5 additional bathrooms would add significant pressure to the existing problems.
5. **Neighbourhood park values:** Two of the lots in this proposed re-zoning will share a fence with Hollywood park. The Official Community Plan (OCP) specifies emphasizing open spaces and promoting urban design that enhances wellness of both community and ecosystems. Approval of this application would reduce the existing green space and replace a large cedar, a Douglas fir hedge, and two flowering *Prunus* species with a large 3 storey house.



6. **Affordable housing:** The proposed house is a 3 storey house with a basement suite. It has 5 bathrooms including an en-suite master bathroom. This is an indication that the development is targeted towards the high end of the housing market and does not address the critical need for affordable housing.

We are not opposed to change in this neighbourhood. However change should be respectful of needs of both neighbours and community. This development is contrary to the zoning by-laws and community plans. Instead of developing Garden suites or creating suites in the existing houses, the developer's primary objective appears to be maximizing profit, at the expense of neighbourhood character and need. This is hardly a hardship situation that might be invoked to justify variances to well-considered City By-laws. In the interests of our community and the City of Victoria, we oppose this application.

Sincerely,

Jordan Anderson

435 Arnold Ave

Leivise Joly

1561 Earle Pl.

Chris Fox

1625 EARLE ST.

Glenis Gidren

370 SIMMONS AVE.

Michael Shayan

1592 EARLE PL

Karen Myers

613 Foul Bay Rd.

Frank

615 Foul Bay Rd.

Marti

410 Stannard Ave.

J. Hillen

330 ARNOLD AVE.

H. Lamb

302-1151 OSCAR ST.

A. Johnson

1667 EARLE ST.

A. [unclear]

1680 Earle St.

D. Bailey

1829 Lillian Rd.



April 16, 2018

Dear Mayor and Council,

**Re: Proposed Development at 331 and 337 St. Charles Street**

We are residents of 325 St. Charles Street and have a number of concerns regarding the proposed subdivision of 331 and 337 St. Charles Street, and the significant variances associated with the proposed new 5-bedroom house with basement suite on a narrow lot with limited yard space.

Firstly, the proposal is out of character with neighbouring properties and significantly out of compliance with the minimum setbacks required under Part 1.6, R1-G Zone, Zoning Regulation Bylaw. For example, the subdivision results in one existing lot having a rear yard of only 4.56m (vs. the 9.1m minimum required under the bylaw); and the new lot has only a lot width of 11.64m (vs. the 15m minimum required). The existing setback requirements were established after an extensive community engagement process to *"Encourage owners and builders to consider the existing character of the site, as well as that of neighbouring properties, in the design of new houses..."* (s. 3.3.11 of the 2002 Gonzales Neighbourhood Plan).

While City staff have been directed by the March 15, 2018 Council Motion to work with the Gonzales neighbourhood to define what is meant by "gentle density," the adjudication of this particular application must be in accordance with the current 2002 Gonzales Neighbourhood Plan. If Council were to ignore or give little weight to the requirements of the current Neighbourhood Plan, Council would risk undermining public trust in ongoing engagement and development of such neighbourhood plans.

Secondly, the proposed development occurs in a unique portion of St. Charles because it is adjacent to Hollywood Park, a park enjoyed by hundreds of park users throughout the year for the recreational opportunities it offers and the green character of the area. There are a number of very large, mature trees located in the park, many of them at the boundary of the park and adjacent residential lots, including behind our lot. We note that the March 15<sup>th</sup> Council Motion also recognized the importance of green space and tree preservation, directing staff to strengthen language in the Gonzales Neighbourhood Plan to reflect these principles. These principles are consistent with the OCP and should also inform the adjudication of this proposed development.

Another aspect of the green nature of this area is that the lots here all have sufficiently large backyards conducive for sustainable food gardening. This is one of the key features of the property that led to our decision to live here. The proposed subdivision and variances significantly reduces the areas available for gardening – making it less likely that future residents of those lots would use the limited yard space for gardening purposes.

Another unique aspect of the particular location of the proposed development is its location directly across from the Fairfield Plaza. Our lot is located across from the loading dock of Thrifty Foods, and on occasion, we have experienced having our car, when parked on the street in front of our house, hit by transport trucks backing into that loading dock. These experiences led us to eventually eliminate one of our cars to avoid the need for on-street parking. However, customers of Fairfield Plaza will often park in front of our house, making it challenging for trucks backing into the loading zone, which has resulted in a number of incidences of trucks running over the boulevards in front of our house. We are working with the Thrifty's manager and City traffic engineer on finding a long-term solution to this issue.

The significant traffic and parking challenges in this particular area are well known and is acknowledged in the draft Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan, Action Plan (p. 104). We urge the City to proceed expeditiously with assessing the transportation conditions of this particular area. Until improvements have been made to address the existing parking and traffic challenges, we are of the view that the City should not be exacerbating the current problem by allowing this development to proceed, which adds more residents to this area, including a basement suite that is exempted from the requirement of providing off-street parking.

We also note the issue our neighbours on Earle Street brought to your attention in January 2018, that the sewage infrastructure is already over capacity, and as such, adding more pressure to that infrastructure by the creation of a new 5-bedroom house and basement suite on Earle Street at this time, seems ill advised.

In conclusion, given the green nature of this particular location, particularly as it is adjacent to an important green space, in an area with well-known transportation challenges requiring priority study and improvements, we are opposed to the application. We are not of the view that the requested subdivision, significant variances and proposed development are of the form and character compatible with the existing neighbourhood. For all of these reasons, we ask that Council reject this application.

Sincerely,



Debbie & John Wells



April 18, 2018

Dear Mayor and Council,

**Re: Proposed Development at 331 and 337 St. Charles Street**

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For the reasons following we ask that you reject this application.

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- The Lot owner/ speculator, knowing the zoning regulation bylaws, paid more than the asking price to acquire Lot 331 so that this application for subdivision could occur. This has already resulted in increased tax assessment and market sales values for nearby residents including us. The housing objective could be met by suiting the existing two houses with or without small additions and additional green space conservation could have been achieved. Potentially these suites could have provided more affordable housing than the new proposed house will. Speculator/applicant has also prohibited tenants of 331 St Charles from opposing rezoning in their rental contract in order to reduce opposition.
- Water restrictions and rationing – CRD is rationing water through restrictions due to insufficient supply and inadequate infrastructure so we should not be adding to the load until the infrastructure is improved. In addition, we already suffer from insufficient water pressure frequently in the summer months (PSI less than 50). Adding another residence and suite without fixing the infrastructure would make this worse.
- The corner of Earle Street and St. Charles is an active area with no crosswalks. There are many pedestrians, such as walkers, shoppers, hospital staff, parents and children going to the daycare and the many and various park users. On a busy summer day the corner in question becomes a serious hazard with a significant potential for accidents. In fact last week a truck while attempting to avoid an oncoming car struck and damaged by motor scooter, which was, parked at least five feet onto my property. The proximity of the proposed development to this corner creates a serious potential for an accident.
- The city sewer is in need of significant repair and must be flushed out continually – we have to roto rooter at least once a year and the blockage is often at the street junction. Plus the regular flushing by the city may contribute to our line backing up as sludge is washed into our line from the larger drain when it is being cleaned.
- Earle Street needs significant road maintenance – it is barely driveable – good part is you don't have to worry about speeders the ruts serve as speed bumps! When it rains hard the puddle in across the street from our house is the length of two vehicles and is almost up to the top of the sidewalk again (City engineers fixed this a few years ago but road has settled and moved)

- ALL of the setback variances requested are not necessary and they certainly are not minor as claimed by the proponent. The house can be constructed to a smaller size and we believe without the road dedications being required by the city meet the requirements in the Zoning Regulation Bylaw.
  - Front yard setbacks rational not identified and not immediately required – why does City need road dedications? Rather the City should be selling the adjacent boulevards to the applicant to increase lot size and generate revenue. Road dedications for unidentified future projects are not sound planning. We were unable to find any discussion or even identification of these requirements in either the official community plan or the City planning information on line.
  - Proposed new House can be constructed smaller and fit within the setbacks as in the zoning requirement. It doesn't have to have a suite nor be as big – Difference between profit maximization and sound regulation – abiding by zoning requirements and the OCP.

In addition, this speculator/applicant has not even bothered to come and talk us yet we live one lot away! Remarkable from our perspective but I guess when \$ are the objective and you don't even live in the neighborhood relationships and the neighborhood are not important.

We would support the development if no variances were required. We believe this is possible by forgoing the road dedications, reducing the size of the residence and eliminating the suite.

We recently found out that there was a planning process underway for the Gonzales and Fairfield areas and that it had been going on for some time (much to our surprise). Pretty hard to have any confidence in a new planning process if the current plans and zoning are provided variances at any opportunity. Allowing a new residence of this size, with a suite may well forestall additional development of the local area before the new planning process is even complete. We have owned our property for over 20 years and support development but lets do it right and not simply line the pockets of speculators. Let's build greater neighbourhoods!

For example we could support the full development of the "L" shaped area on Earle and St Charles provided it was done in a way where all of the lots were developed at the same time, density objectives could be achieved, economies of scale captured, and green space conservation could occur. For example full underground parking for the whole area could be constructed covered by townhouses/affordable houses – some with storefront micro businesses. There's lots of options but please don't leave it to speculators and developers to determine by granting variances for any old request – lets have sound public policy which includes everyone not just speculators.

Thank you for your public service and for reading our concerns.

Yours truly,

Timothy and Marija Stonhouse  
1616 Earle Street