

Attachment 5 - Letter from the applicant, date stamped April 1, 2019

Mayor and Council
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

April 1st/2019

Re: 1400 Vancouver Street/952 Johnson Chapel Heritage Designation



In conjunction with our rezoning application at 1400 Vancouver/952 Johnson, we are pleased to offer in our application the heritage designation of the original chapel building of what was the McCall Brother's Funeral Home.

When coming up with our proposal for this site's redevelopment, we looked at all options and to see what we could and could not preserve. The Chapel of the McCall's Funeral Home is a landmark building in Victoria, and it highlights the work of an important Victoria architect. It also has become an important building for the community and we felt it was important to retain what we could.

Constructed in 1955, the original Funeral Home operation consisted of a chapel and a secondary dwelling unit used for service. The chapel's architectural form and character was designed in what has become known as Mid-Century Modern. Mid-Century Modern style has beauty and grace, yet is simple and unobtrusive. It can be found in both single-family homes, in fact it began in that, and also in commercial spaces. The difficulty in saving these buildings is it has as one of its characteristics, low ceilings. This can work in a single family home, updated but still retaining the grace of this architectural style, but it does not work in commercial spaces, which now require height to function well. The Chapel is unique in that it does have a high enough ceiling that allows it to yet be functional. And we are fortunate enough that due to the Chapels location on the site, and it being a separate building we will be able to preserve this original structure.

Furthermore the secondary dwelling that was used for service was built around 1960. As the whole building was designed for a funeral home service, it has unfortunately come to the end of its life cycle. Our plan is to demolish this existing structure. Most of the building has very low ceilings, in some areas the ceilings are touchable just by stretching one's arm upwards. There is little to no natural light, as one would expect in a Funeral Home.

Our proposed new development not only incorporates the original chapel structure, but will also feature mid century elements throughout the new building that will compliment the original 1955 design.

When rehabilitating the Chapel to ensure its continued viability we will be doing the following:

1. Continue the lines of the Chapel right through the new development thereby anchoring it to the new tower.
2. Use Mid-Century Modern elements in the new development to ensure the two buildings complement each other.
3. Any new features added to the Chapel, additional fenestration for example, will be consistent with Mid-Century Modern architecture.
4. We will open the Chapel up through Mid-Century Modern window features with an eye to highlighting the ceiling of the Chapel - its most prominent and important feature.

In successful rezoning of this property, Cox Developments will be pleased to offer to designate this heritage gem in the heart of Victoria.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Cox".

Dan Cox
Cox Developments Ltd.