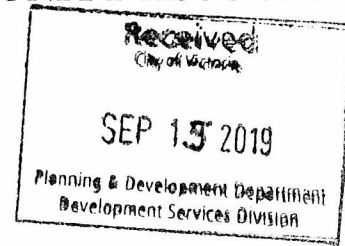


FERNWOOD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Mayor and Council
City of Victoria
Victoria, BC



September 15, 2019

Re: Rezoning Application – 1309 & 1315 Cook Street, 1100, 1102 & 1130 Yates Street, 1109 & 1115 Johnson Street Rezoning and OCP Amendment

Dear Mayor Helps and Council,

Three public meetings were held concerning this proposed development. A Preliminary Community Meeting held on October 25, 2018 and the Official community Meeting on November 21, 2018. The third meeting was held June 25, 2019 where the proponent presented the latest changes to the project.

A total of 628 notices were mailed out for the November 21st meeting. It is fair to say that all the meetings were poorly attended considering the size and scope of this proposed development.

It is the practice of the Fernwood Land Use Committee to invite the neighbouring land use committee to participate with us in reviewing applications that are across the roadway from their boundary. In this case that is the Downtown Residents Association Land Use Committee (DRALUC). We were pleased they were able to attend all three public meetings. Their experience in dealing with developments of this scale and complexity was greatly appreciated. We have reviewed the August 12, 2019 letter from the DRALUC to Mayor and Council and agree with issues they have identified and the position they have taken. As a result we see no need to duplicate the comments made in the letter from the DRALUC.

The 104 units in the 6-storey condominium building facing Johnson Street will be offered for sale at below-market. The developer accepted the suggestions made to include additional two bedroom units suitable for families and shared living situations.

Like the DRALUC we strongly support the Official Community Plan (OCP) that limits buildings on the south side of Cook Street to 8-storeys. This boundary line was decided upon after a lengthy community wide consultation process and should be respected in order to prevent an escalation in land values in anticipation of possibly receiving similar OCP amendments. In a December 13, 2018 letter to Mayor and Council, the proponents architect, when referring to the different height limits allowed on either side of Cook Street said it ‘...results in a very asymmetrical street wall...’. This is a subjective opinion and it could be argued that this OCP mandated variation in heights was designed to reduce the creation of a canyon-like environment and subtly indicates the start of a transition to a residential area.

While small tweaks to the OCP are worth consideration a change of the magnitude requested for this development is not warranted and ignores the work done by many sectors that resulted in the creation of the existing OCP. While an OCP amendment does not set a precedent it certainly paves the way for others to apply for similar considerations.

The purpose built child care space is an attractive feature and the 10 year covenant gives hope that an operator will come forward. The public realm consideration put into the proposed 13-storey building would not be lost if the building was an 8-story building in the same location. An 8-story building would complement both the existing 5 storey building and the proposed 6-story building and also indicate the start of the transition from downtown to residential.

For the 6-storey condominium we support it being a strictly residential building with access to ground floor units possible from the sidewalk. This feature subtly indicates the transition to a more residential area as you go east. We appreciate the existing 5-Storey Victoria Professional Building being preserved and enhanced.

Although the overall project will meet the requirements of the new Schedule C 2018, residential tenants will be below the Schedule C requirements. How that shortfall will be allocated among the 2 residential buildings is unclear. Will the additional stalls allocated for the existing medical building be available to residential tenants in the evening and weekends and will the stalls be both secure and also easily accessible?

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Maxwell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

David Maxwell, Chair
Fernwood LUC