

Public Comment From: Wendy Anthony, 22 Chown Place, Victoria, BC June 25, 2020

**Opposition to the General Form and Character of the
Proposed Chown Place Development Variance Application**

Re: Development Permit with Variances Application No.00132 for 22 Chown Place, Victoria, BC

Purpose: to approve exterior design and finishes and landscaping

Since 2013 I have been a resident at 22 Chown Place, in Building N, immediately to the West of and facing the proposed development building. I believe my right to the peaceful use and enjoyment of my home will be affected not only during the 2-yr construction period, during which I would lose my disabled parking spot, and subjected to construction noise and dust, but forever after if the height variance is approved as my suite will be in total daily shade for months before and after December 21 during which time natural light is necessary for aging eyes, and the healthy prevention of seasonal affective disorder as a critical health issue.

There is very little low-income housing for seniors over 55, and as seniors live longer, in poverty, and with more of the current population is aging and encouraged to age in place according to good practices, there is even more need of affordable low-income seniors housing.

Changing the current housing model from seniors to families is breaking with the agreement made with all current senior residents that Chown Place was only for 55+. This whole proposed development is out of scale, and against the existing model of providing affordable housing for low income seniors. This location has always been a quiet, healthy and peaceful home for many generations of seniors, and to change away from a senior model shows a lack of respect for the current and multiple generations of past senior residents since 1959 who will no longer be guaranteed a place to live among their low-income senior peers in a healthy environment.

There has never been any proper informed conversations about the proposed development and the current residents of Chown Place. The original meetings to tell us what had already been decided were held in a very tiny, cramped back room behind the office which held about 10 people. Not until more than a year later were the residents presented with even more finalized plans in a large enough room to hold as many residents who were interested, though all decisions had already been made, including that the Board had decided that us senior residents would be healthier among mixed age groups and they would be adding family housing to the new development (though many at that meeting objected to this notion, the decisions had already been made without any input from the current low-income senior residents).

The proposed development is **NOT “affordable housing”**. No current resident would be eligible to move into one of these new units because our maximum net income is too low to be eligible. This large building would create a **2-class situation ghettoizing** the low income senior population who don't make enough income to reside in the new building, but whose quality of life will be forever impacted by this land use decision.

No **repairs** have been done to my unit for over 5 years unless deemed emergency, and until new recent management, even refusing to paint bathroom with water resistant paint to cover the black mold that had been forming. The Chown board has been quite negligent in maintaining the existing buildings, and even now all board and management time is spent on the new development. Until the board can effectively manage their existing housing stock, they should not be allowed to build this many more units.

Though Gorge View applied and received family housing funding from BC Housing in November 2018, they did not actually change their BC Societies Constitutional mandate from providing senior housing to family, individual and senior housing until November 2019 (though I was denied access by Gorge View a Board member in order to confirm this from the Gorge View Societies Papers, as is my right as BC resident). There has also never been any confirmation that BC Housing funding for Family Housing will actually permit and age-related restrictions to seniors-only accommodation

Opposition Comments Regarding Specific Variances Requested

I. Building Height

- **Increasing the number of stories from 2-4,**
- **Increasing allowable building height 1.57m (5.5ft)**
- The towering bulk of this overheight 4-story building is totally out of scale with the existing buildings, and changes the model of seniors living in a quiet, safe environment.
- **This increased density** will totally change the density from having open “pastoral” [Gorge View website] green space with 15 1-story 100-unit buildings, and only 1 2-story 8-unit building, with a maximum of 125 residences, to a huge hulking tower overshadowing the neighbouring buildings
- **Height** was said to “not affect any other building” my building N would be in total shadow all day December 21, with very limited light from November to February, a time during which having reduced light would have the most impact on resident health than at any other season.
- **Increased density** with 58 new units (from 108 to 166), 7 new parking stalls (from 70 to 77) can only be done by decreasing the existing stall width, necessary for seniors with reduced mobility, or needing walkers and wheeled carts (from 58 units with 1,2,3 or more possible new residents (from 125 to up to 250 people – doubling the population).
- **Density population of new residents** will increase in a larger proportion than the 58 units, as 9 of these will be 2-3 BD family units (18-27), the other 49 units (49-98) could be an extra 58-125 people, potentially doubling the population of the existing 125 senior residents, none of whom would be eligible to live in these new suites because our maximum income eligibility is too low for the most “affordable” of the new suites.
- Increased noise levels will dramatically change the quality of life for seniors in what is now an appropriately quiet and safe environment.

II. Decreased horizontal setback distances between development and all buildings and parking spaces will overshadow the existing senior residential buildings J, K & L and abut right up to sidewalks

- making it a 4-story hulking block looming over the surrounding one-story buildings
- There will be no setback or vertical barriers as is required by City bylaw – this would make an already too-tall building very imposing from street level, which is the level of all the current senior residences.

III. Exterior Design

- Increased volume of garbage disposal and bicycle storage space will take room away from current resident parking spaces
- **A tall, large, noisy electrical unit** will be located right beside the corner of building N which will be running 24/7 and severely impact the peace and quiet of the adjacent units. This was never included in any preliminary elevation drawings, and should be located within the footprint of the new development, or out at the street on Harriet Road like other neighbourhood 4-story multi-residential units do instead of subjecting seniors with noise for services to another building.
- Increased traffic, including impacts on resident parking, byke and baby stroller traffic on sidewalks due to change from slow seniors in walkers to families with multiple users across the already too-narrow sidewalks
- Landscape discussions were only conducted with current gardeners within the present gated garden with no input from residences who may be affected by the potential of mandatory raised gardens in front of their units with someone else gardening in them

IV. Parking Ratio

- Parking setback should be 6m with only 2.4m separating the building units from parking stalls is less than ½ the suggested setback, and with only 7 new parking stalls proposed, which can only be done by making the existing stalls narrower and less useful to the existing seniors who use all 70 spots, will lead to increased traffic, reducing access to Harriet Rd, and increased parking on Harriet Rd or elsewhere in the neighbourhood.
- As a person with a disability, my parking spot outside of my suite is essential to my activities of daily living, and for me to have no access to parking for up to 2 years will have an extremely negative impact on my pain level and ability to function. For the proposed development to add only 7 extra parking spots would require that the existing parking spots would be made narrower, and even without a disability, a senior may have mobility issues requiring the car door to fully open, which would not be possible if the parking stalls were made narrower.
- No traffic study has been conducted for pedestrian, mobility scooter, bicycles and vehicular traffic to determine if there can be safe access for senior, wide enough parking stalls for seniors and persons with disabilities to use effectively, or if sidewalks will be wide enough to accommodate a potential doubling of population on site.

Pamela Martin

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: June 24, 2020 4:08 PM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: 11 Chown Place Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00132

Mayor & Council,

I am writing as a resident of Burnside Gorge to express my support for the 11 Chown Place Development Permit application. We need more family housing in our neighbourhood and I believe this will be a good addition.

Elizabeth Cull

June 23, 2020

To Victoria City Council

Re: Proposed development of # 11 Chown Place

I have addressed Council in person in 2011 when The Gorge Society was proposing development on the property at 11 Chown Place. At that time the proposal was for 8 more one bedroom units. The neighborhood at that time was concerned about the lack of parking spaces that already existed to accommodate the already 99 Units on the property....parking available was 51 regular spaces 8 visitor and 1 handicapped. They proposed to cut 2 parking spaces and add 1 more handicapped. That development went through with an impact on the neighborhood with residents of Chown Place parking their vehicles on surrounding streets for days on end and their visitors also parking for extended periods of time. This lead to the surrounding streets applying for and being granted Residential Only parking. This designation has not deterred the overflow parking from Chown Place. Moving on to the new development proposal of 58 new units consisting of 1,2,and3, bedroom units in a four story building. An initial community meeting was held in October2019 to get neighbors input as well as current residents of Chown Place. The property is said to be 5.5 acres which sounds like a lot of land....which it is ...but most of it already has been developed. This new structure is being squeezed onto the only green space the now exists on the property and to do that they have to get a variance to be able to fit it. The developers did their presentation and an in depth handout was given. Concerns were raised as to the height of the building and its continuity with the rest of the development...(all one and two stories) , the removal of the community garden and it being relocated also raised concerns as it would be placed behind the four story structure in a South West exposure which is not conducive to large amounts of sun (even though the hand out had a full page of sun aspect on it... with our weather sun is at a premium most of the time) residents were not happy with this location. The main and major concern was again the parking situation. The developers are allowing for only 5 new parking spots bringing the parking spaces to a grand total of 74 including regular spots, visitor spots, and handicapped spots for the development . This when they are adding 58 new units bringing the total number of units to 166 seems a little unbalanced to say the least and there was much discussion on this point. The meeting ended with the developers, Gorge View Society, and other planning members thanking every one for coming and for their input and it would be taken under advisement. There seems to be no change on the original proposal and with the whole development being given a \$5.8M grant from the B.C. Government it looks like an effort in futility to try and have any changes made to the proposal at this time to the lack of for site in the need for additional parking for residents... handicapped or not...for their visitors and for the support workers that make routine visits to Chown Place to provide medical assistance. I am once again disappointed that when the neighborhood is asked for their input on development in the Gorge Burnside Area this input seems to fall on deaf ears.

Sincerely Catherine Delo

3062 Irma Street, Victoria B.C.

Pamela Martin

From: Bonnie Langridge [REDACTED] >
Sent: June 24, 2020 7:07 PM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00132 for 11 Chown Place

To Those This May Concern,

I am writing this email from my lovely, cozy home here at Chown Place in beautiful Victoria, BC. A home which I am grateful for each and everyday because it is affordable housing. As a senior living on disability, securing permanent subsidized housing has been such a Blessing and relief for both myself and my family. I remember the day well, when "I" got the phone call that offered me permanent affordable housing here at Chown Place. It was such a welcomed gift and many of my stresses melted away.

I am happy living within this community alongside my wonderful neighbours and am proud that we are managed by a caring, dedicated and progressive minded Board of Directors and staff. I fully support this development simply because it will ensure that other seniors and young families will have the same opportunity for affordable housing that I have been granted. That they too will receive that phone call which will change their lives for the better and make them much more manageable.

There has been an affordable housing crisis in this city for many years and we need to build where there is space, all over the city. I understand fully the concerns of the residents who reside here at Chown Place, most of them for many years. Yes, there are many concerns and there will be many changes and disruptions going forward but that is what life looks like. This current Pandemic has shown us that but it has also shown us how incredibly adaptable we all are. As a society we need to share our good fortune, if and when we have the means.

It is only when we open our hearts and our minds that we are pleasantly surprised.

Grateful to share a Blessing,

Bonnie Langridge

Pamela Martin

From: Michael Madrone [REDACTED] >
Sent: June 25, 2020 9:33 AM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Dev.Permit with Variances App. no. 00132

This application should be denied and sent back to be re-worked. It is a pre-covid 19 document that can no longer be considered acceptable.

Everyone wants housing but it must be done right. It is not enough to just build housing. It must be done in a responsible way. This proposal is irresponsible.

Any council who approves this as is, is going to be on the wrong side of history and will forfeit any claim to be ecologically aware. We cannot just go back to business as usual. This plan is business as usual in the worst possible way.

A staff report called the site a vacant lot. It is anything but that. Question: How many members of council have actually seen this site and talked to the residents?

The owners of Chown Place do not live there. Their plan to "move" the garden is greenwashing at its worst. The council which is voting do not even live in the neighborhood. Dozens of Chown Place residents and neighbours have expressed their opposition to this project. It needs to be rejected and sent back to the drawing board. Do the people who will be affected by this have any say or is this hearing just a rubber stamp?

Reject this plan.

"They paved paradise and put up a parking lot." -Joni Mitchell

Thank you,
Michael Madrone
66 Chown Place
Victoria
V9A 1H5

Pamela Martin

From: Lynn Peters [REDACTED] >
Sent: June 24, 2020 1:24 PM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Opportunity for Public Comment - Thurs., June 25, 2020

PID: 005-066-999, Lot A (DD2703731), Section 10 & 11, Victoria District, Plan 11749.

Dear Councillors:

I would like to respectfully submit a Public Comment regarding Variance Application No. 00132 for 11 Chown Place. I am a six-year tenant at Chown Place... As the heart of this property is one of rare pastoral vistas so close to the city, may I invite a reconsideration of the intention of changing the zoning regulation bylaw from 2 to 4 storeys? It seems that a 4-storey building would not fit well with the aesthetic of this site. Thank you for your kind attention.

Yours very truly, D. Lynn Peters