

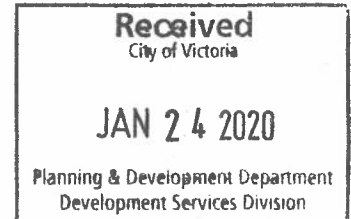
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1224 Richardson Street

Rezoning & Development Permit (REZ-00705 & DP-00558)
 Advisory Design Panel Motion Response & Additional Neighbour Consultation

January 24, 2020

Response to the Advisory Design Panel Motion of Nov 27, 2019
 & Additional Neighbour Consultation



Attention: Alec Johnston, Area Planner, Development Services Division, City of Victoria

Dear Mr. Johnston,

This letter is in response to the Advisory Design Panel Motion of November 27, 2019 regarding the proposed rezoning & development permit for 1224 Richardson Street. It also provides some updates on minor revisions to development plans to accommodate changes made to address the panel's concerns and/or requests from surrounding neighbours.

The Advisory Design Panel's motion was to recommend that Council decline the application **until** further consideration of the following items:

1. Clarification of pedestrian use of the lane
2. Clarification of public and private site access
3. Adjustments to the character of units B and C to better fit the property
4. Accessibility of the units and accessibility within the site
5. Clarification of site functionality, including loading.

Due to the format of the meeting where the panel discusses and debates the application after the proponent has presented and responded to some limited preliminary questions, we were not able to respond or provide this clarification at the time of the meeting. Most of the concerns identified above were not directly raised as questions to our team, but rather developed during the debate amongst panel members during the later half of the meeting which we were not permitted to respond to. This is unfortunate as, had we been given the opportunity to respond to questions or provide clarifications during the panel's debate we believe we could have resolved any concerns or confusion they had and that the motion would have been more positive.

As such we have provided additional information, clarification and responses below to address the panel's concerns.

1. *Clarification of pedestrian use of the lane.* The Current lane is approx. 4.6 m in width and runs from Richardson Road at the south end to Rockland Ave at the north end. The southern most 120 feet of the lane is a public laneway owned by the City of Victoria. The remainder of the lane north to Rockland Ave is privately owned by the properties on the east side of the 700 and 800 Block of Linden.

The lane is open at both ends and used by the public at large along its entire length for vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic between Richardson and Rockland. The lane is also used by City garbage crews servicing the 700 and 800 block of Linden Ave, 1224, 1230, & 1232 Richardson as well as the carriage house at 1232 Richardson.

During the City's initial review of our proposed development, Engineering staff indicated that the most appropriate driveway access to our proposed parking lot was off of the public portion of the lane as the current driveway for 1224 Richardson was too close to the intersection of Richardson and the Lane to meet the City's requirements and standards of practice. They also indicated that the lane did not meet the City's design requirements for two way traffic, i.e., a 6 m lane width, and so requested a 1.4m Statutory Right Of

Way along the West side of our property for the length of the public lane way. We are prepared to grant that SROW. In so doing, this will improve the safety of the lane for all users of the public lane and also permit more effective access to our property.

We also planned to provide a sidewalk along the west side of our property from Richardson to the rear of the northern most proposed building which would have been open to the public to improve pedestrian safety along the public and private lane section that abuts our property. Unfortunately, a number of owners in the 700 block of Linden who own the private section of the lane have insisted that we install a fence along our west property line where it abuts the private portion of the lane to prevent any residents in the proposed development from using the lane for pick up or drop off purposes. As such the sidewalk along the west side of our property, north of the public section of the lane will be fully enclosed within the fenced section of our property and not accessible to the public.

As noted above, the private portion of the lane is owned by the properties on the east side of the 700 and 800 block of Linden. The control and access for public pedestrian use of that portion of the lane is entirely in the control of those owners and we have no ability to influence or alter that control. If they choose to close off that access or leave it open, that is entirely up to them. Having said all of this, our development has been designed to ensure that the residents do not have direct access from our property to the private section of the lane as requested by some of the owners of that portion of the lane. Our proposed pedestrian access as described below under items 2 & 4 is entirely from Richardson and/or the City-owned, public portion of the lane.

2. *Clarification of public and private site access.* As noted above public pedestrian access to the site would be via the sidewalk on Richardson Road and/or a new public sidewalk along the east side of the public section of lane. Public vehicle traffic would access the site via the city owned section of the lane into the private parking lot on the subject site. As we have previously indicated we intend to work with City Traffic Engineering staff to design signage that directs vehicles leaving our property to turn south into the public section of the lane and curbing on our property that prevents vehicles from turning north into the private section of lane. This curbing will prevent vehicles from turning north out of our parking lot but will not impact north bound public or private vehicle access from Richardson to ensure we do not impact what is currently accessible.
3. *Adjustments to the character of units B and C to better fit the property.* Based on our notes of the panel's discussion of this point we believe this request is to address two issues the panel raised. The first was a desire among some of the panel members to have the buildings face the lane due to the confusion regarding ownership and access to the lane. As noted above in item 1 the lane to the west of building B and C is not a public lane, it is private property.

The City of Victoria Design Guidelines for: Multi Unit Residential, Commercial and industrial states:

2.3.1 - Buildings should be oriented towards public streets, walkways and amenities (parks, harbour and coastline, etc).

Turning the building to face the lane would be directly contrary to this section of the City's guidelines. This is precisely why our design has all three buildings facing the "public street," not the lane.

The second issue of adjustment discussed by the panel was the large wide front stairs that one member commented looked too wide and institutional. Modifications have been made to "de-institutionalize" the stair while also acknowledging the Building Code requirements associated with exposure protection of the exits from each dwelling unit. The lower lift of stairs are narrowed to ease the overall width and address the comments, while also meeting the intent of the requirements for exposure protection.

4. *Accessibility of the units and accessibility within the site.* The Edwardian/Craftsman Character and style of the buildings have been chosen to fit in with the existing streetscape, massing and context of the neighbourhood. This type of structure, along with the City's design guidelines that encourage separate individual front doors (ground orientated units), and the desire to deliver 24 affordable home ownership opportunities makes it very difficult to also make these units accessible to those with physical disabilities. We looked at using ramp

systems to allow some of the lower or mid floor units to be accessible, but the length of ramp required was not feasible given the height of the buildings in relationship to the average exterior grade. We also looked at raising the buildings to decrease the length of ramp required to make lower units accessible, but this would have raised the overall height of the buildings beyond its surrounding neighbours and would likely create significant concern from the community. We also looked at providing an elevator but the design is ground orientated to give each unit its own front door which does not allow for the use of an elevator. As such we are not able to offer any accessible units in this development but believe that providing 24 affordable for sale units in this highly desirable neighbourhood is of sufficient value to offset this concern.

5. *Clarification of site functionality, including loading.* This concern appears to be related to how the development would accommodate service vehicles or people moving in and out without blocking sections of the private lane. Service vehicles (repair men, parcel delivery etc) would enter the site via the public lane off Richardson and park in the reserved visitors spot in the parking lot. Small moving vans would utilise the same visitor spot with no disruption to the development residents or surrounding neighbours. Where larger moving vans are used this would be pre booked with the strata manager to allow temporary closing of some of the stalls on the North or South side of the parking lot to accommodate a larger moving truck. This is the same process that is used at many apartment or condo projects for move ins or for cleaning and sealing parking surfaces, or repairing piping, lighting etc. in underground parkades. Vehicles would be discouraged from parking in the private lane to unload as the fence between the lane and the subject site cuts off access to the buildings on the subject development site.

In addition to the issues raised by the ADP one of the neighbours on Linden has expressed concern over the proposed fence along the west side of the site separating it from the private lane. As you know this fence was requested by some, but not all of the neighbours along Linden. We therefore agreed to install a continuous 4-foot solid fence along this property line from the north end of the property south to the point where the public lane begins. Ms. Tamsin McIntosh of 721 Linden expressed concern that this fence was not tall enough to ensure that delivery vans did not park in the private lane and pass items over the fence. While this is highly unlikely as there would be no way for delivery drivers to notify the residents they were parked there, we have made attempts to meet with Ms McIntosh over the last couple of weeks but have not received a response from her. We also spoke with one of the residents of 727/29 Linden who agreed with our concern that a taller solid board fence would create a graffiti target like the fence on this side of the lane to the north of the subject property and that it was counter active to eyes on the alley way for safety & security purposes. This resident also agreed that a taller open lattice type fence would sufficiently discourage delivery drivers from stopping in the lane to pass packages over the fence while enhancing the eyes on the lane as well as allowing for views of the site landscaping from the lane which she believed would be a positive addition. We have therefore revised the fence along the West property line from a 4-foot solid board fence to a 5-foot open lattice fence as shown on the revised landscape plan as well as the updated building renderings.

We trust this adequately responds to the clarification requirements outlined in the ADP's motion and will allow you to finalize your report and present our proposal to Committee of The Whole as soon as possible. Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned if you have any questions or further concerns.

Best Regards,



Tim Stemp
1224 Richardson Property Corp