

Richard Elliott

From: Bruce Williams [REDACTED]
Sent: October 19, 2020 4:40 PM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council
Cc: Jocelyn Jenkyns; Kerri Moore
Subject: Letter-Support-Songhees-cannabis-Oct19-2020
Attachments: Letter-Support-Songhees-cannabis-Oct19-2020.docx; Letter-Support-Songhees-cannabis-Oct19-2020.pdf

Please see the attachment here

Many thanks

Bruce Williams, Chief Executive Officer
Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce

Email: [REDACTED] Web: www.victoriachamber.ca

Direct: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Address: #100-852 Fort Street, Victoria, BC V8W 1H8



This message is intended only for the named recipient. If you are not the intended recipient you are notified that disclosing, copying, distributing or taking any action in reliance on the contents of this information is strictly prohibited.

October 19, 2020

Mayor Lisa Helps and Council
City of Victoria Municipal Hall
1 Centennial Square, Victoria BC,
V8W 1P6

Re. Build Back Victoria: Re-opening and Recovery

Dear Victoria Mayor and Council,

The Chamber supports the Songhees Nation's application to operate a retail cannabis outlet at 901 Gordon St. Regulated and licensed stores such as the one in this proposal help create a safe and regulated supply of cannabis.

The Seed and Stone partnership with Songhees Nation will offer a premium retail outlet with a trusted organization operating within regulatory compliance. The Seed and Stone brand creates awareness about the importance of the natural world and the lifecycle of plants. The design of the store will reflect genuine indigenous branding that will appeal to shoppers, whether they are locals or visitors to our destination.

We feel the creation of a new business enterprise such as this is an important step in retaining commercial vibrancy in the downtown core in this period of business uncertainty.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Bruce Williams
CEO,
Greater Victoria
Chamber of Commerce



John Wilson
Board Chair
Greater Victoria
Chamber of Commerce

Richard Elliott

From: Ian Sutherland [REDACTED]
Sent: October 19, 2020 6:18 PM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council; Lisa Helps (Mayor); Charlayne Thornton-Joe (Councillor); Geoff Young (Councillor); Marianne Alto (Councillor); Ben Isitt (Councillor); Jeremy Loveday (Councillor); Sarah Potts (Councillor); Sharmarke Dubow (Councillor)
Cc: Michael Angrove
Subject: Rezoning Application No. 00743 for 901 Gordon Street
Attachments: 901 Gordon St - Cannabis Retail.pdf

To Mayor and Council,

Please find attached the DRA LUC letter in response to the rezoning application to permit the use of a Storefront Cannabis Retailer at 901 Gordon Street.

Regards,

Ian Sutherland



Mayor Helps and Council
City of Victoria
No.1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC, V8W 1P6

October 19th, 2020

Re: Rezoning Application No. 00743 for 901 Gordon Street

Dear Mayor Helps and Council,

The DRA LUC would like to offer support for the Staff recommendation to decline the application to permit the use of a Storefront Cannabis Retailer. As observed by Staff, “the proposal is inconsistent with the *Storefront Cannabis Retailer Rezoning Policy*”.

There are three properties within 400m of the subject property that have storefront cannabis retailer as a permitted use:

- 778 Fort Street is 238m away, is provincially licensed and has been operating at the location since 2014;
- 1402 Douglas Street is 385m away, is provincially licensed and has been operating at that location since 2015; and,
- 546 Yates Street is 333m away, non-operational and not provincially licensed.

Additionally, Staff point out that there is one independent high school, the Pacific Institute for Innovation and Inquiry that, at 19m away from the subject property, is well within the 200m proximity.

Proximity rules were established by Council to limit the number of Cannabis retailers to the point that the public is adequately served and operators do not need to sell to minors to make ends meet. There is a strong case that indicates a direct correlation between the viability of these businesses and compliance regarding sale to minors.

There is no shortage of ground floor retail properties for lease within the Downtown and therefore no apparent impediment for the applicant to seek a location that complies with the current proximity rules. It is important that precedence is not set in relaxing these proximity rules without a compelling rationale. We strongly encourage Council to uphold its wise decision to adopt the 400m proximity rule for Cannabis retailers and the 200m proximity rule for schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ian Sutherland', with a large loop at the start and a trailing flourish.

Ian Sutherland
Chair Land Use Committee, Downtown Residents Association

cc COV Planning



September 25, 2020

Dear Matthew Angrove,
Area Planner, City of Victoria

I am writing today on behalf of the management and ownership of The Magnolia Hotel & Spa in regards to the rezoning application at 901-919 Gordon Street and 620-630 Courtney Street. The rezoning as posted is looking to permit the use of the storefront as a Cannabis Retailer.

The Magnolia Hotel & Spa has been operating at 623 Courtney Street since 1998 welcoming travelers in our luxury boutique hotel for over two decades. We are currently rated as the #1 Top Hotel in Canada by Trip Advisor, and currently employ approximately 75 people within the hotel and restaurant, The Courtney Room.

On behalf of management and ownership, we would like to express that we do not support this application to share the block with a Cannabis Retailer. We do not believe that having a Cannabis Retailer among upscale tourist and entertainment areas is beneficial for the neighborhood, and being a block from our iconic harbour we do not feel it is the image we are looking to convey to tourists of our beautiful city. Additionally, there are 4 retailers within several blocks of the hotel and as such we believe the market already has supply readily available.

Operationally we are concerned with the comings and goings of patrons of a Cannabis Retailer. Many businesses on our block have patios, and we have windows that open in to our establishments. We believe that there is a high risk that patrons would be smoking Cannabis nearby the store which would negatively impact the comfort of those patronizing hospitality businesses such as ours. We also know that there are no resources to actively police this. Hospitality businesses have been dramatically impacted by COVID-19 and we are utilizing any outdoor spaces available to both operate safely and make the best of a very poor business situation. We strongly believe that having a Cannabis retailer will be detrimental to these efforts.

Lastly, while possibly speculative but nonetheless concerning to our staff, since the rezoning application sign has gone up there have been concerns expressed from staff about what impact this retailer would have on the safety and security of the neighborhood. The safety and security of downtown has deteriorated during the past 6 months, during COVID-19. How much of this is perception, and how much reality could be debated, however it is a real concern for employees who come to work downtown.

Thank you for considering the views of neighboring businesses in reviewing this application. It is our hope as a business that this re-zoning is denied.

Please feel free to reach out to me at [REDACTED] if you have questions about our letter and our concerns on this issue.

Bill Lewis,
General Manager
The Magnolia Hotel & Spa

**623 Courtney Street
Victoria, BC, V8W 1B8**