



November 13, 2020

Mayor and Council

City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC

RE: Proposed Rental Apartments – 2440&2448 Richmond Road

Dear Mayor and Council,

We are proposing to rezone and develop two properties located at 2440 and 2448 Richmond Rd with our client Cadillac Developments Ltd. Based on the recent success of MicroSmart Living's rental apartment building at 2732 Doncaster Drive which was recently completed in Sept 2019 in partnership with Cadillac, we intend to construct a similar model of building on each of these properties. The goal is to provide workforce housing across the street from one of the largest employment centres within the city. The project site is located directly across from the Royal Jubilee Hospital complex with various other health facilities nearby. To the south east of the hospital exists a neighbourhood commercial district with shops including grocery, pharmacy, restaurants, and the Oak Bay recreation centre giving easy access to all the residents needs. Within a block in either direction there are BC Transit stops which take riders into the city and out to the University of Victoria. The transit provides bus service every 15 minutes or better during peak commuting hours. The site provides the best combination of local amenities and employment all within walking or cycling distance.

These properties are currently zoned R1B Single Family Dwelling with existing single storey homes in need of repair. There are 2-storey homes neighbouring to the South and West with Adanac street to the North. Our proposal is to construct two 3-storey purpose built rental apartment buildings for workforce housing on a site specific zone. The proposed building sizes are no greater than already allowed for a public building in the current zone.

For the onset of this project our team has been meeting with local stake holders in an effort to work collaboratively with the neighbourhood. During these early conversations with the neighbourhood association we were encouraged not to consolidate the properties to build a larger building. They felt the massing of a single large building would be out of character with the neighbourhood and shade the yards of the properties around it. This is why we have chosen to pursue a pair of smaller buildings on these sites. Another deciding factor in developing two smaller buildings was being able to keep them in Part 9 of the BC Building Code. Generally speaking Part 9 buildings are more cost effective to build and these savings can be directly applied to more attainable rents for the residents.

Each of the two buildings consist of eleven fully furnished micro suites with bicycle storage and an enclosed garbage/recycling room. While the total project requires 18 parking stalls, which we provided in our original design, at the direction of city staff a parking variance was explored in an effort to create more green space. Transportation and planning staff noted this variance could be supported if transportation demand management (TDM) measures were provided. With the removal of 4 stalls we are able to provide enhanced common patios along with a central rain garden on the west side of the parking area. This rain garden is an integrated part of the storm water management plan which was key considering our proximity to Bowker Creek. In support of the parking variance we are providing secure bicycle storage with repair/maintenance tool areas and eBike charging receptacles for residents in each building. Further to these measure we have been in communication with MODO and have come to a proposed agreement for a partnership membership for the project to provide memberships for all tenants.

The initial image of each building mirrored the design of the successful Doncaster Apartment with an updated colour scheme. The buildings presented a contemporary West coast aesthetic with bold architectural accent roofs, projecting bays, and modern colours. Through input from the neighbours the exterior of the corner site was revised to reflect a more traditional design with sloped roofs, shingle and lap sidings, and window trims. The interior building (2440) was left as originally designed. The siding materials are primarily durable fibre cement sidings with aluminum trims and pre-finished metal fascias. The use of durable materials will ensure low maintenance requirements and will keep the building looking new and fresh for years to come as well as reducing maintenance costs which have an effect on rent. The buildings have a proposed height of 9.0m which is 1.5m less than the allowable building height for a public building in the current R1-B zone.

The project will be built to meet Step 3 of the BC Energy Step Code for Part 9. Through preliminary discussions with consultants we will be looking various strategies to meet this step including but not limited to increased insulation, quality windows, LED lighting, and a special attention to detail in regards to air tightness.

In November 2019 we attended a CALUC meeting for the Jubilee South Neighbourhood in which we presented the project to approx. 60 members of the community. After the presentation we engaged with the neighbours and answered any questions or concerns they raised. While the project seemed to be well received the neighbours seemed particularly concerned about on-street parking. We feel that we have found a balance with the parking provided and the other TDM's. In an effort to alleviate the neighbours concerns of the off-street parking being taken by the trades, the on-site civil work and parking lot will be the first thing constructed. With the parking area being completed first, trades and delivery vehicles can be located on site and limiting congestion on the street.

Throughout the design process we have had a collaborative working relationship with the City and neighbourhood in a effort to satisfy everyone's needs. As with the Doncaster apartment our client is willing to enter into a long term rental housing agreement in perpetuity with the city to secure these units as rentals. At the request of the City, our client will also be registering a 4.89m wide Statutory Right of Way along the frontage of both properties for the City's use. Cadillac and the consultant team have been working directly with the Friends of Bowker Creek Society to ensure the stormwater management plan and the work being done on site does not effect the watershed. Installation of a rain garden, oil interceptor, and permeable paving surfaces will ensure that the creek will see clean water entering the ground.

In July 2020 we presented the project to the Advisory Design Panel after which they voted to recommend declining the application and included key areas to revise. The ADP appeared to be very stuck on a single building approach. As noted the neighbourhood encouraged against the consolidation of the properties and supported the 2 separate buildings. This is still the route we are choosing to pursue. Taking the recommendations from the ADP we have revised the project in the key areas they highlighted. The roof line of 2448 was increased to a more traditional sloped roof typical of the surrounding area. Landscaping has been increased along the West property line as well as between the 2 buildings. An accessible parking stall has been added should it be needed by the adaptable suite being converted to an accessible suite. Increased glazing has been added to ground floor suites to increase livability and enhance the Richmond Rd. elevations. On top of the revisions noted to the elevations, we also took a further look into the materials and transitions between them to ensure the 2448 building reflects a more traditional design as requested by the neighbourhood.

All of the suites will be studio suites of between 300 and 428 s.f., but with the sleeping area separated from the living / dining / kitchen area by a built in millwork unit. One suite (428 s.f.) on the ground floor of Building A will be designed as an adaptable suite for better accessibility in accordance with the recommendations of the BC Accessibility Handbook. The features of this suite that make it adaptable include:

- accessible clearances in washroom;
- slip resistant flooring in washroom;
- door handle access clearances at entrance door;
 - 610mm on hinge side of door (door swings towards user)
 - 305 on opposite side (door swings away from user)
- adaptable kitchen cabinets can be lowered to accessible counter height of 865 mm with adjustable base;
- knee space under kitchen counter;
- continuous counter between sink and range;
- grab bar ready shower stall, toilet area (plywood backing);
- 920 x 1220mm space in front of lavatory;
- 800mm min clearance in front of shower;
- 800mm min. clearance in front of toilet;
- 457mm from CL of toilet to wall;
- accessible heights for switches and outlets
 - electrical and data outlets @ 600mm AFL
 - light switches @ 1200mm AFL
- ADA compliant lever style door hardware;
- ADA compliant single lever style faucets;
- light signalling devices for smoke alarms;
- raised door numbers and signage;
- space for side by side laundry pair;
- Patio access via front door for level access
- Accessible Parking Stall close to the ground floor adaptable suite;
- 5' (1525mm) diameter turning spaces at key locations throughout suite;
 - at entry door
 - at kitchen
 - at breakfast bar
 - in closet

November 13, 2020
2440&2448 Richmond Road
Letter to Mayor and Council
Page 2

Parking is provided for 14 cars, with one stall near the adaptable suite being *accessible and with a direct path to the adaptable suite*. In addition, each building will contain a fully enclosed bicycle storage room for 11 bicycles (1 per suite)c. The room will be equipped with a tool storage cabinet and 4 electrical outlets positioned for convenient charging of electric bikes. There is also a 6 stall bike rack located in close proximity to both buildings, for visitors.

Access to the parking area will be off of Adanac Street to the North. The two lots are being maintained as individual properties with a permanent access easement across 2448 Richmond Road, to access the parking for 2440 Richmond Road. In addition, there is a pedestrian access from Richmond to the rear of the buildings, located along the property line between the two lots, which will be within its own access easement.

The City of Victoria Planning Department has asked the Developer to consider an access easement for access to the property to the South of the proposal site, should development of that property occur in the future. The Developer is not in favour of this blanket type easement at this time, but would consider it in the future, provided that the Developer, as the neighbouring property owner, is consulted about those future development plans.

Outdoor amenity space in the form of common patios are provided at the rear of each building, to encourage social interaction amongst the residents. Each patio is equipped by the developer with a barbecue and outdoor tables and seating for the use of all of the residents.

We believe that the proposed project will provide numerous benefits to the existing neighbourhood and the City of Victoria as a whole. The site is a great opportunity for suburban densification in a flourishing neighbourhood. There is an urgent need for workforce rental housing in the region and we ask that council approve this re-zoning and development permit application.

Thank you for your consideration of this project and we look forward to working with the City in making this proposal a reality.

Sincerely,
Joe Newell Architect Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joe Newell', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Joe Newell Architect.AIBC