

Hi Alex,

I am writing to urge you and city council to consider rejecting the variance permit application for the above-noted property. Here are my concerns:

1. *"... what was intended to be crawlspace ended up as full height basement."*

The whole notion of applying for a variance permit after the fact seems disingenuous. This is a multi-million \$ house built on the edge of a steep slope leading to the water and it is inconceivable why the owners wouldn't have undertaken proper geotechnical assessment work prior to construction if, as they state, "seismic stability is very important to us".

2. *"There is no impact to the appearance of the building as the additional square footage was added by excavating below grade."*

Based on my understanding of this project I think this is incorrect. If the owners had completed a proper geotechnical assessment prior to construction and identified the need to excavate deeper, then the entire house could have been built with the originally planned 5' crawlspace but the house would sit 4' lower compared to how it sits now. In an area with potential waterfront views, a difference of 4' can make a huge difference to the view of water and Gonzales Hill to the residents on the opposite side of Robertson Street.

3. *"By keeping the whole basement area accessible, we preserve an area which could one day be used to create a ... two bedroom apartment."*

This really seems like they are grasping at straws. They clearly have no intention of developing this space as a rentable apartment and it is highly unlikely that any future owner of this multi-million \$ waterfront mansion is going to need a "mortgage helper" suite. However, the additional floor space undoubtedly adds a considerable amount to the value of this property.

It is unfortunate that this work went ahead without permission and it certainly puts the City in a difficult position. I am not sure what an appropriate mitigation would be.

Sincerely,

Jack Sutcliffe  
Victoria