

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Mayor Lisa Helps & Members of Council

FROM: Deane Strongitharm, RRP, MCIP, CitySpaces Consulting

DATE: September 16, 2019

RE: 415-435 Michigan Street Residential Infill
Rezoning & Development Permit Application

Rezoning

- The application for 415-4335 Michigan Street proposes rezoning to accommodate 24 new ground-oriented infill rental housing units – 12 two-bedroom family townhouses and 12 one-bedroom units. The application does NOT request any change in density or use from the existing *R3-H High Density Multiple Dwelling District*.
- Within the rezoning, a housing agreement will designate that the new units are to be rental and that two of the new one-bedroom units be provided at 80% of market rent.
- The rezoning application is consistent with City policy.

Development Permit with Variance

- A variance for parking is being requested. The City's bylaw requires 243 stalls for the total of 219 units on the property (195 existing + 24 new). Currently, there are 138 stalls on the site, and the plans for the new housing units include three additional spaces for a total of 141.
- TWO transportation consultants have concluded that there is currently sufficient parking on site for the 219 units.
- Starlight is proposing extensive TDM measures for the property:
 - 168 new Long Term bicycle stalls (only 30 are required by bylaw)
 - 24 new Short Term bicycle stalls (exceeds bylaw requirements)
 - Purchase of a Modo carshare vehicle (to be located on site)

- Purchase of Modo car memberships for the first 50 tenants who sign-up
- Initial pre-purchase of \$5,000 in Modo vehicle use credits for tenants as incentives to use the service
- Provision of a U-bike program (with three bicycles available every morning on the Michigan Street property)
- Removal of old carport structures to allow for three additional parking stalls.
- Even with this comprehensive TDM program, City staff is still requesting either more vehicle parking or additional TDM measures.
- With the need to reduce reliance on private vehicles, we strongly feel the existing parking stalls and proposed extensive TDM measures more than compensate for the requested relaxation in parking regulations given that the proposed new units are ground-oriented rental homes within walking distance of a Village Centre, the Legislative Precinct, and Downtown.
- While immediately adjacent to the James Bay Village Centre, if the property were included as part of that *Village Centre*, the total number of parking stalls required by the bylaw would be 202; and
- Because the parking bylaw prescribes parking requirements by floor area rather than unit type, a number of existing units are just one square metre larger than the cut-off point for a lower parking ratio. If those units were only one square metre smaller in floor area, the total parking requirement would be further reduced to 193 stalls.

Other

- While several trees are being removed, there is a 3:1 tree replacement program for the project; some new trees have already been installed.
- A new enclosed recycling centre will replace the existing outside bins.

Request

- Zoning: That Council confirm the Staff report;
- Development Permit with Variance: That Council confirm Option 2 of the Staff report; and
- That the application proceed to Public Hearing and public comment.

Thank you.

[REDACTED]

From: nathalie vazan [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 7:10 PM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Proposed construction between 415/435 Michigan St.
Attachments: 20210518_124020.jpg; 20210518_124103.jpg; 20210518_124132.jpg
Categories: Madison - In Progress

Hello Mayor and Councillors :

I am writing to you today in regards to the proposed construction of a 3-storey 24-unit stacked townhouse which would be located between 415 Michigan St. (Regent Tower) where I currently live and 435 Michigan St. (Charter House).

The owners, Starlight Investments, through Devon Property Management, recently delivered at our doorstep a brochure presenting information pertaining to the expected development of this new building.

As you probably know or recall, I have been an engaged citizen for renters' rights, since 2016, having attended numerous meetings and served on committees, i.e. T.A.P.S. (V-TAG), and through my own research on Standards of Maintenance for Rental Housing, a summary of which I presented to City Council and Mayor at your November 23, 2017 meeting.

This premise is to show both my level of involvement and my eagerness to make Victoria a better place to call home, not only for myself, but also for my fellow citizens. We all know that 60 % of Victoria residents are renters, such as myself. Hence, the importance of voicing my opinion about this proposed development adjacent to my current home at 415 Michigan St.

When I received that brochure on May 7, 2021, I was very upset and cannot, 12 days later, remain silent at the thought of Starlight Investments getting the "green light" with their proposed development. It will be no surprise to you, Councillors and Mayor, to learn that I am strongly opposed to this project. Here are my underlying reasons :

1) As you will see in the attached 3rd document, Q/A # 8, the rent for the new apartments have *not yet been revealed*.

Do you, Mayor and Councillors, know what the rent will be for these new rental units?

I certainly hope that you have been informed of this crucial aspect before you even consider approving such an endeavour!

Please note that in Regent Tower the newly but rather minimally-renovated suites are currently above the rent average for the area of James Bay. In fact, as per listings on Devon Properties' website, studios, 1-BD and 2-B suites are approximately \$ 200 to \$ 300 above the current average.

Also, based on the fact that my previous annual rent increases (prior to the pandemic freeze) have been adjusted to the highest dime and penny, i.e. \$ wxyz. 88 cents!

These two examples lead me to believe that Starlight Investments is profit-driven. Hence, I doubt that the rent for the new suites on the proposed building will be affordable.

On that note, your Strategic Plan 2019-2022 clearly states that City Council is advocating for affordable (reasonable/decent/fair/average) housing, and promoting inclusive, stronger and healthier communities.

2) High density area of James Bay

We need to acknowledge that there is high density at the 400-block of Michigan St. This is a narrow street with cars parked on both sides, thus making it difficult for many drivers going along Michigan Street or trying to drive in/out of our respective driveways. Since the proposed building will have NO underground parking (see Q/A # 2), this means that new tenants would have to park either on the street (good luck!) or use the already packed parking lot adjacent to both high-rises, probably taking up the few visitors' parking spots. Furthermore, it is essential to allow emergency vehicles and services to quickly access our buildings, knowing that over 250 people live in both Charter House and Regent Tower combined. I have lived here for 15 years and I have regularly seen police cars, ambulances and firetrucks pulling into our driveways. Also, with the possible construction of a bike lane either on Michigan or Superior, our block will surely see an increase in congestion!

3) Construction timeline

Referring to Q/A # 6, the anticipated duration of construction is 14 months. Well, having lived through 4 years of renovation nightmare in Regent Tower from 2016 to 2020 under the new ownership of Starlight Investments, I doubt that it will take just over one year! Since 2016, City Council has been made well aware of these renovation mishaps, unethical treatment of residents, interruptions, disruptions, WorkSafeBC stop-work orders, and the like!

Many of us renters who "survived" those extremely hard years are apprehensive about going through another 2, 3 or 4 years of construction noise and lack of consideration for our well-being.

I would like to add that allowing this development might lead to displacement of many long-time renters at 415 and 435 Michigan Street. This means that distressed citizens, many of which are low-income or fixed-income earners could have difficulty finding another fair rental home, or even become homeless. Let's prevent gentrification of our block!

4) Public hearing in June

As stated in Q/A # 5, a public hearing on this matter is planned for June 2021 (date not disclosed). Since this public hearing will be virtual, keep in mind that many citizens who do not have access to a computer or are not digitally-savvy will NOT be able to express their views on this important proposed development. Also, those who are working (myself) might simply NOT be available to attend...

To conclude, given all the above-mentioned reasons and knowing that this proposed 415/435 Michigan St. building will not be an asset to AFFORDABLE rental housing and that it will actually compromise circulation, parking, lead to displacement of long-time residents, reduce the quality of life and well-being of existing tenants, I urge you to say NO to this project.

If my request seems unrealistic, well at least, please consider POSTPONING this project until the new bike lane (Michigan or Superior) is completed. Show some compassion for the hundreds of residents on Michigan St, especially during this pandemic.

Sincerely,

Nathalie Vazan
415 Michigan St.



* received on
May 7, 2021
★ at my
door step. n.v.



Dear Residents,

This information is being provided in advance of a new infill development that is occurring on the same site as your building.

Typically, property management would meet with residents to discuss details, any impact or inconvenience residents may experience as a result, expected timelines, and other details of the planned project. But, due to the ongoing pandemic, an in-person tenant update meeting is not possible at this time.

Instead, we are sharing important information about the anticipated development work in this letter. If you have any further questions or concerns, we would be happy to discuss with you. Please feel free to reach out to your Property Manager (contact information below) if you would like to discuss.

{ The new development is a 3-storey, 24-unit stacked townhouse building proposed to be developed in the grassed northern portion of the property, between the sidewalk, the pool, and the two driveways.

This development was the subject of a resident meeting in August 2017 before application was made to the City in October 2017. The proposed development appeared before a City of Victoria Council meeting in September 2019 and is expected to proceed to public hearing in June 2021. Site preparation work is expected to begin in July 2021, with construction commencing in August 2021. Construction is expected to take about 14 months.

As we will not be hosting a resident meeting at this time, we have included a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

Please do not hesitate to contact the Elizabeth Spratt (Property Manager) at [REDACTED] for any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Spratt (Property Manager)
[REDACTED]

General Questions



1. Who is Starlight Developments?

Starlight Developments is responsible for community development and construction initiatives on behalf of Starlight Investments, the asset management company for 415/435 Michigan St. Starlight Investments employs Devon Properties to carry out day-to-day property management.

2. What is being proposed?

We are proposing the development of a 3-storey, 24-unit stacked townhouse building in the grassed northern portion of the property, between the sidewalk, the pool, and the two driveways. No underground parking or significant excavation is proposed. The existing pool will remain.

3. How will the proposed development affect my rent?

The development will **not** affect your rent. Development costs are carried by Starlight Developments and will not in any way be passed along to you.

4. How will the proposed development affect my parking spot?

During construction, some vehicles may need to temporarily use a different parking spot. However, all residents who currently park at 415/435 Michigan St will continue to be able to do so during and after construction. Further, the rent for your parking space will not be affected by the development.

5. Has the development been approved?

The proposed development appeared before a City of Victoria Council meeting in September 2019. The outcome of that meeting was that Council directed staff to prepare bylaws and schedule a public hearing once various agreements were completed. The proposed development is expected to proceed to public hearing in June 2021.



6. How long will construction take?

We anticipate that the construction will take approximately 14 months to complete, however, it is important to note that noisy construction will not be taking place for the entire duration. The 14-month period also includes the time it will take to do more quiet construction of the interior of the new building. We will make every effort to keep interruptions to a minimum.

7. How will the development affect my day-to-day life?

In the short term, there will be some construction noise and dust. However, we are committed to minimizing construction impacts and will comply with the City's construction bylaws. Construction work will not take place on Sundays and statutory holidays. We anticipate only short, temporary closures of the pool, and that it will be generally open during the construction period.

In the long term, the new development includes upgrades that will benefit current residents, including:

- 168 "long-term" (secured, indoor) bike parking spaces, complete with electrical outlets for charging e-bikes and a bicycle repair station with air pump;
- the purchase and placement of two Modo car share vehicles, along with more than 100 partner user Modo memberships (each partner user membership allows one 415/435 Michigan St resident to enjoy the use of the Modo car share co-op without the usual \$500 share purchase);
- upgrades to the pool deck fencing and landscaping; and
- a new enclosure for garbage and recycling, minimizing odour and noise.

8. Will current residents be given the opportunity to relocate to one of the brand-new apartment units?

Yes. All current residents will be given priority registration opportunities. Rents for the new apartment units are not yet known and we will share this information when available.

9. How can I get up-to-date information about this development and stay involved?

Starlight Developments is committed to ensuring our residents are kept informed throughout the entire process. Prior to the commencement of construction, we will post the project information, construction schedules, and emergency contact information in the lobbies. We will also be providing you with update notices and letters as information becomes available, and hosting in-person meetings once safe to do so (pending the status of COVID-19). For any maintenance requests you may have, please continue to contact Devon Properties so that they can address your concerns.

[REDACTED]

From: Betty Roberts [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 3:07 PM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Rezoning 415 & 435 Michigan Street

Having looked down on the above mentioned vacant properties for the past five years, I believe the area could be put to much better use as a location for dwelling units.

Presently the only thing this area is used for is that of a "doggy toilet" for the residents of 415 & 435.

B. Roberts
440 Simcoe Street

[REDACTED]

From: Danny Dupuis [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 12:20 PM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Zoning change on Michigan Street

Hello,

My name is Daniel Dupuis and I am a resident of Charter House at 435 Michigan Street.

I've been a tenant in this building for 7 years.

I lived in a 2 bedroom apartment paying \$1250/ month. Out of fear of renoviction when the buidling was purchased I moved into a refurbished apartment on the same floor. It is a 1 bedroom apartment and I currently pay \$1695/ month.

Throughout the construction phase my apartment was completely wrapped in a non visible through plastic wrap. several attempts at meeting with the landlord were never responded to. I went through a hearing with the Resident Tenancy Branch and was granted a 10% reduction in rent which was followed shortly thereafter by a rent increase.

The company applying for the rezoning and subsequent construction are driven by financial gain exclusively. At any means.

The application will adversely affect current residences, the neighborhood and quite possibly the bike lanes currently proposed by the city.

Traffic and density are at a point where this additional dwelling will only cause more disruption and conjestion.

I could vent about this landlord for pages but will spare you the agony. Fortunately the building is managed by a local property managent company that does care about it's residents.

The one positive thing about this Landlord is shareholders must be very pleased with it's ability to never miss a rent increase date. And increasing the rent to the maximum amount possible.

About 50% of my take home pay goes to rent. As one who potentially faces habitation issues in the future I oppose the application for zone changing and making the next several years through construction, potential relocation and the burden of finding suitable, affordable tenancy in a city very dear to my heart.

I love this city, the location, weather and lifestyle. The real estate situation is such that fear of having to relocate is constant.

This landlord will not ease that burden nor will they ever offer an affordable housing situation.

I thank the city of Victoria for the opportunity to voice my concerns over this matter.

Sincerely,
Daniel Dupuis (Danny)

[REDACTED]

From: Victoria Mayor and Council
Sent: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 3:27 PM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Fw: June Public Hearings - Proposed Development at 415/435 Michigan St

From: Lynne Creba [REDACTED]
Sent: May 28, 2021 4:57 PM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council <mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca>
Subject: June Public Hearings - Proposed Development at 415/435 Michigan St

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

I am a resident of 415 Michigan St., Victoria BC and would like it to be known that I am strongly against the proposed development at 415/435 Michigan St. (Regent Towers/Charter House).

This proposed block of units would be situated on a very small space of green grass (with a beautiful low stone brick wall fronting it) between the two buildings. Our small green space is enjoyed by many, and it would be a shame to wedge a 3 storey 24 unit stacked townhouse building in that space. I think it would look very crowded and unappealing on our lovely street which is often included in a route of the horse and carriage tourist rides.

Presuming there will be cars belonging to the tenants of these proposed units, where will they park? As the price of a parking space for 415 Michigan St. is cost prohibitive to many, some tenants are parking on the street and on many days it is difficult to find a space. As there will be no underground parking for the proposed units, I ask again, where will they park?

As I am sure you are aware, both Regent Towers and Charter House underwent extensive, extremely disruptive, and at times hazardous outdoor/indoor renovations during the years of 2016 to 2018. It was an experience I will never forget and if this proposed development is accepted we will have to yet again endure the upheaval, which will include noise, dust, disruption of traffic and the everyday stress of living closely beside a construction zone.

I am asking, please do not approve this proposal.

Sincerely,

Lynne Creba
Regent Towers
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

[REDACTED]

From: Michelle Preston [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 4:28 PM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Zoning Regulation Bylaw, Amendment Bylaw (No.1253) - No. 21-044

I live in an apartment on the property being considered for increased densification. The tiny bit of greenspace is now very well used by dog owners in the building as a very small dog park. It is also enjoyed by everyone in the neighbourhood just to look at some green between two very tall towers.

The property owners declare the reduced parking will not be a problem as the existing parking is not used. This is because they are charging very high monthly rates for parking, forcing tenants to park on the very crowded street. Michigan is basically a one way street because of this. Cars travel slowly and have to take turns to pass. I think this is fine, it cuts down on traffic noise and makes the neighbourhood safer for kids, cats & dogs, squirrels, the odd raccoon. A recent idea from the city is proposing a possible bicycle lane on Michigan, I don't think there is now any room for such a plan and, after adding 24 additional homes to the already too crowded street, would be impossible.

James Bay is a very nice place to live and wander around, I think it is crowded enough and this new development will ruin the entire block. I doubt you could find a single resident of this entire block or any of the surrounding blocks who thinks it's a good idea.

Victoria is not going to need a Heritage Protection Society in another half century if this sort of building continues. Langford will never need one, please don't do this.

Thank you for your attention,

Michelle Preston
Apartment #903, 435 Michigan Street
Victoria, British Columbia V8V 1R9
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Bill Appledorf [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 11:57 AM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: 415/435 Michigan

Dear Mayor and Council,

*** Please note section 3.) below, which I added today after sending my original email to mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca ***
*** Thank you ***

I am writing to voice my opposition to the housing construction proposed by Starlight Investments at 415/435 Michigan Street.

The single highest housing priority in Victoria at this time is to build as much affordable rental housing as possible as fast as possible because the most pressing need of the more than 60% of Victoria residents who rent their homes is for affordable rental housing.

The motivation for the project Starlight Investments is proposing at 415/435 Michigan Street is anything but to increase the supply of affordable rental housing in this city, evidence for which is that Starlight Investments recently circulated a brochure that clearly states:

"Rents on the new apartment units are not yet known and we will share this information when available."
-- Starlight Investments

The brochure that Starlight Investments circulated was printed on the thickest, glossiest, heaviest, most wasteful, resource-intensive paper available. Further, Starlight Investments increases rents at their properties to the maximum permitted by the RTB every year, on the minute, to the penny. They also raise rents on apartments that tenants vacate to the maximum that Victoria's beleaguered rental market will bear. Bachelor apartments in the building I live in, 415 Michigan, are now renting for \$1,500/month. A few months ago they were renting for \$1,300.

My position on rental housing development in Victoria is as follows:

1.) At present, the primary objective of all rental housing development in Victoria is to maximize capital gains for individuals and entities who finance these developments. These investors' profits are met according to schedules agreed between themselves and have absolutely nothing to do with the needs or objectives of the tenants who are obligated to deliver inexorably-increasing rents to these investors, whoever and wherever they may be.

Given that the single highest housing priority in Victoria at this time is to build as much affordable rental housing as possible as fast as possible, rental housing development in Victoria should be driven from conception to completion by what "[r]ents on the new apartment units" will be.

The most effective way to minimize rents, as well as to minimize the size and frequency of rent increases, is to drive private money out of the rental housing development business, which government can do by assuming the responsibility of financing affordable rental housing development. Private capital is by definition not able to compete for business with the low- or no-interest loans that government, especially the federal government, is able to extend. A public bank, seeded with federal dollars, that loans money to developers at an interest rate as close to zero as possible and whose loans are repaid by renters in the developments financed by the public bank, is a self-supporting, non-profit funding enterprise.

This arrangement would free developers from being servants of big capital and allow them to participate in the life of the community as builders of the housing people need in order to live calm and healthy lives.

2.) Density should be as high as possible.

Intact wilderness in the vicinity of cities is almost nonexistent today and is under constant assault by urban sprawl, sometimes for many kilometers in every direction as the outlines of future megalopolises are sketched across the landscape.

I believe it is essential to limit the horizontal dimensions of human encampments, otherwise known as cities and towns. Green space, and spaces necessary for other uses in cities, like streets converted to grow food in high-tech greenhouses, must be maximized; and surrounding areas that are still alive must be cared for and protected. Dwellings for people therefore must grow vertically.

I have no problem with density. The more the better. But I want housing whose purpose is to house people, adequately and securely, not housing whose purpose is to funnel money into the hands of people who have a lot of money.

3.) Neighbors have proposed a better design, below, and I endorse it:

Excavate the existing parking lot at the rear of the 415/435 Michigan Street parcel, build several floors of parking below ground, and above that parking erect a 15- or 20-storey tower of affordable workforce rental housing. Affordable. Not rents that leap-frog relentlessly from a baseline that is brazenly predatory in the first place.

If anyone builds anything on this property, it should not be Starlight Investments. Their relationship to this city is to plunder it. They are here for themselves and are not legitimate contributors to the prosperity of this community. They are liars, predators, and cheats.

Bill Appledorf

[REDACTED]

From: David Creba [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 1:06 PM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Starlight investments development proposal

- I am a resident of [415 Michigan Street](#) for over 10 years and I am strongly opposed against the proposed development by Starlight Investments at 415/435 Michigan Street.
- The proposed 3 story 24 unit complex is going to be wedged between Charter House and Regent Towers taking away the only green space that is currently enjoyed by the residents. Parking will be an issue as no new spaces will be provided, space will come from any existing vacant spaces or park on the street which is already a issue and with the bike lane proposal it's going to be an ever bigger problem. The construction will be noisy dusty and be extremely disruptive that is expected to take 14 months as stated by Starlight which I doubt given their track record with the renovations they did here 2016 -2019. I am sure some of you are aware of the unsafe workplace practices that took place involving work safe BC. This project will not be good for the 400 block of Michigan Street please do not approve this proposal !

David Creba

[REDACTED]

From: Micheline Lincoln [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, June 3, 2021 11:18 AM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Zoning of 415 & 435 Michigan St., James Bay

To Council Members,

In response to rezoning lots 415 and 435 on Michigan Street, I am opposed to the changes. I would like the green space to remain as is between the two buildings. If we are not careful, there will not be any green space left in any areas. I am not opposed to multiple dwellings, but see no reason to continually take land to build more condo units. People will just have to move further out until there are vacancies in the area in which they wish to live. I hope this project does not move forward, but if so, please note that I am also against the proposed points for the exterior design and finishes.

Thanking you for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,
Micheline Lincoln, James Bay resident

Sent from my iPad

[REDACTED]

From: Wim Borsboom [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, June 3, 2021 1:30 PM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Proposed 24 new rental units on site of Regent Tower and Charter House, 415 and 435 Michigan Street

Dear Councillor,

To start off, I am NOT opposing Starlight's project to construct 24 new rental units on the site of Regent Tower and Charter House, 415 and 435 Michigan Street.

My wife and I are apartment renters, living happily for 4 years now in Regent Tower on 415 Michigan Street in James Bay Village.

I am well aware of Starlight's permit application to build 24 rental units on the site of 414, 435 Michigan Street, and recommend that their application will be granted.

I have carefully read the petition, that an ad hoc citizen group, "Tenants of Starlight", is submitting, but find that much of their objections are not warranted, they definitely do not reflect my considerations whether the project should go ahead or not.

I could detail *my* objections to *their* objections at length, but long letters are often just *loooong* letters, so I will limit myself to just say that I am not opposed to Starlight's project.

I will attend council's meeting when the vote will be taken, and voice my opinions, concerns and positive suggestions when the opportunity arises at the meeting...

Hope to meet you there...

Cordially,
Wim Borsboom
#1407 415 Michigan Street
V8V 1R8
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Laura Taylor [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 4:56 PM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: 415/435 Michigan St

Dear Mayor and Councilors

I have been a resident of 415 Michigan St. for 24 years. I am strongly opposed to the development proposed by Starlight Investments to build a four story building beside my building. The resulting density will be far too high for our site.

This 4 story unit complex is going to take away the only green space that the over 250 residents of 415/435 Michigan have. This green space is in constant use by many of the residents. I prefer to look down on green space than yet another roof of a 4 story complex.

Michigan St. is already very congested. It is difficult to drive down the street and parking is almost impossible to find.

I am 70 years old and already have put up with noise and dust from 4 years of construction on the site. Construction that was very poorly managed by Starlight. This was extremely stressful and I frequently had to leave my home to escape all these disturbances. I can not face more years of this. Many other elderly people live in these buildings and have similar issues to mine.

Please allow me peace, quiet and green space in my old age. I cannot afford to move. I strongly urge you to reject this proposed development.

Sincerely,

Hugh Wilson

1408-415 Michigan St.
Victoria, BC
V8V 1R8

[REDACTED]

From: anna hutchinson [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, June 5, 2021 3:11 PM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Comments - Proposed New Development on Michigan Street

My name is Anna Hutchinson and I live in the Lady Simcoe apartment building, located at 440 Simcoe Street. I look directly on the proposed building site from my apartment window.

I have concerns regarding the proposed reduction in parking spaces. There is already a lot of pressure on parking in this neighbourhood because of densification and as a senior citizen, I have concerns that by reducing the number of parking spots, tenants in Charter House and Regent Towers will be forced to try to find alternative parking in the neighbourhood, making the streets surrounding the proposed development more crowded with parked vehicles and more difficult for a senior to navigate, which disrespects the demographic of the local area. I also am concerned about the loss of green space in the area between what are already two large apartment buildings - I feel it does not reflect the character of James Bay, which prides itself on a mix of high and low rise housing which include gardens and green spaces.

Anna Hutchinson

[REDACTED]

From: marion tustanoff [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, June 5, 2021 9:25 AM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Development 437 415 Michigan Street

I am adding my opinion to STOP the proposed Starlight townhouse development on our green space.

James Bay's density/overdevelopment needs to be limited. Especially in light of a mere one block on Michigan the Capital development tenants have not been finished. Adding how many cars, people etc to the neighborhood.

Starlight is a uncaring conglomerate that is buying up property across the island with no regard for the people residing in them. We dealt with too many atrocities while they renovicted poisoned and created havoc in our lives during the building upgrades that resulted in shoddy workmanship.

Please listen to our fears as we know first hand how this is going to play out.

Unaffordable housing for 27 units at what price ?

Stop the building in James Bay!!!!

Sent from my iPhone

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The most effective way to minimize rents, as well as to minimize the size and frequency of rent increases, is to drive private money out of the rental housing development business, which government can do by assuming the responsibility of financing affordable rental housing development. Private capital is by definition not able to compete for business with the low- or no-interest loans that government, especially the federal government, is able to extend. A public bank, seeded with federal dollars, that loans money to developers at an interest rate as close to zero as possible and whose loans are repaid by renters in the

developments financed by the public bank, is a self-supporting, non-profit funding enterprise.

This arrangement would free developers from being servants of big capital and allow them to participate in the life of the community as builders of the housing people need in order to live calm and healthy lives.

2.) Density should be as high as possible.

Intact wilderness in the vicinity of cities is almost nonexistent today and is under constant assault by urban sprawl, sometimes for many kilometers in every direction as the outlines of future megalopolises are sketched across the landscape.

I believe it is essential to limit the horizontal dimensions of human encampments, otherwise known as cities and towns. Green space, and spaces necessary for other uses in cities, like streets converted to grow food in high-tech greenhouses, must be maximized; and surrounding areas that are still alive must be cared for and protected. Dwellings for people therefore must grow vertically.

I have no problem with density. The more the better. But I want housing whose purpose is to house people, adequately and securely, not housing whose purpose is to funnel money into the hands of people who have a lot of money.

Bill Appledorf

Hello Mayor and Councillors :

I am writing to you today in regards to the proposed construction of a 3-storey 24-unit stacked townhouse which would be located between 415 Michigan St. (Regent Tower) where I currently live and 435 Michigan St. (Charter House).

The owners, Starlight Investments, through Devon Property Management, recently delivered at our doorstep a brochure presenting information pertaining to the expected development of this new building.

As you probably know or recall, I have been an engaged citizen for renters' rights, since 2016, having attended numerous meetings and served on committees, i.e. T.A.P.S. (V-TAG), and through my own research on Standards of Maintenance for Rental Housing, a summary of which I presented to City Council and Mayor at your November 23, 2017 meeting.

This premise is to show both my level of involvement and my eagerness to make Victoria a better place to call home, not only for myself, but also for my fellow citizens. We all know that 60 % of Victoria residents are renters, such as myself. Hence, the importance of voicing my opinion about this proposed development adjacent to my current home at 415 Michigan St.

When I received that brochure on May 7, 2021, I was very upset and cannot, 12 days later, remain silent at the thought of Starlight Investments getting the "green light" with their proposed development.

It will be no surprise to you, Councillors and Mayor, to learn that I am strongly opposed to this project.

Here are my underlying reasons :

1) As you will see in the attached 3rd document, Q/A # 8, the rent for the new apartments have *not yet been revealed*.

Do you, Mayor and Councillors, know what the rent will be for these new rental units?

I certainly hope that you have been informed of this crucial aspect before you even consider approving such an endeavour!

Please note that in Regent Tower the newly but rather minimally-renovated suites are currently above the rent average for the area of James Bay. In fact, as per listings on Devon Properties' website, studios, 1-BD and 2-B suites are approximately \$ 200 to \$ 300 above the current average.

Also, based on the fact that my previous annual rent increases (prior to the pandemic freeze) have been adjusted to the highest dime and penny, i.e. \$ wxyz. 88 cents!

These two examples lead me to believe that Starlight Investments is profit-driven. Hence, I doubt that the rent for the new suites on the proposed building will be affordable.

On that note, your Strategic Plan 2019-2022 clearly states that City Council is advocating for affordable (reasonable/decent/fair/average) housing, and promoting inclusive, stronger and healthier communities.

2) High density area of James Bay

We need to acknowledge that there is high density at the 400-block of Michigan St. This is a narrow street with cars parked on both sides, thus making it difficult for many drivers going along Michigan Street or trying to drive in/out of our respective driveways. Since the proposed building will have NO underground parking (see Q/A # 2), this means that new tenants would have to park either on the street (good luck!) or use the already packed parking lot adjacent to both high-rises, probably taking up the few visitors' parking spots.

Furthermore, it is essential to allow emergency vehicles and services to quickly access our buildings, knowing that over 250 people live in both Charter House and Regent Tower combined. I have lived here for 15 years and I have regularly seen police cars, ambulances and firetrucks pulling into our driveways.

Also, with the possible construction of a bike lane either on Michigan or Superior, our block will surely see an increase in congestion!

3) Construction timeline

Referring to Q/A # 6, the anticipated duration of construction is 14 months. Well, having lived through 4 years of renovation nightmare in Regent Tower from 2016 to 2020 under the new ownership of Starlight Investments, I doubt that it will take just over one year! Since 2016, City Council has been made well aware of these renovation mishaps, unethical treatment of residents, interruptions, disruptions, WorkSafeBC stop-work orders, and the like!

Many of us renters who "survived" those extremely hard years are apprehensive about going through another 2, 3 or 4 years of construction noise and lack of consideration for our well-being.

I would like to add that allowing this development might lead to displacement of many long-time renters at 415 and 435 Michigan Street. This means that distressed citizens, many of which are low-income or fixed-income earners could have difficulty finding another fair rental home, or even become homeless. Let's prevent gentrification of our block!

4) Public hearing in June

As stated in Q/A # 5, a public hearing on this matter is planned for June 2021 (date not disclosed).

Since this public hearing will be virtual, keep in mind that many citizens who do not have access to a computer or are not digitally-savvy will NOT be able to express their views on this important proposed development. Also, those who are working (myself) might simply NOT be available to attend...

To conclude, given all the above-mentioned reasons and knowing that this proposed 415/435 Michigan St. building will not be an asset to AFFORDABLE rental housing and that it will actually compromise circulation, parking, lead to displacement of long-time residents, reduce the quality of life and well-being of existing tenants, I urge you to say NO to this project.

If my request seems unrealistic, well at least, please consider POSTPONING this project until the new bike lane (Michigan or Superior) is completed. Show some compassion for the hundreds of residents on Michigan St, especially during this pandemic.

Sincerely,

Nathalie Vazan
415 Michigan St.

Dear Mayor,

To start off, I am NOT opposing Starlight's project to construct 24 new rental units on the site of Regent Tower and Charter House, 415 and 435 Michigan Street.

My wife and I are apartment renters, living happily for 4 years now in Regent Tower on 415 Michigan Street in James Bay Village.

I am well aware of Starlight's permit application to build 24 rental units on the site of 414, 435 Michigan Street, and recommend that their application will be granted.

I have carefully read the petition, that an ad hoc citizen group, "Tenants of Starlight", is submitting, but find that much of their objections are not warranted, they definitely do not reflect my considerations whether the project should go ahead or not.

I could detail **my** objections to **their** objections at length, but long letters are often just *loooong* letters, so I will limit myself to just say that I am not opposed to Starlight's project.

I will attend council's meeting when the vote will be taken, and voice my opinions, concerns and positive suggestions when the opportunity arises at the meeting...

Hope to meet you there...

Cordially,

Wim Borsboom

#1407 415 Michigan Street
V8V 1R8