

Mr. Phil Nicholls
931 Redfern Street
Victoria, BC

March 18th, 2021

Mayor and Council
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

Dear Mayor and Council;

Re: Development Variance Permit Application for 931 Redfern Street

We are requesting variances for setbacks for a new single family house with secondary suite that duplicate the variances that were previously granted under Development Variance Permit (DVP) for this lot in 2019.

Proposal Description

Having recently purchased the above-referenced property in November 2020, we were only aware that a building permit had been applied for. It was not until the end of January 2021 that we learned of a DVP (expiring March 19, 2021) related to our new property as this information was not registered as part of the Property Title when completing the purchase. There is a building permit application under review by the Building Inspection department for the original design under the 2019 DVP. It is still pending approval. Therefore, It will not be possible to have 'substantially started construction' until after the DVP expires.

As this DVP is expiring, we are having to apply for another DVP which is essentially a duplication of the Lot-A portion of the 2019 DVP application with the same building footprint and floor area, but with some minor building code changes primarily related to the reduction of glazing on the south side facing the neighbour at 927 Redfern Street.

The proposed one and a half storey building includes a three bedroom primary residence and a one bedroom secondary suite in a small scale infill house that maintains the scale of the streetscape and minimizes the impact on existing trees and adjacent homes.

The requested setback variances are related to the position of the existing house on the panhandle lot, the retention of an existing mature Gary Oak tree and the provision of a road dedication required by the City of Victoria.

The shape of this subdivided front lot is a result of the location of the existing house on Lot-B (recently panhandled lot). The diagonal boundary between Lot-A and Lot-B results in a rear yard setback that would be 1.7m from the front yard setback. The building envelope per R1-G zoning would be essentially triangular and the rear point touches the trunk of the largest Gary Oak with a large portion of this tree's root zone falling within the building envelope. Reducing the rear yard setback allows the preservation of a significant Oak tree.

Neighbourhood Context and Design Guidelines

The design for this proposed house endeavors to preserve privacy for the adjacent homes to the North, South and East by retaining existing trees and hedges, minimizing the upper storey, limiting windows on the North and East elevations and providing screening for the entry porch and side deck.

While a front yard setback variance is requested (partly due to road dedication), the front façade of the proposed house is a similar distance from the street as the neighbouring houses. This new house will create a continuity of scale and massing of the streetscape on this side of Redfern Street.

This one and a half storey proposal has low profile roofs which minimize the building height in relation to the neighbours.

The streetscape demonstrates that the proposed house is of similar scale to the adjacent houses with the two storey portion of the proposal to the north adjacent to the north neighbours' two storey house and the lower portion of the house beside the smaller neighbouring house to the south.

Community Consultation

Over the week ending March 21st, 2021, we have reached out to the nearby neighbours to confirm their support for the proposal.

Five of these neighbours have signed a letter stating they do not object to the requested variances. We have contacted the Fairfield Gonzalez Area Land Use Committee by email and provided the updated drawings and letter signed by neighbours and are awaiting a response.

Transportation

One zoning compliant parking space is provided for this property in an attached garage plus additional parking is possible on the driveway.

Tree Preservation

Talbot McKenzie Arborists have provided a complete report and recommendations for the preservation of existing trees for this property. As recommended in their report, the existing

boulevard Hedge Maple on city property is to be retained. Two mature Gary Oaks and three mature Douglas Fir trees are all to be preserved at the rear of the property (see attached site plan and landscape plan).

Green Building Features

The property is located close to schools, shopping, public transit and bike lanes which allow for increased use of bus and bicycles and reduced reliance on cars. The paving proposed conforms to the City of Victoria Permeable Paving requirement (refer to Landscape Plan). Retaining existing trees, hedges and shrubs will preserve screening of adjacent neighbours. The proposed planting of trees and shrubs along the property lines will provide additional screening to neighbours.

Conclusion

Thank you for your considering this “re-application”. We believe the proposed house still fits within the existing context and improves the continuity of the streetscape and we respectfully request your “re-approval of these variances”.

Sincerely,



Phil Nicholls

Enclosures