



15, July 2021

Charlayne Thornton-Joe, City Councillor
John O'Reilly, Heritage Planner
CC: Mayor and Council

Dear Councillor Thornton-Joe and Mr. O'Reilly,

We are writing on behalf of the board of the South Jubilee Neighbourhood Association, with regard to the future of the Bank Street School in our neighbourhood. As you know, this school and surrounding property are a critical part of our community and residents are extremely interested and concerned about the future of the site. Many residents, including some who have lived here for over 50 years, are passionate about creating new community space, creating a Neighbourhood Learning Centre, building a vibrant school, and having a good-faith discussion about the value of the heritage building.

Over the last few years, residents have felt completely left out of the process to provide input and direction on the future of the school. Overall, we are asking for better dialogue on the future of the Bank School, of the costs associated with rebuilding or restoring the school, and the opportunities to create new community space.

We were recently informed that a significant fence will be erected around Bank St. school in the coming weeks. The reason given is danger from potential earthquakes. We are thankful to Mr. Chuck Morris for allowing us to keep our community trailer on the site, and to continue housing recycle and gardening events outside the fenced area. These are volunteer initiatives to build a sense of community in our neighbourhood.

While a fence does mitigate safety and earthquake concerns, it has residents wondering how long it will be erected for? How long will this project take to get started? Should we expect a vacant site for 5-10 years? A large fence will create very negative environment in the community, and is not the type of environment we want children to be around (e.g. Sundance kids).

News of the fence reminds us that the City of Victoria, SD61, MLA Murray Rankin and MP Laurel Collins need to find a solution to the Bank Street School as soon as possible, with the involvement of South Jubilee residents. We cannot accept a delayed project and a permanent fenced-environment in our community. We were extremely disappointed to not have access to the Engineering report that was promised in Fall 2020. How can residents expect to make an informed decision on the future of the

school without adequate information? All this has done is create more divisions in the community over the future of the site.

We plan to send a similar letter to SD61 and request a meeting with all parties in early August 2021. **Are you available for a meeting the week of August 9th-13th, to attend a meeting hosted by SJNA?** We request an update from City of Victoria on the timeline of any plans they have on this project. We will make a similar request to SD61 and all push for access to the 3rd Party Engineering Report they commissioned last fall. We will send a meeting request to all parties in the next few weeks.

With Regards,

Matt Dell, President of SJNA

On behalf of the South Jubilee Neighborhood Association Board