

[REDACTED]

From: Ryan Mitton [REDACTED]
Sent: February 11, 2022 7:22 PM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: 1475 Fort St.

Hello,

As a renter in Victoria I support the proposal for 1475 Fort Street. Smartly built infill housing is critical to Victoria remaining an affordable place to live, especially since this project will triple the number of units on site while adding 4 affordable units of affordable housing.

The COVID-19 pandemic hasn't made renting easier for Victorians, and too many people still struggle to find a place to rent due to low rental supply and a lack of government action. I encourage council to expedite the approval of these homes. Declining this project or subjecting it to delays sends the wrong message about how this city would prioritize new affordable housing for the future.

Regards,

Ryan Mitton
1101-250 Douglas St.

[REDACTED]

From: Barry Willimott [REDACTED]
Sent: February 17, 2022 1:58 PM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: 1475 Fort Street

Mayor and Council,

My neighbours and I are in full support of new rental housing being built at 1475 Fort Street provided that it meets with the current bylaws.

There has been a large voice in opposition to this project and very little support.

This developer and architect have provided false information in the past to neighbours and the Design Review Panel. The developers purchased this property within the last 5 years and they would have been well aware of the zoning that was in place.

This is the fourth time that this item has been brought back to Council, and there have been no significant changes made to the original plan and submission. If it wasn't right the first time, why is it now? Are the developer and architect playing games with City Hall? Why does it not cost them anything to keep coming back?

This 12 unit building is currently being rented to Vancouver Island Health. Where will these individuals go, won't this put additional pressure on VIHA to find reasonably priced accommodation for the individuals being evicted?

Opposition to this project is focused on the size of the building and retention of the existing mature tree canopy. The building is simply too large for this panhandle site. All of the mature trees that sit on the outside edges of the property will be destroyed because the proposed underground parking structure that is going to be constructed. It is going to take up the entire site from property line to property line. The required setbacks for the South, West and East side yards is 6.46 metres or 31.19 feet. The developer/architect is asking that this be

reduced to 3.29 meters or 10.79 feet to accommodate patios and balconies. They are also asking to increase the building height by .92 meters or 3 feet but do not give any explanation for this.

Considering that the climate change crisis is having a continuing drastic effect it is more important than ever to do whatever is possible to save the existing tree canopy.

There is a solution that will save the existing and precious tree canopy and satisfy the neighbours. That is to design a building that is within the existing bylaws and construct the underground parking garage to accommodate the root structures of the existing trees on the property. By constructing a building within existing bylaws will also allow for natural drainage which will not overburden an already overloaded sewer wystem.

If you have not already made a physical visit to the site I would ask that you do.

I look forward to speaking with you in the next few days.

Thank you,

Barry Willimott

1030 St. Charles Street



Dear Mayor and Council,

Please reject the development proposal for 1475 Fort St.

Although I support the need for a 4-storey rental apartment building, the proposed building has not significantly changed its setbacks.

The proposed tree preservation changes protect a few minor trees such as a dogwood (5 cm DBH) and an apple and some elms, it still results in **removal of 5 Big Leaf Maple trees along the fence line.**

These Big Leaf Maples are large and provide numerous benefits - shade, temperature cooling, water absorption and decreased run off, as well as a buffer and increased privacy for the neighbours. **In the light of the climate crisis, it is horrific** that it would be approved to remove these trees which are 86 cm, 95, 58, 45 and 32 cm DBH. **A total of 316 cm DBH tree volume.** The benefit to the environment including carbon capture and mitigating the effects of excess heat and rain is substantial.

Surely, an apartment building could be designed that respects the bylaws and protects these magnificent trees. These are desperate times for rental housing and the climate emergency, we can do better. Let us design an apartment that meets the zoning bylaws and the need to preserve the urban forest. Ask the developer to re-design this building, not just make a few concessions.

Thank you for considering this request,

Jan Firstbrook
A member of Community Trees Matter Network

Mayor and Council,

I am rather surprised, & terribly disappointed, to be writing to you once again, and on the same topic, 1475 Fort Street.

From the very beginning of the process, the neighbours have stated clearly & strongly that we fully understand the increasing need for housing, in particular, affordable, family friendly housing. We continue to support new housing, but would like to see that developments fit into the city's Design Guidelines, follow the By-Laws, and maintain the ambiance of the neighbourhood.

After having the final proposal rejected by Council, the mayor graciously gave the developer a second chance. Unbelievably, they have returned to the table with minor, almost no, changes. The developer has **not** addressed the Council's request to **decrease the size** of the footprint & **the impact** on the neighbours; nor any of the neighbours' concerns re: building to the property lines and removing old, well established trees. The footprint of the building is still far too big for the site, overwhelming neighbours on 3 sides. The plan still includes removing all the older, well established trees, our urban forest that provides wildlife homes, shade, privacy (visual & auditory), etc., and leaving only the smaller, younger trees.

The first presentation, about 21 months ago, by the developer included major 'variances.' These were great enough to make many think they should have been requesting re-zoning..... Neighbours immediately reacted to the developer pushing boundaries to the property lines, and have never objected to the building of the apartments. Throughout the process we have continued to point out that the variances being requested were far **too extreme** and **invasive** to neighbours.

We are thanking each of you in advance for your serious consideration of this proposal, the many responses from neighbours, and all the implications. We are asking that you respect and follow the city's By-Laws and the 2019 Design Guidelines, and reject this proposal as it has been presented, having not met any of the requests from Council.

Sincerely,
Gretchen & Geoffrey Karlebach
#9 - 1019 Pemberton Road

17th November, 2021

Re: 1475 Fort Street – DPV00120

Mayor and Council:

Once again, I am writing to request that you reject the current proposal for the apartment building at 1475 Fort Street. As you are aware, a number of neighbours have objected to the scale of the proposed building and, although the developers have been asked to make modifications to the design in light of these comments, I do not feel that the minimal changes made have adequately addressed our concerns.

We have repeatedly said that we have no objection to a new apartment building being constructed on this site, and we certainly understand the urgent need for additional housing, especially affordable housing, in Victoria. While the footprint of the underground parking structure has been slightly reduced from the original plan (and I am glad that this saves some trees -- although not the most important ones), the fact remains that the scale of the building itself has not been changed and it is too large for the site; the requested substantial variances in set-backs more than attest to this. Over-building on existing sites will not solve Victoria's serious housing problem and will only contribute to the destruction of the character of neighbourhoods. Victoria is a city of considerable beauty and character, attracting tourists who enjoy seeing the historic neighbourhoods; if they are not preserved and the city is allowed to become much like any other, Victoria may become much less attractive as a tourist destination.

Our comments and objections have sometimes been met with annoyance and a suggestion that we are slowing down the process of providing additional housing in the city, and even a suggestion that there should be less public participation in considering such projects in future. While we understand the urgency of the housing situation, perhaps if we had been consulted at an appropriate time in the process, and our comments had been listened to earlier, these delays could have been reduced or avoided altogether. As you will recall, on 10th June, 2021, after listening to the neighbours' arguments at the Public Hearing, Council rejected the proposal with a vote of 5 to 4 against it. So it seems that our arguments were not unreasonable at that time. I do not consider that the minimal changes made to the proposal since then are sufficient to make it acceptable now. Please respect your own bylaws and guidelines.

Thank you for your consideration.

Vanessa M. Dingley
#12-949 Pemberton Road

[REDACTED]

From: Russ Scruggs [REDACTED]
Sent: February 17, 2022 1:45 PM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Development Permit with Variances Application No 00120

Re: Notice of Opportunity for Public Comment

As per the letter we received dated February 10th with the heading; **“It’s Your Neighbourhood”** the public hearing regarding the planned redevelopment of **1475 Fort Street (PID: 005-397-863 Lot 2, Section 74, Victoria District, Plan 9796)** is slated for February 24th, 2022.

Yes, it is “our neighbourhood” and thus the reason we are again coming to the Mayor and Council to ask them to send the 1475 redevelopment proposal back to the Developer (Lantern Properties) and the City of Victoria Planning Department).

The introduction statement alone whereby the egregious variances requested and to date have been granted by the planning department are listed should be reason enough to “not approve”!

- the proposed multi unit building only meets one of the Zoning Bylaw criteria, number of floors of the new building
- the proposal extends no reasonable transition between neighbouring sites
- the City champions the need for trees in our urban environment; they provide habitats for a wide range of species, help with noise mitigation, offer a cooling canopy; yet this development will result in the loss of many mature trees on the site and potential disruption of a much wider root and ground water system

If members of council could have set aside the time at some point during the review process to walk the property and really take in the footprint; now and then; we feel council would do their due diligence and say “no” to this Redevelopment Application. Being onsite really tells the tale, more so than the architects’ building renderings and the 2-dimensional site plan.

We as neighbours to the 1475 Fort Street redevelopment project have come together the past two years and worked hard to respectfully convey/communicate our disapproval of the project as it currently stands: Development Permit With Variances Application No 00120.

We are aware of the housing crisis (affordable) the greater Victoria area is experiencing but must the city’s Zoning Regulation Bylaws and City of Victoria Urban Forest Master Plan be cast aside for the sake of adding 32 units?

Council voted “no” once on this project and should do so again.

Regards,
Russ/Candace Scruggs
1019 Pemberton Road

From: Victoria Mayor and Council
Sent: February 18, 2022 2:08 PM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Fw: Please reject proposal for 1475 Fort Street

From: Carolina Ashe [REDACTED]
Sent: February 18, 2022 10:16 AM
To: Lisa Helps (Mayor) <LHelps@victoria.ca>; Marianne Alto (Councillor) <MAlto@victoria.ca>; Geoff Young (Councillor) <gyoung@victoria.ca>; Charlayne Thornton-Joe (Councillor) <cthorton-joe@victoria.ca>; Sharmarke Dubow (Councillor) <sdubow@victoria.ca>; Ben Isitt (Councillor) <Blisitt@victoria.ca>; Jeremy Loveday (Councillor) <jloveday@victoria.ca>; Sarah Potts (Councillor) <spotts@victoria.ca>; Stephen Andrew (Councillor) <stephen.andrew@victoria.ca>; Victoria Mayor and Council <mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca>
Subject: Please reject proposal for 1475 Fort Street

Dear Mayor and Council,

Re: Development Permit with Variance Application No. 00120

For the past two years, neighbours surrounding 1475 Fort Street have steadfastly requested that Council send this proposal back to the developer, to make revisions that comply with zoning bylaws, respect the City's emphasis on urban forest preservation, and respond to neighbour's concerns.

The developer has had multiple opportunities to consult with neighbours in a meaningful way, yet has failed to do so.

Following is a timeline:

- June 2019 letter from Cascadia Architects: Cascadia said they held an open house with neighbours in March, 2019, while neighbours have maintained that they were never notified of any open house.
- January, 2020, ADP minutes: Cascadia asserted that neighbourhood feedback to the proposal was "very positive." This is not true, and has been addressed in other letters.
- May, 2020 CoTW: Council directed the developer to meet with neighbours and make revisions to address our concerns.
- September, 2020: Developer met with neighbours, and subsequently submitted minor changes that *did not* address any expressed concerns.
- May, 2021, Public Hearing: Council turned down the proposal.
- June 10, 2021, Public Hearing: After Mayor Helps exercised a provision to request reconsideration of Council's decision, Council once again asked the developer to consider neighbours' concerns and submit any subsequent changes.
- August, 2021: The developer once again submitted a proposal with very minor revisions that *did not address neighbour's concerns*.

In a November, 2021 blog, Mayor Helps expressed frustration with how long it is taking for a decision on this proposal, citing neighbourhood opposition as the cause of delays. Consider this: had the developer been held accountable at the beginning to hold meaningful consultation with neighbours, and submit a proposal complying with zoning bylaws and

the guidelines for transition to lower density housing, this apartment building might be completed and rented out by now. It could have been a win for everyone: new housing in place, and the largest mature trees intact, for the benefit of all, including new residents of 1475 Fort Street. An important byproduct would be neighbours/taxpayers/voters feeling we were listened to and that our concerns were respected and incorporated into decisions that directly affect our lives.

As a reminder, neighbours have expressed concerns in two main areas.

- 1) Extreme setback variance requests, which would result in a huge and imposing building just a few feet from adjoining properties, in some cases blocking sunlight and impacting the enjoyment of property. The proposed building is out of scale with both the lot and the character of the surrounding neighbourhood.
- 2) The subsequent removal of large, mature trees – in particular three huge Big Leaf Maples growing on the East and West boundaries, which provide numerous health and environmental benefits. This loss will be permanent, due to removal of soil to accommodate the huge building footprint. (It is incomprehensible why such an environmentally damaging proposal would even be considered during a climate crisis, particularly after last summer's heat dome.)

Twice Council has asked the developer to consider and address these concerns, and twice the developer has failed to do so.

Council rejected this proposal in May of 2021, citing the need for the developer to consider and address neighbours' concerns. This has not been done. Therefore, I ask that, once again you vote against approving this application.

Carolina Ashe

7-949 Pemberton Road