

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Mayor and Council
City of Victoria
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RE : DP - 805 Cook Street - Development Variance Permit

Dear Mayor and Council:

On behalf of our client, 805 Cook Apartments Ltd, please find enclosed our application for a Development Variance Permit to allow the addition of three suites in an existing rental apartment building that we have recently upgraded and renovated. The building was constructed in 1964 and contains 21 rental suites. Although it is structurally sound, the building required significant upgrades for health and safety reasons.

Because we have added ensuite laundry to all suites as part of the upgrade, the existing shared laundry room on the ground floor is no longer required. There are also two small unused spaces beside the laundry room. This DVP application is to convert this surplus space into three additional small rental suites. These new suites would be fitted with the same 24" upgraded appliance package as the larger suites which includes an induction cooktop, 24" convection oven, washer/dryer, etc. This is a minor request that uses existing density to add affordable apartments ideally located near the city core.

These new suites will be less than 325 sq.ft., the bylaw minimum required suite size. To convert the three existing small spaces into 2 compliant suites is structurally complicated. The existing walls are all load bearing and creating the required openings would require costly modifications to the footings and walls. Also, the smallest of the suites, beside the electrical room, currently would have an extra high ceiling (+/- 12') contributing to its livability, and this would have to be removed if this area was consolidated with the adjacent space. A Development Variance Permit would allow these suites to be constructed.

To provide a common amenity space in support of the the reduced suite size, we are also proposing the addition of a bocce court in front of the building. This court will be edged with a boxwood hedge, approximately 30" high. Additional landscaping will be added between the court and the building to enhance the privacy of the ground floor units.



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There is currently a driveway access on Cook Street which is redundant to the parking access off McLure Street. The Transportation Department has determined this access is unsafe and as part of this DVP, wants to see it removed and replaced with new curb, gutter, and boulevard landscaping to match existing. Our client has agreed to complete this work.

The DVP also requires a parking variance. The parking area behind the building was originally configured for 14 stalls, which were non conforming to Victoria by law standards. The area has been replanned to provide 11 conforming stalls, that include 2 visitor stalls, one of which is accessible, 2 stalls serviced by an electric vehicle charging station, and 7 standard sized stalls. Additionally, 26 class 1 bicycle parking stalls will be provided. Additionally, the owner has consider establishing a car share program for the building. Since the renovations have been completed, 19 of the 21 the suites have now been rented. Car membership has been offered to all incoming tenants and none have indicated that they want this service. Of the 9 available car parking stalls, only two have been rented. In lieu of onsite parking, and as suggested by the Transportation Department, we propose to establish 13 car sharing memberships for the building.

We trust that the City of Victoria will welcome the addition of three affordable rental suites in walking distance to the downtown core. In exchange for the variance required for these suites, we have upgraded the parking layout to include accessible parking and EV charging, included car sharing, and have added bicycle parking to current bylaw standards. Additionally, we will be removing an existing unwanted driveway access on Cook Street significantly adding to the landscaping along Cook street.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Peter de Hoog, Architect AIBC (Retired)

DHK Architects