

North Park Neighbourhood Association
PO Box 661, #185-911 Yates Street,
Victoria, BC, V8V 4Y9



City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria BC, V8W 1P6
November 25, 2022

ATTN: Sustainable Planning and Community Development Department, Geordie Gordon, Mayor and Council
CC: NPNA Board, NPNA CALUC, Vinit Jain, Melanie Ransome and Julian Kolsut (Aryze Developments)
Sent via email

Re: 1702 Quadra Street – Rezoning Application

Dear Mayor and Council,

On October 25, 2022, a second CALUC meeting was held for the rezoning application for 1702 Quadra Street. A second CALUC meeting was held due to the revised design, setbacks, and increased building height for the proposed rezoning application. In this meeting, the community was asked to provide feedback based on the documents and presentation provided by the applicant, Aryze Developments. A summary of the information provided from the public feedback is appended to this letter.

Based on the information presented at the meeting and the documents available online on the Development Tracker, the comments from the Land Use Committee members are summarized as follows:

- It would be valuable to the community and for the City to consider the form and design of the ground floor commercial units so that there can be opportunities to support below-market commercial rentals and to support small businesses in North Park.
- The community largely prefers the original building design (December 2021) compared to the revised design (October 2022). There are significant concerns that the updated design does not integrate well with the surrounding buildings and heritage.
- There is a desire for a more significant number of affordable units at rental rates that are affordable for the neighbourhood incomes, thereby preventing gentrification and displacement of existing tenants in what is an affordable rental building.
- There was support for the applicant to consider reserving this building for seniors housing.
- There are concerns about the number of trees that will be removed and the lack of replacement and enhancement of the urban tree canopy. Community members encourage the applicant to integrate increased landscaping into the design (street trees, rooftop patio, green infrastructure, etc.) Concerns were also expressed about the potential loss of

privacy at neighbouring North Park Manor and Fisgard House, and the impacts of shade on the nearby nature corridor and buildings.

- Concerns were expressed about the active transportation networks surrounding the site. Community members recommended that the applicant work in partnership with the city to improve active transportation networks, as a substantial parking variance is requested.
- Some community members expressed that it was refreshing to see the higher-density development and said the height fits well with the surrounding buildings, while others expressed concern.

Based on the feedback received, it is clear that the community is unhappy with the new building design. As we understand it, the building's architecture changed drastically due to setback requirements from the City and feedback from the Advisory Design Panel (ADP). The community expressed a desire for the applicant and City to reconsider making the original designs meet the setback requirements and feedback from the ADP. The original building design showed what 5468796 Architecture, a firm considered by Architectural Digest as one of the leaders in contemporary architecture in Canada, could bring to the community for heritage revitalization. The updated design also removes the greenery additions that the original design enhances, such as tree canopies, a rooftop patio, a green roof, and greater landscaping. North Park is a green-deficient neighbourhood, so Aryze Developments should include a more comprehensive array of greenery in its updated design.

Concern about a pre-existing lack of accessible green space was expressed, along with a desire to see an increase in green space to match the increased density that this building will bring - not to mention the units being added in the rapidly densifying Hudson District. One community member suggested the Yellow Cab property at 817 Fisgard - which is [currently for sale!](#) - would be an excellent site for the City to purchase through the parks acquisition strategy. The North Park Neighbourhood Association agrees wholeheartedly and continues to advocate for increased access to green space for North Park and surrounding neighbourhoods.

Looking at the environment surrounding 1702 Quadra Street, there is a lack of safe and accessible cycling and pedestrian infrastructure. The Vancouver Street and Pandora Avenue bike paths are located one block east and south of the proposed site; however, there are no designated bike lanes or routes on Balmoral or Quadra Street connecting these to the site at 1702 Quadra. Several community members expressed feeling unsafe commuting on bicycles in this area. While the applicant proposes upgrades to the frontage and statutory right of way and boulevard along Fisgard Street, there are no upgrades or improvements proposed for Quadra Street. The current sidewalk fronting the property on Quadra Street is narrow and has large street trees, along with BC Hydro poles, which limit mobility for people with different abilities. Expanding the sidewalk would improve safety, accessibility, and encourage walkability. We encourage the City and the

applicant to work together to complete frontage upgrades along Quadra Street for pedestrians and cyclists.

The need for higher-density rental housing was expressed by several community members who feel that this development matches the heights of the surrounding buildings and will contribute to much-needed rental housing. Meanwhile, some community members mentioned that the proposed 13 storeys feel out of balance with the area's 4-6 storey buildings.

The applicant has indicated that 10% of the rental units will be made available at 10% below market value for a period of 10 years. This equates to 9 units and would be spread between different unit types in the building. Some feedback from community members, including those living at North Park Manor, Fiskard House, and the Sandpiper (all directly adjacent to the proposed development site), strongly advocate that *all* units should be affordable with rents not to exceed 30% of household income.

Currently, there are 15 units at The Abbey, made up of studios and one bedrooms all renting for below \$1000/month. Replacing these 15 below market units with nine new affordable units at the stated 10% below market value will present a significant loss of truly affordable units in North Park.

Based on feedback from the community as well as the NPNA CALUC's desire to see increased access to affordable units in North Park, we strongly request that the units are secured as affordable in perpetuity (not limited to 10 years) and that the affordable unit rents be tied to household income (not more than 30% of gross household income) instead of 10% below market value. Furthermore, in line with best practices, we request that the affordable units are made up of a range of unit sizes and orientations (not just the smallest units with less desired views) and include the same quality of finishes as the rest of the market rate units. To ensure the affordable units are distributed equitably and efficiently, we ask that these units be assigned through the Coordinated Access & Assessment (CAA) process and not by the developer directly.

Some community members expressed concerns about the height of 13 storeys and the Floor Space Ratio (FSR). The application proposes an FSR of 5.5:1, which exceeds the maximum density permitted in the Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP) B-2 zone, which permits a maximum density of 4.5:1 with an amenity bonus. The FSR used for this application has raised some confusion as to why the applicant used the Official Community Plan (OCP) maximum density of 5:1 with an amenity bonus instead of DCAP's more recently approved 4.5:1 FSR with an amenity bonus. The retention of the historical facades was provided as one rationale for the increased FSR. However, facadism is not aligned with the best practices and expectations of heritage restoration or adaptive reuse. No heritage statement of significance was presented, and this property is



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currently not designated or registered by the City of Victoria; hence, the heritage value of preserving the facade instead of providing other community benefits or amenities is questionable. The provision of 10% of units as affordable was also provided as a rationale for the increased FSR. However, see above for our recommendations to strengthen the currently lacklustre affordability measures.

The increased density has also raised concerns about the number of proposed parking stalls. The City of Victoria's parking bylaw requires 74 parking stalls for a development with 92 units, not including visitor parking. The current application proposes three below-grade parking stalls to be shared between visitors, carshare, and service vehicles, and zero parking stalls for the 92 residential units. Even though the applicant intends to attract car-free tenants with Modo memberships, ample bike parking, and a high bike and walk score, some community members expressed concern that there will be increased demand for the already limited availability of street parking. Including transit passes or discounts for tenants in addition to the Modo memberships may further increase the chance that tenants will truly be car-free.

North Park Manor, a 158-unit seniors housing building for adults aged 55+ with low income, is located directly beside the proposed development. Several residents at North Park Manor expressed concern about noise impacts associated with the construction period and the future residents. Some residents are apprehensive about the noise implications of balconies and potentially younger tenants and concerned about how noise complaints will be handled by Victoria Police and/or property management companies who, in their experience, do not prioritize noise complaints. They also expressed how important sunlight is for their mental and physical well-being and are worried about shading in their units. They have concerns that the shadow studies provided are not accurate. Tenants primarily expressed this at North Park Manor living on the south side, which would be closest to the associated noise and most impacted by the shadowing. The addition of balconies in the revised design also raised concerns from these adjacent residents about the fear that their privacy would be reduced. The proposed building design does not comply with the tower separation requirements as per design guidelines and regulations.

Concerns about shading were also highlighted by community members who live in the 800 block of North Park and Fisgard, who note that there is a nature corridor of trees, native birds and animals that will be negatively impacted by increased shade (see photos in the chart below).

This application was carefully considered, as we recognize the importance of increasing the provision of new and additional rental housing given the housing crisis. However, we also carefully listened and weighted community feedback and concerns from affordability, urban design, livability, neighbourhood context, and heritage value perspectives. These concerns have not been



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adequately addressed in the current version of the proposed application. Many community members supported the first design and felt it integrated the heritage features of the Abbey while providing a unique building facade to the neighbourhood. We encourage the City and applicant to work together to revise the design to address the concerns raised by the community and outlined in this letter.

Comments and Concerns Raised by the Public Online

October 7th - November 10th, 2022

Date	Position	Comments
Oct-7-2022, Nov-24, 2022 <i>Resident, 800 block North Park Street</i>	Oppose	<p>Am I reading that ARYZE is trying to add three more floors to the development at the Abbey? As a 4 story neighbour of that site, it's deeply concerning. We don't want to be dwarfed by a massive building. That building is right where the sun's path goes for this area. Our little building would be shadowed with this add-on.</p> <hr/> <p>The people on our block would like it to be acknowledged that a nature corridor of trees, native birds and animals exists between neighbours on our block of 800 North Park/Fisgard and we are concerned about shading from a taller building. We appreciated the clear notes about where the sun would travel. We would still like it noted that most of the block is 4-6 stories, I see that being lost in importance.</p> <p>Secondly, this area needs green space. So if the density is to be approved, we would like to know that plans to provide publicly accessible green space for all the new residents is being factored in.</p> <p>I see the yellow can building on fisgard as an excellent opportunity for the city to purchase land and turn it into greenspace aimed at providing a close place to go for the seniors and kids that live here. They currently play in parking lots and sit on the sidewalk curbs to visit.</p> <p>(black blob 1702 Quadra proposed building)</p>




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<p>Oct-19-2022</p> <p><i>Resident, 800 block North Park Street</i></p>	Oppose	<p>There is no parking offered and no visitor parking. This location is one of the worst for traffic and parking. There are several new high-rise condominiums in the area; do we really need another one? The affordable rent being suggested is not "affordable". It is "market value," which is a totally different option.</p>
<p>Oct-23-2022</p> <p><i>Resident, 900 block North Park Street</i></p>	Unsure	<p>Looking at the coloured model of the final building, it seems as if there might be some colour in the massive white complex plunked on top of the brick below, but it doesn't appear to be enough to tie the two together. Unless it's just not well-defined enough in what I saw, it's a very jarring contrast.</p>
<p>Oct-25-2022</p> <p><i>Resident (no address provided)</i></p>	Support	<p>Really happy to see high density, and height fits in well next to North Park Manor (which is, I think, 16 or 17 stories) and the Cormorant building. It would be next to existing buildings of similar or taller heights. I did love the aesthetics of the original design but added units as a bonus. The original design was striking, and it's too bad that the redesign caused delays and added costs, especially considering the housing crisis. I would like to see the city improve the intersection at Quadra and Fisgard in front of this building; the current curb cut is not very accessible and is very cramped for space. I would also like to see a crosswalk at North Park and Quadra to improve pedestrian safety for new and current residents as this part of Quadra St densifies. Overall a lovely addition to the neighbourhood.</p>

Oct-29-2022 <i>Resident 900 block North Park Street</i>	Support	While I support the idea of this proposal, the most recent renderings show a building out of character with the North Park neighbourhood. The design needs to be rethought.
Oct-31-2022 <i>Resident, 800 block North Park</i>	Oppose	I have a great concern re: the proposed development at the corner of Quadra and Fisgard. That particular city block already has a very high density of residents, especially seniors. We feel the size of the proposed development is much too large. Also, questions are being asked as to why a ten-story proposal (which in itself is too high) has suddenly changed to twelve stories.
Nov 5-24, 2022 <i>Sent by one resident on behalf of several residents at North Park Manor (875 North Park), Fisgard House (844 Fisgard), Harrogate House (832 Fisgard), and the Sandpiper (1630 Quadra)</i>	Oppose	<p>November 5, 2022</p> <p>Noise will include barking dogs and rooftop and balcony parties, and it will produce an echo effect because two towers would face each other, compounding the noise. It is worth remembering that the tower will be just across from North Park Manor's lawn, so a few yards away. It will block all the sun because the broad side of the tower will be parallel to our building. This is about the quality of our lives, and the changes will be permanent. This is our last place to live. We have nowhere else to go. Many seniors here have mental and/or physical disabilities, and we are low-income. This is the most common age group for cancer diagnoses, and we have many deaths here; that's just old age. Noise-and not being able to escape it-is too much when one is not well.</p> <p>We live in small suites with only one window, except for end units which have small narrow windows that don't open. If you walk right up to our fence, you will see that at least 60 elderly peoples' only source of light and ventilation comes from that one window, which will directly face the proposed tower units, some 50 of them.</p> <p>What you can't see from the street, (and what is not seen in any of the architect's/developer's drawings submitted to the city) is where the Fisgard building is located. It is facing our suites as well, a few feet away. In order to get privacy, seniors keep their curtains closed, but it is at the expense of the only light they get.</p>



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	<p>The new build will completely close us in, create Urban Canyon Effect, claustrophobic buildings on all sides, create a dead air space where fumes from the traffic remain. In a canyon, sound echoes, and smells from the inevitable, occasional guy on the balcony smoking weed will not be whisked away by the wind that gets blocked by this huge edifice.</p> <p>Our area is, as noted by the developer, "no stranger to density". That is not a reason to aggressively increase an already dense area, that is a reason not to. We already have towers all around. To increase the sense of claustrophobia, to block out the sky, light, airflow, this is not how anyone wants to live.</p> <hr/> <p>November 5, 2022</p> <p>The information about affordability is contained in the Aryze letter to the Mayor and Council. In the initial zoom meeting, the developer did say 30% of total income. They changed this later, and it will mean much higher rents. This will attract a whole different demographic: single young people with money, and this will be their temporary home until something better comes along. It will not house average income-earners and this is the very demographic at risk.</p> <p>Again, this is what happened in Vancouver. A large number of towers have been built there in the last 5 years, and in every area. The new rentals are attracting transient, young high-income earners from wealthy backgrounds and the condos for sale are mostly owned by investors.</p> <p>An entire village of them was recently built in Vancouver. My sister went to see the completed village and spoke to some of the new renters. She was told they have many units available, that they are actually looking for renters, at such a high price that many remain empty.</p> <p>It's yet another issue, and was addressed a while ago in a letter to the editor of a local newspaper. The writer had investigated various new builds downtown, noticed how high the rents were, and wondered how this would solve our housing crisis, as every one of them was very unaffordable.</p>
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	<p>We at North Park Manor have gathered many opinions which we have attempted to distill in point form for ease. We have still not reached even half the tenants here due to time constraints and the fact that there are so many of us. However, please accept what we have so far.</p> <hr/> <p>November 19, 2022</p> <p>Just briefly, a few neighbours who attended the Aryze zoom meeting Oct 25 had mentioned their confusion about the meeting feedback, as it was full of comments about building design. Having just received the meeting notes, I see what they mean.</p> <p>We are a community of 200 low-income elderly people who will be directly impacted by the Aryze proposal. There are still many who may be shut-ins who are unaware that a 13 storey tower will erase all privacy from the only window they look out from, block most of the day's sunlight, create noise from neighbouring balconies that will echo off the two buildings, create Urban Canyon Effect, intensify air pollution, impede air flow, and add barking dogs to the mix.</p> <p>For all this, you would think, at least it will be much-needed affordable rents, yes? No, actually these will be luxury rentals. It is strange to read all these questions about the design of a building during a housing crisis, when most Victorians are saying the problem is affordability, but perhaps many at the zoom meeting were from elsewhere?</p> <p>If just putting concrete towers up all over downtown was enough to solve the housing crisis, then Vancouver would by now be affordable, so clearly the issue is not just a matter of supply and demand. In fact, many newly-built rental towers remain half-empty there rather than lower the rent to fill the suites. Aryze went from saying rent would be 30% of income to now saying market rates would be charged, which will mean around \$2,600 for a one bedroom or studio. Remember that these are only today's prices, so the cost will be more by the time it's built. They will be luxury rentals with added amenities that you simply do not include if the aim is affordability.</p>
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	<p>All this before we even talk about the gentrification of North Park at the expense of those on low and average incomes. I am concerned not just about what this proposal will do to negatively impact our neighbourhood with the aggressive over-densification of a tiny plot of land. I actually care about housing for young people and it's why I helped in two campaigns but if it's not affordable, then exactly who are we housing? Thanks for reading this. Let's build a Victoria, not another Vancouver.</p> <hr/> <p>November 24, 2022</p> <p>We at North Park/Fisgard seniors unanimously oppose the proposal at 1708 Quadra for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unaffordable high-end rental will displace low income tenants from their homes. This may create more homeless as they struggle to find affordable rents elsewhere. This is gentrification on its face.• Noise from parties on balconies, dogs barking, will echo off the two towers because they would be facing each other. Noise gets louder as a result, voices carry.• Many seniors are not well, have chronic illnesses. This is our last place of residence. Seniors who are sick want quiet above all.• Air pollution: this tower would mean 3 buildings all facing inward to form Urban Canyon Effect-concentrating fumes from heavy traffic exhaust which gets trapped in the courtyard. The tower would block our major source of airflow. There would be no more breeze coming through.• Permanent problems for low income seniors, temporary solutions for whom? Who are we housing? This will be temporary accommodation for young wealthy transients until they can find a better neighbourhood. We feel this is the case because it is the upper income earners who will not tolerate being around the unhoused in our area for very long. We have made our peace with the situation. We doubt they will• Huge problem with dog feces on sidewalks already.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People with money for high-end rentals are going to have cars. It is overwhelmingly low income people who don't drive. We will end up with the new residents vying for parking spaces in an area where parking is extremely difficult already.• No ability to realistically enforce bylaws around noise from drunken partiers, smoking pot, using e-cigarettes on balconies or out of windows. These things happen at night when most are asleep. Again, the canyon will cause smoke to linger due to a lack of airflow.• Dogs barking. The reality is there are many irresponsible dog owners. In a caluc meeting, one even asked if dogs could do their business on the roof dog run. This is an individual who doesn't want to walk his dog, clearly. Should only allow cats for this and so many other reasons.• For most tenants who face south, all sunshine will be blocked except for a half hour sliver in the morning. (On the 8th floor, experiments were done with tape on the window to see where the sun lands during the day in two different seasons. This proved the shading studies done by the developer were incorrect.)• Putting large numbers of young people who want lively parties next to large numbers of seniors who want quiet makes little sense in the real world. (Small numbers change this dynamic drastically ie; 10 seniors live well with 10 young people.)• The pictures submitted by the developer falsely show the building at a greater distance from ours; it will be much closer, and the taller a building is, the closer it seems to be.• This tower would also block out the sky completely for many tenants because there is already a building facing some suites a few yards away.• Creating indoor social hubs actually keeps people off the streets and inside more often. We need the opposite: give people positive reasons to get outside, hang out downtown, buy coffee. Again, adding indoor amenities makes rents less affordable, too.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dog-run on the roof-more noise. Dogs need to go outside for walks, this creates chance encounters, it is a mistake to create an incentive to be lazy pet owners and just take the dog for his business on the roof astroturf.• Wealthy renters bring prices up, suddenly higher end stores pop up and replace cheaper stores. This is another result of gentrification.• Towers use far more resources to heat and cool the building, more noise from cheap rooftop cooling systems. High rise towers cost more to operate for this reason, making them more unaffordable.• If all this disruption results in seriously affordable housing, then it might almost be worth it, but it's not. Vancouver has many empty rental towers, they are too expensive so they remain empty or more often are used as Airbnbs.• These new towers are cheaply built, without exception. This means noise transfer from one suite to another, will be a regular source of conflict among neighbours. Older buildings tend to be well-insulated compared with newer builds. (See Toronto condo problems with noise issues.)• Pub Med studies on quality of life issues for high rise dwellers, tendency to have weaker social ties, affecting health (Kearns et al 2012)• North Park does not want to be gentrified. Upper income neighbours cost too much. Sorry.• We need to consider long-term benefit before short-term financial gain.• References to "community feedback" need to be defined more specifically. Most "community" questions and comments are not coming from people who live anywhere near 1702 Quadra or adjacent to the site. It's possible that some input is coming from people living in another city, so it's important to identify where the input is coming from.• If they are going to increase the building height, I am more concerned about parking. People in some of these units are going to have cars and some of their guests will too. We have a shortage of parking Downtown, and this is impacting the ability of businesses to operate.
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		<hr/> November 24, 2022 One more point, which may be of interest to council: I forgot to leave this quote from Lisa Helps, who opposed a tower proposal for 937 View Street because: "the height would have detrimental impacts on shadowing, skyline view, and sunlight access, exacerbated by being beside an existing tower." Privacy concerns were noted as well. Well gee, that sounds a lot like our problems, too!
Nov-9-2022 <i>Resident 900 block North Park Street</i>	Support	The design will significantly improve the corridor and bring in needed rental units.
Nov-9-2022 <i>Resident 700 block Herald Street</i>	Support	Strongly preferred first design over second. This site is a perfect location for density and height. We need more rentals like this.
Nov-9-2022 <i>Business owner, 900 block Mason Street</i>	Oppose	I attended an information session held by the Developer on this project. I was fully in support of their original plans. I understand that they have now increased the height of the proposed building. I am concerned about the increase in height. The building is in a spot where I do not want it to dwarf the churches and I think the original height was a good balance of providing new housing units and keeping to a building size that works in that location. I strongly oppose the developers increased height. But I would support the original submission.
Nov-10-2022 <i>Resident, 300 block Michigan Street</i>	Oppose	I was the Chair of the North Park CALUC and, until recently, a long-time resident of North Park when this proposal by Aryze was first presented. I, and several others who attended the first and second meetings with Aryze, much prefer the first design proposed for the Abbey site. The proposed design is by a firm that Architectural Digest called one of Canada's best contemporary architectural firms. I like how the first design steps back from the



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		<p>corner, acknowledging the original building by repeating the diagonal corner cut of its heritage façade, and the simple yet elegant geometric design acts as a stage curtain or backdrop to showcase, rather than overwhelm, the heritage façade. The design is somewhat similar to the building going up on the corner of Vancouver and Johnson, where the building steps back from the chapel that Di Castri designed and then leans over it as if offering protection. The design approved or recommended for the Abbey site by the ADP looks like an afterthought, a standard building with some questionable colouring plunked down on the site with no reference to, or acknowledgement of, the heritage façade. A building that could have been built just about anywhere.</p>
<p>Nov-24-2022</p> <p><i>Resident, 300 metres from site</i></p>	<p>Support</p>	<p>I am writing in support of rental housing at 1702 Quadra St. I live a block from the development and walk past the site daily.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I strongly prefer the original design and would like to see beautiful modern architecture in our neighbourhood. • I am frustrated that city staff demanded a redesign leading to an inferior design: the original architecture was incredible. • I am concerned about lack of affordable units in the building • Living close to transit and without a car are a key part of affordability for many people and we need to see affordable units here • Council needs to set an expectation with developers that projects will help increase the stock of truly affordable units in the city • I love that the ground floor of the existing building will be retail - activating the street and providing opportunities for local businesses is awesome. • We are in a housing crisis and rental units are desperately needed. • While the addition is certainly taller than the current two story building, it will sit between the 16-story tall North Park Manor and the 12-storey Sandpiper

		<p>building. It would hardly be an anomaly in this location and would fit in very well in the gap between The Sandpiper and North Park Manor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I am pleased that walkable and bikeable housing is being built. Many people do not drive and they deserve to have housing options that don't require them to subsidize parking spaces. The building is also directly on the #6 bus route: the best and most frequent bus route in the CRD. With a Walk Score of 98/100 I cannot think of a better place to provide housing for those of us who make the environmental decision to not drive, or who cannot drive due to age, disability, or cost.• I personally would support a taller building/increased density above what is currently being proposed for this site. Again, I love the original design and would be happy to see it even taller, especially as it is adjacent to a 16-story tower.• I am not concerned about setbacks from the existing brick building.• I would like to see affordability and sustainability prioritized.• Please approve these 92 units of housing. Young people, middle-aged people, and seniors are all seeking housing. I want new neighbours. I am tired of friends and family leaving Victoria because they cannot find housing. I am sad to see seniors struggling to find a place to live. They deserve to have homes in walkable and affordable neighbourhoods.• I am frustrated to hear of opposition to the project from people who themselves live in adjacent multi-unit towers. Buildings like North Park Manor are integral to the neighbourhood. The existing North Park Manor and Sandpiper buildings do create a lot of shade and block views. It also provides significant housing for seniors. Let's extend the acceptance of apartment blocks like this to new builds as well.
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- Regarding shading: with climate change and recent unbearable heat waves, the shady sidewalk beside The Sandpiper building is a welcome respite from the heat.
- Regarding greenspace: The original design had a planted roof which I much preferred. Although 1702 Quadra doesn't have physical space to add public greenspace, the city should look at improving the small boulevard in front of the site. Bushes could be removed to create a tiny park. Additionally, the North Park Manor development included public greenspace which has now been fenced off. Is it possible for this public amenity to be re-opened?
- Lastly, the city needs to immediately improve the sidewalk at Quadra and Fisgard. The current design pushes people using curb cuts (e.g. babies in strollers, wheelchair users) into traffic. It's an awful corner for pedestrians and should have been upgraded many years ago. In front of The Abbey, the North-South crosswalk is blocked by a curb, grassy area, and telephone pole (weird!) and has no useable curb cut at all. The East-West crosswalk isn't much better. This should be immediately fixed.





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Summary of CALUC Meeting

North Park Neighbourhood Association
October 2022 CALUC Meeting

DATE: Tuesday, October 25th, 2022
TIME: 6:30 pm
LOCATION: Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9333505704>
Meeting ID: 933 350 5704
One tap mobile +15873281099,,9333505704# Canada

6:30: Welcome + Territorial Acknowledgement

Our neighbourhood association acknowledges that we gather here today as visitors on the traditional territory of the Lekwungen peoples, the Esquimalt and Songhees nations.

Agenda:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kCZxju6IMGAhaX8IVU93gVPQDK59tUBk/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=110446812842893496646&rtpof=true&sd=true>

Code of Conduct:

<https://npna.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/NPNA-Bylaws-Updated-March-29-2021.pdf>

Attendance (Total: 39)

Board members present: Kate Fillion

Guests: Jennifer Kay (Townsquare Consulting), Thomas Bevan (BC Housing), Julie Brown (D'Ambrosio Architecture and Urbanism), Kathy Springer (Townsquare Consulting), Vinit Jain (Aryze Developments), 5468796 Architecture (Aryze Development), Melanie Ransome (Aryze Developments), Julian (Aryze Developments), Chris Quigley (Aryze Developments)

Attendees: Virginia, Jenny Farkas, Penny Bond, Harold Stanley, Jennifer, Neal Yonson, Lorna Rennie, Ann Milligan Barry, Kim Tang, Unknown name, Marc, Amy, Sasa Radulovia, Bharat Chadramouli, Doug Beckette, Gregory Owwn, Mel, Robert Starkey, Jocelyn, Owner, "C", Linda Holmen, Chris, Kelsey MacDougall, Jack, Olivia M, Joanna

NPNA Representatives: Sarah Murry (Executive Director), Courtenay Miller (Land Use Planning Advisor), Ammar Mahimwalla (Land Use Chair)



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6:30 - 6:45: 2501 Blanshard Street – Evergreen Terrace

Jennifer Kay, TownSquare

Thomas Bevan, Evergreen Terrace Development Manager (BC Housing)

Julie Brown, D'Ambrosio Architecture and Urbanism

Project Recap:

BC Housing has started a two-year study into redeveloping a 175-unit complex that provides low-income housing at 2501 Blanshard Street in the Hillside-Quadra neighbourhood bordering North Park. See BC Housing's Let's Talk page about the site here:

<https://letstalkhousingbc.ca/victoria-evergreen-terrace>

Process Stage:

BC Housing is starting its multi-year planning process, focusing first on engaging with the existing tenants at Evergreen Terrace and family members at Spaken House. They are currently completing comprehensive stakeholder engagement and community input before the planning process.

BC Housing Presentation:

- This development is seen as an opportunity to demonstrate reconciliation in action
- Redevelopment process:
 - Comprehensive Planning Process
 - Phase 1 - Feasibility Analysis
 - The first stage is 12 months, and then they will be moving into an 18-24 planning process
- Engagement overview:
 - First Nations
 - Tenants
 - Community
- Vision: Evergreen Terrace is a diverse, accessible, and sustainable mixed-incomes neighbourhood that provides a range of guiding principles
- Existing - 195 units
- Future - 195 existing units plus additional 400-500 net new affordable units plus additional near/below/at market-rate housing units and community spaces
- Opportunity to improve existing connections to the neighbourhood from Kings, Bay and Dowler
- Connections and access
 - Accessible pickup and drop off
 - Accessible parking



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- Circular walking and cycling route
 - Separated from traffic, Bay and Blanshard walking path
- Visible Connection to the Streets
 - Grounded-oriented units
 - Entrances and exits located along main routes
 - Non-residential uses in key locations
- Semi-private circulation
 - Clearly defined
 - Safe and secure
 - Landscaping to transition the housing
- Resident-only open space
 - Will be in courtyards between buildings and on rooftops
 - Private patios, balconies, and terraces
- Future open spaces for everyone
- Next steps
 - October - December
 - Stakeholder engagement activities
 - Conceptual plans
- Question
 - Email: EvergreenTerrace_Redev@bchousing.org
 - www.letstalkhousingbc.ca/victoria-evergreen-terrace

Discussion:

- Would you consider the integration of more green space in the area?
 - BC Housing wants to integrate greater green space, and they are having those conversations currently

6:45: 1702 Quadra Street – The Abbey

Project Recap:

The City is considering a Rezoning application to retain the existing two-storey building elevations and construct an 13-storey building consisting of ground floor commercial and residential above and approximately 92 rental dwelling units. See the project details and submit comments on the Development Tracker here:

<https://tender.victoria.ca/WebApps/OurCity/Prospero/Details.aspx?folderNumber=CLC00393>

Process Stage:



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The revised submission from Aryze is being recirculated for the City of Victoria's review as of April 20th, 2022. When the City reviews the application, the next step in the process will require Aryze to make any further revisions based on the City's comments.

Aryze Presentation:

- Project team: Aryze Developments, 546 Architecture, and Biophillia Design Collective
- Site location
 - Corner of Quadra and Fisgard, near restaurants and resources
 - Ideal location for increased housing options and the enhancement of the 15-minute city
- Existing building: Two-storey residential building
- Policy context
 - Within the height requirements of the [City of Victoria Official Community Plan \(OCP\)](#)
 - Is located in the Urban Core - Residential in the OCP
- Heritage research
 - The Abbey building was commissioned in 1911, and there have been significant improvements to the building. The use of the building has changed from commercial to residential
 - Aryze wanted to improve the heritage building on site by keeping the exterior walls of the buildings and renewing as much as feasible
 - Proposed heritage designation of a hybrid facade
- The previous proposal (**previous design - left & new design - right**)

New Proposal [comparison]



- What we heard
 - Bigger units, accessible units, building separation and size
 - Came up with a new and improved design to address the comments raised
- New proposal
 - Working for a more combined version of public space on the rooftop
 - New massing is 12 storeys with a height of 42 meters
 - Shadow study on how the shadow has changed but have not changed greatly with the additional height
 - The bulk of the design is in the grade of the building and the liveliness of the street with the heritage revitalization
- Transportation
 - Walk Score - 95 score
 - Bike Score - 97 score
 - 8 Modo care shares within 500 meters of the site
 - Offers 3 below-grade parking stalls between moto and care share vehicles
 - Central location of the building and lease. Built for residents with a car-lite lifestyle
- Affordability
 - Purpose-built market rental



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- 9 rental units will be offered at below market value, and the type of units will be mixed
- Project Pillars
 - Efficient use of land - Compact development
 - Reduce fossil fuels dependence - Multi modal connectivity and mobility
 - Preservation of - Culture and heritage
 - Diverse housing - Rental, affordable, secure, inclusionary
- Community benefits
 - Rental housing
 - New commercial space
 - Heritage preservation
 - Architecture
- Development timeline
 - Pre-design consultation
 - Design development
 - Rezoning/DP application
 - Municipal staff review
 - Advisory design panel
 - Committee of the Whole (COTW)
 - Public Hearing
 - Building Permit
 - Building construction
 - Tenant occupancy

Discussion:

- Residents in North Park manor feel that they have not been engaged with properly and this is the first time they have heard about this project
 - Engagement page:
<https://engage.victoria.ca/1702-quadra-street-and-862-fisgard-street>
 - Limitation around technology - requests to meet in person
 - Can contact: community@aryze.ca
 - Aryze sent out postcards, invitations, etc. to the building
 - Aryze team is disappointed that they are not aware of the project and are available to meet in person to go over any aspects of the project moving forward
- Have you considered below market commercial as it is challenging to find affordable commercial spaces.
 - The space allocated to commercial units is allocated along Quadra Street



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- Have not thought about affordable commercial space but are interested in considering and working with tenants who want to use that space
 - Priority is to find a local business and make that space work for their needs
- It does not seem like the design of the buildings is integrated with the surrounding buildings and heritage
 - Moved away from brick and concrete to provide a contrast between the historic structure and the church
 - The nature of the construction is very different
 - Aesthetic and material changes are a reason of the design change
 - Mostly due to the requirements of the surrounding site
- Does not understand why there is a barrier to greater affordability
 - A project consists of so many facets including construction costs, municipal approvals, etc.
 - It is a piece that is included in the process in a limited manner
 - Concrete buildings are more expensive compared to wood frame
- Thought the original design was beautiful and looks like it belongs. Can you help me understand the new design, or is this a sad scenario in which the community is pushing you, and the design of the building is not as beautiful as you want it?
 - A lot has to do with push back and they are still testing the design
 - The robustness of the design was lost between the two iterations
 - The original designs were not going to be accepted by the planning department if they were to move forward
- Question regarding the shadow study. The shadows cover a nature corridor, and plants have been grown in these areas for the past decade. Can you explain the shadow study further?
 - The shadow on the figure is the most extreme scenario
 - The sun as it moves, the shadow moves, and it gets shorter as it becomes closer to June
 - It is only between 9:00 am -10:00 am that the shadow will be on their building affecting the nature corridor
- Question around the noise. BC Housing has had to reface the building near my house over the past year, and the noise was awful. I was also wondering if construction noise was a part of the research.
 - Unusual to have that bad of sound for a new construction site
 - The demolition will be done in a different fashion as they will be preserving the existing structure
 - The new construction does not have that kind of noise, but it does have some noise associated with it



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- What was the goal from the City to ask for the current building setbacks?
 - It had to do with the guidelines that have not been yet adopted for Downtown Victoria
 - There is a certain distance that this building had to be from the surrounding structures
 - Primary concern was the separation from the existing buildings
- People really liked the simplicity and elements of the original designs. Really disappointed with what the City and Advisory Design Panel did to this building
 - There are so many moving pieces, and Aryze has to move with the constraints and work with the city's requirements
 - The original proposal came with its own set of challenges. The design is toned down due to the product of working within the constraints of multiple moving parts that the city requests
 - I still feel that the project is very functional and will deliver to the need for housing in the community
 - Changing the design constantly is more expensive
- There are a significant number of seniors in North Park, was there ever a thought to reserve some of these units for seniors housing?
 - There are currently no reserved units for seniors, but they are considering the demographic of the area
 - The project is proposing 11 adaptable units and one fully accessible unit
- I was wondering why the rooftop greenery was taken out and if there was any way to reintegrate it back into the design?
 - Greenery on top of the roof has to do with the rooftop balcony, and they could not include it in the new design.
 - Looking at greening some of the bicycle storage and plants climbing up the screen of the building.
- What is the anticipated timeline for the project?
 - There will be 18-24 months of construction
- What is the current status of the approval process?
 - After this, they submit for the Development Permit (DP), and it gets approved by the Advisory Design Panel. The project will then moves to the Committee of the Whole (COTW) and then to a building permit
 - Construction is anticipated to start early 2024
 - In the pre-design consultation and design development stage right now
- In consideration of the design did the Aryze team consider just sliming the building from the original design? Would slimming the original design and going taller be a compromise to keep the original design?



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- Considering the feedback that has been coming, it has been challenging to meet the balance between new and old designs with these setback requirements
- There is basically no parking in this design. Quadra and Fisgard are not great biking areas. I was wondering if the city has plans to make the bike lanes safer for pedestrians surrounding the building.
 - This would be a question to the City, the Aryze team is not aware of any feature bike lanes along Quadra and Fisgard
 - There are other streets near-dedicated bike lanes
 - This project is, however, updating the corner at Quadra and Fisgard and extending the sidewalks, making it more of a pedestrian-friendly environment
 - To widen the sidewalk, Aryze has to reduce the greenspace and move the tree and relocating the power pole and traffic lights
- To Aryze's knowledge, do you have any plans to improve the streetscape with this development?
 - Not that they know of, but there is a bus stop North of the site and Aryze has worked with Bc Transit to improve that bus stop and add a shelter
 - The sidewalk and curb work is all that they know about at this time

Chat Comments

- Really no one in North Park Manor was able to attend the first zoom meeting. We are the people who will be directly impacted directly by this tower. Many seniors do not have computers. We have not been given a chance to comment via surveys etc., so where is the feedback coming from? We would like to have an in-person meeting if possible.
 - There are 200 plus seniors living in North Park. More in Fisgard and the next building. You don't put partying young people right next to that situation.
 - If you keep the original design, could we make a case for the city to purchase the yellow cab building and turn it into a public access park space that all the people on the block could use?
- "Anonymous Comments"
 - I live at North Park Manor and never heard anything about this project until a couple of months ago.
 - If this project is built, I will be in shadow from Noon onward.
 - 'Could you arrange an in-person meeting in the North Park area so we can see models of the project and shadow maps?
- Really happy to see high density, and height fits in well next to North Park Manor (which is, I think, 16 or 17 stories) and the Cormorant building. It would be next to existing buildings of similar or taller heights. I did love the aesthetics of the original design but added units as a bonus. The original design was striking, and it's too bad that the



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redesign caused delays and added costs, especially considering the housing crisis. Would like to see the city improve the intersection at Quadra and Fisgard in front of this building; the current curb cut is not very accessible and is very cramped for space. Would also like to see a crosswalk at North Park and Quadra to improve pedestrian safety for new and current residents as this part of Quadra St densifies. Overall a lovely addition to the neighbourhood.

- I am in Prince George, BC and appreciate the online meeting and communication. thank you. I was informed of the previous meeting as well. Communication has been good.
 - I am not thrilled with the stick-out balconies.
- I attended the original pre-CALUC meetings, and myself and others really liked the original design with its simple elegance that didn't detract from the original Abbey façade or overwhelm the church at the corner. The current design is bland and too busy and looks out of place.
- What goal was the city trying to accomplish by asking for private outdoor space, rather than communal space, or even better, investing in more public outdoor space?
- The original plan with lower setbacks was a better design.
- The original design showed what a firm considered by Architectural Digest as "one of the leaders in contemporary architecture in Canada" could do. The second design shows how the City can destroy inspiration and originality.
- Can't you apply for a variance to those setbacks in favour of a more beautiful building?
- I want this Cracker Jack architect team to find a better middle ground between these two designs
- I attended the first CALUC meeting and greatly appreciated the original design. This new iteration is still a great project and will undoubtedly bring dynamism to this street corner. I appreciate the improved livability of units, live/work units on Fisgard, the commercial space on Quadra and the generous bike parking for a car-lite lifestyle.
- The original proposal with the communal rooftop would have been amazing and created more possibilities to socialize for residents (barbecue, gardening, etc.). The individual protruding balconies of the new proposal feel exposed and are not as conducive to socialization.
 - The original design was also more respectful/deferential to the historic building. I feel like the recessed balconies of the original design would have been preferable.
- Our building looked at installing EV charging stations, but we would have had to replace our entire building's electrical panel, and it wasn't feasible. I appreciate the building being advertised as there is no parking in the building.



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- The city is upgrading the crosswalks at Caledonia and Quadra, but I was told that there were no plans for much more at this time. I suggested a marked crosswalk for bikes and those with mobility issues at Fisgard and Quadra and North Park and Quadra.

Sincerely,

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