

Dec 19, 2022

Mayor and Council  
City of Victoria  
1 Centennial Square Victoria, BC  
V8W 2S8

**Re: Revised Small Lot Rezoning and Development Permit Application for 3145 Balfour Ave.**

Dear Mayor and Council,

With the support from neighbours, The Burnside Gorge Land Committee, City of Victoria Staff I'm thrilled to resubmit my revisions for the Rezoning and Development of my property at 3145 Balfour Avenue.

My property is a large 11571.20sq ft lot which is currently Zoned R1-B-Single Family, in the Traditional Residential part of the Burnside Gorge Sub Neighbourhood. The location of the property is located within walking distance to parks, schools, numerous services and amenities as well as near major public transportation, walking and biking corridors.

My project entails Rezoning the front portion of my property from an R1-B to an R1-S2 lot, to accommodate an R1-B panhandle lot in the rear yard so that I can build our new single-family home with a purpose-built suite.

The existing house is currently ONLY occupied by myself and my children and will be preserved.

Previously, a total of 17 residences were petitioned. With 16 in support of my project and one that didn't provide a response. A letter from the Burnside Gorge Land Use Committee (BGLUC) who also supports my proposal was provided dated March 19, 2021.

Following careful review of the staff summary letter dated May 11, 2021. My proposal has benefited from valuable City staff input to which all technical requirements, as well as suggestions made by City staff, have been taken into consideration and corrected/updated and/or implemented where possible and have been incorporated throughout.

My proposal is consistent with the Official Community Plan, Burnside Gorge Neighbourhood Plan and Small Lot Housing Policy in several ways including not tearing down the existing structure, being sensitive to neighbours, increasing the supply of

detached homes in the area, and revitalizing neighbourhood by allowing sensitive infill housing which can be seen with other small lot subdivisions completed in the past, a few houses up behind me on Carroll Street, and by creating one additional single-family dwelling and maximizing the use of a limited supply of land is a small, yet important contribution to increase the City's much needed housing and rental stock.

As the neighbourhood is comprised of various architectural designs, massing, heights, and heritage styles, the existing house is already a complementary "fit" within the neighbourhood and adjoining properties and aligns the streetscape along Balfour Ave. The existing house on the small lot (Lot A) is a classic bungalow style two story, 3-bedroom house with stucco and cedar siding and is of modest scale and consistent with roof shape, form, height and massing within the neighborhood, with a proposed new lot area of 380.95sqm (4100.51 sq ft). Existing sewer and drain connections to (Lot A) were tested and will be replaced and infrastructure upgraded as needed.

The proposed new ground-oriented one-story dwelling was designed by the talented team at Victoria Design Group to meet our family's needs and keep the characteristics of the new dwelling consistent to what you see within the neighbourhood, combining the look and feel of the existing house including overall scale, roof lines, proportion of glazing with traditional features and pleasing details like concrete fiber board shingles and stone veneer finished post. It will also include and comply with the BC Step 3 Energy Code and include a 2-bedroom suite with private greenspace and low-glare outdoor lighting above the suite entry door and walkway, to enhance security and help identify the entrance to the suite.

To harmonize both the existing and our new proposed home, the existing house will benefit from minor exterior alterations (e.g. new window trimmings around the house and panel accents to the front windows, belly band, front guard rail, a new window at the front to allow for natural light into the basement, concrete parging, new gutters, and a fresh new paint job. The deck and workshop at the back will be removed and rebuilt to a smaller scale and finished with aluminum railings allowing access from the top floor of the house down to an upgraded green space and patio at the back of the house. The yard will be enclosed by cedar fence along the rear North and South side to provide privacy to the neighbours. The existing house will also be updated with a heat pump to replace the old oil furnace which is located within the house in the garage area. As requested by the City Staff "Secondary suite not permitted" been noted on the drawings.

For (Lot B), the panhandle lot, great care has been taken into consideration when it came to the design to respect adjoining neighbours and the natural environment. New services from Balfour Avenue have been implemented and will comply with the City's current bylaws and services requirements and provide new services down to the new house. The proposed parking on site will have an EV ready stall and consist of a concrete ribbon driveway and parking stall, hammerhead turn around which will permit and allow for vehicle forward ingress and egress of the panhandle access. This will reduce the safety concerns when pulling out onto Balfour Avenue. Both the rear lot and panhandle access driveway will meet all the requirements pursuant to Schedule H of the Panhandle Lot Regulations and Parking Bylaw.

My proposed new house and lot will also address for the privacy needs of our existing neighbours located on the North and South sides by purposefully avoiding and minimizing the use of glazing. As the front of the new house on (Lot B) faces the back of the existing house fronting Balfour Ave, the use of horizontal cedar fencing will be installed in the rear yard of the small lot (Lot A) as well as the three-section step down fence for the rear yard on (Lot B) will provide sufficient space to accommodate the privacy of both houses and not obstruct the view that 300 Doric Street has within the side yard. In addition, the preservation of the established row of Cypress Evergreens on the South side of the property as well as a new Emerald Cedar Hedge to be planted along the North side will contribute to a sense of privacy.

There are two trees that are proposed for removal, one Bylaw protected and the other which is of non-protected size. Both trees will be replaced in accordance with the tree replacement guidelines with two White Wonder Dogwood trees. A rain garden is proposed for the rear lot and is one of the sustainable features along with using permeable pavers throughout.

For both lots, a well thought out landscape plan has also been proposed. This plan enhances the natural environment by incorporating native, adaptive, and drought tolerant species throughout. The plan will maximize the green space for both lots and create privacy for neighbouring lots as well as 6 new trees.

My proposal requires 1 Variance to the existing home:

The rear yard setback on the existing home requires a 6.0m setback. A 2.54m variance is being requested to allow for a deck and stairs to be retained at the back of the existing house.

The proposed new dwelling on the rear panhandle lot will **NOT** require any Variances.

Several green building features are proposed:

- Retaining the existing house;
- Location of the property in an area close to transit, bike lanes, schools and urban areas, encouraging reduced use of vehicles and increased use of alternative modes of transportation;
- Meeting the new BC Energy 3 Step Code;
- Heat pumps in both homes. The new house will also include natural gas;
- Permeable Paving areas;
- Energy Star appliances and low flow faucets, showerheads and toilets;
- Native and adaptive species throughout landscape and planting of 6 new trees;
- Rain garden;
- The use of fibre-cement and fibre board building materials for both houses which contain natural materials and are long lasting and durable.



I believe that the modest family oriented residential design as well as the retention of the existing house, careful lot layout, configuration, and landscape plan will provide the sort of sensitive neighbourhood infill and complementary "fit" the City of Victoria values. As well as provide some much-needed housing within this established Burnside Gorge Neighbourhood.

I trust that the revised submissions have fully addressed the comments made by City staff and look forward to your further consideration and ultimate approval of my project so that I can move forward to create a new home for my family.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dana Benson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dana" and last name "Benson" clearly distinguishable.

Dana Benson