



February 8, 2024

#1 Centennial Square
Victoria, B.C.
V8W 1P6

Re: 522 Saint Charles Street, Development Variance Permit and Subdivision Application

Dear Mayor Alto and Members of City Victoria Council,

On behalf of our clients Vanessa and Hans Rodenburgh we are applying for a rezoning and subdivision of their property at 522 Saint Charles Street in order to construct a new single-family home on the proposed subdivided R1 – B lot. The Rodenburghs are offering to designate their Arts and Crafts heritage home should the subdivision be supported and would be investing money into the home to maintain it and increase its longevity. The refurbishment of and upgrades to the existing home will extend the life of the 113 year-old house greatly.

Over the past several years the Rodenburghs and myself Rus Collins have spoken to at least three or more Planners and Heritage Planners at City about the possible development of the property, and heritage designation potential. The City staff have requested and we have engaged the services of a professional Heritage Advisor. The Heritage Advisor agrees that it is a good idea to designate this house (per report from John Dam & Associates). As well, the Rodenburghs have spoken to neighbours in the area regarding the proposal and met with the Rockland Neighbourhood Association. After receiving positive feedback and support, they decided to proceed with the applications to designate the existing house as Heritage and subdivide the property to build a new home for themselves to move into.

The lot is of a very generous size and the existing home was built in 1910. It is currently on the heritage registry, but not designated. The side yard on the south or downhill side, is very large and would easily accommodate the proposed new lot and home, amply meeting the area requirements of the R1 – B zoning bylaw. However, a relaxation of

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76cm (2.49 feet) for lot width is requested (to locate the new property line at the required 1.5M setback from the existing home) for the new lot, and a lot width relaxation of 4.13M is requested for the parent lot proposed Lot B. The rear yard landscape although remaining unchanged for Lot B, will fall a bit short of the bylaw requirement which is 33% for rear yard (proposed is 26.02%) however the overall landscape for Lot B remains higher than required at 45.25% (30 % is the requirement). A variance to allow parking in the front yard of the existing house would also be required.

Additionally, we have been requested by Victoria's Planning and Engineering departments to provide a seven metre road dedication setback from St Charles Street. Close reviews with Planning and Parks Department staff have resulted in a siting that will both ensure the visual prominence of the heritage home, while at the same time not compromise the existing mature trees at the rear of the proposed new house, but this siting would also require variances (supported by City Victoria staff). Apart from those variance requests the new lot and house would meet all other R1-B zoning requirements for area, coverage, heights, etcetera.

The existing large house designed by G.C. Mesher has the owner's suite which the Rodenburghs reside in, plus two rental suites in it; the owners would like to move into the new smaller house when it is ready, retaining the existing three units in the heritage home as part of available rental housing stock for the area. The continued residential use of the house is included in the Statement of Significance as a key element supporting its heritage value.

The house features a number of Craftsman-style elements highlighted in the Statement of Significance but is currently quite hard to view from outside the property. The existing mature landscaping on the property will be retained and preserved as much as possible, but per the suggestion of City Victoria's Heritage Planner, changes to the existing landscape will include special attention to augment the view corridors to the heritage home from the street. Other heritage restoration considerations from the City have been incorporated to our proposed renovation design, such as restoring double columns at the front entry porch, and restoring sash windows in the upper right gable of the front elevation.

We have designed a new home for the proposed new lot (Lot A) that is sympathetic to the design of the existing heritage house, in a traditional form to blend with the current residential fabric of the street. The new home is being designed as accessible for several reasons and is a downsize plan for the Rodenburghs. The floor plan is wheelchair

accessible and has been laid out to accommodate a family. Having the new home be wheelchair accessible is important to the family as the Rodenburgh's daughter is in a wheelchair, plus it makes it suitable for aging in place for the Rodenburghs themselves. Additionally, the Rodenburghs intend to leave the home to their daughter when they are no longer living in it.

Architectural details for the new home include: pitched roof and gables; narrow horizontal siding; vertical board and batten; covered entries with cornice moulding and an articulated façade; square columns with trimmed bases; second storey deck with wooden railing; wood watertable and belly band; curved knee brackets; decorative finials.

Since the January 5 2022 CALUC meeting, the Rodenburghs have met in person with neighbours who had submitted comments to the online portal and discussed any concerns which included debris and fruit from the productive trees on the joint property line, parking considerations, and the footprint of the accessibly-designed floor plan of the home. Some neighbours expressed full support for the applications. The neighbours to the south will not be affected by shadows cast by the new home, and the existing house to the north is set at a higher grade so also will not be shaded by the new house. Ten existing mature trees will be retained (and given care and attention); six new trees will replace the three small trees proposed to be removed, for a net increase in the number of trees.

The new house would be built to Energy Step Code 3 as required, which will achieve high standards of energy conservation and green building targets, including being built solar panel ready and pre-wiring for an electric vehicle charging system in the garage. A consulting arborist has been retained for the project, as well as an energy advisor. The proposal provides an integrated garage in the new home plus additional off-street parking, so there should not be an increased demand for street parking. Paver treatment proposed for the driveway and rear patio, and a stepping-stone walkway instead of impermeable surfaces, will assist with rainwater management. The location is close to neighbourhood centres and community amenities such as schools, employment and recreation opportunities, shopping etcetera, and is well situated for pedestrian and cycling access as well as public transportation routes.

We feel that the proposed new home would contribute visual harmony and texture to the streetscape, as well as provide a desired increase to housing stock, while retaining the existing house. With this proposed modest increase in density, the project will offer

an attractive housing addition, appropriate in scale for the area. The investment into the 1910 dwelling will breathe new life into the character home and enhance its presence in the streetscape and neighbourhood. The Heritage Designation will ensure ongoing maintenance for the home, and that it retains in residential use for years to come.

Thank you for your consideration of this application. Please see enclosed plans and data tables for variance and property details, and other supporting documents for additional information. We welcome any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rus Collins', with a stylized, cursive script.

Rus Collins

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