



Mayor Alto and Council
City of Victoria
No.1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC, V8W 1P6

26 May 2024

Re: 1885 Government Street – Rezoning and Development Permit Application

Dear Mayor Alto and Council,

On February 13th, 2024 a Community Association Land Use Committee meeting was held regarding a forthcoming Rezoning and Development Permit application for 1885 Government Street. The application includes a six storey building with 79 purpose built rental units and commercial space along the frontage. There will be 11 vehicle parking spaces and 88 bicycle parking spaces. The density (FSR) in the application is 4.1. The OCP allows for density (FSR) of 3 in this area, and a maximum height of 6 storeys. Therefore the application includes an OCP amendment.

Community comments and concerns raised at the CALUC meeting regarding the application are as follows:

- Residents support the exploration of creating a more permeable exterior to avoid a large brick wall.
- Residents noted concerns that the units are unduly small and should consider larger units.
- One Resident asked if the increase of density over the OCP affect the size of the units and create smaller units.
 - The Applicant described that the units are considered fairly typical, are not impacted by the density and are the same style of the Spencer Block.
- In response to questions about the use of the heritage building the applicant clarified several things:
 - The use of the existing heritage building is not confirmed yet
 - The Applicant confirmed they are designing for a food and beverage service in the front, and would anticipate some retail space as well.
- Residents noted that there are several public/private areas in nearby developments that had to be gated off and became for, and wondered how long it would take for the same thing to happen to this development.
- The applicant confirmed the timing of the shadow study and that the courtyard will be a mostly shaded space

- A resident noted that this building will not have adequate parking and nearby buildings with similar parking have not had sufficient parking for the residents.
 - The Applicant noted that they believe they are overparked at the Spencer Block and intend to share parking between the two buildings.
- A resident noted that a fireproof area should be used for the e-bike storage to prevent concerns – the applicant noted that the building will be sprinklered.
- A resident noted the application includes a OCP amendment to the density from 3:1 to 4.1:1 and is an increase of 37% larger than the OCP and this represents an increase to the value of the property. The resident noted typically there is a community benefit for additional density. What is the benefit to the community for the additional density.
- A resident noted the following inconsistencies with the Old Town design guidelines:
 - parapets matching is contrary to the Old Town design guidelines which encourages more of a sawtooth approach and visual interest to parapet heights.
 - The projected balconies are not matching with the historical look to the area.
- It was noted that in the new OCP the city is moving away from strata condos and that rental development are driving the new OCP. It is likely that the OCP will also be moving towards larger units and this should be considered in this development.
- There is disappointment that there is no chamfer at the corner.
- Several asked about construction nuisance and If there is blasting anticipated through construction of the building.
- A resident Previous projects from the applicant complied to OCP and DCAP and were approved quickly.

The DRA LUC recommends that council ensure adequate amenity contributions for additional density and ensure that the old town design guidelines are followed. The applicant has a history of contributing quality rental projects that align with the OCP and the DRA LUC looks forward to working with the applicant going forward.

Sincerely,



Jordan Royer
Co-Chair
Land Use Committee Downtown
Residents Association