

Subject: FW: Geric Development Proposal for 14 storey residential high rise tower at Quebec, Montreal and Kingston Streets.

From: Jim Cuthbert [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, July 25, 2024 1:37 PM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council <mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca>
Cc: Roland Clift [REDACTED] to: [REDACTED] Ann Fraser
 [REDACTED] Dr. Burton Voorhees
 [REDACTED] Pauline Kenneally [REDACTED] Gail Patterson
 [REDACTED] jandj.brooks
 [REDACTED] Chris Locke
 [REDACTED] Jean Wye
 [REDACTED] Juhree Zimmerman [REDACTED] Johanne Blenkin [REDACTED] James Fife
 [REDACTED] James Garel-Jones [REDACTED] Hana Kinsman
 [REDACTED] Vinicius Manvailor [REDACTED] ; Joan Trumble [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] deanna wildeman [REDACTED] Ingrid Rueffel
 [REDACTED] George GULKIEWICH [REDACTED] Stan Hack
 [REDACTED] Ann Rempel [REDACTED] Laurie MacDuff [REDACTED]
 Laurelpontcondos cc: Sean McCrady [REDACTED] Chris
 Lovelace [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Geric Development Proposal for 14 storey residential high rise tower at Quebec, Montreal and Kingston Streets.

Dear Mayor and Council,

We would ask Council to be respectful of the clear direction for this site contained within the current Official Community Plans (ie.City of Victoria, James Bay) and be mindful of the negative effectives such a massive development would have on taxpayers and voters already living in close proximity.

Carefully consider:

Zoning: Zoning provides direction on what can be done on any given site. The tower building proposed is not a minor change of zoning – it goes far beyond what is permitted by current zoning for the site;

Height: current discussions for James Bay are around whether to permit 4 or 6 storeys, whereas the proposal is for 14 storeys, a significantly different and taller building;

Floor-to-Space Ratio (FSR): FSR proposed is 2.94, whereas current zoning permits a maximum of 2.0; Your own Planning Department have objected to this anomaly;

Provincial Recommendations: The proposal goes far beyond the Province's recommendations for development;

Obligation to Consult: Council has an obligation to consult both on changes to the Official Community

Plan and
to such extreme proposals for changes in zoning.

Housing Targets: The city's housing targets are already being met by developments elsewhere. James Bay is already over-densified, and this was recognised by most of the current Councillors in their statements before the last election. The development proposed would not provide family or "missing middle" accommodation. The only party to benefit handsomely from what is proposed would be the developer.

Land Use: The site is prominent and potentially iconic; it is one of the last vacant lots in James Bay and should not be wasted. Most visitors arriving on cruise ships or ferries from the US go past it. This should be carefully considered by those Councillors who want to make Victoria even more of a tourist destination ("like Amsterdam or Copenhagen" – Councillors Caradonna and Dell). The preferred outcome is for Council to expropriate or purchase the site and develop it as a green space within greenspace-deficient James Bay;

Impact on Traffic: - The effect on traffic movements and consequences for safety and emergency procedures have not been adequately considered. Traffic movements in the area are already congested and the development changes proposed for other parts of James Bay (especially Belleville Street) will make traffic management even more difficult and frustrating. (Planned entry to the parkade is on Kingston Street.)

Longer Term Perspective: - Council overriding the current zoning and permitting the development as currently proposed (14 storeys) for this site would prejudice the current update of the Official Community Plan. It would set a precedent for over-development of other sites around the area and outside the designated city core (which includes Laurel Point but currently does not extend to the south of Quebec Street). Increasing land prices have been identified as one of the reasons for rising construction costs, particularly in the CRD. Allowing this development currently proposed (14 storeys) would add to the upward pressure on land values. Reducing it to what is permitted by current zoning would help to reduce that pressure by making it less attractive to developers.

Thank you for carefully considering our well thought out position on this proposal.

Jim Cuthbert MSc RPBio
Kate Hanley

908 - 225 Belleville Street
Victoria, BC V8V 4T9



Dear James Bay rep. Jeremy Caradonna, Mayor and Council:

Regarding the rezoning application for the development proposed for Montreal Street (folder number REZO804), I am writing to express my support for this project.

I live at a townhouse development at 60 Dallas Road in James Bay. I support the density and retail opportunities this development will offer the neighbourhood. While we are close to Thrifty Foods, the residents along Dallas and neighbouring streets would benefit if we had more diverse retail options. This would add to the limited services we currently have in the fisherman's wharf area. The neighbourhood is a little bit separate from the JB hub. It is a walkable neighbourhood that would benefit from becoming its own (15 minute) urban hub. It would add to the vibrancy of the neighbourhood, in my opinion. With the density of residents, hotels and tourist from the cruise ships, I believe it would have a positive effect on the overall economy in Victoria. Thank you for considering my opinion on this matter. Please don't hesitate to reach out.

Best wishes,
Deidre Matheson

Sent from my iPhone

From: Development Services email inquiries
Subject: FW: Quebec, Montreal, and Kingston Development

From: Ben Levinson [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, August 20, 2024 5:12 PM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council <mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca>
Subject: Quebec, Montreal, and Kingston Development

Dear Mayor and Council,

My wife and I live across the street from this proposal. We will see the Montreal, Kingston Corner of the project from our living room, and two other room's windows. We have been following the development of this project for the last few years. The architects have presented their thinking and alternative proposals clearly over that time. They have been open and considerate in their design.

We feel that this latest design answers the majority of concerns for the neighbourhood. It will improve the street-scape making a more enjoyable community. The design is beautiful and will be an asset to Victoria.

Some of my neighbours are concerned about the shadow of the tower but my wife and I think that this is the best for the street. We sometimes are shaded in our suite from our adjacent 630 apartment. This in fact is a relief from the hot sun at times.

We look forward to Council approving this proposal and the construction to begin to complete our street. Hopefully you will find a way of slowing down noisy cars on Montreal street. Please vote yes to this well thought out and beautifully designed building.

Ben and Carla Levinson
501- 636 Montreal Street
Victoria, V8V 4Y1

PS. We also look forward to the completion of Peter Pollen Park.

[REDACTED]

From: Development Services email inquiries
To: Victoria Mayor and Council
Subject: RE: Geric Proposal for 205 Quebec St, etc

From: Ann Rempel [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, September 1, 2024 8:08 PM
Subject: Geric Proposal for 205 Quebec St, etc

I am urging you vote against the Geric Proposal for James Bay. The current proposal violates the OCP by drastically exceeding the allowable height, density and usage. Approving this plan BEFORE any possible changes to the OCP essentially renders the OCP useless. It allows developers to drive a wedge into the Urban Residential place designation at will. This site requires thoughtful use to address the "missing middle" and not more expensive housing. The James Bay area consists of numerous individual homes and low-rise buildings. We need more affordable family units.

Safety and traffic concerns are paramount. The narrow, curving streets combined with an ever increasing variety of vehicles including bikes, e-bikes, scooters, motorcycles, cars, carriages, taxis, pedicabs and tourist buses make driving a challenge, to say the least. Then, add the hundreds of cruise ship passengers walking into town and paying very little attention to the traffic. It is already hazardous and unsafe and far worse when there is an emergency with attendant large vehicles.

Geric was deceptive in "reducing" the number of floors while increasing ceiling height and actually only reducing the building a few meters. Geric also rescinded a planned contribution to affordable housing and only reinstated it when called out. The property has been identified as being in the tsunami zone and the city could be liable if the two-level parkade flooded.

A reasonably-sized and affordable project would be a welcome addition to James Bay. We have already exceeded targets for the city and James Bay is overdensified. Let's not undermine the OCP with approval for a project that exceeds the province's recommendations for development. Let's not ignore recommendations by city planners.

Ann Rempel

From: Development Services email inquiries
To: Victoria Mayor and Council
Subject: RE: 205 Quebec St, 507 Montreal St, and 210, 214, 218 and 224 Kingston St, Victoria, BC

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, September 1, 2024 9:23 PM
To: Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>
Cc: Victoria Mayor and Council <mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca>
Subject: 205 Quebec St, 507 Montreal St, and 210, 214, 218 and 224 Kingston St, Victoria, BC

I object to amending the OCP to accommodate the proposed development at 205 Quebec St, 507 Montreal St, and 210, 214, 218 and 224 Kingston St, for the following reasons:

1. The density with a FSR of 2.88:1 far exceeds the general range of 1.2:1 and the maximum of 2.1:1. It is greater than neighbouring properties and James Bay is already the most populous and densely populated neighbourhood in Victoria.
2. The 14-story height of this property far exceeds the 4 to 6 storeys permitted in the OCP. Taller buildings were constructed in the past, but changes were made by forward-thinking residents and elected officials to maintain the unique character of James Bay.
3. This proposal is by no means a “transitional” development between the properties to the north, which are considered part of the Downtown Core Area Plan, and the residential James Bay Neighborhood to the south. If approved, it would set a precedent for future high-rise and high-density developments in James Bay, contrary to the vision established in the OCP.
4. The proposed building is not in keeping with the form and character of the neighbourhood.

As stewards of our beautiful city, it would be prudent to consider the long-term consequences of allowing a development so out of step with the OCP.

Sincerely,

Elane Gray
812-225 Belleville St
Victoria, BC

238 Superior St.
Victoria, BC
V8V 1T3

Rob Bateman
Senior Planner, City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, B.C. V8W 1P6

Dear Mr. Bateman,

I am a resident of James Bay, and I am opposed to the planned development at 205 Quebec Street/507 Montreal Street/210, 214, 218, 224 Kingston Street.

I am not opposed to development in James Bay. Development is part of the evolution of a neighbourhood and a reflection of the needs and desires of the time. However, this proposed development has caused even me, a supporter of change and development, to write in and express my disbelief and disapproval of this plan.

There are several reasons that I find this development deplorable. For one, the City of Victoria is considering an application to amend the Official Community Plan for this development – an act that will set a precedent for over development of other sites. The Plan was rooted in common sense and these amendments are nonsense – changes by a slick developer that will have an impact on our neighbourhood.

The assessment by a consultant engaged by the City revealed that Laurel Point Inn is within the tsunami hazard zone and Laurel Point condos and the Quebec-Montreal-Kingston parking lot are on the edge of it. No new subterranean spaces, like the parking lots proposed for this Geric development, should ever be considered when built so close to the hazard zone; the proposed development is so irresponsible.

The proposed development's height and density is so off the charts that I can't comprehend why discussion is even being entertained. Why not a lovely timber, environmentally friendly structure that is four to six floors that helps provide residential housing to the missing middle? The current floor-to-site ratio of 2.94 is well above the 2.0 zoning affecting traffic flow and safety and emergency procedures, an area that already suffers during the summer months.

I reject this proposal, which has been adapted several times to try to squeeze by City approvals. I ask City Council to consider consultation over a revision of the Official Community Plan, and to listen to James Bay residents who will be affected by this ill-conceived development.

Sincerely,
Tracy Smith

September 9, 2024

To: Robert Bateman, Senior Planner, City of Victoria

From: Deborah and John Begoray
1104-225 Belleville St.
Victoria, BC V8V 4T9

Re: Proposed Official Community Plan Amendment for 205 Quebec St., 507 Montreal Street and 210, 214, 218, and 224 Kingston Street.

We are **strongly** opposed to the proposed amendment for this property. We are within the Urban Residential urban place designation.

Our reasons are several but include:

1. The OCP plan designates that buildings in this area will include low and mid-rise apartments. The proposed development has a 3 storey podium and a 14 storey tower. Such a building is clearly *far* outside the OCPlan requirements.
2. James Bay is already densely populated but again, this development far exceeds density appropriate for this area at 2.88:1.
3. FSR in this area is 1.2:1. The proposed development is at 2:1 FSR. Once again, far outside the OCP.

In sum, this development is absolutely inappropriate for this location. The OCP should be followed for all developments.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this issue.

From: Development Services email inquiries
Subject: FW: Development proposal for Montreal, Quebec and Kingston Streets

From: Mari Peepre [REDACTED]
Sent: September 11, 2024 4:44 PM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council <mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca>
Cc: Mari Peepre [REDACTED]
Subject: Development proposal for Montreal, Quebec and Kingston Streets

Dear Mayor Alto and City Councillors:

I am writing to express my deep concern over the proposed tower development planned for Montreal and Quebec Streets. One of our neighbours (Fran Farquhar) recently took the time to study the present traffic patterns on our streets and the results are even worse than I had expected.

Traffic on our corner is already unbearable. Please don't allow it to get even worse!

. . . .

The prospect of 112 units and parking for 146 vehicles across from my home on Montreal St is frightening. Here are some statistics regarding activity on Montreal Street between Kingston and Quebec Streets.

On August 29, 2024, between 5 and 7 p.m. I counted 941 pedestrians. This number was due to the arrival of only one cruise liner. They were people walking downtown from that ship. There were two subsequent arrivals and each of those would produce a similar number of pedestrians: imagine 3000 people walking past your house! The cruise ships come to Victoria for 7 months (April through October) and there are 214 arrivals. (I was careful not to include locals in this count – no dog walkers.)

During that same period of time I was able to count 18 large tourist buses which transport tourists from the cruises. These buses continue to drive along Montreal Street until well into the night.

As well, there were 3 tourist sight-seeing buses (Hop On Hop Off) and 29 motorcycles.

On September 8 between 12 noon and 2 p.m. I counted cars and small trucks on Montreal Street. During that 2 hour period there were 807 such vehicles as well as 42 taxis.

There were also 143 bicycles.

There were 6 tour buses for the cruisers and 3 for the local tourists. The 6 tour buses grew into 18 during the later half of the day...and night.

Daily - There are additional vehicles and events over the days, weeks and months:

- delivery trucks for 2 hotels and many eateries in the neighbourhood
- horse-drawn buggies, pedal taxis and scooters
- special events occur at various months of the year and they result in closure of Montreal Street for the better part of a day (Marathons and Bicycle Races, for example)
- dumpsters: on September 6 in the morning there were 6 large dumpster bins on Montreal St. and there were two trucks required to empty them. September 9 – 5 dumpsters. September 10 – 5 dumpsters.

The entrance to the project's underground parking garage would be on Kingston St. This street has parking on both sides, and it is currently difficult to pass an oncoming vehicle without one pulling over which is often impossible because of that street's narrowness.

The proposed project will not only add to this already over- capacity traffic burden the new residents' 146 vehicles plus bikes, scooters, wheelchairs, motorcycles, etc. constantly entering and leaving the facility's parking garages, but it will also increase that load further by injecting its hundreds of new residents onto the neighbourhood's streets and sidewalks, the guests and visitors of all these new residents and their vehicles, the personnel and vehicles of the taxis, deliveries, trades, emergency services, and waste disposal operations required by the new residents, the locals and tourists attracted into the community as customers of the planned coffee shop, and the further dozens of vehicles and personnel who regularly arrive at and depart from the daycare centre grafted onto it.

Please don't allow this development to go forward as planned. It would ruin our corner of James Bay.

Thank you for your attention and positive actions on this issue.

Mari Peepre. 504-636 Montreal St, Victoria.

[REDACTED]

From: Development Services email inquiries
Subject: FW: Proposed development 210, 214,218, and 224 Kingston Street

From: WayneTeri Bembridge [REDACTED]
Sent: September 13, 2024 9:24 AM
To: Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>; Victoria Mayor and Council <mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca>
Subject: Proposed development 210, 214,218, and 224 Kingston Street

We are writing, urging you reject the proposed change to the OCP for James Bay and, with it, the Geric Proposal for development of the parking lot bounded by Quebec, Montreal and Kingston Streets.

We live on Quebec St, admittedly outside the 200m boundary for consultation but are concerned about the impact of changing the OCP on our community. We see two problems:

1. Such a move sets a precedent and could allow for more 'oversized' developments on other street in James Bay. Housing density needs to be increased in a balanced thoughtful manner that allows for green space, sight lines, transport and aesthetics.
2. Changing the OCP for this development appears to ignore or even denigrate the efforts that went into the creation of the OCP, something that could impact the spirit of residents when asked for future input. A vibrant community needs a population that is actively involved on many levels. Maintaining the OCP shows respect for residents who put time and effort into its creation and is likely to result in those residents continuing to be active participants in civic life.

~ Teresa & Wayne Bembridge
202-405 Quebec Street
[REDACTED]

From:
Subject:

Development Services email inquiries
FW: Geric Proposal-Quebec, Montreal & Kingston Streets

Hello:

First of all, we would like to thank Marg Gardiner, Chris Coleman, Steven Hammond, and Marianne Alto for having the insight to vote against this proposal. We are not against a development on this site, if it is done according to the existing OCP. We are adamantly against changing the OCP. The FSR and the height (9.3' ceiling height will be over 14 stories, which is already too tall), of the proposed building are way out of line in an already overly densified James Bay. This is a welcoming community for walkers from cruise ships, pedi- cabs, horse and carriages etc. which support tourism. All this plus the proposals for the Admirals Inn (225 Belleville St.), the expansion of Inn at Laurel Point (680 Montreal St.), this new Geric building, plus the governments plan to change the entrance/ exit for the Coho and Clipper will cause a traffic nightmare on an already dangerous intersection. Our exiting from Cross Street is already difficult.

How does this building support missing middle housing?

Victoria does not have the infrastructure for a major disaster, and this is not being considered when over densifying communities. We are hoping that you who voted for this proposal will reconsider, and vote no to changing the OCP.

Sincerely, Chris & Tom Locke
#806,
225 Belleville Street,
Victoria

Sent from my iPhone

Colin W Couper
901 – 630 Montreal Street
Victoria, B.C. V8V 4Y2
[REDACTED]

September 19, 2024

City of Victoria
Mayor and Members of Council
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, B.C. V8W 1P6

Attention : Mr. Rob. Bateman, Senior Planner

Dear Sir: Through you to Mayor and Members of Council

Re: Development application – Mike Geric Construction
Site location - Quebec St. Montreal St. Kingston St.

Introduction

I am writing this under duress, and this will be explained later. Unfortunately, this submission is not intended to be about me, although it tends to drift in that direction, for that I apologize. My aim is not to degrade Council but to encourage Council and to inform that out there in our collective communities, there is a wealth of good knowledge and incredible experience. I am low on the ranking when it comes to my counterparts, but the proverbial rational voice ought to be of value in the decision making. It may appear that I am talking down to certain individual members and they just might be right. Consider this is an “Emperor’s Clothes” moment where a truth may be exposed.

I am sure as Council, you have received a number if not many comments on the merits (or lack thereof) of this application, the majority of which will likely be opposed to density and size of the proposed development. I would like to take a slightly different approach, in my mind, my opinion only, a more serious approach.

It is about integrity of public process. When one is in the public eye, or brought into the public eye, perception is everything. Perception of Council, or to be more precise, the individual members of Council, as well as the name of the developer, and representative agents for standing before Council, they too are brought into the public eye.

Several years ago, at an inaugural meeting when I was sworn in as elected municipal councillor, there was a speech given addressed to the new Council, and it was presented almost like a ‘charge’ to the obligation we had taken.

“You have been elected to this important office to make decisions, those decisions must be made fairly, without favour and in good conscience.”

Overview

I am concerned that public consultation with this Council, often appears to be a little more than a preconceived notion which is written into a formal process, something to be entertained in due course and my reference here is not just with this specific development application.

Public consultation should not constitute letting people voice their opinion at a public forum or in writing **without** all members of Council listening and reading carefully to the issues and numerous points being made, and the sentiments behind such submissions. One cannot quickly dismiss any submission as frivolous or vexatious without looking for facts and /or the impact a decision of Council may have on a life including the emotional impact, family impact, disruptive community impact and personal property values, and values not necessarily of a monetary nature, more in terms of quality of life.

From watching the July 11, 2024 meeting of the Committee of the Whole, the I believe from the vote “is in” so therefore I am wasting my time. *Fait accompli*

Who am I ? (part of my resume)

I will start on a very personal note. It may appear I am coming late into this planning process. This was the consequence of a serious health issue which I am prepared to share. In March 2021, I was diagnosed with an inoperable cancer. The prognosis was dire, so my future then did not include whether or not there was development on the parking lot across from where I live. However, with a responsibility to my wife and neighbours, I attended the Open House of Mike Geric Construction on August 19, 2021, held on the subject site. (more later)

Prior to my term in elected public office, I had completed 30 years in municipal service retiring as Director of Transportation Planning and Environmental Studies Toronto- North York. Prior to amalgamation, North York was an autonomous City with a census population of 580,000, five times the size of Victoria. In my position I would be called upon to report directly to Council on all development proposals which required site specific zoning approval or amendments through official plan process.

I was deemed an expert witness before the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) which was the Provincial Planning Tribunal with all the powers of Provincial Court. I would be sworn in and give evidence on all matters site specific related to traffic, transportation, land use, and density. I was also responsible in long range planning and providing the background of the roads network required in support of the City's Official Plan. This took me into areas which dealt with traffic volume, flow, distribution and displacement, catchment areas, transit modal split, land use trip rates, parking, vehicle restrictions of access and egress to site specific development.

An evolving duty concurrent with the responsibilities of Transportation Planning, I was Project Manager and responsible for obtaining approval for road construction, design, amenities, based upon need and efficiency, all required through the Class Environmental Assessment process, Ontario, and all with public consultation. As a project manager of six environmental assessment studies, I was permitted to assist Board members of the OMB by providing research and scientific evidence in layman terms relating to air quality, wind tunnel effects, noise, and acoustic impacts emanating from the facade of development fronting onto public streets. Such information would be provided through consultants ‘in the field of their expertise’, usually retained by myself, but on behalf of the municipality, not the development industry. In the 1990's I wrote an article on public transportation which was included in Transportation Demand Management Manual commissioned by the federal government.

From my career and into retirement, I moved to my residence in Severn Township, which was located across the river from the infamous Muskoka s. Mr. Bruce Stanton, who eventually became the Honourable Deputy Speaker of the House at the Federal level asked me to stand for local office, which he would be vacating as he went forward into federal politics. In 2003, I was elected as municipal Councillor for Ward 5, in the Township of Severn, Ontario. To continue in this vein, in 1997, I was one of two applicants shortlisted for the position of CAO, Severn Township, and I also sat three years on the City of Orillia Library Board.

Based upon my professional experience, my political experience, as well as the personal impact of the subject proposal which is across the road from where I live (Harbourside Community), I feel qualified in submitting my comments.

The Process- Public Perception

My principal concern that while Council hears a deputation (or reads a submission), its members do not always listen to those who are better informed of the life arrangement of a particular area, and I am talking about the residents, the neighbours, the communities, and the community associations.

In terms of public perception, my concerns were heightened when I heard the exact words used by a councillor, parroted from an earlier developer presentation. The reason this “clicked” for me was from the inappropriate use of the English language. The word was “utilized”. This was not used in the proper circumstance. If the statement referred to occupancy of parking lot was under utilized and if in fact was a correct statement which it is not, the word phrase should have been “under used”. Had the councillor meant the land use, the phraseology should have been that the potential land use is “under utilized”. I picked up on this noticing the same wrong word assembly from the two separate sources!

Again, with public perception. Mr. Bateman, at the Committee of the Whole July 11, 2024, showed a photographic exhibit to discuss the development proposal in ‘context’ with adjacent land use. In his presentation, he made the comment “inconsistent with the broad objectives” followed with “more appropriate in the downtown core”. This remark was never really challenged by any member of Council for intent or clarification. In this context though we are talking about height transition from the Harbour back to single family residential and as well as the downtown core out. Has Council unilaterally changed the boundary limits of the downtown core to encroach into The James Bay community?

There is another question which lingers. The developer came back to Council with amendments to the proposal, but I am not convinced that the developer satisfied the earlier direction of Council and yet five members sought to side with the developer without question. Why?

Parking

Unfortunately, we must accept that the use of the parking lot will shortly be history. I am sure that Council is aware there are 142 parking spaces, a valuable amenity to the city as a whole, now lost forever to accommodate more population density into this area placing yet again a further demand on on-street parking.

These parking spaces in the parking lot are not being used by area residents, but visitors to the area, contractors, tradespeople, certain employees within this area, overflow from hotel parking, and most importantly tourists, many tourists. On any given weekend day in the summer, at its peak hour (noonish), this lot will be 75% occupied. This does not take into account special event proudly

promoted the City and City Council itself, in the names of the Ryder Hesjedal Tour de Victoria and the Royal Victoria Marathon. - And what about “Deuce Days”.

The road pattern and permitted on-street parking is already constrained. Any development on this site further exacerbates a taxed immediate road network. With the removal of this and other parking lots within the City, has Tourism Victoria been requested for comment?

The Process – Open House – Aug 19, 2021

Unfortunately, I must start off again with respect to my health. In June of 2021 I started on a two-week cycle of aggressive chemotherapy treatment with one of the side effects, anxiety. While I was fully cognitive all the time, my confidence lacked. Regardless I attended the open house.

Based upon my past career and political experiences, and out of responsibility to my wife and my friends and neighbours in the Harbourside Community (630 - 636 Montreal Street) I felt obligated to at least show an interest in the proposed development. In advance and to be properly prepared I had a written list of basic questions relative to any site development proposal, in this case residential use.

My first amazement which soon turned to questionable disappointment is that the City Council’s planning process allows/ requires a developer to hold unescorted public meetings/ open houses without senior planning staff member to oversee the presentation and to represent the interests of the city. This is a shortcoming. There was no one there to validate or provide accurate intent and interpretation of the city’s official plan and/ or zoning requirements. Stepping aside and listening to my neighbours in discussion with the developer’s planners, I heard the explanation justifying the need of this development, along with the planning difficulties the developers faced. This was nothing more than spin, and I use that word lightly to be polite.

My initial discussion was with Ms. Nadine King, with the WATT Consulting Group (traffic consultants). Ms. King was very courteous and polite, and after introductions, I started with planning-based questions relating to traffic transportation matters. Items along the lines number of units, occupancy (persons per unit), proposed demographic of occupant, trip generation rates, catchment areas and distribution, and transit modal splits. There was some reluctance in offering specific information. A young consultant planner joined us (sorry I didn’t get his name) who started deflecting my questions advising that the base information was not readily available even although this was an open house to discuss the proposal. I was not accepting the reluctance in his answers to my question, and a more senior consultant architect came to the rescue of the planner. He asked for my written questions which I refused – this is akin to showing one’s hand in poker.

The dialogue became heated (to be polite) and I was told again that the information I was requesting was premature. I challenged that statement and asked if I could have the financial institution which was backing the project. He obviously knew I was familiar with development proposals. I was told in no uncertain terms that that information was confidential AND “they” could “build anything they wanted without any approval of the community”, and he walked away followed by the planner. Unfortunately, I did not get the name of the architect, although he was a senior member of the developer’s team at that time.

For those members of Council who don’t understand the significance, before banks release money, or portions of the funds for development, at the planning stage, approval stage, building permit stage, etc., an analysis planner for the banks will consider the merits of a proposal, “track record” of previous developments etc., and the likelihood of the new application being granted approval

by municipal government. This is a normal requirement before entertaining the funding request and most (not all) of the information I was requesting would have been available at the open house of Aug 19, 2021.

My Position Today

While I continue my personal battle, including anxiety, I continue to feel obligated to my wife and neighbours to weigh in on this discussion, even at this late date.

The proposed development has too much density inconsistent with Council's vision and will affect traffic flow and circulation at certain times. The loading facilities for "move-in" and "move-out" activities appear deficient recognizing the turnover is normally at month-end. With the higher density, more turnover and in all likelihood, moving vehicles will occupy the travelled portions of the public road allowance, with no penalty.

The principal building is too tall, not only in the number of storeys but in height, and for the applicant to suggest to Council that there is a reduction in accordance with the direction of Council, to me is an insult. The applicant attempts to manipulate Council by using construction rationale which does not change the height objective in the transition area identified in the presentation of your own Mr. Bateman. Don't listen to the public but listen to your senior planner. Remember "inconsistent with the broader objective" and the actual height, the real height of this building will continue to impact the surrounding community. Again, one must recognize the uncalculated (in planning presentation) the height of the roof-top mechanical components.

Parking will be a problem, not for the City for this component now unloaded onto the neighbourhood streets. A year after completion and occupancy, the developer will not have a problem, (he is gone) the City may or may not, but the residents will.

The reliance in the use of public transit for this development is over-rated. For transit to be successful it must be safe, efficient and convenient. The Number 2,3,5, and 10 buses on Superior does not have an inbound component toward the City Downtown core, which is not first extremely circuitous and time consuming, therefore not efficient and convenient.

I find it offensive that certain members of Council can make casual comments and pass opinion when they do not live in this community. They do not know the people and understand what is happening in our neighbourhood. I sincerely hope that Council will consider and balance the benefit of this proposal, the neighbourhood impact versus developer's desires. This application, even with its amendments, is not in keeping with the City's vision if it "more appropriate in the downtown core".

Please remember public perception and however this item proceeds, please be confident in the rationale used in accordance with the City's vision to make the correct decision of Council.

"You have been elected to this important office to make decisions, those decisions must be made fairly, without favour and in good conscience."

Respectfully submitted. Colin W. Couper.

Becky Roder

From: Rob Bateman
Sent: July 10, 2024 8:19 AM
To: Legislative Services email
Cc: Chris Lovelace
Subject: RE: Geric development proposal for Quebec/Montreal/Kingston Streets

Hello,

Can you please assist Chris (cc'd) with this?

Thanks,

Rob Bateman, MCIP, RPP (he/him)
Senior Planner
Planning and Development
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square, Victoria BC V8W 1P6
T 250.361.0292



The City of Victoria is located on the homelands of the Songhees Nation and the Xwsepsum Nation.

From: Chris Lovelace [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 9, 2024 8:59 PM
To: Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>
Subject: Fw: Geric development proposal for Quebec/Montreal/Kingston Streets

Dear Rob, I understand that you are assembling a file for the upcoming COTW that will discuss the Geric proposal for development of this property. Please add my letter sent to Council on July 4. Thank you.

Chris Lovelace
245 Belleville Street
Victoria

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

Begin forwarded message:

On Thursday, July 4, 2024, 1:47 PM, Stephen Hammond (Councillor) <shammond@victoria.ca> wrote:

Thanks Chris. I appreciate your input.

Stephen Hammond
Councillor

-----Original Message-----

From: Chris Lovelace [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, July 3, 2024 1:43 PM
To: Marianne Alto (Mayor) <MAalto@victoria.ca>; Jeremy Caradonna (Councillor) <jcaradonna@victoria.ca>; Matt Dell (Councillor) <mdell@victoria.ca>; Susan Kim (Councillor) <skim@victoria.ca>; Dave Thompson (Councillor) <dave.thompson@victoria.ca>; Krista Loughton (Councillor) <kloughton@victoria.ca>; Chris Coleman (Councillor) <ccoleman@victoria.ca>; Marg Gardiner (Councillor) <mgardiner@victoria.ca>; Stephen Hammond (Councillor) <shammond@victoria.ca>
Subject: Geric development proposal for Quebec/Montreal/Kingston Streets

Dear Mayor Alto and Council,

I am writing to object to the very modestly revised proposal of Mike Geric Construction for this property.

With respect, I believe the Council erred in not taking into consideration the substantial objections of the community, and of City staff, around the inadequacies of the original proposal sending it back to the developer and staff to revise within the density of the original plan. The result is a plan that is arguably worse than the original by modestly reducing the height of the Tower while flattening and therefore creating even less space around the development, and of course our James Bay neighbourhood more generally.

I understand that the plan is to be considered by the COTW without any further input or consultation with the community. I urge reconsideration of this ill-advised and irrevocable decision which will forever affect our community, already one of the most diverse and densely developed communities in Victoria.

To be clear, this is not a request not to develop this property. It is one of the few properties suitable for greater development in James Bay and a great opportunity, but the scale and design of the proposal is beyond all reason.

It appears little or no consideration has been given on issues like the already congested traffic in this vital intersection and gateway to Victoria will be made substantially worse. Nor does it consider the fundamental change in character the proposal shadows the rest of the entire neighbourhood, especially along Kensington. It is also out of step with the current community plan and even the proposed OCP. In short, it does not fit.

My personal view is something more along the lines to the residential development at Capital Park serves as a model of thoughtful and successful development that fits well into the existing community while increasing density and the availability of new housing in the neighbourhood. Similarly the developments along Michigan street at least try to fit within the community its where it is being built. The pipeline in James Bay is already long.

My request is that the process of community consultation with a hearing be re-booted, that staff concerns with the original proposal be revisited without limiting their advice, and Geric be asked to significantly revise it's proposal for the redevelopment of this vital property to make it an iconic investment in providing housing consistent with developing a healthy, livable community that James Bay is.

Please do the right thing.

Respectfully,

Chris Lovelace
245 Belleville Street
