

March 21 2017
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Dear Mayor Helps
 Victoria City Councillors
 City of Victoria Planning Department

We are Ray and Brenda Willis owners since March 2010 of a duplex unit at 218 Superior Street. We are writing to you about concerns we have regarding the negative impact the proposed redevelopment of the heritage property at 224 Superior Street (Albion Manor B&B) will have; a) on the immediate neighbourhood, b) on the state of James Bay's most beautiful heritage property, and C) on our home.

a) Impact on the immediate neighbourhood: Three Driveways on Superior Street

The proposed redevelopment with the inclusion of a small lot calls for two additional driveways off of Superior Street. This action would eliminate all current residential parking in front of 224 pushing parking in front of other properties on the street. Also the additional driveways require the removal of a mature tree from the boulevard in front of the property. Three driveways in such a small area will create increased congestion entering and exiting Superior Street one of the main arterial streets in the area.

b) Impact on the Heritage Property

The heritage property at 224 Superior is the last fully in tact heritage property in James Bay, and, as such, it is an iconic heritage property. It is a beautiful heritage home surrounded by lovely gardens. The property is a favourite photography stop for cruise ship passengers and other visitors to Victoria. It embodies the grand era of Victoria. The proposed redevelopment plan calls for subdividing the property to create a small lot with a two story house. Creation of the small lot significantly reduces the overall size of the property leaving a heritage house (minus the grand entrance stairway) crowded by a two story skinny house. In addition the plan eliminates the majority of the front gardens in order to create unit parking. The end result turns what now is heritage grandeur into just another big old house with a paved yard.

c) Impact on Our Home

The proposed small lot will have a two story house built 5 feet from our property line. The design of the house calls for 10 foot main floor, 9 foot second floor ceilings and a second floor balcony across the entire rear of the house. The house as planned will have a significant impact on our access to direct sunlight, as well as, the privacy of our back yard. Due to the direction and configuration of our duplex 80 per cent of our direct sunlight comes through east facing windows. The shading factor on our windows and yard will be significant. The City of Victoria Small Lot Policy highlights proposals should use "good neighbour design relative to privacy and sunlight." In addition, it states that applicants "should consider the shadowing, privacy, and sunlight impact of any new building." As of March 21 2017 our multiple requests for discussions and considerations regarding modifications (such as lower interior ceilings) to the design of the house have been ignored by the owner of 224 Mr. Halton and his developer Mr. Imhoff.

Final Points

We understand Mr. Halton's financial rationale for redeveloping the heritage house into 4 condos. We know there is a housing shortage in Victoria, although at the suggested price of 700,000.00+ for the condos and 900,000.00+ for the skinny house this plan will not assist the need for affordable housing in the city. Therefore given the concerns highlighted the question we put forward to city council is this – does the end justify the means? A plausible and win win alternative for redeveloping the heritage property at 224 could be achieved by eliminating the small lot. Without subdividing the property, the heritage house can still be developed into 4 (and it has been suggested by Mr. Imhoff into 5) condos giving the city additional housing in the area. As important, without the small lot the need for two additional driveways is eliminated, the street parking is not affected, the boulevard tree remains, the gardens remain intact, and the outside of the house is not affected as the grand staircase could remain. Owner and guest parking can be easily accommodated on the west side

of the property where the small lot is being proposed. Of course, there is always a downside, by eliminating the creation of the small lot the current owner of 224 does not get to profit from the creation of a small lot and house and will invariably argue he has no place to live. The owner could still remain in his heritage house by residing in one of the condos to be developed in his current residence.

Thank you for your consideration of our input.

Ray and Brenda Willis