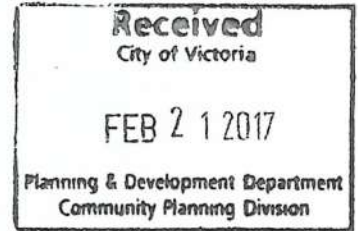


City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

March 17, 2017



Attention: **Mayor Helps and Councillors**

Re: **1088 Johnson Street Development Permit**

Dear Mr. Mayor, and Councillors,

Please accept this letter requesting re-approval of a development permit for our property on the 1000 block of Johnson. The property was an L-shaped lot with 180 feet of frontage on Pandora Avenue, 120 feet of frontage on Cook Street, and 60 feet of frontage on Johnson Street, all on one title. The property was subdivided and split into two phases. The first phase is currently under construction, as a 134-unit rental building; the second phase being is strictly for the 60' x 120' parcel on Johnson Street. This development permit application is in accordance with existing zoning and requires no variances.

The current zoning on the Johnson Street parcel is R-48 'Harris Green' zoning. The property also falls within the new Downtown Core Area Plan [DCAP]. As per the DCAP, the R-48 density and massing is permitted; however the rear, front, and side yard setbacks should conform to the new design guidelines within DCAP. We were presented with a difficult task, as we were instructed to follow guidelines of both the R-48 and DCAP; whichever was more restrictive. The project reflects the building design guidelines and the objectives of the Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP).

Designing a tall building on a narrow urban site was a very interesting and exciting task. The building design has gone through numerous iterations in order to satisfy and receive the support of planning staff. Despite the challenges imposed upon us we believe we have managed to design a striking building. We were also advised by planning staff to still consider what the City had put forth as livability standards. Although these guidelines have been superseded by the new DCAP, we were able to achieve and meet the intent of these standards even on such a small site. Additionally, we have carefully configured suite layouts to restrict 'overlook' of rooms from both this building and the adjacent buildings.

This project follows the scale and massing of the existing development along Johnson Street. The building height matches the Mondrian to the East and the Sutton Buildings to the West. The proposed design also meets the objectives of the City's previous 'Livability Guidelines'. Similarly, the combined setbacks between the proposed development and adjacent buildings exceed the existing combined setbacks between the two adjacent Sutton buildings. As well, the combined setbacks between buildings exceed both the original 8.0m 'Livability Guidelines' as well as the new DCAP [Downtown Core Area Plan] design guidelines.

The overall massing and composition of the building is comprised of the traditional 'base, body and cap' components. This composition aligns with guidelines from the DCAP, which requires a prominent street wall component. While the DCAP recommends a

continuous 3-storey street wall, the height and width constraints of this project demanded a more integrated composition between the vertical and horizontal components of the building. The street wall is 3-storeys at the southwest corner and steps back towards the building entry. An elegant canopy emerges from the defining edge of the street-wall and aligns with the entry canopy of the adjacent Mondrian development. This canopy also defines the entry to the residences and supports building signage. The building will be a total of ten stories, with commercial space on the ground floor. Although not required under the R-48 zoning, one parking spot per unit will be provided. The parking access will be shared with the Pandora re-development and accessed from Pandora Ave.

A tall linear courtyard leads you from the sidewalk on Johnson Street to the front door. A secure wrought-iron gate and fence enclose the courtyard providing privacy and security for the building residents. The walkway includes a water feature that will also be enjoyed by the adjacent neighbours at The Mondrian. When presented to Advisory Design Panel, members fully supported the design with terms including 'beautiful', 'elegant', and a 'downtown gem'. We believe the constraints placed upon us [having to conform to the limitations of two zonings] resolved into an artful, elegant, and distinct architectural solution.

There will be approximately 1430 square foot commercial space on the ground floor of this development. The space has purposely been stepped back approximately 6.5 feet to allow for a coffee shop, or restaurant to have the flexibility to have tables and chairs outside. This will encourage street interaction and enhance the urban experience.

Two neighbourhood meetings were held regarding both the 1075 Pandora proposal and this proposal. We felt it was important to listen to all of the concerns raised and as a result, we have changed the design of the building addressing the concerns of the community yet holding to the best of what the site would allow. A driving factor in configuring the plans for this building was to orient all units in a North-South direction to maximize privacy with neighbouring buildings. Care was taken in locating windows on the East and West facades to minimize direct visual contact between habitable rooms of the proposed building and the neighbouring buildings. These east and west facades are further refined by inseting the exit stairs to articulate the mass of the building. At the advice of planning we are also adding a green feature to the East and West sides of the building. Although our own tenants will not see these features, this feature is primarily provided for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Mondrian and the Sutton.

The Sutton is quite a distance from the property line and we are within the guidelines for side-yards both under DCAP and R-48. There is no issue regarding living room window to living room window between our proposed building and the Sutton. However, some of the Sutton suites have glassed in their balconies, thereby bringing their windows forward somewhat. Even in these cases we do not have living room windows facing living room windows, as our windows facing theirs are bedroom windows. It should be noted we are further from the Sutton building than the two Sutton buildings are from each other, and between their two buildings they do have living room windows facing living room windows, presumably without problem. We bring a better relationship to the closest Sutton building than they have with each other.

The Mondrian has four faces, with each face having living room windows looking out. They built a point tower, but seemingly without thinking the side of another building will soon be in front of some of their suites. Consequently we were put into the situation of having to accommodate a neighbour who might object to having to look into windows closer than they might like. We put a lot of thought into this. A bedroom window facing a bedroom window is not an issue. Most condo and rental buildings in Victoria have side windows that are bedroom windows facing other bedroom windows, and often these are very close, much closer than what we are proposing. Even a bedroom window facing a living room window is not an issue, as usually bedroom windows have curtains that are kept closed for privacy. The real issue is when a living room window faces a living room window. We have purposefully designed our suite layouts to have no living room windows facing other living room windows.

The building will consist largely of two bedroom units, containing 24 two-bedrooms and 13 one-bedrooms for a total of 37 residential units; this is a shift away from the trend toward much smaller units.

We are very excited for the opportunity to add a building to the downtown core. Downtown living is not only more sustainable, but it leads to growth in the arts and culture. In addition to close proximity to like-minded people, and the inspiration deriving from that, a person only has so many hours in a day. If you're driving for an hour and a half, and you're spending time tending to a yard and a home, you have less time for other cultural and artistic pursuits. It is not a coincidence that the greatest cities of the world, Paris, New York, London have been incubators for art and culture for centuries. Perhaps with 30,000 people living in downtown Victoria, we can add Victoria to that list.

We look forward to adding our building to Victoria's downtown housing stock, and we hope our building adds to the creativity and vibrancy of our city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daniel Cox', with a stylized, flowing script.

Daniel Cox

March 21, 2017

Please accept this letter giving authorization to 1032504 BC Ltd and Daniel Cox to represent and make submission in regards to 1088 Johnson Street.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. Cox', written over a horizontal line.

Owner
0929114 BC Ltd.