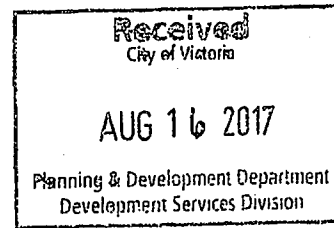


August 14, 2017

Mayor and Council
City of Victoria
#1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W1P6



Mayor and Members of Council:

RE: 425 Oswego Street - Rezoning and Development Permit Application

I respectfully request your consideration of an application to build a new single family house on my property at 425 Oswego Street in James Bay. This is an opportunity to add an additional single family home to the housing mix in James Bay.

This legal lot (166.7 m²) was subdivided well before zoning was established in the City and is part of the historic pattern of land development that can be found in many parts of James Bay and elsewhere in the City. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries these small parcels of land were considered to be affordable lots for working families; not dissimilar from the City's current policies encouraging infill housing for families. Many of these smaller properties were lost during the 1970's, when there was wholesale consolidation and redevelopment of lands in James Bay, which destroyed much of the fabric of the neighbourhood.

Until recently the City allowed development of these pre-existing undersized parcels under the provisions of the R1-B, Single Family Dwelling District. In fact, I developed the house next door (where I live), which has a lot the same size, in 1999 under those regulations. I have owned this lot since that time and it was always my intention to build another house on it. Recent bylaw changes severely (and I would say unfairly) limited the development of pre-existing undersized lots (the zoning now only permits a garage). I should note that the property is assessed and taxed at full market rates and yet under current regulations is unbuildable. It seems that, in its zeal to regulate, the City has made it more difficult to build much needed housing that fits into the character of the neighbourhood.

I feel that my proposal to build a new 166.7 m² two storey home on this lot is in keeping with the City's policy initiatives to promote sensitive infill housing. It fits into the existing pattern of development on this block and in this part of James Bay.

The area immediately surrounding these two lots is a mix of single family houses, apartments and townhouses on Oswego Street. The property abuts a 2 storey apartment building to the south and a 2 storey single family dwelling to the north on Oswego (where I live). There are a number of houses in the neighbourhood that are built on lots which are the same size and width as this property.


The proposed two bedroom home fits in with the City's small lot house design guidelines (see attachment). While the new house does require a number of variances from the R1-S2 zone standards every effort has been made to minimize possible impacts on adjacent properties. The design, massing and situation of the house on the lot is substantially the same as the house next door at 429 Oswego which was built in 1999 and has been well accepted. The new house is designed to have a traditional feel, with a hip roof, bay windows, covered front entry and concrete fiber board siding that will be more durable than, but have the same aesthetic as wood.

This new home will fit in with the character and scale of the existing neighbourhood and will appeal to a family or people who want to live in proximity to Downtown, transit and walking and/or cycling to work, shopping and services. Unless it is rezoned to permit a single family house it will remain undeveloped and will be a lost opportunity.

Based on consultation with staff I revised my original plan by reducing the overall building height, increasing the rear yard space and animating south wall of the building.

I thank you for your consideration of my application and look forward to discussing it with you.

Sincerely,



Bob Greene

for

425 OSWEGO STREET PROPOSAL COMPARISON TO SMALL LOT HOUSE DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Streetscape/Neighbourhood

The traditional design, materials and 2 storey massing are in keeping with the visual character of adjacent properties and the neighbourhood. This is especially true of the house next door which I built in 1999 and has proven to fit in well with the streetscape. The proposed height is the same as that house.

2. Siting, Location Topography

- **Setbacks**

The proposed setbacks are similar to the house next door and are, on average, in keeping with the setbacks of other buildings on this block of Oswego. The front setback (2.67 m) allows for a covered front entrance and provides a transition from the side yard of the apartment to the south and the front yard of the house to the south. The rear setback (4.75 m) allows room for a useable private outdoor space and meets the standard of 25% of the lot depth. The north side yard (2.7 m) meets typical zoning setback requirements for single family homes and provides sufficient room for parking. The reduced south setback allows for an entrance into the basement storage space.

- **Parking**

Surface parking is accommodated beside the house in the north side yard. An additional car could be accommodated behind that space in the driveway.

3. Architectural Envelope

- **Roofs**

The design of the roof with projections for bay windows on the street and dormers is traditional and adds visual interest to the building.

- **Massing and Proportion**

The proposed house fits in with the predominant 2 storey massing and proportion of buildings on this block of Oswego Street. The traditional expression of entryways and windows as well as the roof form add visual interest to the building and help to reduce its overall visual massing.

4. Openings

- **Entryways**

The main entrance to the house is expressed with a traditional set of stairs and covered porch. Providing and “welcoming element on the streetscape”.

- **Windows**

The proportion, sizing and detailing of windows in this project, including the bay windows on the street front, are based on the proportion, size and detailing on windows on traditional homes in the neighbourhood. The windows proposed on the south wall have been designed to eliminate any possibility for overlook onto the adjacent property.

5. Textures and Detail

- **Finishes and Materials**

The finishes and materials used in this project are consistent with those used in the neighbourhood and while they express more traditional materials are more durable. This includes the use of horizontal and patterned concrete fiber siding and a manufactured stone veneer base at ground level. Typical finishing will include fascia board and corner trim and decorative blocking. The roof material will be laminated fiberglass asphalt shingles.

- **Roof Detail**

As discussed above the roof form is made more visually interesting by the addition of bays and dormers. This also helps to reduce the scale of the roof and give a sense of scale to the house.

- **Colour**

The palate of colours chosen will be muted with one accent colour. It will complement adjacent properties and the neighbourhood.

6. Landscaping

Landscaping includes simple ornamental plantings and a private rear yard space with a raised bed for possible food planting.