

City of Victoria Mayor and Councilors
City of Victoria Land Use Development Departments
Dani Eisler
3 118 Michigan Street
Victoria, BC V8V 1R1

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed new development at 301/303 St. Lawrence Street. I understand this is an item on the agenda for the upcoming Planning Committee Meeting on November 6th.

My townhouse is one of the four nearest residences of the planned redevelopment, immediately to the east. My front door, living room window, and bedroom window overlook the site. Obviously I have a great interest in this issue.

Originally, Mark Imhoff presented plans to our strata members, plans that addressed some of the negative impact that a new, higher structure would have on us. The roofline took into account and minimized the blockage of natural light. The window positions on the back of the building, the side immediately facing our living spaces, allowed for as much privacy as possible. The position of the new building was well back from the property line, another factor in limiting loss of light and loss of privacy.

Recently, it™s come to my attention that the plans have been changed radically, apparently at the request of the City, in order to homogenize the streetscape by having 301/303 St. Lawrence resemble the "4 Sisters" on the opposite corner of St. Lawrence and Michigan Streets.

James Bay is home to a wonderful diversity in design. The buildings within even a block of 301/303 St. Lawrence are varied, but compatible. The traditional "4 Sisters", the modern Church of Truth, the majestic Shoal Point, and The Reef with its contemporary flourishes all contribute character to the neighbourhood. The initial design for the redevelopment of the property was attractive and suitable for its location. It was also respectful of our existing homes to the immediate east, with the lower roofline maximizing light, and the outdoor space in front providing separation between living spaces.

I do not support the new design. The much higher roof will block much of the incoming light from my home and front garden. Not only will this mean the interior of my home will be darker and colder " in almost constant shadow " but it also raises the issue of personal safety along the sidewalk on the west side of our strata " access to four of our strata units. Three of those four units are owned and occupied by single female seniors. I am one of them.

In addition to the much higher roofline, the new plan moves the primary outdoor living space for the two middle units to the back of the property. The larger windows and the balconies will have clear sightlines into my front door, my living room and my bedroom. With gas fittings included on the balconies, obviously (and understandably) bbq™s will be in use. Cooking odors and noise from common activity will be inescapable. These larger windows and encroaching balconies mean an extreme loss of privacy, and also restrict my enjoyment of my own property.

Please note: I am not opposed to the redevelopment of the property. But it must be an acceptable design that enhances the neighbourhood, and does not unduly infringe on my privacy, or my property value. I felt the initial design, originally presented to our strata members and to the James Bay Neighbourhood Association meeting in January, was worthy of support.

I do not understand why the initial design was rejected, and why we, as neighbours, were not notified or involved in the process. As it stands, I cannot support the redevelopment as radically altered from the initial plan.

I urge you to return to the design originally presented to the community and us by Mark Imhoff, perhaps with minor modifications, if necessary. It would allow for the continued enjoyment of my property, the ensuring of my safety and privacy, the protection of my home's resale value, and it would be a great addition to the community.

Sincerely

Dani Eisler