

Planning and Land Use Committee Report For the Meeting of September 4, 2014

Date:

August 7, 2014

From:

Helen Cain, Senior Planner

Subject:

Rezoning Application #00440 for 1156 Fort Street

Application to rezone from the R3-1 Zone (Multiple Dwelling District) to a new zone to permit a cultural facility with accessory uses. This rezoning is concurrent

with Heritage Alteration Permit Application #00179.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to present Council with information, analysis and recommendations regarding a Rezoning Application for the Heritage-Designated property at 1156 Fort Street, known as Wentworth Villa. The proposal is to rezone from the R3-1 Zone (Multiple Dwelling District) to a new zone that would allow uses and apply regulations in the CA-2 Zone (Fort Street Special Commercial District). Specifically, the proposal is to convert Wentworth Villa into the new "Museum of Pacific Northwest Heritage Homes".

The following points were considered in assessing this application:

- The proposed museum is aligned with the Official Community Plan, 2012, (OCP) which enables public facilities and community services throughout the City in all land use designations. This proposal would also contribute to goals in the OCP and Fernwood Neighbourhood Plan, 1994, related to conservation, public awareness of community heritage resources and cultural planning.
- Proposed uses within the museum would typically require a total of 20 vehicle parking spaces based on the CA-2 Zone. The proposal is to retain one existing parking space with no new additional on-site parking provided. Staff consider the shortfall to be acceptable given that the property is located along a major transit route on Fort Street and within walking distance (200 m) of the Downtown Core.

Staff recommend that this application advance to a Public Hearing as the proposed uses would be broadly consistent with the relevant policies in the OCP, and the local area plan.

Recommendations

- a. That Council instruct staff to prepare the necessary Zoning Regulation Bylaw amendment that would authorize the proposed development outlined in Rezoning Application #00440 for 1156 Fort Street.
 - b. That Council consider giving first and second reading to this bylaw amendment after the bylaw has been drafted.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Cain
Senior Planner
Development Services Division

Deb Day, Director
Sustainable Planning and Community
Development Department

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:

Jason Johnson

Date:

Date:

Jason Johnson

Date:

Date:

Jason Johnson

Date:

Dat

That Council schedule a Public Hearing after the bylaw has received first and

C.

second reading.

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present Council with information, analysis and recommendations regarding a Rezoning Application for the Heritage-Designated property at 1156 Fort Street.

2.0 Background

2.1 Relevant History

2.1.1 Heritage Property

The house located at 1156 Fort Street, known as "Wentworth Villa", is one of the oldest buildings in Victoria (built in 1862) and is protected through a municipal Heritage Designation Bylaw. The applicant is proposing exterior alterations to restore certain original features of the house, and to alter an accessory building ("outbuilding"), dating to 1957, which is also protected through the Heritage Designation. It should be noted that the proposed new uses would require seismic upgrades and building code improvements to the historic interior, which is not protected. The report on the concurrent Heritage Alteration Permit Application provides the analysis and recommendations for the proposed alterations to the exterior of the property.

2.1.2 Previous Application

A Heritage Alteration Permit Application with a different scheme for the subject property was considered at Planning and Land Use Standing Committee in 2012. However, ownership has since changed and the current proposal before Committee is unrelated to the 2012 application. However, a Heritage Conservation Plan prepared at that time has been submitted concurrently with the Heritage Alteration Permit Application.

2.2 Description of Proposal

The proposal is to rezone Wentworth Villa from the R3-1 Zone (Multiple Dwelling District)) to a new zone to permit the existing building to be used as a cultural facility with exhibit rooms and retail, office and public assembly space. A non-profit society is the owner of the property, and is requesting this rezoning for adaptive reuse of the heritage house to allow the new "Museum of the Pacific Northwest Heritage Houses". The museum interior would have: 12 exhibit rooms, including public assembly space for events, such as concerts; a gift shop; a tea room with seating capacity for up to 15 people; and two offices. One existing parking space near the northeast corner of the site would be retained, and the applicant is requesting that Schedule "C" requirements for the proposed mix of uses be relaxed from 20 vehicle spaces to one space. The applicant is also requesting that accessory buildings be permitted in the scope of the rezoning in order to accommodate the Heritage-Designated "outbuilding" in the rear yard.

2.3 Existing Site Development and Development Potential

The subject property is located in the R3-1 Zone (Multiple Dwelling District). The data table (below) compares the proposal with the CA-2 Zone (Fort Street Commercial District). An asterisk is used to identify where the proposal is less stringent than the CA-2 Zone.

Zoning Criteria	Proposal	Zone Standard CA-2
Site area (m²) - minimum	1249.7	n/a
Lot width (m) - minimum	36.5	n/a
Total floor area (m²) - maximum	510.0	2837.8
Density (Floor Space Ratio) - maximum	0.41:1	1.5:1
Height (m) - maximum	8.80	15.50
Site coverage (%) - maximum	24	n/a
Storeys - maximum	2	n/a
Setbacks (m) - minimum Front (Fort Street) Rear Side (east) Side (west)	4.95 8.81 3.87 12.55	Nil Nil Nil Nil
Vehicle parking stalls - minimum	1*	20 ¹
Bicycle storage - minimum	5	3
Bicycle rack - minimum	5	3

¹ public assembly: 8 stalls; tea room: 6 stalls; commercial exhibit: 4 stalls; retail: 1 stall; office: 1 stall.

2.4 Land Use Context

The subject property is located within walking distance (200 m) of the east boundary of the Urban Core located on Cook Street, and along the Fort Street corridor, where community services or facilities, such as a museum, would be accessible by public transit.

The immediately adjacent land uses are:

- North: apartment building in R3-1 Zone (Multiple Dwelling District)
- South: professional office in C1-Zone (Limited Commercial District) and retail in S-1 Zone (Special District)
- East: professional office in C1-Zone (Limited Commercial District)
- West: professional office in C1-Zone (Limited Commercial District).

2.5 Legal Description

Lots 1096 and 1097, Victoria, City except the southerly 8 feet thereof taken for road purposes as registered under No. 28313I.

2.6 Consistency with City Policy

2.6.1 Official Community Plan, 2012

The proposal is consistent with land use policies in the Official Community Plan 2012 (OCP), including the designation of the property as Urban Residential and, in particular, Policy 6.4 which supports and enables community services and public facilities and assembly throughout the City. Additionally, adaptive reuse of Wentworth Villa as a museum would align with OCP

objectives and policies related to heritage and cultural spaces, as well as objectives for conservation and public awareness of community heritage within the *Fernwood Neighbourhood Plan*, 1994.

2.7 Community Consultation

In accordance with the Community Association Land Use Committee's (CALUC) procedures for processing Rezoning Applications, the applicant consulted with the Fernwood Community Association on February 5, 2014. A letter from the Land Use Committee is attached to this report.

3.0 Issues

The key issues related to this application:

- proposed relaxation for parking
- heritage and cultural resources.

4.0 Analysis

4.1 Proposed Relaxation for Parking

Staff consider the proposed relaxations for on-site parking to be acceptable. Alternate modes of transportation would be available to visitors, given that the museum would be located along a major transit corridor and that the subject property is in close proximity to the Downtown Core. It is important to note that approval of this relaxation would also support heritage conservation.

4.2 Heritage and Cultural Resources

Wentworth Villa is one of the most significant heritage properties in Victoria. Conservation of this historic place through adaptive reuse would help to maintain this significant building and garden for present and future generations, and increase awareness of heritage in Fernwood. Moreover, the museum would provide a unique and broadly accessible, new cultural space.

5.0 Resource Impacts

There are no resource impacts that are associated with this development.

6.0. Conclusions

Adaptive reuse of Wentworth Villa to a museum aligns well with goals and policies in the OCP and local area plan related to heritage conservation and cultural spaces. The request for reduced parking is acceptable, given the property is located in close proximity to public transit routes and walking distance from the Downtown Core Area. Relaxation of the normal parking requirements is also supported in the OCP to foster heritage conservation through zoning variances and other incentives. Staff recommend that the Planning and Land Use Committee advance the Rezoning Application to a Public Hearing.

7.0 Recommendation

7.1 Staff Recommendations

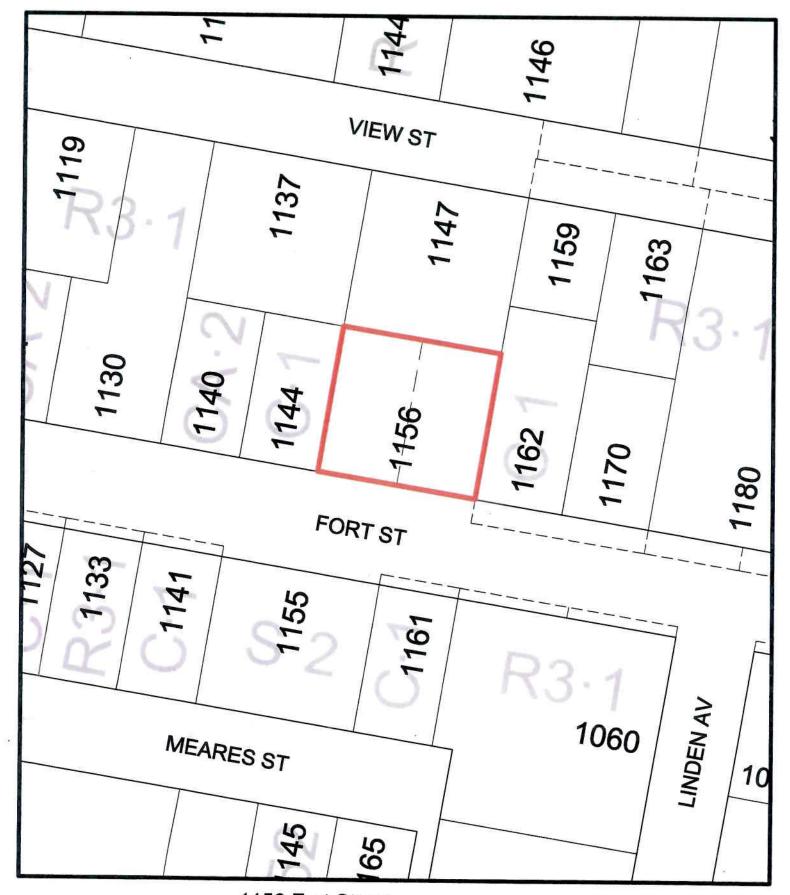
- a. That Council instruct staff to prepare the necessary Zoning Regulation Bylaw amendment that would authorize the proposed development outlined in Rezoning Application #00440 for 1156 Fort Street.
 - b. That Council consider giving first and second reading to this bylaw amendment after the bylaw has been drafted.
 - That Council schedule a Public Hearing after the bylaw has received first and second reading.

7.2 Alternate Recommendation

That Council decline Rezoning Application #00440 and Heritage Alteration Permit with Variances #00179 for 1156 Fort Street.

8.0 List of Attachments

- Zoning map
- Aerial photo
- Letters from John Keay & Associate stamped March 5, 2014
- Plans for Rezoning Application #00440 and Heritage Alteration Permit Application #00179 stamped July 23, 2014
- Letter from Fernwood Community Association stamped February 24, 2014.





1156 Fort Street Rezoning #00440 Bylaw #







1156 Fort Street Rezoning #00440 Bylaw #



KEAY & ASSOCIATE, ARCHITECTURE LTD

JOHN KEAY, ARCHITECT AIBC LARRY CECCO, IA, AIBC 1124 FORT STREET, VICTORIA, V8V 3K8

January 29, 2014

Mayor and Council City of Victoria V8W 1P6

Your Worship and Council

re: proposed rezoning, Wentworth Villa, 1156 Fort Street

DR R.3.1

Received

City of Victoria

MAR - 5 2014

Planning & Development Department Development Services Division

You will find enclosed an application for rezoning, for the above structure, from 61 to a zone which will permit assembly/museum/display/office use. It is the intention of the applicants to restore the building and grounds, and open them to the public as "The Museum of Pacific Northwest Heritage Homes". This is an eminently suitable use for the building.

Wentworth Villa is the subject of a comprehensive study by Stuart Stark & Associates, its history can be paraphrased as follows:

"Wentworth Villa is one of the oldest, and most valued, heritage houses in the City. Built in the Gothic revival style, the home features hallmarks of the style, including a symmetrical plan with a central front door, pierced bargeboards, steeply pitched roofs, and a gothic style pointed window – with stained glass – high in the central gable illuminating the attic. Tall double-hung windows are small paned: Six over six on the upper floor; four over four on the main floor. The house has wide, bevel siding, and a covered porch that wraps around three sides of the house.

Typical 1860's porch posts originally supported the porch roof. Made of pairs of slender, squared timbers – tripled on the porch corners – they culminated in delicate sawn brackets. Above, the porch roof was edged with a chinoisierie-inspired railing. By the 1890's the porch posts were replaced with solid single turned posts; the fanciful balcony railing lasted for a few years into the 20th century.

Today, Wentworth Villa survives into the 21st century, essentially intact, a rare historic house. This survival was due to an unusual combination of family occupation, lack of modernization, and appreciative care.

Wentworth Villa has been occupied by just two families over the course of 149 years from 1863 until 2012, though each occupancy was continued by three generations."

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email: john@keayarchitecture.com

rezoning, Wentworth Villa, 1156 Fort Street

Interestingly, during its tenure as Faith Grants' "The Connoisseurs Shop" the building remained almost unaltered with the exception of the occasional repainting, and an addition to the north east corner constructed in 1956.

Because of its age and condition, the building remains one of Victoria's most significant residential structures. This has been recognized by the fact that the house and outbuildings have been designated by the City. Restoring Wentworth, and returning it to a use whereby it can be enjoyed by the public, is in line with recent heritage improvements in this area of Fort Street, and also with the City's Heritage policies. A part of the rezoning process will be the upgrading and stabilization of the structure and building services, with the result being a heritage building that will be preserved for the foreseeable future. As well, a full exterior restoration is contemplated, including the replacement of missing exterior decorative elements as shown on the drawings. In the interior, some rooms will be fully restored as part of the museum display, and some will be sensitively adapted to provide areas for display, gift sales, and a small tea room. The outbuildings, which are in poor condition, will be rebuilt using existing materials where possible and will complement the restoration of the garden, including the brick walls and pathways, and wrought iron railings.

We would ask that this rezoning be considered for the following reasons:

- i. The proposed use is compatible with the building and area, allowing public access to one of Victoria's most significant remaining houses. The proposed use, a small museum with ancillary uses, is appropriate for the area. The use provides an interpretation of an aspect of Victoria, that of its domestic architecture, that is not currently available in the community
- ii. the building, designed by Wright and Saunders, has been designated heritage. The proposed use is an effective way of ensuring that this significant building is stabilized, protected, and maintained in good repair We will be looking for equivalencies as part of protecting the original finishes and woodwork
- the building is centrally located in the precinct of the heritage houses located on Fort Street which are mixed residential, commercial, or office use,
- iv. The work required as part of the rezoning will include seismic upgrading, improving thermal efficiency, sprinklering, and new building services, all of which will ensure its preservation.
- v. The proposed use will allow the exterior to remain unaltered and in its original state. Missing decorative elements will be restored, based on archival photographs and on site interpretation. The interior will be restored in some areas, and sensitively adapted in others to fulfill code requirements for safety, handicapped access, and display functions.

As part of the application we are asking for consideration of the following:

- minor exterior revisions required for a new fire exit at the rear, and removal of a small entry porch, both part of the 1956 addition
- ii. delisting and removal of the smallest of the outbuildings, and moving the south wall of the second building, which will allow for additional landscaped

area. The brick wall on the property line will be extended where the small building has been removed

that the provision of one parking space be acceptable. Although parking is limited on site, there is ample street parking. Public transport is excellent in the area, and bike racks are proposed for 10 bicycles. The house is located on a popular walking and tour bus route to Craigdarroch Castle and Rockland. During its tenure as a retail business, 13 parking spaces would have been required, the proposed use requires the following:

a. museum: 6 spaces b. tea room: 6 spaces c. gift shop: 1 space

1 space

d. office:

Thus the proposed change of use is essentially compatible with the previous retail use, in other words the impact on the neighbourhood and adjacent street parking will not be changed to any significant degree. The driveway allows for three cars to be stacked, providing sufficient employee parking. Comparable small display museums with limited or no parking are the Emily Carr House, Ross Bay Villa, and the Bateman Gallery on Belleville Street, all function successfully within their neighbourhood context

equivalencies for certain Building Code requirements have been developed,
 and are described in the code analysis which is included with this application

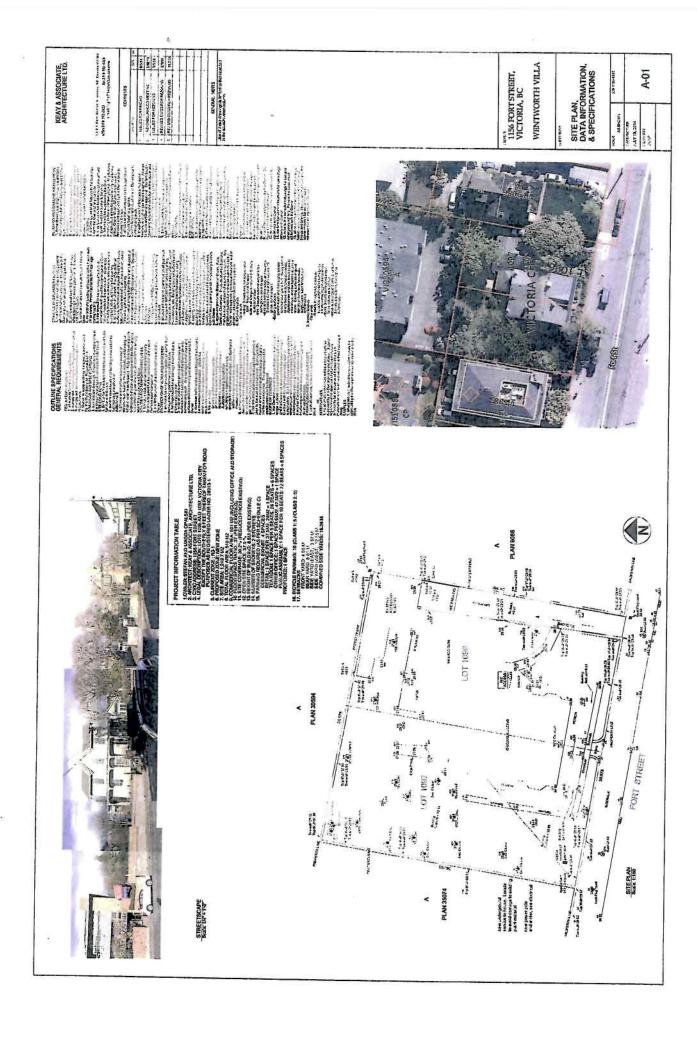
We trust that Council will see this application as an opportunity to preserve a landmark building which is clearly, because of its design and prominent siting, a significant element of the Fort Street heritage precinct. The proposed use, with the attendant upgrades in protection, structure, and building services, Its adaptive re-use as proposed is a realistic means of ensuring its preservation. As part of the process we will be meeting with the Fernwood Community Association, and neighbours immediately adjacent to the project.

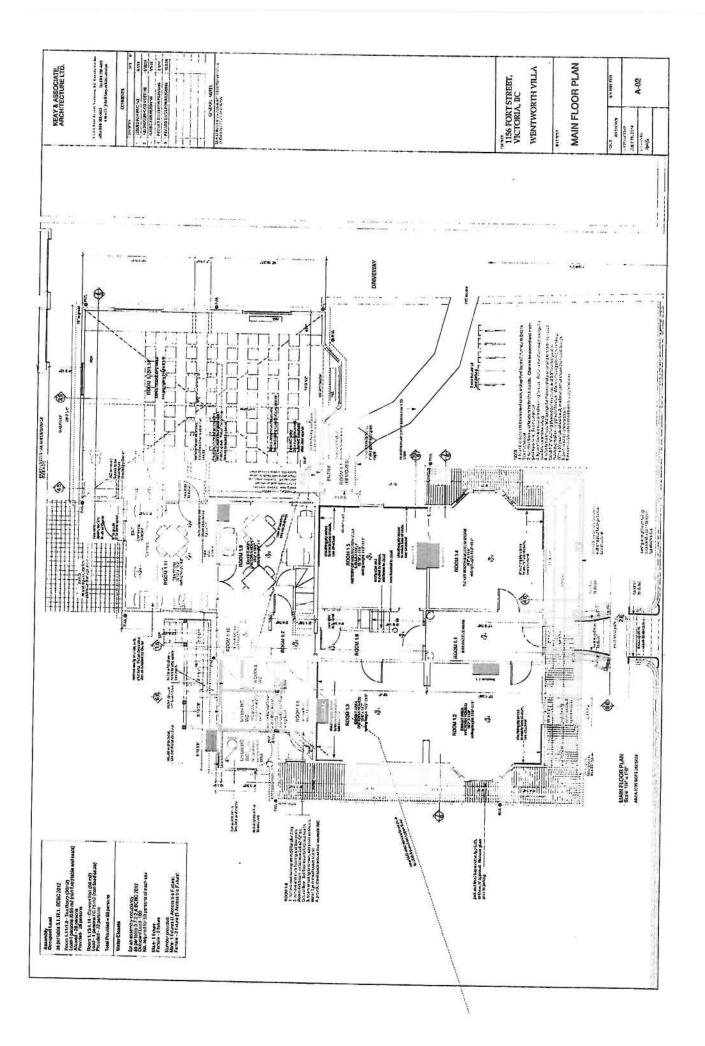
Thank you for your consideration of this application, we look forward to explaining it in further detail to Council.

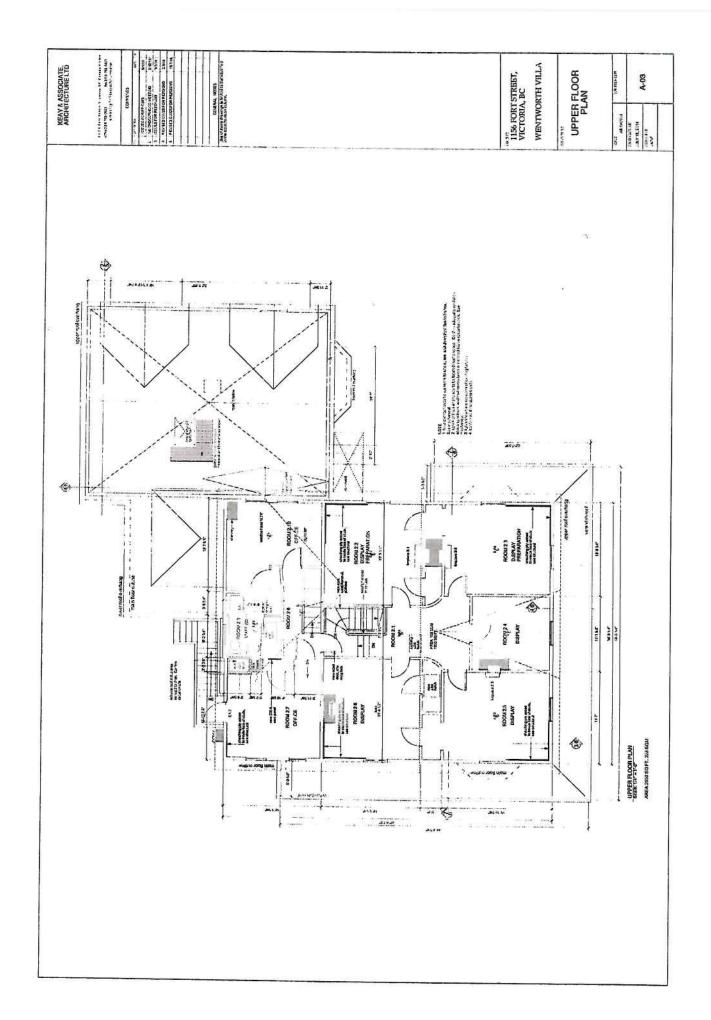
Yours truly,

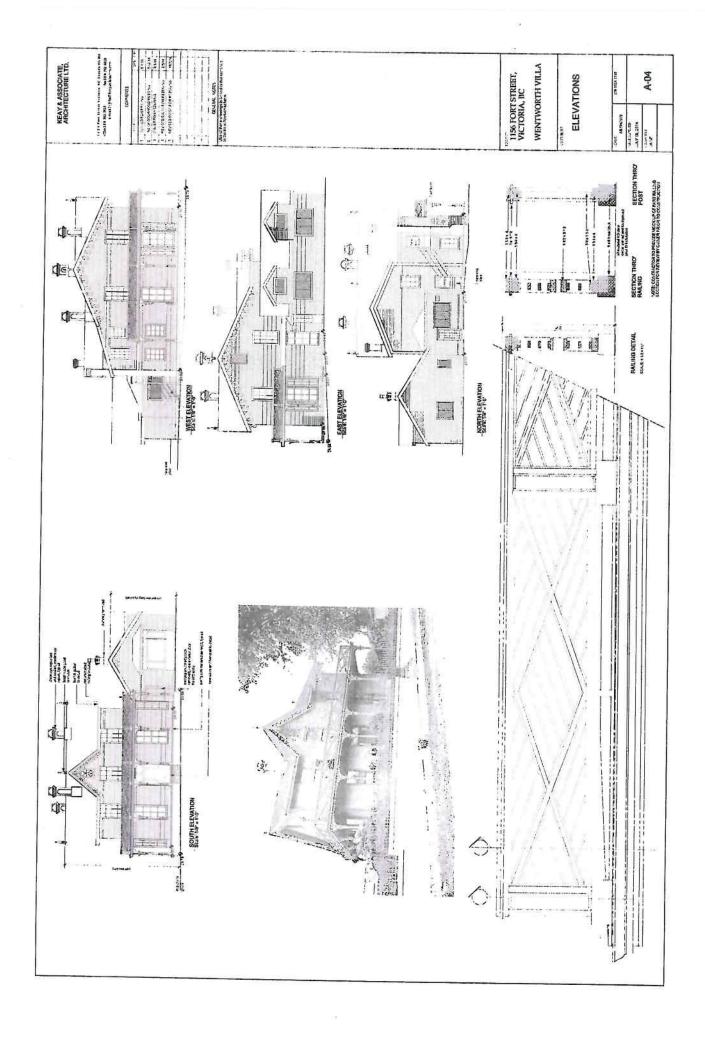
John Keay, Architect

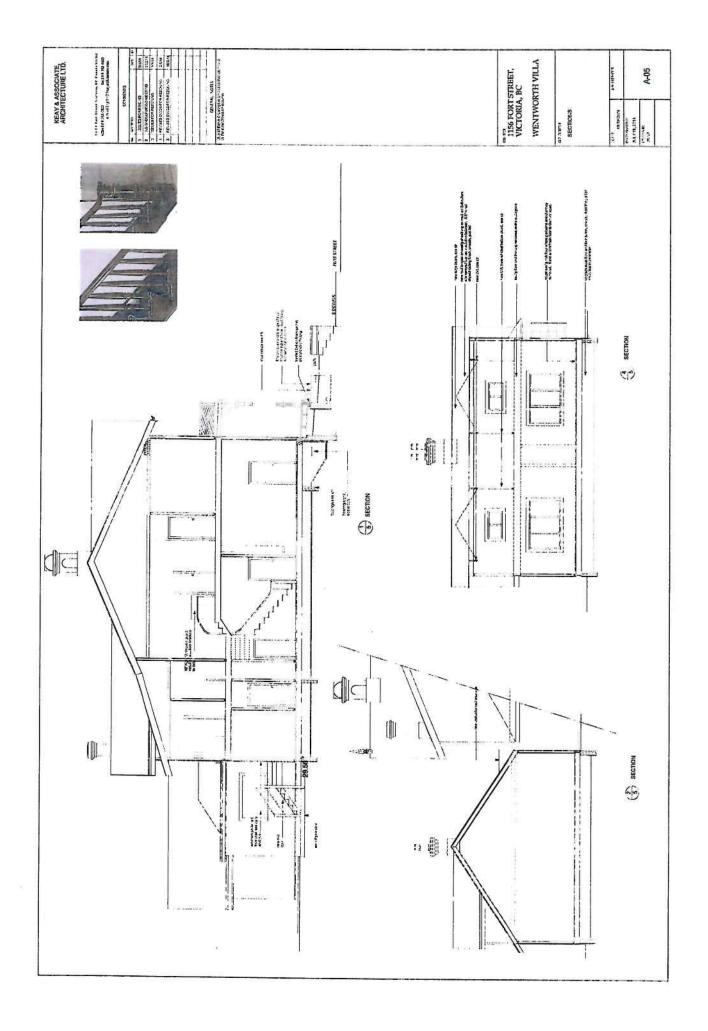
cc: Stefan and Magda Opalski

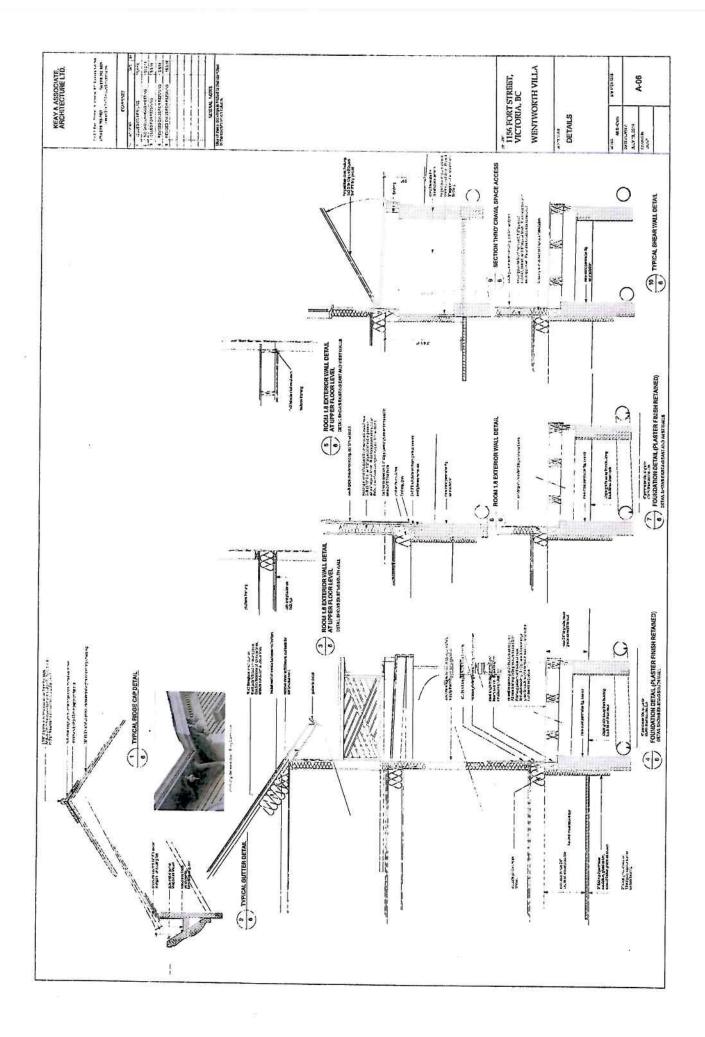


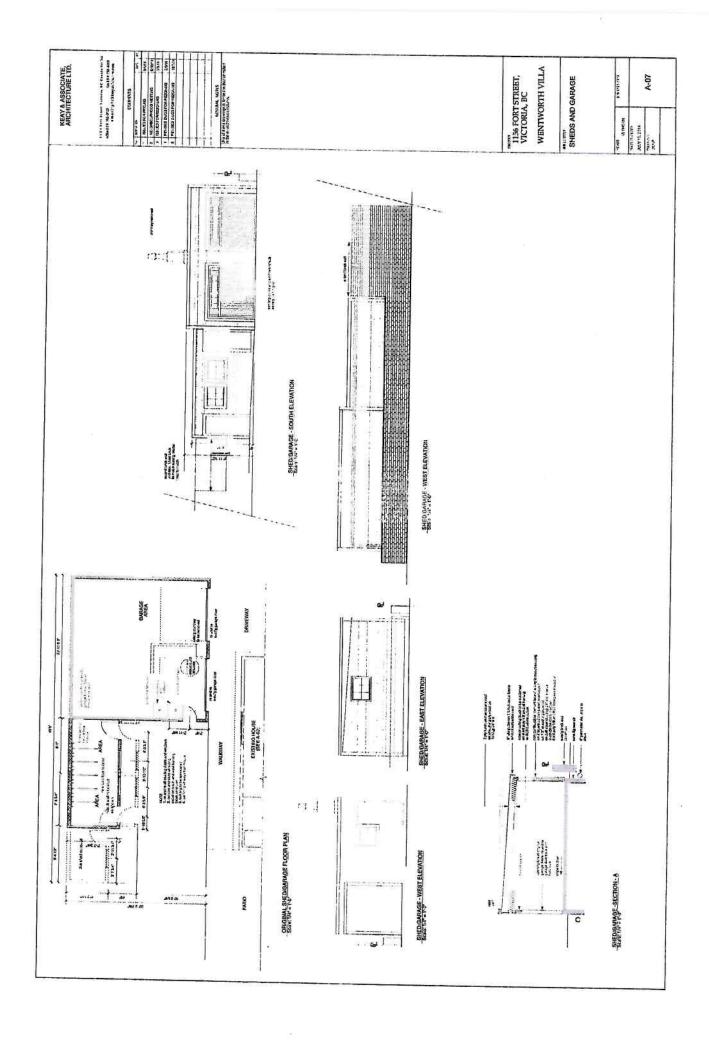


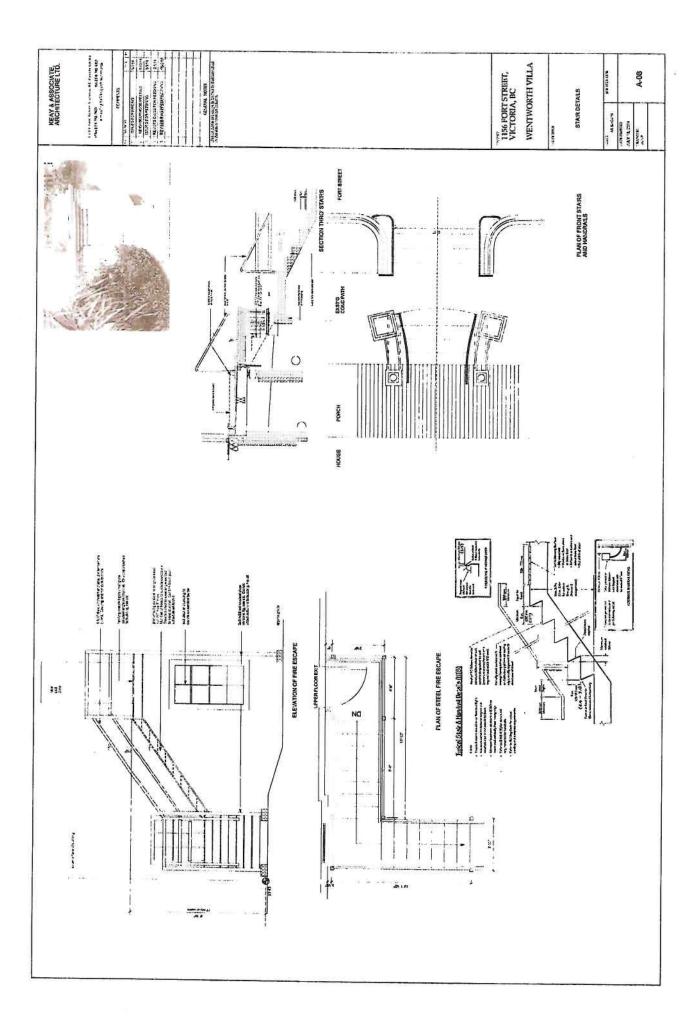


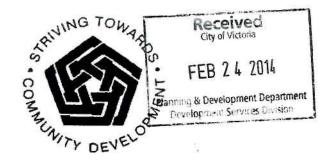












Land Use Committee Fernwood Community Association 1923 Fernwood Road Victoria, BC V8T 2Y6 Phone/Fax: (250) 384-7441

Email: landuse@fernwoodvic.ca

February 22, 2014

Mayor and Council City of Victoria

Re: Rezoning Application for 1156 Fort Street

Dear Mayor and Council:

On February 05, 2014 the proposed redevelopment of 1156 Fort Street was presented at the Fernwood Community Association Land Use Committee meeting. This Official Community Meeting was attended by ten people where the proponents and there architect presented their plans and answered questions.

All in attendance at the meeting fully supported this property being used as a museum and were pleased to see this property being secured for generations to come.

Sincerely,

David Maxwell, Chair Land Use Committee

Fernwood Community Association

Pc: Planning and Development Department, City of Victoria