



**JBNA**

234 Menzies St  
Victoria, B.C.  
V8V 2G7

## **James Bay Neighbourhood Association**

[www.jbna.org](http://www.jbna.org)

December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013

Mayor Fortin,  
City of Victoria

**Re: Victoria Accord - Public Input/Consultation and the CALUC process**

Dear Mayor Fortin,

On Wednesday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, JBNA held the second of the public meetings focused on the proposed build-out of the complexes committed as part of the Capital Park project. The focus of the meeting was the subdivisions of South Block and Q-lot.

The issues and objections raised by residents at the meeting were NOT, in the main, directed to the subdivision but to the honouring of the Victoria Accord, the heritage houses, parking and traffic, and *the unknown* as a specific build-out proposal has not been presented.

Attached you will find an excerpt from the draft December 11<sup>th</sup> JBNA general meeting,

At the December 2<sup>nd</sup> Open House and December 11<sup>th</sup> JBNA meeting, residents completed 83 surveys. The survey is now available on the JBNA web-site and to date we have received an additional 54 survey responses. It is our intention to summarize the surveys responses and present the results at a Council meeting in January.

Sincerely,

Marg Gardiner  
President, JBNA

Tom Coyle  
Chair, JBNA CALUC

Cc: Jocelyn Jenkyns  
Deb Day  
Brian Sikstrom

## JBNA December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013 General Meeting

Victoria Accord – Re-Zoning of Legislative Precinct – Province of BC

Introduction by Marg Gardiner on the project and JBNA's role. The timeline: rezoning for office use at JBNA November meeting, subdivision of Q-lot & South Block tonight and sale of land (March 2014). City processes would follow, dealing with requests to alter lots or zoning.

### **Jim Baker, Shared Services BC: Sub-division of lands of the sale package.**

The project description included Victoria Accord history, and:

- ~ The Government of BC is commitment to a 20-year lease of 180,000 sqft to support 1125 employees, additional office and commercial space, another 140 housing units. Office buildings to be built to LEED gold standard. Government offices will be anchored in James Bay.
- ~ Parking lots – 303 stalls on South Block will become 563 lots underground.
- ~ Provisions for heritage building restoration is included.
- ~ On Q-Lot, the Camelot care complex and the Kew Court subsidized housing complex fulfilled part of the Victoria Accord.
- ~ Many development controls in place through 1994 Victoria Accord & renewed agreements.
- ~ RFP asked developers to assume the Accord's position.

Rezoning is underway to address an inadvertent omission of permitted office use in a 2007 rezoning process. The subdivision application of South Block and Q-lot may require an OCP amendment. Development Permits and amendment to the master development agreement will also be needed.

The subdivision is the subject of this meeting. BC Gov't will retain ownership of the Queens Printer and heritage buildings on Government St on South-Block and most of Q-lot .

## **Excerpt: JBNA December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013 General Meeting Draft Minutes**

### Questions/Comments/Responses

C: The accord was suggested as being secure, and then changes were hinted at – many of us fear change, that the accord will expire and will not be observed. I'd like it to be upheld.

A: The development schedule will have to change. Commercial space was supposed to be built out first, followed by residential, then offices last. Residential won't be built first – there is a requirement that office space be made available according to a schedule.

C: Lewis Street resident: The 5 heritage houses were to be moved down to Michigan. I've since heard that there is a proposal to put them on Q lot. It's a daft idea. I'm opposed to them being moved off South Block. They need to be designated, restored, retained.

C: San Jose resident: I agree with previous comments. The community garden needs to be retained too. It could become an interesting piece of ecology amongst big buildings. It could be a charming oasis. It's important; it feeds low income people. I'll fight to keep it.

C: Fairfield resident: I want to see a percentage of the land preserved as public park.

Q: Resident of 400 block Government: Victoria Accord states traffic must be considered before anything happens; there needs to be a means of getting in & out of James Bay. That hasn't been done – with three times as many employees, how are they to commute & park?

A: Fewer parking requirements are anticipated, as more spaces will be provided. The Transportation plan has been partly fulfilled – we've provided bus stops on Government Street. Any development proposal will need to consider transportation.



C: The Duet was supposed to be built as senior housing, but suddenly sold to a developer.

Q: Regarding the process – a plan normally goes with a rezoning application. What we've been told is that plans aren't yet available, but we want to take the next step. That's not the way it's normally done – can someone from the City clarify?

A: This is a little different because the building concept is already in the accord. The rezoning application now underway affirms the original intent of the accord.

Q: Presently the land can only be used for public buildings – is that correct? We were told there had been a mistake. I participated in the accord process and have faith in that work. I am concerned we're being asked to trust the process, but it seems we are one step ahead already – we need to see the proposals, to see the specific plans.

A: If a plan comes forward that's not in keeping with the intent of the accord, it will have to go through the whole rezoning process.

Q: About Q-Lot – the James Bay Market space. It's not being developed right now, and you're retaining it for parking, right? Is the green space threatened? Will it remain?

A: Currently there is no plan to change it ... but current use is not a perpetuity.

Q: Montreal St resident: We'll hold your feet to the fire on the accord. If you assume this should be built, you could not get a more sensitive plan – right down to the trees. There are issues with traffic, gardens, heritage houses to be resolved. This is better than having the property sold to the private sector with no obligation. If the developer follows the design guidelines, it will be a huge plus for the community. All must be considered – but we must hold to the design guidelines. We are hopeful new families will move here, bring new vitality. The community suffers for the parking lots, they discourage tourists from entering the community. We need respectable building frontages. Parking lots discourage.

Q: What happens in February, when the accord has ended? Will all this work be honoured?

A: I believe so, from what I've seen. The JBNA has been a strong advocate for the community, we hear them.

C: Regarding the heritage houses – they should remain on South block, fronting on Michigan. They are protected under the accord – but who's going to pay to save the houses, and who's responsible for their upkeep and development?

A: They are part of the sale, conditions being that they be relocated and refurbished.

C: Maintaining sightlines to the dome – everyone should look from corner of Michigan and Menzies – it should remain on the diagonal. I'd like to see that in the plan.

A: It's part of the accord document – a change will trigger full public process.

Q: The accord contemplated the whole project, now it's being sold off piece meal. Will a new accord be created for the residual lands of Q-Lot?

A: We've been talking to the City about that – it's 20 years old and in need of change.

C: If you parcel some off now, then obviously a new accord for Q-Lot is needed.

Q: Resident Toronto/Michigan: I asked at the last meeting whether houses could be designated heritage by the City before anything happens. A developer will see the houses as an impediment & take a quick way out to restore them. What developers call restoration and heritage people call restoration is very different. The houses need to be considered.

A: I expect they will need to get permits to move them anywhere.

C: Both the City and the Province need to be involved in that process.

C: I am more worried about Q Lot than South block due to the expiration of the Accord in June. I hope the City will negotiate a new accord for Q-lot. Regarding the garden, JBNA has identified another couple of spots, and Chris Coleman is working on it.