

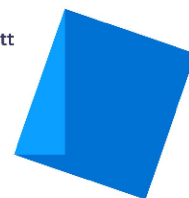
1212 Vista Heights

Rezoning (REZ00809) & Development Permit (DP000639) Applications

Letter to Mayor & Council

Revised February 26th, 2024

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Letter to Mayor and Council (Revised) – City of Victoria

Situated in the Hillside-Quadra neighbourhood, this proposal is for a new two storey, two-family dwelling building, to be built on the site of an existing older single family house and detached garage. The current "R1-B" zoning would allow the construction of the building as proposed however the "R1-B" designation only permits a second family as a rented secondary or garden suite. This effectively prohibits the second family from owning their home, and demands they occupy their home only as renters without the option of ownership. Not only does this exclude that family from ownership of their home, but it also requires the landlord household bear the full expense of the property ownership.

This Rezoning Application seeks to remove this barrier by rezoning to the "R-2" two-family dwelling district, making dual home ownership possible through strata titling the property. In this way, we seek to expand home ownership in the established and desirable Hillside-Quadra neighbourhood, while integrating the new development with its primarily detached single-family context.

As a duplex home proposal within "Missing Middle" Development Permit Area (DPA) 15F of the Official Community Plan (OCP), the project is defined as "Missing Middle Development" under items 2(a)(a) and (2)(b), and therefore subject to a requirement for a development permit and consideration of the Missing Middle Design Guidelines (2022). Though the proposal embeds the principles of the Missing Middle Design Guidelines, as a two-family dwelling (i.e. having fewer than three self-contained dwelling units), the proposal does not constitute a "houseplex" as defined in Schedule "P" of the Zoning Regulation Bylaw.

Description of Proposal

The new duplex maintains the current driveway location and is sited to preserve the rear yard and ensure required parking is behind the front setback. With a gradual slope across the site that is higher at the rear, the two homes are configured in a front-back arrangement with an offset Western aspect that enables each to have a street facing entrance and orientation. Each home will thus have direct access to a separate yard without need for divisive fencing and while minimizing the length of shared wall between them for improved acoustic privacy. To further enhance access and housing inclusivity, the South unit has been designed as an adaptable dwelling unit and shall meet BC Building Code requirements for a cost effective conversion for accessibility.

Two electrified parking spaces are proposed located behind the front setback in a configuration described by the Guideline, to be surfaced with unit pavers for permeability and aesthetic appeal. The front unit amenity will be neatly defined with high quality landscape screening, and new wood fencing at the West and North sides shall

create privacy, screen the parking, and delineate the common bicycle and recycling areas. Attention has also been paid to neighbour overlook and privacy concerns, particularly for Eastern neighbour's second storey window, as windows have been deliberately located to limit views.

Neighbour concerns given voice at the CALUC meeting have been addressed through various measures. Fencing was expanded as requested by immediate neighbours to provide privacy and separation, including where the proposed parking area abuts the neighbouring lot. Landscape plantings and replacement tree species have been selected and identified on a landscape plan for clarity.

Planning Policy & Guidelines

Though the Rezoning application process for this project predates the approval of the “Missing Middle Housing” Schedule “P” regulation, the design process incorporates many best practices for duplexes as identified in the “Missing Middle Design Guidelines”. The offset front-back orientation maintains a pattern of landscaped front and back yards and allow different floor elevations in response to the natural topography, enabling direct connection with the outdoor yards. This also facilitates adaptable access for the Southern unit, which is entered off a semi-private and sun-facing patio facing the street to enrich and enliven Vista Heights. Site landscaping promotes permeability, and includes plantings specifically chosen to encourage and support pollinators.

The project advances a gentle density approach, and embeds multiple goals identified in the Official Community Plan (OCP), particularly those related to housing affordability. Strata division of the lot shall make ownership more affordable and diversify the range of housing choices within the neighbourhood.

With the supply of adaptable and accessible housing being particularly constrained, the inclusion of an adaptable dwelling unit is also supportive of diversity and demographic change. Adaptable dwelling units can help to accommodate a wide range of life and familial circumstances, including aging in place, injury or disability, mobility impairments, multi-generational living, et cetera, in direct support of the following OCP objectives:

- 13(b) "That housing affordability is enabled for housing types across the housing spectrum, particularly for people in core housing need."
- 13(d) "That a wide range of housing choices is available within neighbourhoods to support a diverse, inclusive and multigenerational community."

Materials are robust but residential in nature and comprise a combination of white and a classic dark blue. Generous canopies will bring livability to wet winters and bring clarity to the front door locations. At two storeys, the modest scale of the proposal readily integrates into the neighbourhood and minimizes impacts on others.

Though not technically a “houseplex” on account of having only two dwellings, the project nevertheless is demonstrative of the Guidelines’ typology specific guidelines for them, including legible front entries and maximizing landscaping and softening at the front yard.

Green Building Features

Multiple green features are integrated, proposed and made possible with this proposal, the most consequential of which may be the compact siting of the building. With the increased rear yard setback of "R-2" zoning, and with the efficient building footprint proposed, the resulting open site space (over 62%) is more than double the

"R-2" minimum requirement (30%). The driveway and parking shall both be surfaced in permeable pavers, reducing surface runoff and demand on the municipal stormwater system. The East planting area will be planted with lower allergen pollinator species and supported through the dry summers with irrigation from a rain barrel.

Consideration is also given to protecting and enhancing the urban forest in the siting and landscape design. Two trees are proposed removed for the development, with one of the required replacement trees proposed planted off-site at the City's discretion through payment to the Tree Reserve.

Multi-modal transportation options are also embedded in the design. Two parking spaces are required and proposed, and each shall be electrified in accordance with City bylaws. The site plan further incorporates dedicated space for two oversized bicycles, to support and encourage car-free mobility and reduce overall demand within the neighbourhood for parking. These spaces can be used for standard, cargo, child carrier or recumbent bicycles - or even mobility scooters. Nearby improvements to the bicycle route network are making cycling increasingly convenient and easy as a primary mode of transportation.

Summary

This duplex proposal seeks Rezoning to allow shared ownership by rezoning to a "two-family" dwelling district. On a comparatively small site, we feel the duplex is highly livable and well-integrated in its neighbourhood and provides the added benefits of a new adaptable dwelling unit and green features to support and enhance natural systems.

Kind Regards,

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

Tim Kindrat, Architect AIBC

Associate Principal, Christine Lintott Architects Inc.

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on behalf of the Owner of 1212 Vista Heights, Mr. Charles Chang

[Green Building Indicators List follows on next page]

Appendix: Green Building Indicators List

Transportation

- Both vehicular stalls to have EV chargers per Schedule C
- Two (2) enhanced, 2.4m long bicycle spaces

Energy Efficiency

- Highly efficient building configuration
- Step 3 performance under BC Energy Step Code

Renewable Energy

- Pre-plumbing to be solar hot water ready
- Structural support for future photovoltaics (PVs)

Water

- Rainwater barrel for dry season irrigation

Site Permeability

- Open site space more than double minimum requirement
- Permeable paving at driveway and patios

Landscaping and Urban Forest

- Overall increase in number of trees
- Two existing trees removed; three replacements on site + 1 Tree Reserve payment-in-lieu

Urban Agriculture

- Locations for future vegetable gardens identified
- East landscaping selections comprised of lower allergen pollinator plants