

Terry Crawford
1676 St Francis Wood
Victoria, BC V8S1X6
250-388-5726
terry.crawford@ubc.ca

October 24, 2023

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

Dear Mayor and Members of the Council:

I am requesting (with the assistance of Lida Homes and Adapt Design) a Development permit for 1638 Redfern Street. The existing house was built in 1903 and was later moved to a new foundation so that the property could be subdivided into two small lots. It was placed on a very inadequate foundation with no corner posts. When my late husband and I bought it in 1993 the house was noticeably tilted (we hoped it had settled) but over the years more and more cracks have appeared in the plaster. (See attached photo.) **In summary, the existing house is not structurally sound.**

I hope to build a new home on this site in which I may age in place.

The existing house **has no main floor bedroom and has narrow hallways.** In the new house, the main floor will have an open plan with a single wide hallway and wide doorways so that it is wheelchair accessible. There will be room in the kitchen and bath for a wheelchair to turn around. The attached garage will have a charger for an electric car or for a mobility scooter. The second floor will have bedrooms for a caregiver, if necessary, and for visitors and the existence of the second floor will make this house adaptable to future owners.

The minimal small lot setback requirements for the front and back yards would result in a very narrow house front to back (7.16 m) which is not a footprint which can fulfill the above requirements. There would not be room for a main floor bedroom plus room for a wheelchair to maneuver. **In summary, a variance is needed to make the new house suitable for an elderly and/or disabled person to live in.**

The variance I am seeking is to reduce the setback along Leighton Rd (which will be the front of the house) from 6 m to 4.98 m for a new house on this corner lot. In the neighbourhood (Redfern St and Leighton Rd) there are a wide variety of set-backs, ranging from more than 6 m to as little as 0. When the new house is built the front door will be on Leighton Rd. The setbacks for the neighbouring houses are 3.83 m for 1921 Leighton Rd. and 4.75 m for 1915 Leighton Rd.

Reducing the setback along Leighton from the mandated 6m to 4.98 m would make possible a main floor plan that will be accessible. When my

time in the new house is over (I am 78) this house with the main floor bedroom would meet the needs of many kinds of families, including those with elderly grandparents or others who need accessible housing. Since the house will have no basement, the entrance will have one step only and the attached garage will open into the house with no steps. The small flat yard will be easy to maintain, and its location one block from Oak Bay Avenue and one block from Save On Foods (though Redfern Park) is ideal for the elderly or disabled. I believe that the new house will be an asset to the housing stock in the City of Victoria, where such houses are extremely rare.

Please note: Although the address of the lot is on Redfern St., the city considers Leighton Rd. as the front of the house. In addition I prefer to have Leighton as the front of the house as that makes the the backyard South facing. This area, which is at the side of the existing house, is currently being used as the back yard. This provides a pleasant shared landscape with the neighbour on Redfern St.

The Development Permit Information form lists a number of other details that should be addressed. (1) the project benefit has been discussed above.

(2) Neighbourhood and design: The design of the house is similar to the one it is replacing, which originally was an Edwardian farm house.

(3) Transportation: The garage will have room for one car or a mobility scooter and one bike. Excellent bus service is nearby.

(4) The existing house is not a heritage building.

(5) **The following items support sustainability:**

Green building features include a heat pump and Solar hot water. There will be no gas in the house, so all energy used will be renewable. Modern insulation, double glazing and an HVAC will conserve much energy in comparison to the current house. The garage will have wiring roughed in for a charger for an electric car. A passive design feature that will save energy in the Summer is the large overhang above the windows on the South side of the house, where there will also be 3 deciduous trees.

For water conservation, the toilets will be dual flush and the showers low flow. Native plants and established plants in the front yard will require little water.

Reuse and recycling: The bathroom fixtures and kitchen cupboards will be reused or donated to Habitat for Humanity if possible. Building materials such as wood and metal will be recycled.

Stormwater management: Permeable surfaces will be used for the driveway and the patio. There will be no net loss of trees and the existing shrubs on the North and East side will be protected.

Urban agriculture: if there is room I will plant 2 dwarf fruit trees and have a small raised bed for salad greens

(6) Since this house is a replacement, the basic infrastructure is already in place.

I have asked all of the immediate neighbours to sign the Neighbourhood Petition for the development to go ahead. One declined to sign but all 6 of the others were in favour.

Yours sincerely
(Mrs.) Terry Crawford

