

September 29, 2022

Mayor and Council
c/o Development Services
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC



NsqArchitecture Ltd.

1060 Meares Street
Victoria, BC, V8V 3J6
p. 250.382.3823
e. nsqa@nsqa.ca

RE: 623/625 Avalon Rezoning and Development Permit Application

Dear Mayor and Council;

We are writing you in regards to an application for rezoning of the property located at 623/625 Avalon Road to allow for the existing garden house to be developed as a garden suite.

The property is currently zoned R-2 Two Family Dwelling District and has two buildings on the property, the main house that includes two family dwelling units and a garden house which is currently used for storage. The main heritage building was restored and added to in 2017. At the time the garden house had its exterior finishes repaired and updated to match the original house. All water, sewer and electrical services were replaced. The owners received a Hallmark Heritage Society Award of Merit in 2019 for the restoration.

The owners are looking to rezone their property to allow for the existing garden house to be converted to a garden suite. Exterior alterations would be minor, with only adding 3 skylights to bring in natural light and changing the existing window openings on the west elevation to patio doors. Since the building is existing, the owners would like to maintain the current entrance locations to keep exterior alterations to a minimum. We have added signage in a number of locations, directing guests or deliveries to the suite front door. The height of the building, setbacks, and window and door locations will remain unchanged. Completion of the interior would include a full bathroom with shower, kitchen, living space, studio space and storage mezzanine. The studio space will be for the sole use of the tenant of the garden suite, for whatever they wish. This could include an art or fitness studio, a workshop or a bedroom.

The current property was professionally landscaped following the restoration, including the addition of ten large trees. Permeable pavers are used throughout the property for hard surfaces as well as stepping stones through green spaces. The only proposed landscape change is to delineate the garden suite outdoor space by installation of square lattice fence panels tied into the existing boundary fence.

The garden suite will be constructed using current codes and standards and every effort will be to increase energy efficiency where possible. A significant energy efficient component is that the owners are repurposing and insulating an existing building rather

than demolishing and building from new, thereby providing a substantial positive environmental impact. The service upgrade in 2017 included electrical input and output services in preparation for solar panels for the garden suite, as well as the duplex. A circuit for future car-charging was also installed for the property.

The property currently has 1 legal non-conforming parking stall that was approved through a previous Heritage Alteration Permit in 2017. The City of Victoria bylaws do not require additional parking for a garden suite. The property is in close proximity to public transit and within walking distance to downtown and basic amenities and the owners included secure bike parking within the garden suite. The owners are pro alternative and public transportation with household members holding 2 car-share memberships and a bus pass. For a tenant living in the garden suite, an additional bus pass or car-share membership will be provided.

The City of Victoria, Transportation Department has requested a Statutory Right-of-Way (SRW) of 1.41m of the front property line for future city planning plans. The property is within the Avalon-Huntington Heritage Conservation Area; eight of the ten houses on this block are designated heritage homes and a number of owners have done considerable work to maintain their heritage buildings in this heritage conservation area. The involved one-block portion of Avalon Road is a dead-end street with priority through access for pedestrians and bicycle traffic. As outlined in the City of Victoria's Official Community Plan for heritage conservation areas such as the Avalon-Huntington area, the objective of this designation is to conserve and enhance the special features such as the historic streetscapes and street patterns in these residential areas. Implementing the requested SRW plan will not only change the historic streetscape, but also necessitate the removal of 3 mature shade trees and low stone wall created from the original stone foundation of the house. In addition, strong opposition from the neighbours to the requested SRW has been voiced to Mayor and Council. The location of the requested SRW is shown on the architectural plans but because of the above, the owners respectfully decline to allow the City access to 1.41m of their front property, as they wish to continue to maintain the historic and peaceful feel of this dead-end avenue.

The proposed application has one variance due to the rear yard site coverage. Under Schedule M of the Garden Suite Bylaws the allowable maximum rear yard site coverage is 25% and our proposed rear yard site coverage is currently at 28.1%. Although this is not changing from the existing approved site conditions, as the use of the garden house is changing from accessory building to garden suite, the variance applies.

The owners have made every effort to consult with their neighbourhood regarding the application and have received many letters in support for the garden suite from neighbours directly affected by the property in question, as well as from others

throughout James Bay.

We believe this application provides an opportunity to establish a nonintrusive additional dwelling in an area of high demand for housing. Thank you for your time in reviewing this proposal.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicole Parker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nicole Parker | Architectural Technologist AIBC