

November 20, 2020

Mayor Lisa Helps and Councillors
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, B.C. V8W 1P6

1 Description of Proposal

1737 Rockland is Earl Large's (owner of Large and Co.) private home which he has lovingly restored. The home was built in 1899 and its original character has been well maintained. It remains a single-family residence - probably one of the few in Rockland that has not been broken into smaller units. A *Statement of Significance has been prepared by a Heritage Consultant.*

Our proposal is to retain the existing significant home and designate the exterior and interior foyer. It is in very good condition with a few exterior repairs and upgrades required. (*A Conservation Plan has been prepared by a Heritage Consultant*). The rock wall along Rockland Avenue is a character-defining historic feature and is being preserved as per the submitted design and Heritage Conservation Report. An accessory building would be built at the rear of the home.

The property is big - 2,713 m² (29,202 ft²) and with the existing home sitting up high in the top SW corner right at Rockland Avenue it leaves quite a bit of land to build two additional two storey homes behind the principle residence.

The objective of our application is to honour the beauty and importance of this 1899 Samuel McClure home. The proposed new houses are designed to compliment its heritage style, character and scale yet not detract from its significance. The slope of the land from Rockland down the back, allows the principal residence to be a focal point at Rockland Avenue with the 2 new houses sited unobtrusively below.

Rockland is primarily a historic residential neighbourhood with ground oriented housing. We understand residents want to preserve Rockland's unique historic character and they do not want big development. Our proposal honours both of these desires by preserving and designating the original home and its entrance, and by offering only two additional homes on the large remaining property so as not to pressure the site.



Existing Property Today



Designated Property with 2 New Homes

2 Government Policies

The OCP is looking to balance the need for new housing and retention of heritage assets. This proposal fully supports this initiative.

Because of Rockland's notable historic architectural and landscape character, the OCP asks us to:

- Support the maintenance of existing dwellings and character through sensitive infill that preserves green space and estate features.
- Continue to conserve the historic architectural and landscape character of the Rockland neighbourhood.
- Encourage a diversity of population and housing in consideration of the Rockland neighbourhood's heritage and estate character.
- Create designs that relate to the land's topography.
- Achieve a high quality of architecture in the design of new dwellings, as well as a high quality of landscape and urban design to enhance the neighbourhood.

The location is ideal being close to goods and services as well as transit which reduces reliance on cars. By including electric car chargers for each home, we are furthering sustainable and climate initiatives.

3 Project Benefits

1. Preservation and designation of an 1899 Samuel McClure historical home and its foyer, as a single-family residence.
2. Responsible use of a large piece of available land to provide additional housing.
3. Building housing in a central, walkable location.
4. Introduction of 27 new trees, over 300 adaptive and native species shrubs and hundreds of adaptive and native species groundcovers and perennials.

4 Design and Neighbourhood Context

4.1 Neighbourhood

The sloping land, the size of the property and siting of the existing home makes this a unique opportunity to provide additional housing to Victoria residents. Because the outdoor recreation space for the existing home is largely out front, the large amount of land in the rear is not needed to support it. The additional dwellings will sit on decent sized lots and pretty much go unnoticed to those passing by. They are sited to maximize privacy for all neighbours.

4.2 Building

The existing home will remain on its own lot with the bottom portion of the property being subdivided to accommodate two new homes. Each of these homes will be 2 storeys with 4 bedrooms and 3.5 baths. Working with the topography is encouraged in the design guidelines so we designed the new homes to follow the natural grade with the principal residence being the focal point at the top of the property at Rockland Avenue, and the lowest home reading as a single storey. The new houses are designed to compliment the existing home's style and character.

4.3 Landscape

There are 19 bylaw protected trees identified for this development: 8 on-site and 11 off-site. Thirteen of these, including all the off-site trees, are being preserved; 6 of the on-site trees have been recommended for removal by the Arborist. We are proposing adding 27 new trees to the site.

The following is from LADR Landscape: (Original letter is part of the application package)

Context

The proposal for 1737 Rockland Avenue envisions two residential lots on a large open space east of the private home built in 1899 by architect Samuel McClure, and lovingly restored by Earl Large. As the current driveway entrance will be retained (only minor adjustments needed), the heritage house and Rockland streetscape character will be preserved. Given the size of the heritage house and slope of the land, it is likely the two new homes will be invisible from Rockland Ave.

All off-site trees close to the property line and the mature on-site conifer located just off the north property line near the northeast corner (tree #135) will be retained. The developer and design team recognize the value of mature trees in terms of wildlife food/habitat, carbon absorption, shade, stormwater management, and beauty and neighbourhood character. Although six on-site trees must be removed in the course of development, twenty-seven will be planted (better than 4:1 ratio).

The site slopes dramatically from west to east, with a grade difference of approximately 9m from its Rockland frontage to its lower Richmond Road neighbour. The intermittent bedrock outcrops found on site be retained where possible and used for garden walls in instances where they must be removed.

On-Site Storm Water Management

Of the 2713m² site (including the proposed ROW), approximately 1035m², or 38% of the site, comprises planting beds or lawn area, natural stone outcrops that drain to permeable landscape and decorative porous aggregate borders. The porous asphalt driveway which the adjacent concrete walk drains to is approximately 475m² or 17.5% of the site, meaning that the porous driveway and absorbent landscape alone cover approximately 55.5% of the site.

It should also be noted that approximately 109m² concrete sidewalk (4% of site), the existing house patios/walkways and the lot 2 and 3 patios (collectively approximately 180m² or 6.6% of the site), all drain to absorbent landscape and have no impact on the storm system. That is an additional 10.6% of the site that benefits from the 55.5% absorbent landscape.

Plant selections reflect a commitment to resiliency, biodiversity, native and adaptive species, seasonal interest, and low maintenance.

5 Green Building

The following features are proposed for this project:

- Retaining and designating the existing heritage home.
- New homes constructed under Step 3 building code requirements.
- Electric car chargers for each new home.
- Permeable driveway.
- Onsite rain water management.
- Native and adaptive vegetation throughout the landscape.
- Rear yard space available for vegetable gardens and fruit trees as desired.
- Water conservation through low flow faucets, showerheads and toilets.

6 Community Engagement

Two meetings were held with the Rockland CALUC Executive (May 06, 2020 and June 11, 2020). Comments from the first meeting resulted in a complete redesign of the exterior by Zebra Design Group to ensure the new homes were more complimentary to the heritage aspects of the existing home. The Heritage Consultant has reviewed and approved the designs and color choices.

A meeting was held on Sept 11, 2020 by neighbours on Lyman Duff. We attended and answered questions as required.

Further community input was done through DEV TRACKER under the new COVID protocols set out by the City.

7 Summary

As a built out city it is a challenge to balance the accommodation of any type of new housing with other values such as retaining heritage buildings and resources. Our proposal fully embraces this challenge by designating and preserving one of the few remaining heritage single family homes in Rockland and proposing single family homes in-keeping with Rockland's character. This proposal is a reasonable and respectful use of the property.

Thank you for considering this application.

Sincerely,

Kim Colpman
Applicant