

515 & 519 Rithet Street  
Proposed Re-Zoning – Pre-Application CALUC Meeting  
Summary Letter



October 16, 2023

Attention: JBNA Development Review Committee  
Tim Van Alstine, Linda Carlson, Trevor Moat  
CC: Development Services, City of Victoria

Good Day,

We are pleased to submit this Pre-Application Re-Zoning Summary Letter for 515/519 Rithet Street on behalf of James Bay Ventures Ltd. (the Owner). The development proposes to construct a five-storey multi-unit residential building with underground parking. The 16-unit building will provide 1, 2 and 3-bedroom condominium suites.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This project on Rithet Street is the fourth multi-unit residential project in the Casman Properties portfolio in the Greater Victoria area. Each of these projects has been thoughtfully designed to meet the needs and character of their surrounding neighborhood, all of which are proudly built by Casman Projects, a division of the Casman Group, who have been building neighborhoods for over 40 years.

Shortly after purchasing the property in 2021, the Owner undertook a consultation process with the owners of neighboring properties, the JBNA, and with City of Victoria planning staff to achieve a project which compliments its surroundings and provides a desired mix of housing to the community. A Development Permit with Variances (Application No. 00187) was previously approved by the Mayor and Council on September 8<sup>th</sup> 2022, however to satisfy Structural and Seismic requirements of the forthcoming Building Code, and improve upon the Multi Transportation and Mobility Approach of the project, and better address the need for both down-sizing and family friendly housing, a revised design is being proposed. The revised design maintains the aesthetic character of the previous iteration as well as the considerations that had been taken in regards to the addressing the privacy of the neighboring properties.

#### **EXISTING ZONING, OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN (OCP) AND SITE CHARACTERISTICS**

The current zoning is R3-2 Multiple Dwelling District

The site is located in the block between Dallas, Menzies, Rithet and South Turner. Rithet is a Local Street with the main access from Menzies St. which is a Secondary Collector. The OCP identifies most of the block (including the project site) as 'Urban Residential'. 'Traditional Residential' areas are present on Menzies St. adjacent to the project site and further on South Turner Street.

This proposed development conforms with the Vision in the citywide context and Strategic directions of the OCP contributing to:

- Increase the city's residential stock (OCP 21.15.6)
- Maintain a variety of housing types and tenures for a range of age groups and incomes (OCP 21.16.1)
- Maintain an interesting diversity of land uses, housing types and character areas (OCP 21.16.3).

The 2 parcels incorporated by the proposal are 963.1 m<sup>2</sup> in total area and are currently occupied by 2 houses and one single car garage. Neither home has heritage status.

The site is generally flat sloping down approximately 0.7m from the south to the north corner of the property and approximately 0.5m along Rithet Street.

The neighbourhood encompasses a mix of Four-plex Rental (37 Menzies and Rithet corner), Tri-Plex (29 Menzies), 5-Suite Rental (23 Menzies), 5-Suite Transient Hotel-style Vacation Accommodations (19 Menzies), 6-Suite Short-Term Rental (15 Menzies), 7-Suite Condominium (502 Dallas), 4-storey multi-unit residential buildings, a 7-storey building at Rithet / South Turner St. corner, a 12-storey high Beckley Manor and the 4-storey Somerset House retirement living on Dallas Road. The immediate neighbourhood does not have a consistent architectural style and character that would establish an overriding design context.

515 and 519 Rithet are temporarily occupied by close associates of the Owner and therefore no occupants are being displaced through this project.

## DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

### MASSING & SITING

The building design concept is based on several imperatives:

- Contribute positively to the pedestrian and urban experience along Rithet St
- Massing and architectural expression be sensitive to the smaller scale multi-unit buildings to the west, transition and connect to the multi-unit residential to the east and across Rithet St
- Proposing a reduced building height (5 stories instead of 6) in exchange for exceeding the minimum setbacks and aligning the floor plates to meet seismic structural requirements

### STREETScape / RELATION TO STREET

The ground floor unit facing Rithet St. is accessible directly from the street, through a large private patio which provides a soft, small scale residential street-to-building connection.

The muted and soft colour palette blend harmoniously with neighboring properties.

A modern design wood fence surrounding the property will replace any existing fencing and provide privacy and security to the ground floor units and neighboring properties.

### EXTERIOR FINISHES

The project uses a palette of durable materials capable of weathering gracefully, such as cementitious panel cladding in a two-tone combination and anodized or coated aluminum railings at balconies and patios with frosted glass panels at balconies.

The smooth surfaces of cementitious panels and glass will be complemented by wood textured materials at balconies, soffits, and roof overhangs, and natural wood fencing on the property line and harmonious landscape.

The combination of these materials relates to components of the existing context while contributing to the aesthetic direction of future developments and generating visual gratification for residents.

## LIFESTYLE

The future Rithet multi-family project will provide 16 units of thoughtfully designed 1, 2 and 3 bedroom homes that the development team anticipates will attract homeowners spanning a range of demographics. With proximity to outdoor activities as well as downtown, the location will attract downsizers who already call James Bay home and multi-generational households, to first time buyers into the Victoria market. The ground-oriented units on the main floor are well suited for family living and the rooftop amenity space provides opportunities for gardening, gathering, and community building within the property.

## TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

The site is well located and fully serviced by City infrastructure. It provides immediate proximity to amenities, public transportation, ocean, parks, trails and bike lanes.

- James Bay Village – 350m / 5 min walk
- Dallas Road, trails and cycling network – 200m
- Beacon Hill Park – 700m
- Two bus stations - 200m away on Niagara Street and 750m away on Douglas St. provide direct travel to Esquimalt / Royal Jubilee Hospital / South Oak Bay and Willows and convenient connection to other transit routes.

The numerous nearby employment opportunities available in the service and tourism industries and in the Provincial Government offices make this site desirable.

The project proposes to include underground parking accessed from Rithet Street to provide 10 stalls for 16 residential units. Electrical Vehicle charging stations will be provided as required. Long term and short-term bicycle parking will meet or exceed existing by-laws and special consideration will be taken to accommodate the growing popularity of E-Bikes and their needs.

## SUSTAINABILITY AND GREEN FEATURES

The building will be developed to meet Step 3 of the BC Energy Step Code, with durable materials and a design that optimizes natural daylight.

Additional features, such as EV chargers, LED lighting, ERVs (energy recovery ventilation units), highly insulated building and rooftop gardening are contemplated to be included during the next phases of project development.

The design addresses to a multi transportation mode approach to encourage shared and active transportation. It also supports electrification of vehicles while reducing transportation related greenhouse gas emissions (OCP Transportation and Mobility 7.0 Goals)

Sincerely,



Margie Shenduk  
Director of Operations, PMP, P.GSC  
Casman Properties/James Bay Ventures Ltd.  
mshenduk@casman.net