



#1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC
V8W 1P6

January 25, 2020

Re: 1514 – 1520 Foul Bay Road, Rezoning application and Development Permit

Dear Mayor Helps and City of Victoria Council Members,

On behalf of our client Norm Foster Properties, Zebra Design is applying for rezoning and development permit for the properties at 1514 and 1520 Foul Bay Road. The properties are currently zoned R1-B (Single Family Dwelling District) zone. The subject lots when combined together are 1,070 m² (11,523 sq ft). This site-specific development application is proposed in order to construct eight ground-oriented townhouses in two buildings of four units each. This proposal supports the City of Victoria's "Missing Middle Housing Initiative", with a traditional form and design that integrates well with the residential fabric of the surrounding neighbourhood. Missing Middle housing is defined in the City of Victoria's Phase Two Housing Strategy as "ground-oriented housing such as townhouses, houseplexes, duplexes, row houses, lock-off suites, and other housing forms that fit well within neighbourhoods to help increase housing choice, affordability and the achievement of citywide livability and sustainability goals."

The subject property lies in the South Jubilee Neighbourhood, bordering on the Gonzales Neighbourhood and Oak Bay Municipality and is directly adjacent to properties identified as "Oak Bay Avenue Village", an area outlined in the Jubilee Neighbourhood Plan as intended for a Mixed-Use concept. The property is designated Traditional Residential which supports townhouses. Traditional Residential zoning accommodates up to 1:1 Floor Area Ratio; our proposed density is at 0.9:1 FAR. We suggest that townhouses in this location will provide an appropriate progression from the Commercial/Small Urban Village Oak Bay Avenue area to nearby detached housing and will add housing type diversity. In addition, Townhouses are the least represented form of housing in this neighborhood.

This proposal is designed with three storeys at the street front and lower, two-storey units at the rear in respect of the overlook and privacy for the neighbouring houses located along Amphion Street. Detailed consideration has been given to window locations to prevent or minimize overlook to adjacent properties, with staggered windows to the north and no overlook to the west; south facing windows (in the south building) are over commercial parking.

Having spoken to the Planning Department throughout our design process, we have incorporated much of their feedback, including applying a great deal of the Design Guidelines for Attached Residential Development. The Design Guidelines suggest street-facing row housing is preferable in general, however in the context of this site it would present challenges, while the proposed layout has many benefits which outweigh the street-facing model in this circumstance.

The developer met all adjacent neighbors, a number of people in the South Jubilee community, as well as close proximity neighbors in Oak Bay. Extensive consultation with neighbours allowed for the incorporation of useful feedback. The resultant design met with overwhelming support for the project and a high level of appreciation for this specific design. Many neighbours voiced their opinion that they strongly support the “galley” style site layout as proposed (please see enclosed signatures and canvassing map), whereas they would not support street-facing row homes (the homes on Amphion Street do not want a whole row of townhomes overlooking their backyards). This layout also preserves two trees just over the property line of the north neighbour; a street-facing configuration would compromise those trees.

In lieu of a CALUC meeting, we participated in two closed meetings with the CALUC Board, and our proposed plans were hosted on the City’s Development Tracker for a period of 30 days after a CALUC mail-out notice was sent, during which time we received a lot of comments from the community, most of which were highly positive (please refer to enclosures a and b). We read, considered and responded to correspondence from neighbours with concerns about trees, parking and other matters.

We think that our proposed site layout is preferable in this case due to other factors such as providing safe private yard space away from the street for children and other residents and reducing the amount of hard surfacing on the property. To explain, a less dense, street-facing layout would either make this development unreasonably expensive if underground parking were to be incorporated, or greatly increase the amount of paving required on the site if underground parking were not provided (please see enclosure c). With a street-facing row house layout and parking provided behind them, after accommodating turning radii and required aisle widths there is little area left for yards. Underground parking is reasonable only in instances where there are many more units between which to distribute the costs.

With three bedrooms, these homes would be suitable for a variety of household types including families and are intended to provide more attainable entry level housing. The main level room supports a work-at-home option. The building designs themselves incorporate varied rooflines, modulation of building facades and a variety of exterior finishes (shingles, panels and trim) plus numerous architectural details such as finials, metal railings, belly bands, panel accents and dentils, to add character and visual interest to the project. Parking and bicycle storage plus private garden space is provided for each unit, as well as a secure visitor bike rack on site. A stone pillar and metal fence, entry gates and other landscaping features will enhance the site’s appearance, including trees on all sides of the property.

The owners of the two properties are committed to green building, and have strived to set an example beyond Step Code 3 with initiatives that include:

- incorporating solar power for each unit and solar power for outdoor public lighting;
- reducing fossil fuel consumption (no gas appliances/fireplaces);
- incorporating a hot water heat recovery process;
- including permeable paving to reduce stormwater management requirements;
- ensuring a minimum 30% indigenous and drought resistant planting.
- providing a bicycle focus with centrally-designed secure bike visitor area.

In addition to the above, the property is located close to BC Transit routes, accessible cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, with walkable shopping, recreation, education and employment locations nearby.

We hope that you will agree that this design offers an opportunity for sensitive redevelopment, allowing a moderate increase in density while keeping the development in scale with adjacent properties. The end units closest to Foul Bay Road have their entrances oriented towards the roadway so that they are street-oriented, and the project transitions to the commercial building to the south. Low-impact and high-quality building designs will provide much needed missing middle housing with efficient and flexible floor plans that will accommodate households at different phases of life.

We thank you for your time in consideration of the enclosed materials and invite you to contact us if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,



Rus Collins

Zebra Design & Interiors Group Inc.

Enclosed:

- a) Support signatures from neighbours;
- b) Canvassing map;
- c) Paving diagram showing 2 layouts;
- d) Energy Efficiency Letter