

## Letter to Mayor and Council



# VILLAGE LANDING

*A Community within a Community*

REZ No. 00762  
DP No. 000590  
Proposal to Rezone 1514-1520  
Foul Bay Road A community of  
family-oriented townhomes.  
wayne foster



Mayor and Council  
 #1 Centennial Square  
 Victoria, BC  
 V8W 1P6

July 12, 2022

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

REZ No. 00762 & DP No. 000590

Dear Mayor Helps and City of Victoria Council Members,

We are pleased to present an updated submission for Rezoning and Development Permit for townhomes at 1514 and 1520 Foul Bay Road in the South Jubilee neighborhood next to commercial at the corner of Oak Bay Avenue on Foul Bay Road. They will be the first townhouses to be built in South Jubilee.

This is the third iteration of the development proposal and is closely related to our original submission by Zebra Design in 2020. In 2021 a completely different lot layout with street-facing units was developed by an architectural firm as a second major submission to the City of Victoria. For a number of reasons which I will explain, we are reverting to the original lot layout concept, while incorporating multiple revisions. The current, third proposal also synthesizes some of the Departmental review comments related to the 2021 submission. We are pleased to present this proposal in a carefully considered effort to meet the objectives for adding Missing Middle housing.

### **Overview: Location and Zoning**

1514-1520 Foul Bay sits at the corner of Oak Bay Avenue at Foul Bay to the North of Oak Bay Bikes. The two parcels of land are comprised of two single family homes built in the early 1900's deemed non-restorable. The proposal will replace these two homes with eight (8) 3-bedroom townhouses. The proposal conforms to both Zoning and the Official Community Plan, and the project is located along a Development Permit Area. It is R1-B zoning designated for "ground-oriented housing such as townhouses, houseplexes, duplexes, row houses, lock-off suites, and other housing forms that fit well within neighborhoods to help increase housing choice."



The site has a high walk score of 88 and proximity to adjacent shops in the South Jubilee area near Jubilee hospital and a five-minute walk to Oak Bay Village. We understand from Planning that Rezoning to a Comprehensive Development would be the appropriate approach for the redevelopment of these properties.

## Neighbor Engagement

As part of an extensive 28-month process, dozens of individual neighbor engagement meetings were undertaken, and 2 CALUC presentations helped inform the iterative design. The design received support from all neighboring properties, including commercial and residential sides of the property, as well as all three homes across the street in neighboring Oak Bay. Many comments stated this design would fit nicely into the community.



One of the City Councilors suggested we explore a transition to two stories for the back units which worked out well. All three rear neighbors (to the West) support the design and appreciate the transition to two stories toward their single-family residences. This concept aligns well with the *Draft City of Victoria Missing Middle Design Guidelines, April 2022*, for example, on Page 4 in the section on **Neighborliness**. Many neighbors have sent letters to Council in support and over two dozen have signed a petition in support of our proposal during canvassing and local presentations. We continue to get letters of support from project neighbours.

The proposed townhouse buildings run East to West, are next to a commercial development and parallel to Oak Bay Avenue. The townhomes are afforded extensive light due to large open spaces on the commercial site that Oak Bay Bikes is on. The property adjacent to ours to the North at 1524 Foul Bay is a multi-residential home on a single lot; four of our townhomes have rear yards facing that direction, and that neighbor has indicated support through the CALUC process. The neighbouring homes on Amphion St., to the West which face the rear of the townhouse proposal are offered privacy by extensive design consideration minimizing window sizes and overlook, and by the proposed line of trees to be planted there. There is a green space buffer with plantings and privacy screening on all sides of the site except the street front.

## Design Orientation Iterations

The Draft City of Victoria Design Guidelines for attached residences favours street-facing townhouses over “galley” style site layouts. However, as noted in the Guidelines, certain lot configurations do not readily support street-facing designs.

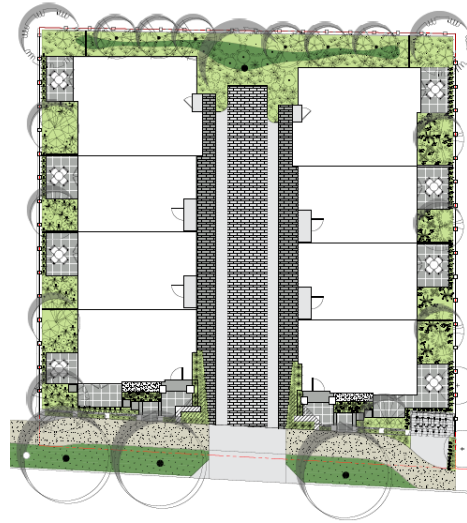
Our first iteration was galley style. Respecting the concepts in the City Design Guidelines, our Second iteration (2021) attempted to try and make the townhouses street facing, similar to Philadelphia walk-ups. It reduced the number of units from 8 to 5 units with flex suites. That design moved the development into Part 3 of the Building Code, like condo buildings, meaning that it required a full architect, more expensive civil and electrical engineering and ultimately higher construction costs. The architectural firm faced a series of issues, such as too steep a driveway slope, a lack of space for visible visitor bike parking, and non-conformity to requirements to Storm Water Management as required by Oak Bay engineering, to whose services we connect. As the site is situated on an arterial road, the street-facing design required a large drive aisle which reduced the number of townhomes on site to five. Altogether the change resulted in an estimated \$450,000 increased cost per townhome, making them similar in price to other Part 3 Building Code condo developments. Our goal was to provide family townhomes at more standard market rates.

Therefore, our team is proposing this third iteration, a more affordable and more efficient design of two buildings facing each other (galley style) which has received unanimous, positive support by all the direct neighbors.

### Third Design Iteration: A Community within the Community

This proposed design of two buildings facing each other reduces costs as it follows Part 9 Building Code and keeps the price in line with more moderate townhome projects. The design will be built on grade and requires less excavation and site preparation time. The central drive design echoes the efficiency we see in nature, like leaves branching from both sides of a central stem.

The project aims to meet the objective of creating greater community, where the development itself creates a community within the community.



Efficient Design



Zebra thoughtfully designed the first street facing units with both balconies and patios that serve to engage pedestrians, following the objectives of *Draft City of Victoria Missing Middle Design Guidelines, April 2022* Page 5 and 6 **Objectives 1.5.6 and 1.5.7** of lower massing and reduced overlook.

The proposed design helps achieve the following:

- Reduces land cost and price point per unit by increasing the number of units from five (5) to eight (8).
- Conforms to Part 9 Building Code (like houses) as opposed to the more costly Part 3 Building code found in condominium projects.
- Reduces driveway hard space by over 30%.
- Increases garden, trees, and greenspace by 30%.
- Allows residents to enter the busy arterial road from grade level overcoming some of the engineering challenges posed with below grade parking.
- Creates an opportunity for neighbor engagement between units, particularly with the green space allocated at the rear of the site.
- Eliminates the need for extensive excavation requiring 120 trucks, reducing site preparation time significantly.
- Meets Oak Bay engineering requirements for Storm Water Management.



The large new trees toward the end of the lane help nestle the homes together and help achieve *Proposed New Design Guidelines* Page 4 addressing **Open Space Design**. The first units entering the site face the street, designed with neighbor-friendly balconies on the second floor and semi-private as well as private patios on the ground floor. Each townhome has their own private outdoor yard space.

## Green Features

With a changing climate in mind, this proposal is likely the first of its kind in Greater Victoria and will help set the bar for including green features and energy conservation among townhouses.



1. Each of the two rows of townhomes include a Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Array. The solar panels will reduce energy needs for each townhome by an estimated 35-40%.
2. The landscape architects design of greenspace helps bring rain and storm water to the rain garden to get filtered and slowed before entering the storm system. This feature will mitigate the additional load from the multi family aspect and follows effective Storm Water Management principles.
3. All the pavers in the central driveway and pathways are permeable which will again filter into the site water rather than the storm system. Hydropavers' unique system serves to increase evaporation of rainwater back into the atmosphere.
4. The units will use electric power for space and water heating. There are no fossil fuels on site, thereby reducing the Greenhouse Gas Emissions and helping the residents take full advantage of the PV Array.
5. To reduce the hot water energy demand, we will be installing Drain Water Heat Recovery (DWHR) units to the upper showers. This can reduce energy usage by upwards of 25%.
6. Each unit will have a charging plug for an electric car/electric bike in the garage.
7. To encourage the use of no emission transportation, there are six (6) dedicated visitor bike racks at the front.
8. Raised heel trusses will help reduce insulation compression around the roof.

## Bowker Creek Watershed and Storm Water

The townhouse development sits on the outskirts of the Bowker Creek Watershed. To address storm water, the landscape design includes a large riparian garden bed, and specially designed permeable pavers that offer water absorption and water evaporation. The developers and JE Anderson worked with Oak Bay Engineering to achieve their requirements for no increase in storm water run-off into their storm system. This galley design allows us to achieve that.

### Trees and Landscaping

Each of the townhouses has garden and outdoor patio space. The proposal removes 5 trees and includes planting eighteen (18) additional new trees to the site. The proposal grants a Statutory Right of Way (SRW) boulevard and includes agreement to plant three (3) new trees along the newly assigned SRW along with electrical stubs for future street lighting.

### Tenant Assistance Plan

The developer lives in one home and the second home is tenanted. The developer/ applicant and the tenant have enjoyed a strong close relationship over the years and jointly agreed to a Tenant Assistance Plan approved by the CoV. Both are in regular conversations on the status of the proposed development application.

### Flexible Space to Meet Changing Family Needs

Each proposed new townhome has 3 rooms, some are on two levels and others on three levels. One room on the lower Level can serve as a guest room or flex room for a student living at home or for a home office. The design strives to meet the growing need for the changing family.

We thoughtfully worked to ensure this proposed project fits within the objectives of increasing housing supply, while sensitively including important green features. Our goal was to make an appropriate contribution of housing to the neighborhood and, as such have received tremendous community support. We trust that the proposal reflects the greater vision for the City of Victoria.

### Summary

In summary, this revised proposal offers the following features:

- A contribution of eight (8) townhomes in an appropriate location;
- An effort to raise the bar on energy efficient green design with no fossil fuels;
- Allowing for a variation of unit types to meet various family sizes and needs;
- Thoughtful landscape design to address water capture, run off and feed new gardens;
- Emphasis on a visible visitor bike parking area in the front.

Thank you kindly for considering this proposal.

Sincerely,



Wayne Foster, President

PS Attached: Additional neighbor support comments.