

January 19, 2009

Mayor and Council
City of Victoria

70 Linden Ave. Parking variance request

The proponents for the above address met with the Fairfield Gonzales Planning and Zoning Committee on January 19, 2009. Included in their package were numerous pictures and letters of support from the adjacent neighbours.

The owners of this single family home wish to turn the existing garage, which is an integral part of their small 1950's home, into living space. Although they have never used the space to park a vehicle, it is however a requirement by the City of Victoria that the property must provide a single parking space beyond the front façade of the home. Therefore a parking variance is required before they can proceed with the proposed renovation.

Like almost all the other garages in similar type homes, there was never any intent to park a vehicle within. This is quite evident throughout most of the neighbourhoods in Victoria. Even in situation where one could park a vehicle along the side of a home or at the rear, the vast majority of them are parked in front of the home. As more and more of these situations occur it may be time for a review of the bylaw to see if it actually serve the purpose it was created for and even more importantly, is it hindering us from achieving our new goals for the city around preservation, green space, increased density and maintaining the heritage and character of our neighbourhoods.

Committee's comments

What they are proposing makes perfect sense not sure if there is a situation such as heritage concerns where it wouldn't.

It would go against everything green to have the owners destroy all the vegetation along side of their home and pave it over just to comply with an outdated regulation.

What a unobtrusive, undestructive, neighbourly way to increase density and except for replacing a door with a window, preserve the character of a home for years to come.

In the situation where a single parking space is required, the current by-law is an impairment to smart growth.

With the majority of vehicles parking on the street in our neighbourhood and the majority of the remaining vehicles in single family homes parked in front of their homes there does not seem to be any logic to this by-law, if there is it escapes me. Unless someone can come up with argument that supports this by-law maybe it is time to save both the city and the property owner considerable time and money and allow a single parking space in front of a single family home, right where the vehicles have been parked for so many years.

Wayne Hollohan
Chair, Fairfield Gonzales Planning and Zoning Committee