

2 July 2008

To Mayor and Council  
City of Victoria

**Re: 1820 Hollywood Cres.**

The proponent wishes to demolish the existing home and replace it with a very similar, but larger new triplex. In order to archive this, the property will have to be re-zoned from R1G to a site-specific zone. The owner stated that the footprint of the current home will not permit the added space needed to accommodate the proposed triplex and that he has been advised that economically, a new structure would be the logical route to go given the condition of the current home. There was a surprising large turnout from neighbours for this re-zoning proposal. Many neighbours spoke to this proposal and I informed them that our letter would be only a summary of their comments and encouraged them to send their detailed comments directly to the city.

Neighbours Comments

Concerned about tearing down a “sweet gem of a heritage style house, why not just convert it into a duplex”. “Renovating makes more sense than demolishing. The R1G zone has contributed to the stability of the Gonzales neighbourhood”. Why not renovate and do that secondary suite thing. Many neighbours spoke about concerns about the traffic congestion that already exists with all the tour buses and cars, etc. Upset with watching, more and more backyards (actual green space) being turned into “parking lots”. Proposals like this are eroding the character of our neighbourhoods, as more and more of the original owners of these homes die, their homes and property turn into business opportunities. Don’t like the idea that they can have a whole floor of additional space and as long as it is classified as a basement it’s not counted on the overall square footage. Separated entrances, bedrooms, and bathroom what is to stop them from becoming apartments. It’s unfortunate that somehow setback requirements seemed to have been none existent when neighbouring property line was drawn. Hard-surfacing the backyard to park vehicles seems to be going against all things green and neighbourly. Has the applicant considered parking under the house instead? Don’t feel this re-zoning is necessary or in any way benefits the neighbourhood. Thinks the proposal is better than some others on the street.

Committee Comments

This is a precedent-setting re-zoning and it is not supportable given the newness of the Gonzales plan and the R1-G zoning. The hard-surfacing of backyards has got to stop. Replacing grass and trees for parking lots is something people didn’t do years ago; we certainly should not even be entertaining such a thought today. There seems to have been considerable consideration gone into the design. The design is nice, but that should not justify demolishing the existing structure. Demolishing homes because it is an easier or a more economical route to go, or it is a simpler way to add square footage and build what you want, is not something we should even consider, let alone support. Supports the actual design as it seems to fit the area, but does not like the idea of having separate basement entrances. If it was a R1-G with a secondary suite the backyard could stay as is. Have to agree with most of the neighbours concerns - it seems to take far more than it gives, work within Gonzales Plan.

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Chair, Fairfield Planning and Zoning Community