



Mission

Strengthening the Oaklands community by providing programs, services and resources for its residents, businesses and visitors.

Oaklands Community Association Land Use Committee March 25, 2019 Community Meeting Minutes

Location: Oaklands Neighbourhood House - 2629 Victor Street

Contact: landuse@oaklandsca.com

Meeting overview:

On March 25, 2019, the Oaklands Community Association Land Use Committee (CALUC) hosted a community meeting for a proposed condominium development at 1301 Hillside Ave. The meeting was attended by 41 residents (Participants) and 4 representatives of Abstract Developments (Developer)

Project summary:

The Developer provided a summary of the proposed project and noted that it was a revised concept initially proposed in the Spring of 2018. The Developer outlined the major changes to the design of the revised building design as follows:

- A change to a market condo project with and affordable housing component (50 units of which 16 would be marketed as affordable housing¹)
- Change to more contemporary structure – roughly same footprint with setbacks on the upper levels – building height reduced by 12ft.
- From 0.7 to 1 parking unit per market condo with no parking for affordable units
- Access to parking moved to Cook St and bike parking same between proposals.

The Developer outlined their rationale for the change from rental building to market condos and changes to the design:

- Increase in construction costs made rental building cost prohibitive; as well In Victoria there are 2000 rental units and affordable housing units in development
- Market sales would subsidize the 16 affordable units (roughly 10% below) or slightly less than \$299k (estimated)
- In design changes the Developer stated that they considered OCP and community input following community meeting for the original building proposal.
- Stepped design to reduce appearance of the height of the façade and more engagement with the pedestrian area including live work units on the ground floor

¹ The Developer noted that they are working with [BC Housing](#) to define the thresholds for affordable housing for the development.

- The project would require the removal of one Garry Oak tree however 10 Garry Oak trees would be planted as well as 5 other species (yet to be selected)

Summary of discussions:

The meeting participants inquired about the relative costs of construction, the potential for additional building amenities such as roof top gardens, the potential impacts to local traffic from vehicles entering and exiting on Cook St and impacts to local parking from increased residential density and the variance on the parking as required under current City of Victoria building policy.

Costs of construction and overall building design:

Participants were interested in the costs of construction and how the design had changed in response to their previous concerns with the older design. One participant noted a previous commitment by the Developer to outline the rough costs to remediate the site to accommodate the required parking under City policy. The Developer noted the building would be about the same price to construct but would be roughly 12ft lower in height due to change from modular construction to onsite construction methods. Amenities such as bike parking gardening plots for ground floor units would remain roughly the same as the previous design. In response to suggestions for additional gardening and/or green space, the Developer noted the inherent limitations of the site due to it's historical use as a gas station. The CALUC noted a general recognition of the incorporation of some of the previous feedback and a general appreciation of the varied façade and the balconies in the new design. With respect to remediation of the site, the Developer noted that the cost of remediating the site would make the project economically infeasible, and in any event, the Province placed restrictions on the site use which they must abide by.

Impacts to local traffic:

The meeting participants noted concern about the use of local and residential streets (Cedar Hill Rd. Fernwood Rd, and Haultain Rd.) for motorists attempting to access the building. From their perspective this would increase local traffic on these streets and likely result in motorists making dangerous U-turns on Cook St. The Developer noted that a traffic study that compared traffic volumes between the proposed building and the previous use of the site as a gas station showed considerable increases in traffic for the gas station use of the site. The Developer also noted that there are only two options for placement of the parking garage (Hillside or Cook) and that the City had required the garage access to be moved to the Cook St side. The Developer also noted that the Hillside Corridor is being considered by the City for an all ages and abilities route and that the proposed building is consistent with the City's vision for Hillside Ave. A representative of the Oaklands Rise Group, which is promoting the incorporation of Woonerf street design in Oaklands suggested that the Developer review the Woonerf concept being proposed by the group and to consider ways in which the building supports or could be modified to support their initiative.

Parking:

Parking remains a significant concern for the meeting participants many of whom noted that, from their perspective, the site does not permit suitable parking ratios for the density being requested. The participants were also concerned about sufficient visitor parking and temporary parking for delivery and service vehicles. The Developer noted that the units without parking are designed to appeal to consumers who live a car free lifestyle and noted that the building design has limited spaces for visitor parking and a temporary parking area at the entrance to the garage for delivery and service vehicles. The Developer also contended that given the building's proximity to major transportation corridors, Hillside Mall, and the downtown, that they consider it a good candidate for the requested parking variance. To help gauge whether the impacts to parking are as predicted (i.e. negligible) the Developer committed to a post occupancy study to understand parking impacts from which additional mitigations (such as moto car share) would be explored. The Developer also noted the City's process for having "resident only" parking requirements on surrounding streets, A representative of the Cridge Centre also noted that they are exploring the possibility of selling limited and conditional parking spaces for the residents of the 1301 Hillside building.