

JAMES BAY NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION

Minutes Monthly Meeting September 12, 2018

Chair: Linda

Minutes: Laura

City of Victoria: Margaret Lucas, Kim Stratford

Attendance: 62

1. Welcome & Announcements:

We are meeting on traditional territory of the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations

2. Announcements/Correspondence:

- On October 3, the JBNA is hosting an all candidates meeting for the municipal election. The meeting begins at 5:30 to meet candidates for council positions, followed by question to those seeking the position of mayor. The meeting will conclude at 8:30. We are looking for volunteers to assist with the set up.
- CRD will be hosting an information session about Dallas Road construction. Dates to be announced.
- The September 8 LAP preparation gathering was successful. 65-70 enthusiastic people participated. Feedback from participants will be compiled and distributed.
- Radar Speed Reader – one to be installed in a permanent location in James Bay. We welcome suggestions as to the single permanent location. Please forward to jbna@vcn.bc.ca before Sunday, Sept 16.
- CFB Esquimalt is holding a public daytime event Ogden Point Sept 30.
- Chair read the City of Victoria "Inclusive Communities" policy

3. Approval of Agenda M/S/C

4. Minutes of August 8, 2018, meeting M/S/C

5. JBNA Community Association Land Use Committee (CALUC) Rezoning application for 38 South Turner

Introduction by Tim VanAlstine, CALUC Co-chair: The JBNA Development Review: Committee met with the proponents on August 13, 2018. The property is at 38 South Turner Street and is currently a 5 unit rental property. The proposal is to lift building to add another floor, creating one 1 bed + den, two 2 bedroom, and two 3 bedroom units. The ground level unit will be accessible.

Villamar Design described the proposal. The plan is to significantly upgrade the property. In order to provide onsite parking, the house will need to be moved east toward South Turner Street. An additional story will enable the larger, family sized units. The proponent acknowledged the shadow study showed significant negative impact on the adjacent property at 42 South Turner Street.

Questions/Comments & Answers from Residents
(Residents within 100 m given first priority)

Q: A current resident of 38 South Turner asked the proponent what he meant by wanting to attract a "better kind of tenant".

A: That was probably inappropriate use of language – stated badly – people who currently live in building will have an opportunity to reapply for tenancy.

C: I think you need to address the monetary concerns of those who currently live in the house. What is the financial ability to return once the new building is completed.

A: Rents will obviously be higher to reflect the cost of the upgrade.

Q: Current resident of 38 South Turner: You are hoping to bring families to new house. What about the families that are living there now? I'm a high school teacher with an 11 year old son. What will become of our family? It may be good for capitalism to renovict families, but it is not good for struggling families who cannot find affordable homes.

Q: South Turner resident – My house is heritage designated. I am concerned about the proposed addition of another story, which will drastically change character of street scape. I find the presentation doesn't respect the current character of the street. Raising one more story will lend itself to the potential loss of the character of the street and other streets in James Bay. I think you need to find a way to develop the house by not adding another story.

A: This house is not designated heritage, but we do want to retain some of the existing character of the building with the transitioning to the increased level and including heritage features on the exterior.

C: Resident of 38 South Turner: What is the benefit to the community? You are planning 5 upgraded suites. There are already 5 suites and nothing wrong with them. We have children, a single mom, and a senior all currently living in the building. I have been renovicted twice in last two years. I am also a teacher and it has been daunting to find new accommodation in this community which is also affordable.

(Following are the speaking notes that the resident provided which were read by the Chair)

Benefit to Community: I am curious if someone could speak about the proposed benefit this renovation will bring to the community? After speaking with neighbours and giving the matter thought, I/we are doubtful as to any benefit.

Displacement: The tenants of this building are a mix of new and long term. The renoviction will displace stable tenants into an obviously unstable market with limited prospects. Gentrification and displacement of lower income, more pressure on an oversaturated market, and affordable housing.

The Character of the House/Community: May not be a heritage house, but this home has plenty of charm and old character. This could be lost if interior is gutted. House is along a tourist route, with many tourists walking the street's sidewalks and riding the horse drawn carriages.

Personal Notes & Reasons: Multiple renovations in Victoria since moved here. We want to settle down, build/create a home together long term and contribute to the flourishing James Bay community. Came to James Bay also for health reasons. The wellbeing of our physical and mental health has drastically improved since moving to the community.

A: This proposal brings something into the community, bringing the building to a place where the electrical is replaced and the building is up to code.

C: 42 South Turner resident immediately adjacent to 38 South Turner: I moved into this community 2 years ago. We bought our house and love it. There is light coming in from the south side of building. The addition you propose of a 3rd floor will take all sun light from our property. The secondary suite in home, which is affordable, has 3 windows facing south and light will be completely obstructed from an additional story. What will be provided by your proposal will be expensive housing that is not affordable.

A: I have earlier acknowledged that the shadow study will have an adverse impact on the neighbours at 42 South Turner.

C: Resident who lives on 3rd floor of the existing building: I am on disability and have lived here for several years. I can't believe how lucky I am to live here, on my income. I will not be able to secure another home in James Bay if I am renovated from this home, based on unaffordability of other rental units in the neighbourhood.

C: South Turner resident: I also rent in a home on this street. I want to know how this proposal will affect the existing tenants. When will the tenants be evicted?

A: If things were to move forward, I don't know at this time what the timeline would be.

Q: South Turner resident: I am a renter on the street. Will the rent be set at any level? Will this be an incentive for other landlords, like mine, to evict their tenants?

A: Can't respond to that as don't know intention of other land owners.

Q: 38 South Turner resident: Rent increase per unit will be a lot more than we can afford it there will be no way for us to come back to the community.

C: 38 South Turner resident: You will be displacing existing garden space, animal space and a social economic base. What can the JBNA do for us?

A: Chair explains CALUC process, that we do provide community comments to the City, and when we can make will make a comment to the city about the proposal.

Q: South Turner resident: This project doesn't appear to me to be rental, but condos. I really feel for these folks who are about to be evicted. There is nothing to guarantee that these units will be available for rent.

A: Not sure if strata units now, but in other projects there has been a covenant placed on the property. Could this be a possibility here?

A: Councillor Lucas, noted that Council can place a covenant on the property but it has to be put to the Council by request of the property owner or of residents. Council would not initiate such action.

C: I checked with BC Assessment and this property is currently strata.

C: Rithet St resident: This structure seems to be out of proportion and I believe it will be an eyesore.

C: Resident: The current zoning is R49 – what is the allowable height on R49 – are you seeking a height variance?

A: Yes, we are requesting a development permit with variance and rezoning. The height is 22.9 meters and a variance is required.

C: There has been some pretty consistent feedback for you about this proposal and I would encourage you to reconsider the additional floor, reconsider the height and the affect it will have on the neighbours. The height variance you are seeking is the height of the new floor. If you eliminate the additional floor and not lift house, would it be viable to do new electrical? You could upgrade and renovate as is.

A: Originally considered raising building by 2 ft., but that's not viable for the parking. We did explore going down, but would lose accessibility access. This wouldn't be an appropriate plan to go forward.

C: South Turner resident: There is sufficient parking on the street on South Turner. You are making changes to provide onsite parking which is probably not necessary here.

C: Dallas Rd resident: I have issues with comments about your interest in attracting a certain kind of tenant. The mean income in Victoria is \$53,000 and these units would most likely be unaffordable. There appears to be no provision or consideration given to the existing tenants. I believe you have an obligation to the current tenants. I believe there is no benefit to the community.

A: Appreciate your comments and I apologize for the words chosen. I am looking at what is required by the city as per parking and what is suitable for the area. If we were to build something new, we would reflect what homes currently exist on street. The owner has made some choices and that is where we are today with a building with not too many changes, with accessibility, and improved internal services.

C: St Andrews St resident: My home was built in 2005 – really appreciates that our home fits in with the existing older designed homes. Wonder if it were to be torn down, would owner consider keeping in-line with current housing designs?

A: There would not be the same number of units as exist now and there would still be displacement. I am hearing from this discussion that residents would prefer the height not be increased and an additional unit would not be applied.

C: Resident: Under current zoning there is a max of 5 units.

Chair summarizes to proponent that the comments indicate he would be encouraged to reconsider the proposal and the impact on the existing tenants. Chair provided background on what CALUC process is and how the JBNA conveys the information heard at the CALUC meeting to the City of Victoria. Encourages those who have views about proposal to write to Mayor and Council.

Presentation: Canada Coast Guard and Department of Fisheries and Oceans update on new Search and Rescue Centre. Presenting were

Joanne McNish, Regional Manager

Steve Brame, Facility Manager

Randy Burgin, Project Manager

Denis Taylor, officer in charge of Search and Rescue Station

Rob Halliday, Architect

Oceans Protection Plan was announced early this year by the Federal Govt to protect our oceans. Four new stations were approved - Hartley Bay, Tahsis, Port Renfrew and Victoria. After 2 ½ decades we are now seeing some growth, new ships being built and the lifeguard stations as noted above. The current Coast Guard building in James Bay was built in the 1960's. On June 6, 2018 an interim Search and Rescue (SAR) Station was open at Huron Street, where search and rescue vessels are located. The Victoria SAR Station covers from Bamfield to Ganges. Since opening in June 2018, we have responded to 30 calls. Residents are welcome to come and take a tour the boats.

The permanent Station will be located on the current base where the old equipment yard was, next to the James Bay Anglers and facing Dallas Rd. This will be a 75,000 sq ft building over 2 floors housing SAR's crews 24/7. It will also be utilized as community gathering centre in the event of a nature disaster. Construction timelines tendering Dec 2018 – 10 months operational by fall 2019.

Questions/Comments:

Q: How far about sea level will new building be?

A: It will be fine for a small tsunami, but a large one will flood the basement. For this reason all the essential wiring and electrical is on the second floor. The building will withstand seismic events and will be utilized for seismic events.

Q: The Building looks residential – why not institutional?

A: We tried to strike a balance with surrounding buildings. We also want to strive to create a home like structure for the ships/SARs crews. They will be living here for 24 hours a day and need to be comfortable.

Q: I notice a Coast Guard vessel at Ogden Point named after Franklin. Why would you name the ship after Franklin given the tragedy it evokes?

A: There were some significant positives about that expedition that we want to recognize. It is proven that he navigated the North West Passage and although there was a failure of the mission there was those successes the mission led to thus the name.

Q: You said the new SAR station will be open to the public. Why will this building be open to tours, yet the other building on the site is secured?

A: There are security levels and there will be a chain link fence around the property, anyone visiting will be escorted for all tours.

Residents expressed appreciation to the Coast Guard and the work they do. They were thanked for attending our meeting.

Adjournment at 8:56