

**CITY OF VICTORIA
HERITAGE ADVISORY PANEL
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 12, 2021**

- Present:** Pamela Madoff, Chair
Steve Barber
Doug Campbell
Helen Edwards
Jim Kerr
Shari Khadem
- Regrets:** Aaron Usatch
Graham Walker
Avery Bonner
Kirby Delaney
- Guests:** Councillor Stephen Andrew
Karen Hoese
- Staff:** John O'Reilly, Senior Heritage Planner
Malcolm MacLean, Community Planner
Katie Lauriston, Administrative Assistant
Justine Wendland, Heritage Secretary
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The Chair called the meeting to order at noon.

1. Adoption of the Minutes of the December 8, 2020 Meeting

Moved by Jim Kerr

Seconded by Helen Edwards

Carried (unanimous)

2. Business Arising from the Minutes

- No business raised from December 8, 2020 minutes.
- Anticipate the consultants report on Bank Street School to be concluded by January 27, 2021, followed by a presentation to HAPL on February 9, 2021, then proceeding to Council on February 25, 2021.

3. Announcements

None raised.

4. 1611 Stanley Street – Heritage Designation Application No. 000194

John O'Reilly provided a brief introduction.

Panel Questions and Comments

- It is beneficial to have clusters of heritage-designated buildings on the same street.

Moved by Steve Barber

Seconded by Doug Campbell

That the Heritage Advisory Panel recommend that Council approve the designation of the property located at 1611 Stanley Street, pursuant to Section 611 of the *Local Government Act*, as a Municipal Heritage Site.

Carried (unanimous)

5. **Missing Middle Housing Initiative**

Presenter: Malcolm MacLean, Community Planner

Panel Questions and Comments

- What is pre-zoning? Malcolm MacLean: Pre-zoning is City-initiated, where Council can change the zoning of land without the landowner needing to make an application.
- What will the parking requirements look like? They have a huge impact on small properties regarding ground-space and tree-retention. Malcolm MacLean: the modeled typologies are contemplating parking at lower rates than the current Schedule C would require, due to the potential urban forests impacts. If Schedule C with one-to-one parking requirements were required, often the rear yard becomes fully paved over for parking. Lower parking requirements will help maintain open space and existing urban forests.
- Is there a Development Permit process that is invoked for redevelopment under the Design Guidelines? If so, will that be continued? Malcolm MacLean: Yes, there is a Development Permit application under the guidelines that is owner initiated.
- The Panel received feedback from staff regarding the impact on heritage and character homes.
- Concern was raised regarding the potential pre-zoning for all traditional residential areas, as this would have demolition implications. Victoria is a built-up city and there are not many opportunities for redevelopment, so then the pressure starts to bear on the more established neighbourhoods. There is the potential for redevelopment interest in neighbourhoods of R-1, R1-B and R-2 properties, which would impact the character of those neighbourhoods. The neighbourhoods' character is important to preserve. The features of 1912 era homes, many of which are not on the Register, nor are they designated, would be impacted. There are opportunities in Victoria to encourage missing middle housing in lower-density areas.
- This is new territory of zoning to control the nature and character of development in a specific area. It is important for slow implementation and attention to consequences.
- Concerns were raised about parking and the visual impact on character of garage doors on streets. It is felt that examples in the missing middle document fall short. For example, the Wilson Street development would not meet the guidelines for attached housing.
- Concerns were raised regarding precedence setting and unintended consequences. Redevelopment does not increase affordability; it often replaces what is affordable with less affordable options. If this initiative were applied across city, the land value from redevelopment would impact housing affordability.

- There are opportunities for infill development. Many buildings and houses are not on the heritage register and not designated but offer affordable housing. There is concern of demolishing buildings that are not designated as heritage.
- An issue with fixing up and increasing the density of older homes is that the permit process becomes onerous with maintaining the house. It is a less onerous process or an owner to demolish the home and build new. Where is the incentive to pursue the latter? Malcolm MacLean: There is the potential for an unavoidable incentive to build new instead of improving old. This will be flagged for Council's consideration.
- Doug Koch was recommended to staff as a source for feedback.
- The strong affordability lens has merit over the threat of incentive. Vancouver recently implemented blanket rezoning which removed single family zoning and property values for single family lots quadrupled. How can this risk be mitigated when the value comes from development entitlement instead of potential? There is an impact on character, register and designated homes. Previously, the City has received feedback where residents felt there was more financial opportunity to sell and redevelop a property than designate it. Interest in registering or designating is less financially advantageous from a real estate point of view. It is likely to see a potential outcome of fewer properties being designated or registered.
- The new building code and step code add additional challenges to retaining existing housing stock. Destabilization is created when the opportunity for redevelopment is visible in the neighbourhood.
- The retention and reuse of buildings from economic and environmental approach is important. There is a huge impact on land value and decision by property owners and broader community.
- There is opportunity for sensitive infill to be considered on a case-by-case basis. Malcolm MacLean: There is interest in obtaining feedback on what the characteristics of the sensitive infill areas are.
- The low volume of single-family dwellings could threaten and defunction areas. Malcolm MacLean: The concept of houseplexes is one way of increasing housing.
- The policy focus seems to be on new construction. More thought should be given to incentivising retention.
- There is opportunity for small lot single-family dwellings through case studies and encourage the City to seek explore this opportunity.

Motion to adjourn: Steve Barber

Seconded: Jim Kerr

Adjournment: Unanimous

Adjourned at 1:25pm