



**CITY OF VICTORIA
HERITAGE ADVISORY PANEL MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 10, 2026
ONLINE MEETING VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS
1 CENTENNIAL SQUARE**

The City of Victoria is located on the homelands of the Songhees Nation and Xwsepsum Nation

PANEL MEMBERS PRESENT: Alissa Wrean (Chair), Steve Barber, Ben Clinton- Baker, Jana Stefan, Valerie Lindholm, Katie McEvoy, Nathalie Picard, Rosemary Sleight, Veronika (Nikki) Strong-Boag

ABSENT: Liberty Brears

STAFF PRESENT: Kristal Stevenot – Senior Heritage Planner
Laura Saretsky – Heritage Planner
Kamryn Allen – Recording Secretary

**A) Rezoning No.00907 and Development Permit
with Variance No.00299 for 530-538 Herald
Street, 517-533 Chatham Street**

**APPLICANTIONS:
ATTENDEES:** Matt Kolec (Director Development, Intracorp), Sasha Kosmajac (Junior Development Manager Intracorp Homes), Nick Sully (Architect AIBC), SHAPE Architecture, Oren Mizrahi (Landscape Architect BCSLA), Connect Landscape Architecture

**B) Delegated Heritage Alteration Permit No. 00336
for 805 Gordon Street**

John Armitage (Architect, Garyali Architect Inc), Shiv Garyali (Principal, Garyali Architect Inc)

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

Panel Members and staff provided introductions.

R. Sleight was not present at the start of the meeting.

2. Minutes

Minutes from the meeting held:

January 13, 2026

Moved By: K. McEvoy

Seconded By: J. Stefan

That the Minutes from the January 13, 2026 meeting be approved as circulated.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. Approval of Agenda

Moved By: S. Barber

Seconded By: K. McEvoy

That the March 10, 2026 Heritage Advisory Panel Agenda be approved as circulated.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. Applications

A) Rezoning No.00907 and Development Permit with Variance No.00299 for 530-538 Herald Street, 517-533 Chatham Street

Kristal Stevenot, Senior Heritage Planner, provided an overview of the application and clarified that this is a rezoning and development permit application with no heritage alteration permit. Staff requested the panels review and comment due to the property's location in Old Town and highlighted the areas that staff are seeking feedback.

Applicant Team provided an overview of the project and provided a presentation.

R. Sleigh joined at 12:15

The Panel asked the following questions of clarification:

- Wondering about the pop-up retail, what's going to sustain that?
 - Located on the Herald-facing side of the property, the intent is to activate the space and increase activity within the public park. The concept envisions a beverage retailer/operator. We have not yet designed the space but labelled it as roughly the size of a shipping container, which we think is enough space for some storage and a point-of-sale type system and counter.
- Will the space be fully wired and plumbed? and curious where the public washroom facilities are located for this facility and the businesses near this site?
 - Just electrical service is required for this service as the space is not intended for on-site drink preparation. It is envisioned as a grab-and-go concept, encouraging patrons to take items into the park rather than remain on-site for extended periods. As a result, no washroom facilities are planned.
- The lack of public facilities in urban environments remains a significant and widely recognized gap in public planning, and this raises concern in this context.
- Did you consider lighter-coloured ceiling materials in the long walkway to help brighten the space, as it may otherwise appear quite dark?
 - The design intent for the passageway is illustrated in the slide, with an emphasis on maintaining material consistency with the steel used along the Chatham Street frontage, referencing the Ironworks building to the west. Rather than introducing a

new material to define the space, the approach focuses on adjusting the reflectivity of that material. A matte finish could absorb light and create a darker environment, whereas increasing reflectivity is intended to help bounce light through the passageway. This approach is also applied to the ground paving, aiming to further enhance light distribution throughout the space.

- Wondering whether the design is geared toward families, as there is no mention of amenities or features that support children and how families might use the space, particularly the courtyard.
 - The proposal is informed by a demographic study indicating the likely resident profile will be primarily younger professionals, generally within the 20–40 age range, given the downtown location. The unit mix reflects this, while also aligning with the City of Victoria’s family housing policy by providing approximately 35% two-bedroom units, along with some three-bedroom units. Overall, the development includes a range of unit types, ensuring provision for family-sized housing within the anticipated demographic mix.
 - There is no direct play structure on the rooftop, but there is an area meant for outdoor games and play. There is the dog area, and agricultural plots that are going to be shared and kids can kind of explore, and there is a dining area where there could be used for parties and events, but no direct play however the pocket park is going to be a really valuable asset for the parents and children,
- What is the distance between the balconies of this building and the Biggerstaff building? In your drawings it looks very close. Just wondering what that distance would be.
 - A separation of approximately 4 metres is proposed, with balconies of adjacent units intentionally stepped back and designed as Juliet balconies to increase spacing between buildings. This setback is comparable to existing conditions further south on the site, where the distance between the adjacent buildings is approximately 13.5–14 feet, and increases to approximately 16–17 feet toward the southern portion of the site.
- Wondering about the rooftop agricultural plantings, including potential impacts of root growth on structural elements such as walls and ceilings. Concerns also noted regarding safety within the rooftop greenspace for residents.
 - The passages are intended to remain open during the day and closed between dusk and dawn. Early design concepts include the integration of lockable steel gates, as reflected in the renderings.
 - The rooftop agricultural plots are intended to function as communal spaces, designed with edible plantings such as herbs and vegetables for residents to harvest, with maintenance managed by the strata. Planting will be contained within aluminum planters rather than placed directly on the slab. While planting directly on slab is feasible with appropriate root barriers and build-up systems, this proposal utilizes three-sided aluminum planters to contain the soil volume and protect the structure.
- Will this be a strata building?

- Belmont Properties is an owner and operator of rental buildings, with hundreds of rental units on Vancouver Island and additional holdings on the Lower Mainland. The anticipated outcome for this project is a purpose-built rental development. While some flexibility has been maintained regarding tenure in case financing considerations arise, it is highly likely, approximately 99%, that the project will proceed as a purpose-built rental.
- Can you tell us more about the pet relief area?
 - The top right corner of the roof deck is proposed as a designated dog relief area, informed by precedent studies. This space will feature artificial turf with a central mound and a small feature element. While modest in size relative to the building, it is not intended as a dog run or exercise area, but rather a convenient space for residents' dogs. The area will include water access for cleaning the turf, along with a few benches for residents. This amenity is being provided in response to an anticipated higher proportion of residents with dogs, offering an on-site option rather than requiring use of surrounding streets.
- What's the ratio of parking to residential units and will there be facilities for electric vehicles/bikes and will there be storage/ accessible parking?
 - Parking is proposed over two levels of below-grade parking, with approximately 85 stalls provided for 133 residential units. Bicycle parking is provided in accordance with the City's bicycle parking bylaw requirements, including both residential and visitor/commercial spaces. A dedicated bicycle parking room is located in the northeast corner of the building, providing approximately 130 stalls, and is adjacent to a commercial elevator with direct access to ground level.
- Appreciation expressed for the design's heritage approach, noting its sensitivity and the positive experience created when moving through the passageways, which is considered appropriate to the context.
- The opportunities to look at these heritage buildings from different angles, is well thought out and the textures and colours are quite satisfying and appropriate.
- In regards to the Rezoning Application (No.00907), including what changes are being proposed, how is the rezoning intended to be implemented, and the rationale behind the proposal.
 - Staff explained the application is a combined rezoning and development permit submission. It involves multiple existing parcels that require reconfiguration to accommodate the proposed infill building and associated pocket park. The rezoning is necessary to enable a revised parcel structure, including consolidation and adjustment of boundaries to support the infill development. The proposed arrangement would integrate the new infill building, courtyard, and pocket park along Herald Street, while maintaining the existing Biggerstaff and Wilson buildings and their courtyard on separate parcels. The application also involves adjustments related to density and overall site organization.
- Did not find the explanation of the development and application was not sufficiently clear or comprehensible, particularly given the complexity of the project. Concern was also raised regarding the lack of advance documentation provided prior to the meeting. It was noted that key details, such as parking provisions, unit counts, and

rental information, were not fully addressed in the oral presentation, which is necessarily limited in length. Overall, questions were raised as to why the application was brought forward without appropriate supporting documentation.

- Staff responded, the application is for rezoning and a development permit, not a heritage alteration permit. The Heritage Advisory Panel has been provided an opportunity to comment on the design proposal in relation to applicable heritage and conservation design guidelines and policies. A full application package was not circulated, as this is not standard practice where a heritage alteration permit is not involved.

Panel members discussed:

- The design is considered exceptional, demonstrating a sensitive understanding of the historic context. It is viewed as a quiet and respectful intervention that aligns well with the Old Town design guidelines. Applaud both the design team and landscape consultant for their sensitivity and thoughtful response to the historic context and fine-grain character of Old Town. The application is strongly recommended for approval.
- Agreed with the previous comment and really appreciate the streetscape frontage and the selected materiality. The stepped-back areas are noted as a thoughtful and sensitive response to the surrounding context. It is also noted positively that the application complies with the specified height for Old Town, which is considered appropriate and encouraging.
- This is sensitively done, and think the materiality is great and varied in texture and appreciate that the pocket park, which contains views of the Wilson Bros sign and the north elevation of the building. The design is great and very well done.
- Staff confirmed that no motion from the Panel was required, but they were free to provide a recommendation.

Motion: That the Heritage Advisory Panel recommends to Council that Rezoning No.00907 and Development Permit with Variance No.00299 for 530-538 Herald Street, 517-533 Chatham Street be approved as presented.

Moved By: K. McEvoy

Seconded By: S. Barber

For: A. Wrean (Chair), S. Barber, B. Clinton- Baker, J. Stefan, V. Lindholm, K. McEvoy, N. Picard, R. Sleigh

Opposed: N. Strong-Boag

CARRIED

B) Delegated Heritage Alteration Permit No. 00336 for 805 Gordon Street

No minutes were recorded for this delegated item.

5. Adjournment

Moved: S. Barber

Seconded By: V. Lindholm

The March 10, 2026 Heritage Advisory Panel meeting was adjourned at 1:34 p.m.