



ROCKLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION

June 9, 2015

Mayor and Council
Helen Cain, Development Services
City of Victoria

Re: 1745 Rockland Community Meeting of May 27, 2015

This third meeting focused almost completely on the complexities raised by the proposal to subdivide 1745 Rockland and create a panhandle lot. Questions were raised regarding the number of buildings, their height and the resulting infringement on neighbours' privacy, and the lack of necessary internal setbacks. (See Notes from 3rd CALUC Meeting)

Although the lot is currently zoned R1-A with higher standards of site coverage and setbacks, the proposal is to change to R1-B zoning. R1-A zoning serves to protect green space and privacy; therefore, it should be retained as the benchmark.

Significant time was spent in discussing the supposed merits of the subdivision. However, the proponent wants to circumvent the protections that the Schedule H panhandle regulations provide the neighbours.

Schedule H allows for a residential building of 1 storey and of 5 m. height. Yet the proposal is for 4 buildings, three of 1.5 or 2 storeys and heights ranging from 6.28 m. to 6.72 m. In addition, the Introduction and General Regulations to bylaws (19) state that "Not more than one building other than an accessory building shall be erected or used on one lot, unless the regulations applicable in a particular zone expressly permit otherwise." The neighbours remain very concerned about the loss of privacy from 2nd floor windows directly or obliquely overlooking abutting homes.

The proponent's insistence upon four buildings was questioned. The lot less panhandle driveway is 2717 m². The current R1-A zone (minimum) Schedule H requires 850m² in site area, which might allow 3.2 buildings, if not for the single building restriction of the panhandle lot. At this time

there might be some support of 3 single storey dwelling units as several neighbours do acknowledge the unusual nature of this site.

The proponent suggested that the project could easily return to the original 6 unit proposal if this 4 unit proposal is rejected, citing the owner's rationale for four units as financial return. Anything less would not realize the returns expected. This argument was challenged by the assertion that if the zone does not support the profit expected, one should change the expectation and the plan, not the zoning.

While the proposed subdivision and rezoning supports a mansion of architectural significance, it is inconsistent with the OCP strategic direction for Rockland, in that the increased density neither respects the "large lot landscape character of the neighbourhood" nor fits the definition of sensitive infill "that preserves green space." Further, DPA 15B emphasizes the need "to preserve Traditional Residential character by ensuring that integration of panhandle lots and associated developments are compatible with immediate neighbours." The community meeting showed once again how unacceptable the proposed degree of density and mass is to the neighbourhood.

Sincerely,

Janet Simpson, President