



June 17, 2019

Township of Esquimalt  
1229 Esquimalt Road  
Esquimalt, British Columbia  
V9A 3P1

Dear Mayor Desjardins, Council, and Staff:

**Re: Application to Rezone 874 Fleming Street, Esquimalt, British Columbia**

Please accept this letter as part of our Rezoning Application for 874 Fleming Street, a proposed one hundred and thirty-seven (137) unit permanently affordable, residential rental building.

874 Fleming Street, currently known as Esquimalt Lions Lodge, was designed and constructed by the Esquimalt Lions Club in 1972. The Greater Victoria Housing Society acquired the four (4) storey, seventy-seven (77) unit apartment building in 1980 and has continued operation of the building to this day. A recent feasibility study indicates that the current site is underutilized and can support a building nearly twice in size. As the current building is well past its effective life and no longer meets the needs of the tenants, we are proposing to rezone the property from RM-4 to a site-specific zone.

The site is a single lot approximately 3,903 sq. m. and is bounded by single family lots to the north, an undeveloped treed lot to the west, a multi-residential building to the east, and the Esquimalt Lions Park to the south. The proposed development is a six (6) storey wood frame building, over a single below grade parkade. The ground floor will contain multiple common rooms with patios, common laundry room, and caretaker's office with washroom facilities.

The proposed development is being designed to Step 4 of the BC Energy Step Code subject to funding availability. The Greater Victoria Housing Society strives to create Zero Emission buildings by eliminating the need for a natural gas, domestic hot water heating system, thereby reducing annual CO<sup>2</sup> outputs entirely.

The proposed development is designed using Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CTPED) principles to engage and promote safety and security for tenants and visitors. To minimize opportunities for concealment, the building footprint is uncomplicated, with minimal alcoves and recesses. Landscaping is similarly articulated with a combination of low ground cover and high crown plant species that provide clear sight lines into front, rear, and side yards eliminating blind spots. Appropriate levels of shielded lighting provide safe, well-lit pathways and garden areas around the building, specifically at entry and exit doors.

The proposed development has been carefully designed to conform with the *Official Community Plan* (OCP). The OCP recognizes this site under Section 5.3, Medium and High Density Residential Development. The proposed development meets the strategic directions as outlined by thoughtfully increasing residential density and enhancing the existing neighbourhood through quality design.

The OCP acknowledges affordable housing units as an amenity to the Township of Esquimalt under section 5.4, Affordable Housing. It is the intent of the Greater Victoria Housing Society to design and construct this development as a purpose-built rental building to be owned and operated by the Greater Victoria Housing Society. The proposed development includes twenty-eight (28) studios, sixty-seven (67) one bedroom units, twenty-four (24) two bedroom units, five (5) three bedroom units, six (6) four bedroom units, and seven (7) fully accessible studios, with rental rates set to assist seniors and families earning very low to moderate incomes.

The proposed development allows seniors to 'age in place' in age-friendly housing and addresses the shortage of family and child-friendly housing in the Township of Esquimalt.

Funding for the proposed development is provided by BC Housing as part of the provincial Community Housing Fund program. As per the funding agreement with BC Housing, the Greater Victoria Housing Society will enter into an Operating Agreement with BC Housing for a period of no less than thirty-five years. This agreement will outline minimum and maximum rental amounts, along with the demographic of residents.

Tenants will have the opportunity to take advantage of the neighbouring parkland, schools, recreation facilities, and public transportation, aiding in an active lifestyle and the ability to live, work, and play in the Township of Esquimalt.

The provision of one hundred and thirty-seven (137) units (sixty (60) net units) will provide many benefits to the current tenants, neighbours, and the community at large. The increase in density on the site is beneficial to the local economy as it will increase the consumer base to the neighbourhood, in addition to consumers and employees for local businesses.

The form, massing, and character have been developed in keeping with Section 23, DPA.: 6 Multi-Family Residential as listed in the OCP. The proposed development addresses the Guidelines under Section 23.5 as follows:

- Sightlines have been limited along the north elevation as to not intrude on neighbouring properties, in addition to the increased 6.5 m. setback.
- Appropriate setbacks along the south elevation highlight the proposed building entrance and add key interest to the streetscape, encouraging interaction at the street level.
- Enhanced landscaping creates visual stimulation and allows for distinct separation between the proposed building and the neighbouring residential properties.

Convenient and efficient transportation access encourages opportunities for cycling, walking, and public transit use.

The proposed development includes sixty (60) secure underground parking stalls, seven (7) surface stalls, including a loading bay, and a bicycle facility capable of accommodating one hundred and thirty-eight (138) bicycles.



A total of 10% of all parking stalls will be equipped with EV charging stations. Additional conduit will be distributed to each remaining parking stall for the installation of future EV charging stations. Charging for mobility scooters and electric bicycles will be provided.

As per the Development Application Procedures and Fee Bylaw No.: 2791, 2012, a Community Open House was held in the evening on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May, 2019. The Greater Victoria Housing Society welcomed more 25 members of the neighbourhood and community to view the proposed development plans and provide comments and feedback. The response was overwhelmingly positive.

The Greater Victoria Housing Society further met with the current tenants of the Esquimalt Lion's Lodge on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May, 2019, to discuss the redevelopment of the site and the details of the Tenant Relocation Plan.

Founded in 1956, the Greater Victoria Housing Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing affordable rental housing. For over 62 years, the Greater Victoria Housing Society has provided homes to low to moderate-income seniors, families, working individuals, and adults with disabilities. The Greater Victoria Housing Society owns and operates seventeen (17) properties and seven hundred and twenty-six (726) units of affordable housing throughout the region. The Greater Victoria Housing Society currently owns and manages one hundred and sixty-eight (168) units of seniors' housing in the Township of Esquimalt.

We thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Kaye Melliship  
Executive Director  
/CA

References:

Official Community Plan - June 25, 2018

Official Community Plan - Schedule B  
*Proposed Land Use Designations*