

July 26, 2019

Mayor Lisa Helps
Members of Council
Victoria City Hall,
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, B.C. V8W 1P6

Dear Mayor Helps and members of Council,

Re: Rezoning and Development Permit Application – PARC Victoria
Applicant Address: 829 – 899 Fort Street and 846 Broughton Street

We acknowledge with respect the Lekwungen-speaking peoples on whose traditional territory the above-mentioned site stands and the Songhees and Esquimalt people whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

PARC is respectfully submitting this updated cover letter for inclusion in a staff report coming before Committee of the Whole regarding our rezoning and development permit application. The concept and the design of our application are the outcome of over 500 meetings with members of the executive and administration of the City of Victoria, neighbours, community groups and stakeholders in Victoria over the past three years.

We are focused on serving seniors through rental accommodation and services specific to their needs. PARC is proud to be a certified Living Wage employer since 2017 and has 250 employees on the payroll, full-time / part-time and casual positions. Our company is privately owned and for many years has supported community groups, the arts, hospital foundations and other charitable organizations. PARC is operating four residences since 2001, with a fifth one opening in the Fall of 2019. We operate on the North Shore, Burnaby and White Rock.

In the summer of 2016, PARC Retirement Living (PARC) acquired the properties at the east end of the block defined by Fort / Quadra/ Broughton and Blanshard. The assembled site of approximately 55,000 square feet touches three of the four streets with the exception of Blanshard. Our goal is to create a retirement residence for Independent Living (IL) as part of a hub of uses of interest both for the seniors and also for the broader community.

PARC considers central areas with a good number of amenities as the best location for independent seniors to continue to be part of the community they have helped to shape and build over many years. Walkability is key. PARC's adjacent building (838 Broughton) has a Walkability score of 99 out of 100, considered a "Walker's Paradise" with all errands within walking distance. We are not displacing any residents through redevelopment and look forward including vibrancy to this key location.

Based on the City's design guidelines and the 13 strategic goals of the City of Victoria, PARC is proposing a group of buildings ranging from seven to ten stories and **100% rental in perpetuity**. This will be confirmed via a Housing Agreement between the City of Victoria and PARC prior to a public hearing.

Our priority is to provide a home for many, with 268 units built over commercial space. This area will provide activity and involvement for the public focused on locally sourced retail stores, coffee shops and restaurants. On the 2nd floor there will be space for licensed child care operated by a local not-for-profit society, Victoria Conservatory of Music/PARC partnership for Centre for Music Wellness open to all ages, medical offices, multi-purpose rooms for

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both seniors and community groups available at no charge, and further amenities for seniors and as well some apartments. Bicycle /Scooter parking, for the public and residents is on the main floor with access to Fort Street. There will be 185 parking stalls, 45 more than required. Some public stalls will be offered on P1.

Intergenerational by Design

We have provided several “hubs” for diversity and intergenerational connection within the building.

Licensed Childcare – We have a Letter of Intent with a not-for-profit to run the licensed childcare within the westernmost building at below market lease rate. This will include spaces for 36 infants and preschool children. There will also be intergenerational programming with the seniors and opportunities for shared programming with the Centre for Music Wellness in partnership with Victoria Conservatory of Music, rooftop agriculture and active programming with the PARC residents.

Centre for Music Wellness – The 760 sf space will provide opportunity for the public and the residents to engage in music at all levels and ages, both individually and in groups. The programme has been sponsored by PARC and piloted over the past two years with the Victoria Conservatory of Music (VCM) and is being refined for its future satellite location within PARC’s residence. A signed Letter of Intent is included with the package detailing the background and vision for the future. This space will also be available to not-for-profit groups when not in use by VCM.

Multi-purpose rooms - The multi-purpose rooms, located on the second floor of the westernmost building, will be shared with not-for-profit community for public for meetings, events and lectures that contribute to the overall vibrancy and diverse representation of the neighbourhood. This has worked well over a decade in existing PARC buildings, offering much needed space at no charge. The three adjacent rooms are 800 sf and can be adjoined to provide 2,400 sf.

Public Realm-Exterior on Fort, Quadra and Broughton Streets - Public Plazas: two public plazas, located on the PARC site, are being made available to the public at all times. One is located along Fort Street (approximately 1,000sf), the second is located at the corner of Quadra and Broughton Streets (approximately 2,000sf). Both will have urban furniture and hardscaping/landscaping for the enjoyment of the general public.

The Design

Our site is located in Fairfield Gonzalez, bordering the Harris Green neighbourhood and can be seen as an extension to the downtown of Victoria. The area is undergoing a restoration with several developments already being completed or being considered. This applies especially to the neighbouring ten story buildings, one that was completed in 2016 (838 Broughton) and one submitted for a Development Permit (819-827 Fort).

Across Fort Street buildings of 15 stories are permissible according to the OCP. Across Quadra there will be lower buildings than ten stories and across Broughton on the site of the “Y” a ten-story development could be contemplated under the OCP. PARC is building within the neighbourhood context.

Our design responds to the historic buildings such as Christ Church Cathedral and other buildings on Fort Street but can be expressed through contemporary design.

On our large site a group of five buildings is being proposed. Three of them are ten stories with two “bridge” buildings at seven stories. The materials are familiar to Victoria, including brick and stones but more contemporary claddings add terra cotta and metal. The difference in height creates view corridors and access for sunlight and neighbour’s views.

Our design focuses on interesting pedestrian experiences on Fort/Quadra and Broughton. We will also create a green courtyard offering an attraction to all residences and neighbours, while bringing rooftop agriculture and bee-keeping to the community.

Landscape Design

PARC intends to relocate the above ground power lines underground and remove some infrastructure in the sidewalks. A letter from the City confirming PARC's intention is included in our package along with support letters from five landowners and two business associations. This change will allow us to plant trees on Fort Street. Trees along Fort, Quadra and Broughton, a piazza at the corner of Quadra and Broughton will add green space for the public.

The roofs of the bridge buildings and the patios on the 2nd and 3rd floors will feature extensive landscaping, space for active gardening and urban farming, enhancing the quality of life of the seniors and provide visual interest for residents of the existing Escher and the future Salient building.

"Independent Living" (IL) and PARC

Independent Living is enjoyed by up to 10% of the seniors' population above the age of 75 in BC, depending upon the specific area and region in BC. The average age of resident is 88, with a 3.5-year average stay. In Independent Living residences, further Assisted Living services are available through third party providers. Independent living extends and improves quality of life. For example, studies show that Seniors requiring residential care are spending an average six months in a nursing home compared to the average stay of 18 months when moving from their home.

In 2027 there will be approximately 14,000 more seniors above the age of 75 living in Victoria than in 2017. This suggests approximately 1100 (around 8%) more seniors will be looking for Independent Living in 2027. They would occupy approximately 900 additional Independent Living suites. These seniors would qualify financially for PARC's proposed housing units. This study was prepared by Westbridge Group Valuation Partner, Victoria, BC.

In PARC residences the monthly rental rate includes accommodation, cable TV, weekly housekeeping, three daily meals, fitness classes, transportation, social programs, consultations with a wellness nurse and access to all the amenities from lounges, music rooms, exercise gym and media areas.

Affordability

There are 14 units PARC will commit to making available at a 60% discount of the market rate. This discounted rate covers three meals daily, housekeeping, transportation, social programs, access to all amenities, consultation with the wellness nurse in the same way as offered to the other residents.

The ten studios and four one bedrooms for couples will be non-identifiable and secured for 12 years. Residents of these suites remaining at the end of the twelfth year will be able to stay in their homes until they naturally need to move out under normal circumstances. This model has been successful in North Vancouver since 2012 in partnership with Hollyburn Family services. We have a signed Memorandum of Understanding in place with the Greater Victoria Housing Society to provide placement service on a fee for service basis included with this package.

In addition, 63 suites (with their own street entrance) will be earmarked for student housing through a signed Letter of Intent between PARC and Camosun College. These suites will be put in place for four academic years starting once the building has received occupancy permits. This housing use is intended to enhance the multigenerational aspect of the neighbourhood and to provide below market housing for a significant group of local residents.

The Environment

PARC will commit to Step 2 of the BC Energy Step Code. We will target a LEED Gold (version 2009) certification with an emphasis on energy use to a "Zero Carbon" building not using fossil fuel.

PARC has a proven track record with two existing certified LEED gold building and a third currently under construction.

The reduction in energy use is expressed in the design and appearance of the building through smaller windows to prevent energy losses. Extensive sun shading also reduces heat gain.

Thirty parking stalls will be equipped with an e-charger using renewable power.

Public Art

A jury will choose a West Coast artist for Public Art in reference to this development. The budget will be \$400,000.00. Marianne Nicholson, a Dzawada'enuxw visual artist living in Victoria, created Public Art in North Vancouver 2012 for a PARC Residence after a similar process. The successful artist will be free to determine the location and historical significance of the installation.

Inclusivity and Diversity

Our buildings offer a number of spaces that will be open for community groups. PARC is in discussions with a number of stakeholders about their needs for space and options for cooperation, i.e. the Songhees Nation. PARC intends to offer services like access to fitness areas for seniors not living with PARC as a part of our neighbourhood outreach.

Employment

PARC will offer full-time / part-time and casual employment as a Certified Living wage employer, meaning this will set the standard for starting wage, with management positions providing competitive salaries. In total there will be around 60 full time equivalent positions. Additionally, there will be employment opportunities in the retail spaces, medical offices and licensed childcare.

We are thankful to the hundreds of stakeholders who have contributed to the proposal we submitted and look forward to serving the community on many levels. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Our team have reached out to all members of Council and remain available to meet, email or speak to you at your convenience.

Best regards,

PACIFIC ARBOUR SIX RESIDENCES LTD.



Rainer A. Müller

Founder and Chairman
PARC RETIREMENT LIVING



living wage
employer