

Dear Michael Angrove, Mayor Alto and city council.

The Bayview development at "355 CATHERINE ST, 251 ESQUIMALT RD, 200 KIMTA RD, 210 KIMTA RD" has requested a variance (REZ00729) of a previously approved development plan. This variance request is shortly coming to a Committee of the Whole (COTW) hearing, planned for Oct 26/23.

Portrayed as a commitment to the need for higher density housing, the Bayview development group in 2020, requested changes to its previously approved development plan. By this "variance", the group wishes to minimize its proposal for local infrastructure development, minimize enhancement of a heritage site (the roundhouse), minimize a commitment to affordable housing and instead substitute an apartment building height out of keeping with the local area, increase the number of apartment buildings previously planned and thereby increase living density.

A different view of this proposal is that a development group wishes to maximize profit, by leveraging a need for city council to increase housing density in the city, while minimizing the livability of the local area. In particular this variance request is brought forward with limited acknowledgement of the impact of the requested change on Vic West in general and on the area in and around the proposed development in particular.

The variance request on a proposal of this size can tick the box, for Victoria City council, to increase average city housing density without having to do much in the way of actual city planning. I trust that this appeal is outweighed by the more serious need to plan for increased city density spread though the neighbourhoods of Victoria. Although densification and making available "affordable" housing are current goals of Victoria City council, the pursuit of this with minimal attention to longer term "community well being" is shortsighted and hollow. It serves to "kick down the road" actual considerations of the impact of densification and increased floor space ratios (FSRs).

I note the absence in the current variance request of much of the original infrastructure development proposed. There is an absence of planning for grocery stores, retail shops, services and amenities supporting the proposed increase in Vic West population.

Unaddressed in long term city planning is the reality that Vic West access to Victoria proper is provided by only two routes - Johnson Street running over the jackknife bridge of the same name and Bay Street running over a two-lane bridge (one in each direction) of the same name. This is insufficient for the anticipated increase in human traffic envisioned.

I strongly oppose bylaw revision to allow for increased building height on the site which may open the door to further revised development. I strongly oppose approval of this variance on the previously approved development permit, for reasons stated above.

As the time frame is so short between my becoming aware of the COTW meeting (Oct 20) and the actual COTW meeting date (Oct 26), I have taken the liberty of writing to Mayor Alto and the city council directly as well as sending this letter to yourself. **[Author's name withheld for privacy]**