

From: Phil Calvert

Subject: 1201 Fort Street: Revised Development Proposal

Date: October 23, 2017 at 11:48:28 AM PDT

To: mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca

Dear Mayor Helps and Council,

I am writing to express my continued opposition to Abstract's revised proposal to develop the property at 1201 Fort Street, the former site of the Truth Centre.

I attended the Committee of the Whole meeting on April 6 of this year, when the City Council instructed Abstract to return to the drawing board, and to submit a proposal that addressed concerns about massing, height, and the scale of the development, as well as preservation of the privacy of neighbours and the heritage character of the neighbourhood.

Abstract's revised proposal for this property neither respects the directions of Victoria City Council, nor the views of Rockland. Indeed, Abstract seems to have essentially ignored these clear instructions from City Council. The townhouses are taller and still dominate the street. The rooftop patios are still in the plan, and will still affect the privacy of residents on Pentrelew. The apartment buildings are bigger and take up more space on the grounds. Setbacks are smaller, meaning these massive buildings will be closer to the street than previously proposed. There is no provision for playgrounds, bicycle parking or other amenities that one would expect from a family-friendly development. In addition more trees will be cut down than in the original proposal, and there is less green space.

The proposal still does not conform to the Heritage Management Strategic Plan, under which any new development in a heritage neighbourhood should provide continuity with surrounding development, and not dominate the existing landscape.

Nor will these luxury townhouses and condos will not address the serious housing shortage in Victoria. It seems clear that they are only intended to be investment properties, not places for families to live. Abstract's commitment to provide affordable housing as part of this proposal is minimal, and the penalties are far less than the cost of one of these condos.

Our democratic institutions should be respected. This means that the clear instructions from our elected representatives to developers should also be respected. Abstract, in its arrogance, has not done this.

1201 Fort must be developed, but in a manner consistent with Victoria's management plans, appropriate to the neighbourhood, and supportive of affordable family housing. I urge you all to send Abstract back to the drawing board again, and to deliver the clear message that your instructions should be taken seriously.

Sincerely

Phil Calvert