



*My priorities as a Councillor are safe streets, healthy neighbourhoods, fiscal prudence and open government.*

June 28, 2023

This month, I want to discuss threats to our neighbourhoods and the dramatic changes planned by Victoria City Council to the character and livability of our neighborhoods.

You may have wondered about the meaning of “missing middle housing” and what the implications might be for your neighbourhood. Here is what is coming: **“The era of single-family-home zoning has come to an end...The new baseline is six units on what was formerly known as a single-family-lot.”** City Councillor Caradonna (Belton development - May 11)

We are now in the era of **“Beyond Missing Middle Housing”** in Victoria. Proposals which did not meet the missing middle housing guidelines because of set-back and parking regulations have been approved.

An example is 633 Belton in Vic West. This development on a property zoned as single family residential will now be a six-plex of four three-bedroom units and two accessible two-bedroom units. This development will be “car free”. Instead of the normally required parking stalls, residents will have one electric MODO car share on the street, 6 car share memberships and a bike storage and repair facility on site.

Residents of Rockland have informed me of a property assessed at \$1.6 million being marketed as not needing re-zoning to build “5 luxury townhouses” MLS 932812

A property in Fairfield, with an assessment of \$1.3 million is promoted as “a long-term investment or build Missing Middle housing...” MLS 934851

This City Council, in a headlong rush to solve the “housing crisis”, is ready to approve multi-unit housing in neighbourhoods where families have traditionally enjoyed safe places for their children.

Further, there is a looming parking crisis in the City of Victoria. Plans are afoot to approve high-rise buildings with minimal or no parking. A rental building at 937 View Street is proposed with 269 units and **no parking.**

”

*“Victoria would be so much safer and inviting if those who live and work here become Council’s priorities”*

A development in Harris Green (downtown), approved by City Council on February 16, allows 0.52 parking stalls per unit. I objected to a proposed amendment that would have reduced the number of parking stalls to 0.34 per unit, stating *"We have a shortage of parking downtown and that applies not only to customers of downtown retail, but to people who live downtown"*. I am also concerned that the City will drive away those who need vehicles for employment, such as people in the trades who need trucks and vans, salespeople, and shift workers.

I want to be clear about housing needs in Victoria. The population of Victoria will grow. It must. However, I believe that it is foolhardy to continue on the current path of City Council. Families want a little patch of earth - not much - but a safe place for kids to be outside. Not a balcony in a multi-plex or houseplex.

Accommodation for our growing population can be built near main arteries and employment centres with public transportation. We do not need to destroy neighbourhood character to achieve this.

And not everyone finds a bicycle adequate transportation. The pernicious belief that everyone can ride a bicycle cannot be allowed to shape our housing policy.

---

For details regarding the Rockland and Fairfield properties and the Harris Green, Belton and View parking, please see the addendum document posted on my web-site at <https://www.marggardiner.ca/posts>

Thank you to those who responded to my first newsletter in May, and those who have recently "signed on". Let me know your thoughts in the Your Voice section of my web site.

My next newsletters will be about diminishing community voice and the upcoming Official Community Plan redo.

Regards,

*Marg*

---

If you find this newsletter informative, please share it with friends. If you do not wish to receive updates, please send me a note and I will remove your e-address.

---

*"Victoria would be so much safer and inviting if those who live and work here become Council's priorities"*