



Advisory Design Panel Report

For the Meeting of April 11, 2018

To: Advisory Design Panel **Date:** April 3, 2018

From: Leanne Taylor, Senior Planner

Subject: Rezoning Application No. 00620 and Development Permit with Variance Application No. 00076 for 210 Gorge Road East

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend to Council that Rezoning Application No. 00620 and Development Permit with Variance Application No. 00076 for 210 Gorge Road East be approved with changes recommended by the Advisory Design Panel (ADP) and that the ADP pay attention to the following aspects:

- a. building height
- b. corner treatment of the building at Gorge Road East and Carroll Street
- c. treatment of blank walls on the east elevation
- d. building mass along the upper storeys
- e. application of materials on the building.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Advisory Design Panel (ADP) is requested to review a Development Permit with Variance Application for 210 Gorge Road East and provide advice to Council.

The proposal is for a six-storey, multi-unit residential building consisting of approximately 48 dwelling units. The following policy documents were considered in assessing this Application:

- *The Official Community Plan (OCP, 2012)*
- *Revitalization Guidelines for Corridors, Villages and Town Centres (2017)*
- *Multi-Unit Residential, Commercial and Industrial Design Guidelines (2012)*
- *Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters (2010)*
- *Advisory Design Guidelines for Buildings, Signs and Awnings (2006).*

BACKGROUND

Project Details

Applicant: Ms. Deanna Bhandar
The Victoria Cool Aid Society

Architect: Mr. Mark Anthony, MAIBC
Number TEN Architectural Group

Development Permit Area: Development Permit Area 7A, Corridors

Heritage Status: n/a

The following data table compares the proposal with the existing T-1 Zone, Limited Transient Accommodation District and the standard R3-1 Zone, Multiple Dwelling District. An asterisk is used to identify where the proposal is less stringent than the existing Zone.

Zoning Criteria	Proposal	Zone Standard R3-1	Current Zone T-1
Site area (m ²) – minimum	1981.40	920.00	1850.00
Density (Floor Space Ratio) – maximum	1.87:1*	1.2:1	1.2:1
Total floor area (m ²) – maximum	3700.10	2377.56	2377.56
Height (m) – maximum	17.28	18.50	21.50
Storeys – maximum	6	n/a	n/a
Site coverage % – maximum	52*	20	20
Open site space % – minimum	33*	30	30
Parking – minimum			
Existing Schedule C	24*	90	90
Proposed Schedule C	24*	30	30
Visitor parking – minimum included in the overall units			
Proposed Schedule C	4*	8	8
Bicycle parking stalls – minimum			
Class 1	90	82	82
Class 2	12	12	12
Setbacks – minimum			
Street Boundary – Carroll Street	4.25*	13.50	7.50
Rear (E)	1.53*	4.12	7.50
Side (N)	3.00*	4.12	7.50
Side (S)	5.84	4.12	7.50

Zoning Criteria	Proposal	Zone Standard R3-1	Current Zone T-1
Accessory Building (Gazebo)			
Location	Front yard*	Rear yard	Rear yard
Height (m) – maximum	2.94	3.50	3.50
Setback (m) – minimum		0.60	0.60
Rear	39.65	0.60	0.60
Side	44.32	3.50m or front	3.50m or front
Flanking Street (Gorge Road East)	23.13	setback of adjoining lot	setback of adjoining lot
Separation space from main building (m) – minimum	1.55	2.40	2.40

Description of Proposal

The proposal is to construct a six-storey multi-unit residential building consisting of approximately 82 rental units. The development has a proposed floor space ratio (FSR) of 1.87:1. The proposed site plan, architecture and landscape design include the following details:

- contemporary architectural features, including a flat roofline, roofline soffit materials, and contemporary-style windows
- exterior building materials include cementitious fibre board (panel, horizontal and board & batten), brick, aluminium and glass guardrail system, metal roofline soffit material, wood trim, and concrete
- one residential entryway into the building fronting Gorge Road East
- Juliet balconies on the west elevation
- a large lounge, offices and common areas on the ground floor
- large private patio space and gazebo on the south west corner of the building fronting Carroll Street
- garden plots and substantial landscaping along the Carroll frontage
- permeable surface treatment for all communal areas and exposed parking area
- substantial landscaping around the perimeter of the site
- 24 parking spaces located in a gated underground parking structure
- 90 Class 1 bicycle parking spaces on-site located in a secure, enclosed bicycle storage room in the underground parking structure and 12 Class 2 bicycle parking spaces located at the main entrance to the building
- bicycle kitchen (bicycle repair area and air pump) located in the bike storage area.

Sustainability Features

The applicant has not identified any sustainability features associated with this proposal.

Consistency with Design Guidelines and Urban Design Policies in the Local Area Plan

The *Official Community Plan* (2012) (OCP) Urban Place Designation for the subject property is Urban Residential, which supports low-rise and mid-rise multi-unit residential buildings up to approximately six storeys, provided that the architecture, landscape and urban design respond to the established place character of the neighbourhood. The OCP also identifies this property in Development Permit Area (DPA) 7A: Corridors. The objectives of this DPA are to ensure that development along corridors is compatible with adjacent and nearby lower density residential neighbourhoods, and encompasses human-scaled urban design and a sensitive transition in building form and place character. The OCP further emphasizes the importance of a transit-oriented streetscape along Gorge Road East, a frequent transit corridor.

The new *Burnside Gorge Neighbourhood Plan* (2017) supports the development of multi-unit residential development along Gorge Road East and contains urban design policies to ensure that new development is a good fit within established residential neighbourhoods and is oriented positively towards the street to create a more attractive pedestrian environment. The Plan supports buildings up to five storeys on the north side of Gorge Road East, east of Balfour Avenue, provided that there is ground floor commercial space and there is a sensitive transition to lower density areas to the north. If there is no ground floor commercial, the Plan supports up to four storeys.

The proposal is for a six-storey building along Gorge Road East, which then transitions to five storeys at the rear due to significant grade changes on the site. The ground floor uses include offices, a lounge and other common areas for the building. There are no ground floor residential units. To visually break up the building into human-scaled portions and address transition to the lower density residential areas to the north, the building is set back at the fifth and sixth storeys on the south elevation and at the fourth and fifth storeys on the north elevation. To minimize privacy impacts on the four-storey multi-unit residential building to the east, the applicant is minimizing the amount of glazing on the east elevation, and the portion of this side elevation with windows is setback approximately 15.5m from the east property line. The east elevation is predominantly a blank wall; to soften its appearance, the applicant is proposing different applications of cementitious fibre board, a mixed colour palette, roof elements and building articulation.

The proposed landscaping along the Gorge Road East and Carroll Street will improve the streetscape and pedestrian experience at the corner. The large Hornbeam tree, a landmark tree at this corner, will be retained. The applicant proposes constructing garden plots and soft landscaping along the Carroll Street frontage as well as substantial landscaping along Gorge Road East. A statutory right of way on Gorge Road East will be required as a condition of rezoning to allow for sidewalk realignment, additional boulevard and trees. Permeable surface treatment would be installed throughout the site.

Staff indicated to the applicant that a six-storey building at this location would be difficult to support given Council policies, unless there were some design interventions to the original proposal to address initial concerns from staff. Staff concerns were related to the visual impacts of the building height, the upper storey portions of the building, the roofline and the blank side elevations. The applicant incorporated some design changes, and the proposed development is overall more consistent with the DPA 7A objectives and design guidelines despite the height issue.

ISSUES

The issues associated with this project are:

- building height and transition to lower density residential areas
- corner treatment of the building at Gorge Road East and Carroll Street
- treatment of blank walls on the east elevation
- building mass at the upper storeys
- application of building materials.

ANALYSIS

Building Height and Transition to Lower Density Residential Areas

The *Burnside Gorge Neighbourhood Plan* supports buildings up to five storeys on the north side of Gorge Road East, east of Balfour Avenue, provided that there is ground floor commercial space and a sensitive transition to lower density areas to the north. Providing ground floor commercial space in this building is not feasible from an operations perspective and considering that this building is 100% rental (operated by a non-profit housing provider), obtaining the maximum number units is crucial from a financial perspective. The applicant has programmed the building so that all the offices and communal areas are located on the ground floor (i.e. no dwelling units are located on the ground floor). To mitigate impacts resulting from a six-storey building, the applicant is stepping back the upper storeys on the north and south elevations by approximately two metres and providing greater building articulation. However, the Advisory Design Panel's input on this aspect of the design with special attention to the transition to the lower density residential areas would be welcomed.

Corner Treatment of the Building at Gorge Road East and Carroll Street

The *Multi-Family, Commercial and Industrial Design Guidelines* contain language that distinctive massing, building articulation and architectural treatments should be incorporated for corner sites. The *Revitalization Guidelines for Corridors, Villages and Town Centres* provide suggestions on how to emphasize the corner, such as chamfered or setback corner, prominent glazing, or a primary building entrance oriented to the corner. The applicant has incorporated design features to accentuate the corner of the building; however, the ADP's input on this aspect of the design with special attention to the corner treatment of the building would be welcomed.

Treatment of Blank Walls on the East Elevation

The *Multi-Family, Commercial and Industrial Design Guidelines* discourages large, blank windowless and featureless walls that are visible from the public realm. The *Revitalization Guidelines for Corridors, Villages and Town Centres* also emphasize that large expanses of blank walls should be avoided and where this is not possible, design treatments such as vertical plant materials, landscaping, art, buildings materials and building elements are encouraged to add visual interest. The blank wall on the southeast side of the building would be visible from Gorge Road East and the applicant has incorporated different applications of cementitious fibre board and colours to break up this wall. The blank wall on the northeast side of the building would be less visible from the public realm; however the residents residing in the multi-unit residential building to the east would have direct view of this elevation. The applicant is

proposing some building articulation and glazing to break up the blank wall. The ADP's input on this aspect of the design would be welcomed.

Building Mass at the Upper Storeys

The *Multi-Family, Commercial and Industrial Design Guidelines* contain language that perceived building mass should be mitigated through the use of architectural elements, visually interesting rooflines, a stepping back of the upper floors, and detailing that creates rhythm and visual interest. To reduce the building bulk of the upper fourth, fifth and sixth storeys, the applicant has set back the upper storeys along the north and south elevations by approximately two metres, incorporated roof elements and large windows, and broken up the massing. However, staff have some concerns with the abrupt transition between the fourth and fifth storey on the south elevation fronting Gorge Road East, and the ADP's input on this aspect of the design and any other comments related to building mass would be welcomed.

Application of materials on the building

The *Multi-Family, Commercial and Industrial Design Guidelines* encourage high quality and durable exterior building materials that enhance and articulate street frontages. The predominant material on the new building is a different application of cementitious fibre board (panel, horizontal and board & batten). The applicant is proposing brick along the building base. The ADP is invited to comment on the application of materials.

OPTIONS

1. Recommend to Council that Rezoning Application No. 00620 and Development Permit with Variance Application No. 000076 for 210 Gorge Road East be approved with changes recommended by the Advisory Design Panel (ADP) and that the ADP pay attention to the following aspects:
 - a. building
 - b. corner treatment of the building at Gorge Road East and Carroll Street
 - c. treatment of blank walls on the east elevation
 - d. building mass at the upper storeys
 - e. application of materials on the building. **(Recommended)**
2. Recommend to Council that Rezoning Application No. 00620 and Development Permit with Variance No. 000076 for 210 Gorge Road East be approved with changes recommended by the Advisory Design Panel.
3. Recommend to Council that Rezoning Application No. 00620 and Development Permit with Variance No. 000076 for 210 Gorge Road East does not sufficiently meet the applicable design guidelines and policies and should be declined.

CONCLUSION

The Application can benefit from further design refinement to improve consistency with the relevant design guidelines, particularly in relation to building height, the corner treatment of the building at Gorge Road East and Carroll Street, treatment of blank walls on the east elevation, building mass at the upper storeys and the application of materials on the building. Comments from the Advisory Design Panel are welcomed on these as well as any other aspects of the design that may require refinement.

ATTACHMENTS

- Aerial Map
- Zoning Map
- Letters from the applicant received February 14, 2018
- Plans date stamped March 14, 2018.

cc: Ms. Deanna Bhandar, The Victoria Cool Aid Society, and Mr. Mark Anthony, Number TEN Architectural Group.