

6. **819-823, 825 and 827 Fort Street**
Heritage Alteration Permit with Variances Application No. 00009
Heritage Designation Application No. 000176

Attendees: Sydney Schwartz, MCM Partnership; Kristine Liu and Robert Fung, The Salient Group; Chelsea Dunk, Donald Luxton & Associates; Will King, Waymark Architecture; Bruce Johnson, RJC Engineers

Merinda Conley provided a brief summary of the application.

Panel Questions and Comments

- Are the units for rental or purchase? Sydney Schwartz: Rental.
- What will be the depth of the retail space? Robert Fung: The retail space will be 60 ft deep. Only the façades will be retained.
- There are a number of interior bedrooms without windows. Sydney Schwartz: Yes, on the podium level there are two bedroom suites in which the rear bedrooms do not have windows. These suites have higher ceilings and attention will be given to material treatments and lightness to maximize light into these deeper spaces. Robert Fung: There are units on the second and third levels that have internal bedrooms. These bedrooms could have sliding glass doors or transom windows to provide light. Panel: Are windowless bedrooms allowed under the building code?
- Have shadow studies been done? The building, on the south side of Fort Street, would cast a long shadow across the street. The concern is in the shoulder seasons (spring and fall). Sydney Schwartz: The spring equinox shadow touches the buildings across the street at noon (shadow study chart was shown).
- Is 827 Fort Street included in the heritage designation? Merinda Conley: No, it was determined at the time of designation (2008) that the building was not worthy of designation due to the number of alterations over time. The Council minutes and motions from 2008 were reviewed and discussed with the City Solicitor. The building was not identified in the Statement of Significance. Panel: Who was the architect of 827 Fort Street and the year built? This building was built in the 1950s and could have significance.
- The height of the building will dominant the block and set a precedent. The proposed setbacks are not adequate. A lower building and more setback would mitigate the shadowing issue.
- The project straddles two zones: one allows 43m and the other 15.5m in height. The proposal is requesting 35.2m in height. That is a substantial variance for the height. Robert Fung: Information was provided regarding the allowable heights for this site in the existing zones and in the Downtown Core Area Plan.
- Does the proposal meet the guidelines for the DPA 7B (HC): Corridors Heritage? Merinda Conley: The guidelines support the proposal. Panel: Does the additional height encourage human-scaled urban design? If it does not, it deviates from policy.
- Architecturally, there is too much consistency in materials between the lower and upper floors. It would be preferable if the upper floors had more glass rather than brick. The scale of detail on the brick part of the building is less than that of other buildings on Fort Street.
- The windows on the base, body and cap are well done.
- The proposal says nothing about the robustness of the Fort Street Heritage Corridor. The podium of the building needs greater detail to increase the integration of the design. There is no harmony between the new building and the older buildings on the

corridor. The new construction on the streetscape reflects the tower, not the existing buildings.

- It is unfortunate that only the two façades are being conserved and not the buildings.
- The Panel would like to hear the Advisory Design Panel's motion for this project.
Alison Meyer: Council looks for independent consideration by the Panels. The draft ADP motion was read aloud.
- The retention of the heritage building façades maintains the pedestrian rhythm on the street. The podium maintains the height along the street.

Moved

Seconded

That the Heritage Advisory Panel recommend to Council that Heritage Alteration Permit with Variances Application No. 00009 for 819-823, 825 and 827 Fort Street be approved with the following changes:

- increase in height beyond the maximum allowable of 30m not be allowed
- Increase the setback of the tower from the streetwall subject to the zone
- confirmation of heritage designation of 827 Fort Street.

Carried (4 in favour; 2 opposed)

Moved

Seconded

That the Heritage Advisory Panel recommend that Council approve the designation of the heritage-registered property located at 819-823 Fort Street, pursuant to Section 611 of the *Local Government Act*, as a Municipal Heritage Site.

Carried (unanimous)