



Committee of the Whole Report For the Meeting of August 8, 2019

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** July 26, 2019

From: Andrea Hudson, Acting Director, Sustainable Planning and Community Development

Subject: Development Permit Application No. 000516 for 829-899 Fort Street and 846-856 Broughton Street

RECOMMENDATION

That Council, after the Public Hearing for Rezoning Application No. 00613, if it is approved, consider the following motion:

"That Council authorize the issuance of Development Permit with Variance Application No. 000516 for 829-899 Fort Street and 846-856 Broughton Street, in accordance with:

1. Plans date stamped May 31, 2019.
2. Development meeting all *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* requirements.
3. Final plans to be generally in accordance with the plans identified above to the satisfaction of the Director of Sustainable Planning and Community Development.
4. The Development Permit lapsing two years from the date of this resolution."

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

In accordance with Section 489 of the *Local Government Act*, Council may issue a Development Permit in accordance with the applicable guidelines specified in the *Official Community Plan*. A Development Permit may vary or supplement the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* but may not vary the use or density of the land from that specified in the Bylaw.

Pursuant to Section 491 of the *Local Government Act*, where the purpose of the designation is the revitalization of an area in which a commercial use is permitted, a Development Permit may include requirements respecting the character of the development, including landscaping, and the siting, form, exterior design and finish of buildings and other structures.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present Council with information, analysis and recommendations for a Development Permit Application for the property located at 829-899 Fort Street and 846-856 Broughton Street. The proposal is to construct a ten-storey mixed-use building containing independent seniors rental apartment units, market rental apartment units, commercial offices, a childcare facility, music wellness centre and retail commercial uses on the ground floor.

The following points were considered in assessing this application:

- the proposal is generally consistent with the design guidelines for Development Permit Area 7B (HC): Corridors and Development Permit Area 14: Cathedral Hill Precinct, which encourage high quality architecture and urban design that strengthens the heritage value and special character of the area while enhancing commercial viability through a cohesive design that contributes to an improved pedestrian experience.
- the proposal is generally consistent with the *Downtown Core Area Plan* (DCAP), which identifies Fort Street as a special character area and encourages mixed-use buildings that fit with the smaller scale commercial properties that contribute to a lively and active shopping street.
- the portions of the upper storeys of the building are inconsistent with some of the setbacks and floor plate size limitations envisioned in the DCAP; however, the applicant has modified the proposal to ameliorate the impact of the encroaching portions of the building to ensure the proposal meets the objectives of providing access to light and limiting the visual impact of bulkier buildings.

BACKGROUND

Description of Proposal

The proposal is to construct a ten-storey mixed-use building containing independent seniors rental apartment units, market rental apartment units, commercial offices, a childcare facility, music wellness centre and retail commercial uses on the ground floor. Specific details include:

- three ten-storey buildings connected with seven-storey 'bridge' buildings
- reduced massing at the corner of Broughton Street and Quadra Street across from Pioneer Square
- frequent retail entrances along Fort Street to contribute to the existing small scale commercial character of the street
- two levels of underground parking, as well as an enclosed commercial parking and loading area accessed via Broughton Street
- bicycle parking and end of trip facilities located on the main level
- outdoor amenity areas located on levels 2, 3 and 7 comprising a residents' patio, children's play area, outdoor dining area, urban agriculture plots and other passive and active recreational spaces for residents and visitors
- residential entrances on Fort Street and Quadra Street.

Exterior building materials include:

- a mix of granite, brick and terracotta in a variety of warm toned colours as the predominant materials
- dark metal cladding as an accent material on the brick façades and light metal cladding for the uppermost storeys
- mosaic tile for portions of the building base along Fort Street
- engineered wood for the pergola over the publicly accessible outdoor space at the corner of Broughton Street and Quadra Street
- steel framed glass canopies above the retail entrances and over the publicly accessible outdoor space along Fort Street
- combination of glass and metal rail balconies.

Landscaping elements include:

- rooftop and courtyard spaces with various native and naturalized plantings
- new street trees added to the Fort Street, Quadra Street and Broughton Street frontages
- unit pavers at the street corners as per the City's *Downtown Public Realm Plan and Streetscape Standards* (2017)
- variations in paving material to differentiate between public and private space
- two new publicly accessible spaces have been added: one mid-site along Fort Street and one at the corner of Broughton Street and Quadra Street.

Advisory Design Panel

The application was reviewed by the Advisory Design Panel (ADP) on two occasions. It was first presented at the meeting of April 11, 2018, where the massing concept was well received; however, the Panel recommended that the application be declined due to a lack of consistency with the design guidelines. The current proposal, which retains the original massing concept while incorporating significant revisions to address ADPs concerns, was presented to the Panel on April 24, 2019, where it was recommended for approval with consideration to revising the corner treatment of the building at Fort Street and Quadra Street to enhance the pedestrian experience and provide some urban prominence. In response to the recommendation, the applicant has revised the treatment of the mid-rise portion of the corner, redesigned the corner canopy and added coloured glass fins on the second storey to enhance the pedestrian experience and give the corner more prominence. The minutes for the two ADP meetings are attached to this report for reference.

ANALYSIS

Development Permit Area and Design Guidelines

The subject site is designated as Core Residential which envisions multi-unit residential, commercial and mixed-use buildings from three storeys up to approximately 20 storeys. In terms of place character features, the *Official Community Plan* (OCP) envisions three to five storey street walls with buildings set close to the street to define the public realm along retail streets with wide sidewalks and regularly-spaced street trees, and off-street parking located at the rear of buildings or underground. The proposed development is consistent with these policies.

The Fort Street portion of the site is located within Development Permit Area 7B (HC) - Corridors Heritage. The objectives of this designation are:

- to revitalize arterial and secondary arterial streets to strengthen commercial viability and improve the pedestrian experience along the corridors
- to conserve the heritage value, special character and the significant historic buildings, features and characteristics of this area
- to achieve a more cohesive design, and enhanced appearance, along arterial and secondary arterial streets through high quality architecture, landscape and urban design responsive to its historic context through sensitive and innovative interventions
- to encourage pedestrian and cycling use of corridors by enhancing the experience of pedestrians and cyclists through human-scaled urban design, including built form and place character considerations, which are compatible with street function.

The Broughton Street and Quadra Street portions of the site are located within Development Permit Area 14: Cathedral Hill Precinct. The objectives of this designation are:

- to revitalize an area of commercial use through redevelopment of sites including surface parking lots and public realm improvements to increase vibrancy, complement the adjacent Core Business area and strengthen commercial viability
- to enhance the Cathedral Hill Precinct through a high quality of architecture, landscape and urban design that reflects the function of a major residential centre on the edge of a central business district in scale, massing and character, while respecting prominent heritage properties and landmarks
- to recognize the transitional nature of the area between a high density Downtown and the medium to lower density residential neighbourhood through sensitive infill and the enhancement of streetscapes.

The design guidelines relevant to this application are:

- *Downtown Core Area Plan* (2011) - Sections 3, 5, 6 & 7
- *Advisory Design Guidelines for Buildings, Signs and Awnings* (1981)
- *Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters* (2010)
- *Cathedral Hill Precinct Plan* (2004).

The DCAP identifies Fort Street as a “special character area” within the Residential Mixed-Use District Guidelines relevant to this application, which encourage new buildings that enhance the special character of Fort Street as a heritage corridor and active shopping street through the creation of a well-designed, active public realm. The proposed Fort Street frontage is brought close to the sidewalk and includes a mix of smaller ground level retail and café spaces with frequent entrances, consistent with the guidelines. Portions of the building are setback and ground level to provide additional street level outdoor space to accommodate seating, patio space and retail displays that help to animate Fort Street. The material changes to the base of the building also contribute to the visual interest of Fort Street and respond to the heritage character of the area. The addition of street trees on all three frontages would further enhance the public realm and pedestrian experience.

The *Advisory Design Guidelines for Buildings, Signs and Awnings* encourage a comprehensive design approach that is sensitive to the surrounding context. The subject site occupies nearly half a city block with each frontage having a distinct character. The proposal responds to the varying conditions in an effective way through changes in building form, material, setbacks and landscaping. For example, along Quadra Street the building would be setback further from the street and more extensive landscaping and outdoor seating is proposed within the front setback. Staff consider this an appropriate response given the close proximity to the larger green spaces of Pioneer Square and Christ Church Cathedral. The relationship to Pioneer Square is further strengthened by stepping down the building height at the corner and the more organic form of the rounded corner of the building.

Overall, staff consider the application to be generally consistent with the design guidelines although there are some areas where the proposal lacks consistency, specifically with regards to upper storey setbacks and maximum floor plates.

Upper Storey Setbacks

The DCAP specifies a minimum setback of 3-6m for secondary street walls, a 6m setback for portions of the building above 25m, as well as a 1:5 setback ratio starting at 15m above grade, for buildings fronting onto narrow streets such as Fort Street, Broughton Street and Quadra

Street. The purpose of the setbacks is to reduce the bulkiness of upper storeys, encourage variation in massing, distinguish between building bases and upper storeys, and to encourage articulated designs that provide visual interest for pedestrians. Portions of the proposed building along Fort Street and Broughton Street encroach into the DCAP recommended setbacks and setback ratio. The rationale for the encroachment into the building setback ratio is that locating the massing closer to the street allows for increased internal separation between buildings to the south and west to provide better internal sunlight penetration, enhanced privacy and overall enhanced livability.

To ameliorate the impacts of the reduced setbacks along Fort Street, the applicant has introduced more vertical modulation in the façade to help break up the massing and has set the lower height bridge building back 3.79m from the property line to provide greater articulation in the building mass and to provide at-grade public space with seating and weather protection. In addition, the portions of the building above the fifth storey have been further set back (8.3m) from the west property line to increase access to light and views. The secondary street wall setback ranges from 0.92m to 3.62m with the majority of the building being setback 2.55m from the property line. The break between the two-storey building base and upper storeys is emphasized through a change in materials from darker stone to lighter brick for the taller portions of the buildings. The lower height of the connecting bridge buildings utilize a tile mosaic that continues onto the ground surface to provide a visually interesting pedestrian experience and break up the building base into a finer grain that complements the existing character of Fort Street.

The taller building along Broughton Street also encroaches into the 1:5 setback ratio above the seventh storey and does not step back until the tenth storey. The applicant has introduced projecting balconies and variation in materials (brick and terracotta) to break up the massing of the upper storeys. In addition, the seven-storey bridge building along Quadra Street wraps the corner of Broughton Street. As mentioned, this change in height along with the introduction of a recessed outdoor café space at the corner help to provide relief and a sympathetic transition with Pioneer Square located across Quadra Street.

Maximum Floor Plates

Staff had concerns with the overall massing and height of the original proposal, particularly the large floor plates for the portions of the building above 20m in height (floors 7 - 10), which the DCAP recommends limiting to no more than 930m² per floor. The applicant had responded by carving away portions of the upper storeys, limiting the floor plates for the floors above the sixth storey and increasing the separation space between the taller building elements. With this revised proposal the applicant has increased the street level setbacks and the side setback for the upper storeys adjacent to 825 Fort Street. To offset the impact of the increased setbacks, the applicant added a seventh storey to the bridge buildings along Fort Street and Quadra Street. This increased the floor plate size for this level, which is above 20m in height, to 2,551m², which is well above the maximum envisioned under the DCAP guidelines. The seventh floor is stepped back from the sixth floor so that it would not be noticeable to pedestrians. The portions of the building above the seventh storey have been limited in size and are well below the maximum envisioned under the DCAP to reduce the bulkiness of the overall massing and provide access to light and views of the sky, consistent with the design guidelines. In addition, the building is perceived as several smaller buildings due to the articulation of the building massing and variation in height and materials.

CONCLUSIONS

The proposal to construct a ten-storey mixed-use building containing independent seniors rental apartment units, market rental apartment units, commercial offices, a childcare facility, music wellness centre and retail commercial uses on the ground floor is generally consistent with the design guidelines for DPA 7B (HC): Corridors Heritage and DPA 14: Cathedral Hill Precinct. The proposed building massing is sympathetic to surrounding buildings and the proposed variation in façade materials and landscaping respond to the heritage context of the area and will contribute positively to the public realm and pedestrian experience. Staff recommend that Council consider supporting the application.

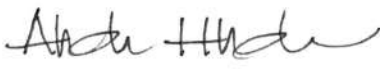
ALTERNATE MOTION

That Council decline Development Permit Application No. 000516 for the property located at 829-899 Fort Street and 846-856 Broughton Street.

Respectfully submitted,




Alec Johnston
Senior Planner
Development Services Division



Andrea Hudson, Acting Director
Sustainable Planning and Community
Development Department

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:



Date: July 31, 2019

List of Attachments

- Attachment A: Subject Map
- Attachment B: Aerial Map
- Attachment C: Plans, date stamped May 31, 2019
- Attachment D: Letter from applicant to Mayor and Council, dated July 26, 2019
- Attachment E: Community Association Land Use Committee Comments, dated March 20, 2017 and February 1, 2018
- Attachment F: Land Lift and Amenity Contribution Analysis, dated July 22, 2019
- Attachment G: Advisory Design Panel Minutes, dated April 11, 2018 and April 24, 2019
- Attachment H: Sustainability Report, dated September 19, 2017
- Attachment I: Correspondence.